Maurice Corry (West Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many empty commercial properties there have been in each local authority in the West Scotland parliamentary region in each year since 2007.

Holding answer issued: 10 January 2017 (S5W-5522)

Derek Mackay: The number of empty non-domestic rateable properties in each local authority in the West Scotland parliamentary region in each year since 2007, is shown in the following table. The figures are as reported on the Scottish Assessors’ Valuation Roll at 1 April each year.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argyll and Bute</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>553</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>572</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Dunbartonshire</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>169</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Renfrewshire</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>178</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inverclyde</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Ayrshire</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>579</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renfrewshire</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>923</td>
<td>918</td>
<td>1,084</td>
<td>1,129</td>
<td>1,114</td>
<td>1,063</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>1,043</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Dunbartonshire</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>2,841</td>
<td>2,830</td>
<td>2,889</td>
<td>2,992</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>3,149</td>
<td>3,111</td>
<td>3,084</td>
<td>3,009</td>
<td>3,163</td>
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1. Only part of Argyll and Bute is in the West Scotland Parliamentary Constituency; separate figures for part of the LA are not available.

Willie Coffey (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to improve the lives of disabled people and break down barriers to opportunity.

Jeane Freeman: On 2 December 2016 we launched A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: Our Delivery Plan to 2021 for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Plan has five long term ambitions: support services that meet disabled people’s needs; decent incomes and fairer working lives; places that are accessible to everyone; protected rights; and active participation. The ambitions have 93 actions to help make a positive difference to the lives of disabled people.

We will ensure that there is opportunity for disabled people to hold us to account on progress with this plan. We will lay a progress report before Parliament in early 2021 to determine where we need to focus our efforts in the next parliamentary session.

Through engagement with stakeholders, principles underpinning our approach to Social Security in Scotland were developed which include placing dignity and respect at the heart of all we do. In addition, we have carried out an extensive consultation to help inform our approach and will be publishing a report on the consultation responses early this year. This will help to inform the work of the Disability and Carers’ Benefits Expert Advisory Group which will also be established early this year to provide recommendations and guidance on issues including assessment for benefits in Scotland.

We will continue engagement through our stakeholder groups and the establishment of ‘Experience Panels’ involving at least 2,000 people, with recent experience of applying for or receiving benefits, to help us design, build and improve the new system, and support our work on a longer-term basis.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many interpreters each local authority has had in each year since 2007-08, and for which languages.

(S5W-5807)
Jackson Carlaw (Eastwood) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of the recent decision by the UK Government to do so, whether it will adopt the definition of anti-Semitism that has been designated by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

(S5W-5829)

Angela Constance: There is no excuse for any form of hate crime; it is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. The definition of anti-Semitism designated by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance will be considered by the Scottish Government. Officials will also meet with the Scottish Council for Jewish Communities in early 2017 to discuss the definition.

(S5W-5844)

Angela Con stance: The Scottish Government has not had any discussions with the UK Government about Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre since November 2016. However, I did seek guarantees about the safety and wellbeing of detainees and assurances that anyone moved to England will be guaranteed suitable legal representation, during my meeting with the Immigration Minister, Robert Goodwill MP on 11 October 2016.

(S5W-5845)

Linda Fabiani (East Kilbride) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it has been informed by the UK Government of the timetable for the closure of Dungavel House immigration removal centre.

Crown Office

Douglas Ross (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many cases there have been in each of the last five years, where the charge of assaulting an emergency worker under the Emergency Workers (Scotland) Act 2005 have been dropped by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

(S5W-5909)

James Wolffe QC: The following table relates to charges under sections 1(1) and 2(1) of the Emergency Workers (Scotland) Act 2005. There will frequently be more than one charge arising from a single incident and multiple charges under the same legislation may feature in a single case.

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<tr>
<td>Total Charges reported to COPFS</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charges proceeded with</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charges where proceedings were commenced in Court and then No Further Action taken</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
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</table>

In a significant number of cases where charges were discontinued, this was related to the mental or physical health of the accused. Included in this number were accused who died or became incapacitated after the case was reported to COPFS and accused who were made subject to Compulsion Orders, detained in hospital or engaged with treatment or other services.
Douglas Ross (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many cases in each of the last five years, where the charge of assaulting an emergency worker under the Emergency Workers (Scotland) Act 2005, have been dropped to pursue a charge relating to the same incident.

