

Future of Energy in Scotland to be debated today



The effects the UK-wide vote to leave the EU will have on Scotland's energy sector will be discussed at the first of two summits today in Edinburgh.

Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy Paul Wheelhouse will meet with key sector stakeholders to hear more about the challenges presented by the EU referendum vote, and ensure the Scottish Government is doing all it can to help.

Mr Wheelhouse will set out plans for the Scottish Government's forthcoming Climate Change Plan and Energy Strategy, canvassing industry opinion on the best joint way forward to navigate current uncertainty.

Mr Wheelhouse said: "Scotland voted overwhelmingly to stay in the EU and the Scottish Government has a democratic responsibility to protect Scotland's position in Europe. That will be our first priority and I will make that clear to key energy stakeholders at this event.

"We have a duty to provide as much reassurance and certainty as possible in these circumstances. Today's session is about listening to industry and other expert views on the implications for the future of energy in Scotland following the EU referendum result.

"We will publish two pieces of work in the new year that will set out an ambitious framework for a truly integrated approach to energy and climate change. Scotland's third Climate Change Plan will set out how we intend to meet our greenhouse gas reduction targets between now and 2032, towards a long-term reduction of 80 per cent on 1990 levels by 2050.

“Building on the Climate Change Plan, our new Energy Strategy will demonstrate how to facilitate and capitalise on the transition to a low carbon economy, reaping social, economic and environmental benefits. This will form our strategic response to the challenges and opportunities facing the sector and articulate our long term vision for energy in Scotland out to 2050. We will seek to provide leadership, clarity and direction for industry – the impetus for which has greatly increased following the EU referendum.

“Both of these will be crucial to help the energy sector respond, both in the short and long term, to the EU vote as the position for both Scotland and the UK develops and becomes clearer. We understand that the energy industry requires a stable environment and investors need policy certainty. That is why a steady, managed transition is so fundamental to our energy strategy. Recent UK Government decisions, actions and, sadly, inactions have resulted in considerable change and uncertainty for the energy industry in Scotland.

“The EU referendum result has added immeasurably to that uncertainty.

“I am determined to ensure that the long-term objectives of our Energy Strategy and Climate Change Plan will be delivered in the face of this uncertainty and today’s event will help us to plot a common path forward and deliver on that promise.”