

The Council had before it a notice of motion by Councillor Farquhar in the following terms:-

“That the Council:

1. Notes with extreme disappointment the Chancellor’s decision on 26 November 2025 to keep the Energy Profits Levy (EPL), despite significant lobbying from industry in Aberdeen.
2. Recognises the Fraser of Allander Institute’s “*Is the energy sector at a turning point?*” report of 20 November 2025 which shows that the North East economy has contracted by 21% since 2015.
3. Further recognises Robert Gordon University’s “*Striking the Balance*” report of 2 June 2025 which shows that we could lose 1,000 oil and gas jobs a month if current policies continue. The equivalent of a Grangemouth refinery closure every two weeks for the next 5 years.
4. Notes with regret the misery that this will cause many families in and around Aberdeen.
5. Instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor to outline our city’s concerns about the continuation of the EPL and formally ask that this be reconsidered.”

Councillor Farquhar moved, seconded by Councillor Allard:-

That the Council -

- (1) approves the notice of motion;
- (2) agrees the Labour UK Government’s Autumn Budget, delivered in the House of Commons on 27 November 2025 by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP, fails to deliver for Aberdeen;
- (3) condemns the decision of the Labour UK Government to retain the Energy Profits Levy which is risking thousands of jobs in Aberdeen, and the North East of Scotland, and accelerating decline in the North Sea;
- (4) notes David Whitehouse, Chief Executive of Offshore Energies UK, said (P&J, 26/11/2025): “*Reforming the Energy profits Levy will support the UK’s wider energy future by sustaining the supply chain and industrial capabilities needed for offshore wind, carbon storage and hydrogen projects. Our message to Government is simple: Reform the EPL in 2026 to unlock more tax not less, support more jobs, not less, and deliver more homegrown energy not less.*”
- (5) agrees the Energy Profits Levy should be reformed to support "oil & gas & hydrogen & storage & wind"; and
- (6) instructs the Chief Executive, on behalf of Aberdeen City Council, to sign Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce’s open letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP, regarding Support our North Sea at this critical moment.

Councillor Tissera moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Malik:-

That the Council -

- (1) notes the decision by the then Conservative Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to introduce an EPL surcharge on oil and gas companies to fund support for households struggling with high energy prices;

- (2) recognises the Fraser of Allander Institute's 'Is The Energy Sector at Turning Point' report of 20 November 2025 highlights the North East economy has contracted by 21% since 2015 and notes that the Conservatives formed the UK Government from 2015 to 2024 and the SNP were in power in the devolved Scottish Parliament throughout the whole of this contraction period;
- (3) supports the Labour UK Government's recent announcement regarding a relaxation of restrictions on new oil and gas licences, noting that the UK Government will now permit tie-back of discoveries and fields to existing infrastructure;
- (4) notes that this decision was influenced by data and evidence presented by the Centre of Energy Transition at Aberdeen University;
- (5) agrees the shift in the Labour UK Government's position on licensing demonstrates that they are willing to listen and act when presented with a logical, evidence-based case for doing so;
- (6) agrees the UK government commitment to the North Sea Future Plan is set out in the UK government's framework for achieving its ambition for the future of the North Sea: which is -
 - to be an internationally leading offshore clean energy industry, which ensures good, long-term jobs, growth, and investment in tandem with a sustainable transition in oil and gas. Noting the NSF Board will:
 - a. **review progress against the actions in the government response:** "North Sea Future Plan", so the clean energy transition is managed in partnership between central government, local organisations, industry, and trade unions.
 - b. **identify and address barriers to delivering a clean energy transition** by recommending and implementing industry-led actions that accelerate progress and maximise value for UK growth.
 - c. **help drive investment in all North Sea regions** to build at pace the infrastructure and manufacturing sites that will create new jobs for a vulnerable local workforce and accelerate clean energy deployment.
 - d. **identify and promote opportunities for supply chain companies** to take advantage of the clean energy transition.
 - e. drive progress and **engagement in the package of measures to retain the highly skilled oil and gas workforce** in jobs in growth-driving industries.
 - f. **advocate for the strategic importance of the North Sea** by influencing local policy and encouraging action;
- (7) agrees with disappointment that the Chief Executive Aberdeen City Council is not included within the NSF Board despite delivering the Aberdeen City Region Deal in 2016 and the Aberdeen Oil Summit in 2014 alongside the then Leader of Aberdeen City Council and Labour candidate for Aberdeen Central Jenny Laing;
- (8) notes the contrast between Labour Leadership under Ms Laing who said at the time of the summit "Aberdeen was the oil capital of Europe and as such it was my job, as leader of the city council, to work with the governments in Edinburgh and Westminster and the oil industry to ensure jobs in the city were protected and companies remained based there." And the current SNP leader who procrastinates rather than delivers for the people of Aberdeen who he is meant to serve;