James Wolfe QC: Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) Management Information Database records data on the basis of charges not “incidents”. One “incident” can involve multiple charges and multiple accused, sometimes reported and prosecuted under separate cases. From the statistical data held by COPFS, it is not possible to isolate this information. The number of charges under the Emergency Workers (Scotland) Act 2005 in which no further action has been taken in the last five years was provided in the answer to question S5W-05909 on 11 January 2017.

All answers to written Parliamentary Questions are available on the Parliament’s website, the search facility for which can be found at http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx

Economy

Brian Whittle (South Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist): To ask the Scottish Government how it encourages the access to art, drama and music by all children, irrespective of background.

Fiona Hyslop: Through the Youth Music Initiative, Cashback for Creativity programme and Sistema Scotland we are ensuring that no young person’s background is a barrier to taking part in the arts.

Creative Scotland continue to work with a range of partners to ensure young people have the opportunity to engage in cultural activity. Scotland's five National Performing Companies too are committed to creating and performing their work across the whole of Scotland and make a significant contribution to cultural life both in Scotland and internationally. Their performances and outreach programmes continue to be of the highest quality with the Theatre for Schools Scotland initiative, which I helped launch in June, aiming to ensure every child in Scotland receives a minimum of one performing arts production, per year, as part of their education.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on when the scaffolding will be removed from Dumbarton Castle.

Fiona Hyslop: Historic Environment Scotland are responsible for operations at Dumbarton Castle and at Scotland's other historic properties in care. I understand that Historic Environment Scotland wrote to the member on 22nd December detailing their forward plans for Dumbarton Castle, including the removal of scaffolding from the Governor's House.

David Stewart (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what support it can provide to the Morayvia project to allow it to move to alternative accommodation.

Fiona Hyslop: The Scottish Government supports non-national museums and galleries through Museums Galleries Scotland, the National Development body which supports the museum sector across Scotland through the provision of services and the operation of grant schemes.

Museums Galleries Scotland would welcome discussions with the Nimrod Heritage Group to help develop the project and to support them through the process of becoming an accredited museum.

Gillian Martin (Aberdeenshire East) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to reports that Scottish renewable energy firms are now active in more than 40 countries.

(S5W-5910)

(S5O-536)

(S5O-537)

(S5O-538)

(S5W-5581)
Paul Wheelhouse: The results of this research by Scottish Renewables shows the considerable global reach of renewable energy businesses in Scotland.

The figures reinforce the growing importance of renewable energy businesses, to the Scottish economy and vindicates the Scottish Government’s support for the sector and the increasingly crucial role it plays within our energy mix and the wider economy.

Clearly, it is a significant boost, to the economic benefits of Scotland making an early, sustained transition to a decarbonised model of electricity generation, that as we see great expansion in renewable generation in Scotland, across a range of technologies. This equips us with expertise that helps Scottish businesses to generate significant export earnings in overseas markets. This mirrors Scotland’s success as a knowledge hub in the oil and gas industry.

Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether Highlands and Islands Enterprise will continue to decide the strategic priorities for its investment and social development in the Highlands and Islands following the establishment of the single Scotland-wide board for enterprise and skills.

Keith Brown: HIE will retain its Chief Executive based at its headquarters in Inverness, staff will also continue to operate from the Headquarters in Inverness and HIE’s area-based locations across the area from Lerwick to Lochgilphead. HIE senior management will continue to work in the same way as they do now but will benefit from the coordination provided by the new Scotland-wide Statutory Board.

Businesses and communities will continue to access services across the Highlands and Islands area.

As part of the work being taken forward in Phase two of the Enterprise and Skills Review we will consider the formation, format and remit of the new Scotland-wide Statutory Board. This will include ensuring that HIE continues to deliver an excellent service identifying and prioritising investment within the Highlands and Islands.

We would expect that there will be strong Highlands and Islands representation on the new single board, and there is no commitment to a single geographic HQ for the Board.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government (a) what the remit was and (b) who the members were of its Strategic Forum, previously chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth.

Paul Wheelhouse: I refer the member to the answer to question S5W-03752 on 10 November 2016. All answers to written Parliamentary Questions are available on the Parliament’s website, the search facility for which can be found at http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what strategy and monitoring framework was in place for the Strategic Forum, previously chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth.

