SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Economy

Andy Wightman (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will publish details of the (a) discussions, (b) meetings and (c) correspondence it has had with the Chief Scientific Adviser to Wildcat Haven CIC since 2007.

Holding answer issued: 9 January 2018 (S5W-13301)

Roseanna Cunningham: Details of (a) discussions, (b) meetings, and (c) correspondence the Scottish Government has had with the Chief Scientific Adviser to Wildcat Haven CIC since 2007 are as follows.

Dr Paul O'Donoghue, Chief Scientific Adviser to Wildcat Haven, met with Paul Wheelhouse, the then Minister for Environment and Climate Change, on 19 March 2014 to discuss the Wildcat Haven project, including a wildcat education programme.

Dr O'Donoghue, wrote to Paul Wheelhouse, on 29 August 2014 seeking funding for the Wildcat Haven project. The Scottish Government responded on 10 September 2014 that it was unable to provide funding towards the Wildcat Haven Project as all of the funding resources for wildcats were already committed to the Scottish Natural Heritage Wildcat Conservation Action Plan.

In addition, Wildcat Haven, through their lawyers Clifford Chance, also wrote to Roseanna Cunningham Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, in May 2016 requesting a meeting to outline their concerns regarding the Scottish Wildcat Conservation Action Plan. The request for a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary was declined but an offer was made to Wildcat Haven to meet with officials instead. This offer was not taken up.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government when the Cabinet Secretary for the Economy, Jobs and Fair Work last reviewed the risk register for (a) Highlands and Islands and (b) Scottish Enterprise, and what the findings were.

(S5W-13520)

Keith Brown: Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise are solely responsible for the management of their respective risk registers.

Both operate an approved risk management policy and are responsible for assessing and evaluating both the likelihood and impact of a risk being realised.

All internal and external risks in their Corporate Risk Registers are actively managed at the appropriate level in each organisation.

A note of the key risks identified by Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise can be found in their latest annual report and accounts.

Andy Wightman (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many hectares of privately-owned forest land are owned by women.

(S5W-13523)

Fergus Ewing: The Scottish Government does not collect data on the gender of private landowners.

Andy Wightman (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many hectares of private forestry land is owned in holdings of (a) 0-10ha, (b) 11-50ha, (c) 51-200ha, (d) 201-1,000ha and (e) greater than 1,000ha.

(S5W-13524)
**Fergus Ewing:** Forest Research, through the National Forest Inventory, publishes data on the number of hectares of forests, including in Scotland, in the following size classes (hectares): <2, 2-10; 10-20; 20-50; 50-100; 100-500; 500 and above.

Summary data on the proportion of privately and publically owned forestry is also published.

This and other data on Scotland’s forests and woodlands can be found at: https://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/NFI_SCOTLAND-REPORT_010813.pdf

**Andy Wightman (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party):** To ask the Scottish Government how many hectares of private forestry land are owned by (a) individuals, (b) families, (c) resident owners, (d) absentee owners, (e) charitable bodies and (f) corporate bodies.

**(S5W-13525)**

**Fergus Ewing:** The Scottish Government does not hold data about these categories of ownership of private forestry. Information showing the estimated number of hectares of privately owned forests in the UK in the following classifications was published by the Forestry Commission in 2005, as part a one off assessment drawing on data from the last national forest inventory: forest land owned by individuals, owned by families, owned by forest industries, owned by private institutions, owned by co-operatives owned by religious institutions, owned by educational institutions, and owned by other private institutions.

This data is available at www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd7aqk5z

As part of the current National Forest Inventory, Forest Research has collected a limited sample data-set on the ownership of woodlands in Scotland, England and Wales. This data was collected by means of a questionnaire. The data is currently being assessed for quality assurance purposes.

**Andy Wightman (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party):** To ask the Scottish Government what information it has regarding the residency status of the owners of private forestry land.

**(S5W-13527)**

**Fergus Ewing:** The Scottish Government does not collect data on the residency status of private land-owners.

**Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government how many "good neighbour agreements" made under section 75D of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 have been registered by the Registers of Scotland in each year since 2011-12.

