



Just Transition Commission
Aberdeen Heat and Power visit
25 September 2019 16:00 – 18:00

Commission attendees
Lang Banks, representing WWF
Professor Mike Danson
Dave Moxham, representing STUC
Tom Shields

Meeting summary

Members of the Commission met with representatives of Aberdeen Heat and Power to discuss their experience of setting up and running a not-for-profit district heating network. The visit included a trip to Seaton Energy Centre and a local residential home to hear about the network's impact on residents.

This visit helped build on the June meeting of the Commission, which focused on the built environment.

The discussion focussed on the following themes:

Barriers to establishing and expanding the district heating network

- High capital cost of expanding the network, in addition to the difficulty in accessing finance
- Lack of skills and awareness of district heating schemes and the heat sources they rely on, both from the engineering and architect community.
- Regulatory barriers preventing the company selling electricity to residential homes, in addition to the provision of heat.

Enabling factors contributing to the success of the scheme

- Establishing a not-for-profit company to manage the network helped keep prices low. Commercial properties connected to the scheme paid a premium which was reinvested in the delivery of heat to residential properties.
- Separation from the council had aided the development and running of the network, by keeping the business insulated from short-term political considerations.
- Combining expansion of the district heating network with wider energy efficiency measures delivered by the council.