Paul Wheelhouse: The Strategic Forum discussed a range of strategic economic issues and encouraged and promoted collaborative actions by our agencies. Scotland’s Economic Strategy sets out the overall economic aims of the Scottish Government. Individual agency activities align with those priorities. The National Performance Framework (http://www.gov.scot/About/Performance/scotPerforms) measures progress and the individual agencies have their own monitoring systems that are scrutinised by Parliament.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what independent assessment has been made of the effectiveness of the small business bonus in creating jobs.
Derek Mackay: The Scottish Government has not commissioned independent assessment. Policy-making in respect of the Small Business Bonus Scheme is informed by objective internal analysis and wide-ranging stakeholder engagement. For example, the Federation of Small Business recently said that, having surveyed almost 1,000 business owners to ask what would happen if the support through the Small Business Bonus Scheme was abolished:-

"About a fifth of small firms (18.9%) reported they would close the business, with similar proportions arguing that they would have to cancel investments (19.9%) and amend their plans for growth (18.3%)."

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what estimate it has made of the share of the costs of decommissioning oil and gas platforms in the North Sea that are attributed to (a) capping and plugging wells, (b) removing offshore infrastructure and (c) dismantling of infrastructure and equipment that has been brought onshore.

Paul Wheelhouse: Scottish Enterprise published a Decommissioning Action Plan, on behalf of Scottish Government, on 21 December 2016 and this sets out a vision of how the Scottish supply chain can maximise the value that is obtained from the forecast spend of £17.6 billion on decommissioning between 2016 and 2025.

Figures for the costs of decommissioning activities are taken from the Oil & Gas UK Decommissioning Insights Report 2016. The OGUK report states that for ‘all UK continental shelf projects’ the share of costs is, a) Well Plugging and Abandonment – around 47% b) Removals – around 19% c) Onshore Dismantling and Disposal – around 1%.

The OGUK report can be found at http://oilandgasuk.co.uk/decommissioninginsight.cfm.

It is estimated that decommissioning activity in Scotland over the next 10 years could be valued at between £8.3 billion and £11.3 billion. Further detail on the estimated Scottish share of delivery by activity and location can be obtained by accessing the Decommissioning Action Plan at https://www.scottish-enterprise.com/knowledge-hub/articles/publication/oil-gas-decommissioning-action-plan.

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what information it has on whether it is (a) practically and legally possible and (b) compliant with international obligations, for tax reliefs assigned to oil and gas decommissioning to be invested instead in renewable energy development.

Paul Wheelhouse: I refer the member to the answer to question S5W-05659 on 11 January 2017. All answers to written Parliamentary Questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what action it can take to reduce the costs of work carried out to conserve historic (a) buildings, (b) monuments and (c) tenements.
Fiona Hyslop: It is the responsibility of the owners of historic buildings, monuments and tenements to ensure the conservation and repair of their properties. The cost of conservation work is usually determined by the scale of the problem needing rectified. In view of this, the Scottish Government and Historic Environment Scotland advocate the regular inspection and maintenance of buildings to identify and rectify issues before they become problems, thereby reducing the risk of urgent and expensive repairs at a later date. Advice for owners of historic properties is available from Historic Environment Scotland.

With specific reference to tenements, the Scottish Government online guide, Common Repair, Common Sense, on the management of tenements in Scotland: http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0041/00417200.pdf also notes that “Regular inspections followed by prompt remedial action will reduce the costs of minor and major repairs.” In September 2016, the Under One Roof web resource http://www.unnderoneroof.sco/ was launched as part of the Year of Architecture, Innovation and Design. This free, impartial resource provides advice for the owners and occupiers of tenements and flats in Scotland.

Some owners may be eligible for grant support towards repairs. Scottish Government funding for the historic environment is channelled via the Historic Environment Scotland grant schemes. The level of these grant schemes has been maintained over recent years, despite economic pressures. Grant programmes in Scotland’s Cities are administered by local City Heritage Trusts, who can advise on grant eligibility and also provide advice to property owners.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what percentage of the overall quayside construction costs of Global Energy's Nigg yard was met by its award of £6.5 million.

Paul Wheelhouse: Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) awarded £6,532,226 towards project costs of £40,481,212, which represents 16.1% of the total.

Linda Fabiani (East Kilbride) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it uses for-profit private organisations to deliver its international development programmes.

