

MOTION TO EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

29 April 2025

Security of the Nation's Energy Supply

East Lothian Council has for over 20 years been supporting the energy industry to deliver significant change in our energy supply. We are continuing to consider every opportunity that will help the nation reduce its reliance on fossil fuels and reduce their energy demands and costs. We will deliver more with the energy industry in East Lothian in the areas included in this motion if we have more support from both of our governments.

Changing World

The UK's Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, in partnership with the International Energy Agency (IEA), will host an international summit on the future of energy security in London on 24–25 April 2025. The summit will focus on the geopolitical, technological and economic factors influencing global energy security, with a focus on the growing role of clean energy and its supply chains, as well as the availability of critical minerals and metals.

Affordable Energy

To give the country the best possible chance to deal with the global uncertainty of our energy supply, our governments must consider the development of all possible technologies to secure our energy security. This needs to secure an affordable energy cost for our industry, commercial and domestic consumers.

Renewable Energy

To deliver this, our governments must continue to expand the availability of all renewable technologies and their associated infrastructure. They must also urgently support new net zero base load generation. The replacement of the two nuclear reactors at Torness Power Station with new modular reactors is vital for the stability of the National Grid.

Hydrogen Production

Our governments must continue their work with the energy industry to expand the sites available for hydrogen production and storage to reduce our use of natural gas that is currently used by our industrial, commercial and domestic consumers.

UK Oil and Gas Production

Oil and gas will continue to be required by the UK economy for many years, but we must do all we can to reduce what we use. However, in a changing world we must continue to protect our current oil and gas fields so the UK has a secure energy supply and a sustainable transition strategy. The government's commitment to continue the development of carbon capture and storage is vital to reach net zero and support our economy.

Proposal

East Lothian Council calls on the Council Leader to write to UK Government Secretary of State for Net Zero and to the First Minister of Scotland to request that they take whatever action is necessary to secure the nation's net zero energy supply and reduce the cost of energy for our industrial, commercial and domestic consumers, and:

- request that all decisions on any energy projects, not just the projects under 50mw in a council area, are decided by the local planning authority through the normal planning process. The Energy Consents Unit would still be responsible for granting a licence to the applicant, but communities would feel their views on any application were fully considered by their local elected representatives;
- request that local government is an integral part of any planning for the delivery of new technologies that they will be expected to accommodate in their area. Councils will also have the appropriate powers and resources to deal with any proposals they need to consider;
- request that government develops a national energy master plan, so we understand the full extent of the nation's future demands. This will allow a fair allocation of energy sites that are required for new developments so we can properly consult and plan projects. This will help us reduce the cumulative impact on our countryside that will accommodate the renewable technology and its infrastructure.
- Request that the fees for energy applications are set at a reasonable level to cover the full cost of planning assessments by the relevant professionals.

Proposed by (name): Norman Hampshire

Date: 15 April 2025

Seconded by (name): Shamin Akhtar

Date: 15 April 2025

Received by (name of officer): Lel Gillingwater – Team Manager, Democratic & Licensing

Date: 15 April 2025