



Media Release

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Chamber gives evidence to Holyrood energy committee

The Chamber's research & policy director James Bream today gave evidence on the future prospects for the oil and gas industry in Scotland to a prominent Holyrood committee.

This was the second of two oral evidence sessions in front of the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee, and James was accompanied by Deirdre Michie and Mike Tholen from Oil & Gas UK, followed by Andy Samuel and Sir Patrick Brown from the Oil & Gas Authority.

James updated the committee on the Chamber's recent oil and gas survey carried out among operators and contractors which found record low levels of activity and confidence in the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS).

Respondents are also forecasting a gloomy 2016, and James reinforced to the committee the need to retain talent in the region to make sure the sector remains up to the challenge.

James urged members of the committee, which includes Murdo Fraser, Johann Lamont and Lewis Macdonald, to get behind the Aberdeen City Region Deal as he said this important initiative is needed to anchor both the oil and gas sector and its workforce in the North-east of Scotland.

James said: "The committee members were all interested in what action is needed to support the oil and gas industry through this difficult period of a low commodity price.

"They wanted to know whether the workforce is likely to contract further, where the oil price is heading and just how far along the supply chain the impacts of the current situation are being felt.

"We were able to explain the countercyclical nature of Aberdeen's economy. We have seen great investment over the past decade, but the city has been heavily impacted by this downturn.

"Our main ask would be for the Scottish and UK governments to continue supporting the negotiations around the Aberdeen City Region Deal, which aims to make the most of the energy expertise of the region."

Ends

Notes to editor

- Further information on the committee can be found at www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/55888.aspx
- Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC) is North-east Scotland's leading private sector, member-focused, business organisation. The Chamber represents more than 1,350 businesses with almost 130,000 employees in the private sector covering all industry sectors, ranging in size from sole traders to multi-national corporations.

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