Alasdair Allan: The Scottish Government funds through a range of Scottish based organisations, such as registered charities, universities, local authorities, NHS Boards, private sector companies and social enterprises, with a strong emphasis on respectful partnership. The Scottish Government is clear in seeking applications to its funding rounds that it would not expect a private sector organisation to profit from a development project, and private companies in receipt of a grant under the International Development Fund will act on a not for profit basis.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government when a Scottish Minister last met the UK Visas and Immigration and what was discussed.

Alasdair Allan: I met the UK Minister of State for Immigration, Mr Robert Goodwill, on 7 December 2016 to discuss immigration issues. We discussed the potential impact of exiting the EU, post study work visas, the Tier 4 student visa pilot, and the upcoming UK Government consultation on the UK points based system.

I raised the concerns relayed to me by a number of EU nationals in Scotland, and again asked for the UK Government to allay their fears, and to guarantee their rights to live and work in the UK post-Brexit. I also highlighted Scotland’s differential demographic needs and reiterated the very strong cross party and cross sector support for the return of a post study work route for Scotland.
Andy Wightman (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide a breakdown of the recipients of financial contributions from VisitScotland to the strategy, Game for Growth Strategy - Country Sports Tourism in Scotland 2016; what information it has regarding how each recipient will use this; what action it has taken to ensure that no money was provided to the owners or managers of landholdings on which crimes against wildlife have been committed; whether it will publish the strategy on its website, and what aspects of this it is supporting or plans to support with public money.

(S5W-5930)

Fiona Hyslop: VisitScotland has approved a grant of £17,925 to the Scottish Country Sports Tourism Group to promote Scotland as the destination of choice for all country sports. The Group will use this to develop content and supporting digital activity to attract visitors from across the UK and Scandinavia. As this money is for a specific project, no funding will be provided to individual estates or land owners. There is no intention to publish the strategy on VisitScotland's website and so there will be no funding support for this.

Finance

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government for what reason the private consortium building the new Dumfries hospital is charging an interest rate of 11.3%, and what its position is on whether this represents value for money.

(D5W-5607)

Derek Mackay: The interest rate that applies to subordinated debt for Non Profit Distribution (NPD) projects is commercially sensitive and covered by a confidentiality agreement until 2 years after construction handover, however all NPD contracts were competitively tendered. Typically subordinated debt is approximately 10% of the total finance and this is generally the investment that is most at risk. The remaining 90% of the project investment requirement on this project is sourced from 'senior lenders', such as the European Investment Bank and an institutional funder which lend at much lower rates.

The capped return for NPD projects are much lower than National Audit Office published information* from 2012 which showed an average tendered uncapped base-case return for PFI models of around 14% to the equity investors.

*Reference for info:
The National Audit Office undertook a study entitled “Equity Investment in Privately Financed Projects" published in February 2012. In relation to the higher risk project investment requirement, it shows an average tendered base-case return of around 14% to the equity investors; under PFI this is an uncapped return.


Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what increase in pay for its civil servants has been set out in its pay policy for 2017.

(S5W-5625)

Derek Mackay: The 2017-18 pay policy allows for the following increases in pay:
an overall 1 per cent cap on the cost of the increase in the baseline paybill for those earning more than the low pay threshold of £22,000
an increase of £400 for all staff with a full-time equivalent salary of less than the low pay threshold
a commitment to paying at least the Scottish Living Wage
allow individual employers to reach their own decisions about pay progression where staff are eligible to move towards the maximum rate for the job

This link also contains a list of the public bodies that are directly covered by the Scottish Government’s pay policy.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how much it (a) borrowed in 2015-16, (b) is borrowing in 2016-17 and (c) plans to borrow in 2017-18 and for what purpose.

(S5W-5709)

Derek Mackay: £283 million was set against the Scottish Government’s borrowing cap in 2015-16. We would expect to take decisions about borrowing in 2016-17 and 2017-18 respectively late in each financial year, on the basis that it is prudent to only draw down borrowing late in any financial year, based on an up to date assessment of programme requirements. As noted in the Draft Budget 2016-17 and Draft Budget 2017-18, the Government has indicated that it will borrow up to the full amounts available in order to support the overall capital programme.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how much (a) capital borrowing it used in 2015-16 and (b) is using in 2016-17 to guarantee non-profit distributing (NPD) projects.

(S5W-5710)

Derek Mackay: £283 million was set against the Scottish Government’s borrowing cap in 2015-16. This meant that the budget cover available from the borrowing facility was utilised to cover non-cash costs without having to draw down funds and incur the interest costs normally associated with borrowing.