**(S5W-13530)**

**Keith Brown:** Registers of Scotland have been unable to find any record of a good neighbour agreement having been registered under section 75D of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 since 2011-12. However, as there is no prescribed style of good neighbour agreement it is not possible to be definitive. People may have chosen to use other named deed types, such as a minute of agreement, to register a good neighbour agreement. It is also possible that parties have entered into good neighbour agreements but chosen not to register them in the property registers.

**Andy Wightman (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party):** To ask the Scottish Government what research (a) it has and (b) its agencies have commissioned on the development of a genetic test to identify Scottish wildcats; how much this cost, and whether it will publish the findings.

**(S5W-13556)**

**Roseanna Cunningham:** The Scottish Government has not directly commissioned research on the development of a genetic test to identify Scottish wildcats but Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) has,
from the early 1990s to the present day, commissioned research into the classification and genetics of Scottish wildcats.

In 1992, SNH initiated a comprehensive study into the morphology, genetics and behavioural ecology of wild-living cats in Scotland. This work was largely taken forward by SNH staff and resulted in several publications (Balharry D, Daniels MJ (1998) Wild living cats in Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage Research, Survey and Monitoring Report No 23; Beaumont M, Barratt EM, Gottelli D, et al. (2001) Genetic diversity and introgression in the Scottish wildcat, Molecular Ecology 10, 319-336).


In 2012, SNH issued a contract to the value of £5,778 to the Department of Biological Sciences, University of Chester, for genetic analysis to help assess the purity of the contemporary population of Scottish wildcats within the Cairngorms National Park. No findings have been received by SNH from this contract and SNH has been in correspondence with the University of Chester to resolve the situation.

In 2013, SNH commissioned an independent review of information on wildcat genetics, carried out by scientists at the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh funded by the Natural Environment Research Council, as part of a Conservation Genetics Knowledge Transfer project. The outcome of the review is published (Neaves, L.E. & Hollingsworth, P.M. 2013. The Scottish wildcat (Felis silvestris); A review of genetic information and its implications for management. Conservation Genetic Knowledge Exchange, Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh).

In 2013, SNH in partnership with the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) funded a trial to identify the presence of wildcat and feral cat populations within the wildcat range based on genetic testing of droppings. Droppings were collected by trained volunteers and submitted for testing using pre-paid sample kits. The results of this work are available to SNH, but were not published as a commissioned report as many of the samples submitted turned out not to be from cats, but rather from foxes and pine marten. This work cost SNH £6,000.


Since 2015, as part of a commitment under the Scottish Government’s Scottish Wildcat Conservation Action Plan, which is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, £13,900 has been paid to the Wildgenes Laboratory for the genetic testing of samples collected during the project, including £2,100 to cross-reference previously analysed samples against a more detailed genetic test. Data has been made available to SNH and an update was provided to project stakeholders and partners during a Wildcat Forum held in November 2017. A report has not yet been published because data collection and analyses are on-going.

Michelle Ballantyne (South Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to reverse the reported decline in social and economic wellbeing in Scotland, in light of the country reportedly being ranked 16th out of 32 countries in the Index of Social and Economic Wellbeing in 2006 but falling to 20th by 2016, and being one of just five countries to see a fall in their overall index scores.

(S5W-13673)
Keith Brown: Devolution has been overwhelmingly positive for Scotland. Over the last decade people are living and remaining healthier for longer, inequality has shrunk, the gender pay gap has fallen, more young people are attending university and crime has fallen to a 42-year low.

Both Ernst & Young and the Fraser of Allander Institute forecast that GDP growth will accelerate in 2018, and we remain one of the leading destinations in the UK for overseas direct investment – all of which has been achieved against the backdrop of austerity imposed on the Scottish Government by the UK Government and is further threatened by the pursuit of a hard Brexit.

