Thursday 7 May 2015

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Communities

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government on what date it will publish its response to the consultation on proposed amendments to the NHS Central Register (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

(S4W-25353)

John Swinney: The Scottish Government is considering the views expressed in response to our consultation on proposed amendments to the National Health Service Central Register (Scotland) Regulations 2006. We will set out our intended way forward shortly and in doing so will further set out how our commitment to protecting privacy will be met.

Enterprise and Environment

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many times and on what dates ministers have met representatives of Iberdrola to discuss Longannet power station and what subsequent action it took following each meeting.

(S4W-25247)

Fergus Ewing: Scottish Ministers have regular contact with representatives of Scottish Power, part of the Iberdrola Group, at which the company’s current generation assets and future investment plans are discussed.
Following Scottish Power’s decision to opt-out Longannet from the UK capacity market auction in October 2014 – a decision Scottish Power linked explicitly to the UK system of discriminatory transmission charges – both the Deputy First Minister and Minister for Business, Energy and Tourism have visited Longannet power station to meet company representatives.
In addition, ministers have made repeated representations to National Grid and the UK Government at the highest level to underscore the significance of Longannet and to highlight Scottish Government concerns about dwindling spare capacity in the GB electricity system.
Under the devolved settlement, governmental and regulatory responsibility and operational control of GB energy market issues rests with the UK Government, Ofgem and National Grid. The actions urgently required on the key factors contributing to the threat of premature closure of Longannet – principally, transmission charges and the design of the UK Capacity Market – are ones that must be taken by the relevant UK authorities rather than the Scottish Government.
Details of recent meetings in person and by telephone are listed in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 October 2014</td>
<td>The Minister for Business, Energy and Tourism (Fergus Ewing MSP) had a telephone call with Neil Clitheroe (Chief Executive Officer, Scottish Power Retail and Generation) and discussed the future of Longannet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 October 2014</td>
<td>Fergus Ewing had a telephone call with Neil Clitheroe and had another discussion on the future of Longannet.</td>
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<td>12 November 2014</td>
<td>Fergus Ewing co-chaired a meeting of the Thermal Generation and Carbon Capture and Storage Industry Leadership Group. The state of the electricity sector was discussed, focusing on supply margins. Scottish Power was represented at the meeting by Hazel Gulliver (Europe and Scotland Policy Manager).</td>
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<td>26 November 2014</td>
<td>Fergus Ewing met with Mike Calviou (Director of Transmission Network Services, National Grid) to discuss the future of Longannet and emerging findings of National Grid’s System Study for Scotland.</td>
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<td>21 January 2015</td>
<td>Fergus Ewing met with Keith Anderson (Chief Corporate Officer, Scottish Power), Frank Mitchell (Chief Executive Officer, SP Energy Networks) and Neil Clitheroe. Discussions included the future of Longannet.</td>
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<td>16 February 2015</td>
<td>The First Minister co-chaired a meeting of the Scottish Energy Advisory Board with Professor Sir Jim McDonald of the University of Strathclyde.</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 February 2015</td>
<td>Fergus Ewing visited Longannet Power Station and met with representatives of Scottish Power and the union Prospect.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 March 2015</td>
<td>Mr Ewing had a phone call with Mike Calviou and discussed the future of Longannet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 March 2015</td>
<td>Mr Ewing met with Mike Calviou in London and discussed the future of Longannet.</td>
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**Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats):** To ask the Scottish Government on what date it will publish details of the payment regions under the new common agricultural policy, and what discussions it has had with NFU Scotland regarding the delays in publication.

(S4W-25316)

**Richard Lochhead:** Details of the payment regions were announced to Parliament on the 11 June 2014. Since then, in October 2014, we wrote to each individual farmer with details of the provisional allocation of their agricultural land into the three new payment regions. Farmers were given the opportunity to request a review of the provisional allocation and we are currently working through those review requests.

Payment regions and payment rates can only be finalised once the 2015 single application Form forms have been submitted and validated and we know how much land has been declared and claimed in each region.

We have regular discussions with NFUS on a number of issues including the CAP.

**Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats):** To ask the Scottish Government whether farmers applying for support under the new common agricultural policy will be required to submit their Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) forms in advance of the publication of the details about the payment regions.

(S4W-25318)

**Richard Lochhead:** As per the answer to question S4W-25316 on 7 May 2015, farmers have already received details of the provisional allocations of their agricultural land into the three payment regions, however, this information is not necessary for the completion of the single application form (SAF). Farmers should complete their SAFs without delay ensuring that they only declare eligible land and eligible activity for the area they are seeking payments. Once this information is validated final allocation of payment regions can be made. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament’s website, the search facility for which can be found at: [http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx).

**Claudia Beamish (South Scotland) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to ensure that it meets its obligations under the air quality directive and to what timescales.