There is no guarantee required for NPD projects. The provision set out in the 2016-17 Draft Budget published last December to reflect the budgeting treatment of the capital costs of NPD projects is £398 million. No decision has been taken yet on borrowing requirements in 2016-17.

Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government what information it has regarding what profits will be made by each company involved with the (a) Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route/Balmedie Tipperty, (b) Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service National Centre, (c) Royal Hospital for Sick Children/Department of Clinical Neurosciences, (d) Dumfries acute services redevelopment and (e) new Orkney hospital and healthcare facilities project, including from long-term (i) interest and (ii) fees.

(S5W-5824)

Derek Mackay: As these projects were procured under the Non Profit Distributing model, there are no profits distributed to the private sector investors in the project companies that have been set up and which hold the contracts with the procuring authorities.

Information on interest and fees is included in the financial models which underpin the contracts. This information, which was subject to competition during the procurement process, is subject to confidentiality provisions in the contracts for a time limited period of typically two years. Information on the profit levels of sub-contracting companies, such as the construction contractor, is not held.

Health and Social Care

Jamie Greene (West Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to address the reported problems with waiting times in NHS Ayrshire and Arran.

(S5W-5561)

Shona Robison: As announced in the Draft Budget for 2017-18 in Parliament on 15 December 2016, the baseline allocation for NHS Ayrshire and Arran will increase to a total of £682.1 million. In addition to this increase, the Board can also expect to receive an additional £1.5 million of recurring NRAC parity funding.
In the current year the Scottish Government has made available £3.7 million to address waiting times in Ayrshire and Arran. This includes £2.2 million from the additional £10 million announced on 21 November to address outpatient waiting times.

You will also be aware that on 29 November the Scottish Government announced a plan to deliver a major shift in the way outpatient care is delivered, giving patients faster and more local access to care, has been published *The Modern Outpatient: A Collaborative Approach 2017-2020* sets out a new strategy for responding to rising demand and aims to free up 400,000 hospital outpatient appointments by 2020. The strategy proposes that some patients, particularly those who are waiting for a routine check-up or test results, would be seen closer to home by a team of community healthcare professionals with close links to hospital departments. The NHS will also make better use of e-consultations and action will be taken to reduce the number of unnecessary referrals.

**Fulton MacGregor (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Scottish National Party):** To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on the development of plans for trauma care in Scotland.

**(S5W-6026)**

**Shona Robison:** Scottish Government consider it a priority to design and implement a national inclusive trauma network that will save lives, deliver improved outcomes for injured patients and fully support them to quickly return to normal life. In May last year, Ministers set out this clear commitment which was subsequently included as a key outcome in the Programme for Government in 2016.

A National Trauma Network Implementation Group, chaired by the Chief Medical Officer Catherine Calderwood, has now developed high level plans for a Scottish Trauma Network. The Chief Medical Officer also visited clinicians and other healthcare professionals as well as the Scottish Ambulance Service to help develop a unique model of care that will aim to deliver improved patient outcomes.

The Scottish Trauma Network’s vision is ‘*Saving lives. Giving life back*’ and aims to improve trauma patient care throughout the care pathway, from prevention through to rehabilitation. The Network will involve hospitals across Scotland, including four major trauma centres (MTC) in Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow and Edinburgh, working together across traditional geographic boundaries to realise this vision.

The 4 MTCs are vital components of the new Scottish Trauma Network. They will deal with our most severely injured patients and will be equipped to ensure patents have the best chance of a speedy recovery from their injuries. However this new network is not just about the four major trauma centres. It is about delivering a joined up network approach that will enhance trauma care across Scotland and improve patient outcomes. This will involve the Scottish Ambulance Service and existing trauma services in hospitals across Scotland working together with the 4 trauma MTCs to provide coordinated care and support to our most seriously injured patients.

Clear strategic direction and assurance will be provided by a new national STN Steering Group. The STN Steering Group will work collaboratively to prioritise investment in trauma services on a national basis, to implement a unique model of trauma care for NHS Scotland.

It is extremely important that we get implementation of the model right. The 4 MTCs and their trauma regions are expected to provide the new STN steering group with their plans on how they will meet the trauma Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by October 2017. These plans will inform the development of a clear phased national implementation plan by December 2017. Given the scale and complexity of the changes required to deliver the network, we should recognise that it will take at least 3 years to fully implement it.

