

The Rt Hon Jonathan Reynolds MP

Secretary of State for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade

Tuesday 28 July 2026

Ref: Congratulations and introduction from the Energy & Utility Skills Partnership

Dear Secretary of State,

Many congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of State for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade. We are writing on behalf of the Energy & Utility Skills Partnership CEO Council to introduce our collective work and reaffirm our commitment to working with you and your Department to ensure workforce capacity supports the UK's Industrial Strategy, productivity, supply chain growth and export ambitions.

The Partnership brings together employers across energy, water and critical infrastructure supply chains. Partners directly employ more than 200,000 people, support many more through extensive supply chains and generate more than £120 billion in annual turnover. Our 2025 to 2030 Skills Strategy, endorsed by over 20 industry and sector partners, provides a shared approach across four priorities: research, attract, develop and retain.

The scale of the opportunity is significant. Our workforce research estimates that more than 312,000 new people will be required across energy and utilities by 2030 to deliver planned investment and maintain essential services. Across energy, water, wastewater, waste, recycling and their extensive supply chains, workforce capacity will be fundamental to delivering planned investment, strengthening UK supply chains, increasing productivity and supporting economic growth. To help achieve this, we:

- Support delivery of the Industrial Strategy through our work with DESNZ on the Clean Energy Jobs Plan. In partnership with industry, we recently launched Destination Energy, are supporting delivery through the Social Inclusion Forum and are seeking to develop the clean energy sector's first Apprenticeship Unit.
- Develop workforce evidence with industry, including evidence that informed the Migration Advisory Committee's recent Temporary Shortage List recommendations.
- Deliver Sector Entry pilots with industry and DWP. This innovative approach to attracting new talent has seen 18 of 21 completers secure employment. We are now seeking to extend the pilot through a larger second phase designed to be scalable across the UK.
- Set the second year priorities for our 2025 to 2030 Skills Strategy, including seven UK wide policy priorities that we look forward to progressing with your Department and governments across the UK.

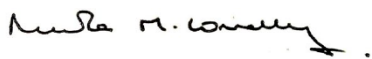
There are a number of opportunities for immediate impact. These include:

- Support a larger second phase of Sector Entry and explore its potential across Industrial Strategy priority sectors. Of the 18 first pilot participants who have secured employment, seven are now working directly in water and 11 in energy. The model has been designed to scale across the UK and provides a practical route for employers to recruit new talent that is currently outside the workforce.
- Mobilise behind the Network Sector Growth Plan due to launch in September, ensuring workforce and skills requirements remain integral to implementation and that lessons learned can be applied across other Industrial Strategy priority sectors.
- Embed workforce planning within Industrial Strategy implementation, regulatory reform and major investment decisions, ensuring that growth ambitions are supported by the skills, competence and workforce capacity required for delivery.
- Develop the export potential of UK workforce, skills and competence expertise, building on opportunities already referred to Energy & Utility Skills Group by DBT officials in Nepal and Saudi Arabia.
- Meet with Paul Cox at the Labour Party Conference, where he will be attending throughout the event.

Andrew Findlay and Paul Cox are also scheduled to meet with Alan Milburn tomorrow, Wednesday 29 July, providing a further opportunity to connect our work on workforce demand, participation and competence with routes into skilled employment for young citizens who are not in education, employment or training. We also enclose our recent letter to the Minister for Skills, setting out the apprenticeship priorities recently agreed by the Energy & Utility Skills Partnership CEO Council.

By continuing to work together, we can increase opportunities for citizens and communities, strengthen UK supply chains, workforce resilience and productivity, and ensure that Industrial Strategy ambition and investment are matched by the competent workforce required to deliver sustainable economic growth. We look forward to continuing our positive partnership with you, your Department and governments across the UK.

Yours sincerely,



Nicola Connelly
EUSP CEO Council Co-Chair
Chief Executive
ScottishPower Energy Networks
Group



Andrew Findlay
EUSP CEO Council Co-Chair
Chief Executive
M Group



Paul Cox
Group Chief Executive
Energy & Utility Skills Group

ENC: Ministerial Letter - Skills Minister Baroness Jacqui Smith - Monday 13 July 2026