- (9) notes that the Scottish Government currently does not have an Energy Strategy, but when a draft was published in 2023 it included talk of a “presumption against” new oil and gas developments;
- (10) notes that at COP26 the then First Minister stated that the Cambo oil field must be subject to the most stringent climate assessment before any potential approval for drilling is given;
- (11) notes the UK Government in all probability rejected the industry’s proposals on EPL as they remained unconvinced by the evidence provided and agrees to work with the industry to put forward a stronger evidence-based case to UK Government to support the revision of EPL prior to next year’s UK budget;
- (12) agrees the Cambo oilfield is essential to UK energy security and calls on the SNP to abandon its permanent policy against both unconventional and conventional oil and gas extraction as this is the real reason we are seeing job losses in Aberdeen. Agrees that nuclear energy will be a cornerstone for UK energy security and for achieving net-zero goals;
- (13) agrees that Aberdeen is well placed to play a key role in the development of nuclear energy in Scotland, given its existing skilled workforce, and calls on the Scottish Government to abandon its policy to use devolved powers to block nuclear projects;
- (14) agrees with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation that the UK Government budget will reduce child poverty;
- (15) notes the Foundation said the abolishment of the two-child benefit cap was the single most effective way to tackle child poverty, which aligns with the UK government’s commitment to lifting hundreds of thousands of children out of hardship;
- (16) notes the SNP Scottish Government failed to abolish the two-child benefit cap in Scotland; and
- (17) agrees the decision by the SNP to increase Council tax by 9.9% and housing rents by 9.5% will only add to child poverty, undoing the good work of the UK Labour Government.

Councillor Massey moved as a further amendment, seconded by Councillor Boulton:-
That the Council -

- (1) notes the damage being done to our Oil & Gas industry and the jobs the industry supports. As highlighted in the Fraser of Allander Institute’s “Is the energy sector at a turning point?” report of 20 November 2025 and the Robert Gordon University’s “Striking the Balance” report of 2 June 2025;
- (2) condemns the continuation of the Energy Profits Levy;
- (3) condemns the presumption against new oil & gas and the current ban on new licences for exploration drilling;
- (4) condemns the delays to official approval for large ready-to-go projects like Rosebank & Jackdaw; and
- (5) instructs the Chief Executive, on behalf of Aberdeen City Council, to sign Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce’s open letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP, regarding Support for our North Sea at this critical moment.

There being a motion and two amendments, the Council first divided between the two amendments.

On a division, there voted:-

For the amendment by Councillor Tissera (9) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Grant, Lawrence, Macdonald, Malik, Tissera and Watson.

For the amendment by Councillor Massey (5) - Councillor Boulton, Crockett, Massey, Nicoll and Mrs Stewart.

Declined to vote (28) - Lord Provost; Depute Provost; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Allard, Alphonse, Brooks, Buchanan, Hazel Cameron, Clark, Cooke, Copland, Cormie, Cross, Davidson, Fairfull, Farquhar, Greig, Henrickson, Hutchison, Kuszniir, MacGregor, McLellan, McLeod, McRae, Mennie, Radley, van Sweeden and Yuill.

Absent from the division (2) - Councillor Graham and Houghton.

The Council then divided between the motion and the amendment by Councillor Tissera.

On a division, there voted:-

For the motion (31) - Lord Provost; Depute Provost; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Allard, Alphonse, Boulton, Brooks, Buchanan, Hazel Cameron, Clark, Cooke, Copland, Cormie, Crockett, Cross, Davidson, Fairfull, Farquhar, Greig, Henrickson, Hutchison, Kuszniir, MacGregor, McLellan, McLeod, McRae, Mennie, Radley, Mrs Stewart, van Sweeden and Yuill.

For the amendment by Councillor Tissera (10) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Graham, Grant, Lawrence, Macdonald, Malik, Tissera and Watson.

Declined to vote (2) - Councillors Massey and Nicoll.

Absent from the division (1) - Councillor Houghton.

The Council resolved:-
to adopt the motion.