In the interim work will focus on delivering a series of key actions for 2017-18 and beyond as set out in the CMO’s report ‘*Saving Lives. Giving Life Back*’;

We are allocating an extra £5 million in 2017-18 to begin to accelerate these improvements, and we will be putting further, significant investment in as we continue to build and fully establish the network over the next few years. The level of investment required in future years will be guided by the STN Steering Group.
The STN Steering Group will be hosted by National Services Division (NSD). Scottish Government will provide NSD with £225,000 a year for at least the next 3 years to establish the Group and to recruit and retain dedicated network staff.

Implementation of the new Scottish Trauma Network should be viewed within the context Health and Social Care Delivery Plan, launched on 19 December. The proposed STN model and the CMO’s report are available on the STN website at: http://www.traumacare.scot/

I expect to be able to provide a further update on progress with the Scottish Trauma Network to Parliament in October.

**Learning and Justice**

**Linda Fabiani (East Kilbride) (Scottish National Party):** To ask the Scottish Government when it will next meet the Chief Constable.

(S5O-528)

**Michael Matheson:** Scottish Government Ministers and officials meet regularly with representatives of Police Scotland to discuss a range of issues. My next scheduled meeting with the Chief Constable is on 17 January.

**Gordon Lindhurst (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party):** To ask the Scottish Government how many 999 calls have been made to the (a) police, (b) fire and (c) ambulance service in each of the last 10 years, and how many were hoax calls.

(S5W-5089)

Michael Matheson: This information is not held by the Scottish Government.

**Mike Rumbles (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats):** To ask the Scottish Government what will happen to air gun owners who want to apply for a certificate now that the deadline of 31 October 2016 has passed.

(S5W-5534)

**Michael Matheson:** People who want to use, possess, purchase or acquire air weapons in Scotland from 31 December 2016 will be required to hold a valid air weapon certificate, unless they are exempt under the provisions of Part 1 of the Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2016.

People who apply for a certificate between 1 November and 31 December 2016 will have their application determined as early as possible in 2017. Until they receive a decision, they should ensure that they are not breaking the law by making alternative arrangements to store their weapons safely. This can be done by placing their air weapon with someone who already holds an air weapon certificate or firearms licence, or by lodging it with a registered firearms dealer.

Similarly, anyone applying for a certificate from 31 December onwards must ensure that they comply fully with the requirements of the new legislation before using, possessing, purchasing or acquiring an air weapon.

**Mike Rumbles (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats):** To ask the Scottish Government what steps were taken to ensure that all air gun owners applied for a certificate before the deadline of 31 October 2016.

(S5W-5535)

**Michael Matheson:** The Scottish Government has, alongside Police Scotland, undertaken a wide-ranging public information campaign to advise people about the new legislation. A dedicated website was launched on 23 March 2016. This is at www.airweapon.scot. The website summarises the legislation, offers a check tool for those unclear about whether they might need a certificate, and has an extensive FAQ section. The 31 October deadline was clearly publicised on the website. To date, the website has had more than 101,000 visits from 73,000 visitors.
We also provided a detailed “toolkit” for main stakeholders informing them of the new legislation and seeking their help in disseminating the information. This was picked up by a number of the main shooting organisations.

A wider public information campaign launched on Monday 16 May under the heading “No Licence – No Air Gun”. This included a country-wide poster campaign and radio advertising. Further targeted media events have taken place over the past six months, including news events in early September to remind people of the “50 days to go” for applications to be with Police Scotland by the 31 October deadline.

**Mike Rumbles (North East Scotland) (Scottish Liberal Democrats):** To ask the Scottish Government what steps are being taken to avoid criminalising air gun owners who have applied for a certificate after the deadline of 31 October 2016 but before the new law comes into force on 31 December 2016.

*(S5W-5536)*

**Michael Matheson:** Both the Scottish Government and Police Scotland have undertaken extensive media and public information campaigns to advise air weapon owners and users to apply for an air weapon certificate by 31 October 2016. Those applying by that deadline should receive a decision on their application prior to the new law coming into force on 31 December, and may continue to possess their air weapons until they receive that determination.

Anyone applying for a certificate from 1 November 2016 should ensure that they are not breaking the law by making alternative arrangements to store their weapons safely if no determination has been made by 31 December. Alternative arrangements could include placing the air weapon with someone who already holds an air weapon certificate or firearms licence, or lodging it with a registered firearms dealer.