(S4W-25431)

**Aileen McLeod:** The Scottish Government is working closely with the UK Government, the other devolved administrations, local authorities and other delivery partners to ensure compliance with the air quality directive as soon as possible. We are currently updating the action plans with the aim of submitting them to the European Commission by the end of 2015. These action plans will specify specific actions that need to be undertaken with appropriate milestones.
Claudia Beamish (South Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the Supreme Court's recent judgement in relation to compliance with the air quality directive.

(A4W-25432)

Aileen McLeod: Air quality in Scotland and the rest of the UK has improved significantly in recent years and, as this judgement recognises, work is already underway on revised plans to meet the air quality directive targets on nitrogen dioxide as soon as possible. The Scottish Government was already working with the UK Government and the other devolved administrations to submit these plans before the end of 2015.

Health and Social Care

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether people with muscular dystrophy can be prescribed the drug, Translarna, by the NHS.

(A4W-25343)

Shona Robison: The manufacturer of Ataluren (Translarna®) has not yet launched this product in the UK and a submission has not yet been made to the Scottish Medicines Consortium.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether funding for the drug, Translarna, would be available from the New Medicines Fund and, if so, in what circumstances.

(A4W-25345)

Shona Robison: The manufacturer of Ataluren (Translarna®) has not yet launched this product in the UK.

Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what it is doing or plans to do to ensure that people with hearing loss have access to lipreading classes or tutors, particularly in the Highlands and Islands.

(A4W-25350)

Jamie Hepburn: A Scottish Lipreading Strategy Group, chaired by Action on Hearing Loss and funded by Scottish Government, recently produced a report, Lipreading Classes in Scotland – the way forward which is currently being considered by Scottish Government officials. One of the recommendations of the report is that a Scottish Lipreading Working Group should be established which will, among other things, improve access to lipreading services in the remote and rural areas by trying out, and evaluating, new technology-based ways.

Murdo Fraser (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government when it will introduce an age restriction of 18 on e-cigarettes.

(A4W-25428)

Maureen Watt: An age restriction for electronic cigarettes will be included in the forthcoming Public Health Bill. We aim to introduce the Bill before summer recess.

Learning and Justice

Mary Fee (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when the Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities last met the (a) Secretary of State for Defence and (b) Ministry of Defence and what issues were discussed.

(A4W-25365)

Keith Brown: The Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities has not met with the Secretary of State for Defence. The Cabinet Secretary most recently met with Julian Brazier MP,
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and Minister for Reserves, on 27 November 2014. This was an introductory meeting following Mr Brazier’s appointment in July 2014. Mr Brazier is the Ministry of Defence Minister with responsibility for veterans issues and for Scotland.

Transport Scotland

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government which budget would cover any legal costs arising from the civil action between Shetland Islands Council and Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd.

(S4W-25361)

Derek Mackay: Apportionment of costs will be a matter for the court if no out of court settlement is reached. It will be for Shetland Islands Council and/or Highlands and Islands Airports to determine how any costs will be met.

Mary Fee (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when the (a) Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities and (b) Minister for Transport and Islands last met the Confederation of Passenger Transport and what issues were discussed.

(S4W-25366)

Derek Mackay: The Cabinet Secretary’s last engagement with Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) was during his term as Minister for Transport and Veterans where he gave the key note speech at the CPT annual conference on 6 October 2014 on developing bus policy. I had an introductory meeting with CPT on 4 February 2015 to discuss a range of issues including funding, smart ticketing and bus legislation.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what the differences are between the funding formula used to calculate road equivalent tariff fares in Assessment of the Impacts of the Road Equivalent Tariff Pilot: Draft Final Report of March 2011 and in Scottish Ferry Services: Ferries Plan (2013-2022), published in December 2012, and what the reasons are for the changes.

(S4W-25388)

Derek Mackay: Based on independent contemporary research, the variable element of the road equivalent tariff (RET) car formula, the rate per mile, was updated in 2012 to £0.80 per mile to reflect the higher costs of motoring. A comparable increase was made to the variable element of the RET formula for foot passengers, which was updated to £0.13 per mile. The comparable figures for 2008 were £0.60 per mile and £0.10 per mile respectively. The fixed elements of the RET formula, for both cars and foot passengers, £5.00 and £2.00 respectively, did not change between 2008 and 2012.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-25249 by Derek McKay on 24 April 2015, if no increase was assumed in table 11.7 where the road equivalent tariff (RET) would result in a higher fare, for what reason RET was not introduced on the routes where it would result in lower fares.

(S4W-25389)

Derek Mackay: The fares in table 11.7 of the 2011 Halcrow report contained a number of assumptions and were for illustration purposes only. The Ferries Plan, published in December 2012, was clear that implementing the road equivalent tariff (RET) on routes to the Northern Isles now or in the next few years would mean an increase on a range of fares and therefore RET will be rolled out over a longer timeframe.