A Scottish Government news release highlighting this advice issued on 19 December. In addition, Police Scotland have placed detailed information on the air weapons licensing page of their website and are contacting as many applicants as possible directly to provide similar advice. People can still surrender unwanted air weapons to the police until 31 December 2016.

**Alexander Stewart (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party):** To ask the Scottish Government what action it will take in response to recent figures released under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, which show that 22 bladed weapons have been recovered from prisoners by staff at Perth prison since April 2016.

*(S5W-5678)*

**Michael Matheson:** I have asked Colin McConnell, Chief Executive of the Scottish Prison Service, to respond. His response is as follows:

The figures highlighted under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 request reflect the continued vigilance of staff in detecting improvised weapons in HMP Perth.

The safety and well-being of prisoners and staff is and will continue to be a key concern for the Scottish Prison Service. In order to ensure prisons are safe for all, SPS will continue to invest in staff training and technology to aid staff in their duties.

All establishments will continue to undertake robust searching of prisoners and areas which supports the identification and recovery of illicit or unauthorised articles, including weapons. Any individual found in possession of such weapons will be reported to Police Scotland and prison managers will put in place an appropriate management plan for the individuals involved.

**Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats):** To ask the Scottish Government whether it has considered the proposal by the Royal Society of Edinburgh to establish “a dedicated centre for the study of economics in education”.

*(S5W-5837)*
John Swinney: The proposal by the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) to establish a dedicated centre for the study of economics in education forms part of its response to the Government’s consultation on “Empowering Teachers, Parents and Communities to Achieve Excellence and Equity in Education, a Governance Review”. The RSE’s paper will be considered alongside all other responses to the consultation which closed on 6 January 2017.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the announcement of £120 million of funding for schools, which will be passed on to head teachers, whether the funding will (a) include a review of the devolved school management system and (b) be tied to staff costs under the devolved school management system.

John Swinney: In 2017-18, £120 million Pupil Equity Funding will be targeted to help children and young people overcome the barriers to learning associated with poverty. It will extend the reach of the Scottish Attainment Challenge to around 95% of Scotland’s schools and it will be a matter for schools to use the funding for additional staffing or resources that they consider will help raise attainment.

Pupil Equity Funding will be paid by means of specific grant to local authorities, indicating the allocations for individual schools. Pupil Equity Funding will be additional to core education funding and therefore separate to any funding provided under the devolved school management system.

Clare Adamson (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what response it has received to the publication of Scotland’s Place in Europe.

Fiona Hyslop: The Scottish Government has received a range of positive responses from across business, education, environment, health and legal sectors to the publication of Scotland’s Place in Europe on 20 December. They recognise that our proposals represent a serious and a genuine attempt to build consensus and to unify the country around a clear plan to protect Scotland’s interests.

Indeed, Professor Sir David Edward, former Judge of the Court of Justice of the European Communities highlighted upon publication that:

“...I believe that the Scottish Government is right to urge the UK Government to maintain the UK’s position within the Single Market, the Customs Union and the various forms of security and police co-operation. That is the primary proposal and I believe it merits the widest support across the political spectrum.”

“.I urge everyone who cares for the future of Scotland to read the Scottish Government’s paper with an open mind.”

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether there has been a real terms reduction in the pay of its civil servants from 2011 to date.

Derek Mackay: The answer to this question varies depending on the grade of staff. For Scottish Government staff in lower paid grades, there have been real term increases in average salary between 2011 and 2016. This reflects specific measures put in place by Scottish Ministers in their Public Sector Pay Policy to support lower paid staff at a time of continued real term reductions in public sector budgets for Scotland flowing from the UK Spending Round. For staff in higher paid grades, there have in some cases been real term decreases in average salaries between 2011 and 2016. The position for the majority of Scottish Government staff is that there has been a real term increase in average median salary between 2011 and 2016 ranging between 2.7% and 3.9% depending on grade.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many officials in Transport Scotland use an electric vehicle in carrying out their duties.
Humza Yousaf: Transport Scotland operates two electric vehicles (a Renault Fluence and a Nissan Leaf) which represent 50% of its own fleet. The vehicles are available to all officials when carrying out their duties.

The following questions received holding answers:

SSW-05088
SSW-05090
SSW-05091
SSW-05558
SSW-05559
SSW-05562
SSW-05580