Our Draft Budget sets out how we plan to build on our strong foundations and continue to improve social and economic outcomes in Scotland. This includes proposals to increase spending on health by over £400 million, provide £120 million over and above core education funding – direct to head teachers to help ensure all young people can fulfil their potential and use all the levers at our disposal to promote fair work for all in Scotland to deliver truly inclusive growth.

Alex Cole-Hamilton (Edinburgh Western) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether it is considering updating legalisation, in light of the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 and Civic Government Scotland Act 1982 not including explicit consideration of the suitability of properties for animal boarding.

(S5W-13707)

Roseanna Cunningham: The Programme for Government 2017-18 commits the Scottish Government to preparing legislation on a modern system of registration and licensing of animal sanctuaries and rehoming activities. The principles of that modern system will, in due course, be applied to the licensing of animal boarding establishments.

However, the Scottish Government considers that the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 offers local authorities the discretion to consider factors other than animal welfare when considering applications for an animal boarding establishment licence.

Alex Cole-Hamilton (Edinburgh Western) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what work is being done to ensure that dog boarding establishment licenses are only given to premises suitable for these animals.

(S5W-13708)

Roseanna Cunningham: Local authorities are responsible, under The Animal Boarding Establishment Act 1963, for the granting of licences permitting the carrying out of the business of running an animal boarding establishment; and have powers to inspect premises that they have licensed.

That 1963 Act lists a number of statutory requirements that must be complied with for a licence to be granted. These include the need for accommodation to be safe and appropriate for the type and number of animals boarded. In addition, local authorities have discretion to withhold a licence on other grounds.

Sandra White (Glasgow Kelvin) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of the Celtic Connections festival on the economy of (a) Glasgow and (b) Scotland.

(S5W-13741)

Fiona Hyslop: A Celtic Connections 2016 Economic Impact Assessment, carried out by EKOS Limited for Glasgow Life was published in June 2016. The report showed the following results:

Celtic Connections 2016 generated expenditure of £5,537,195 from visitors from the Glasgow area and £1,732,247 from visitors from the rest of Scotland.
Once all organiser costs have been taken into account, the calculation of economic impact has identified that the festival has a benefit of £4,002,532 across Scotland. (This is made up of £3,899,433 from the Glasgow area and £1,031,099 from across the rest of Scotland).

The festival is estimated to have generated over a hundred full-time equivalent jobs for one year across Scotland in 2016 (79.6 jobs in Glasgow and 24.8 jobs across the rest of Scotland).

Education, Communities and Justice

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S5W-09274 by Shirley-Anne Somerville on 1 June 2017, how much it has spent on the services of John Sturrock, and whether he is still engaged in providing advice or services.

(S5W-13494)

Shirley-Anne Somerville: John Sturrock has been instrumental in helping both sides in the College Lecturers dispute reach agreement. The Scottish Government is always mindful of the public purse when engaging any contractor on a commercial basis.

Liam Kerr (North East Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether the integration of the British Transport Police (BTP) and Police Scotland will move retired BTP officers who are in receipt of their police pension into a new segregated and protected group and, if so, (a) for what reason it reached this decision and (b) whether it will offer a crown guarantee to the retired officers.

(S5W-13586)

Derek Mackay: The Scottish Government is engaging with the Trustee of the BTP pension schemes to reach agreement on how the pensions of transferring staff can be managed without detriment to them. The finalised agreement will also ensure there is no impact on the payment of pensions to retired BTP officers.

Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the reported claims by the Communication Workers Union (CWU) that the Dangerous Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010 has (a) not been implemented adequately by it and (b) been interpreted inconsistently and incorrectly by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, and whether it plans to meet the CWU to discuss this.

(S5W-13604)

Annabelle Ewing: There is no legislation called the Dangerous Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010.

There is however the Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010 which introduced a civil regime for the issuing of dog control notices for owners of dogs who allow their dogs to be out of control. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service do not have a direct role in the operation of the Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010 except in considering reports made to them where a dog owner has breached the terms of their dog control notice. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service operate independently of the Scottish Government.

There is also the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991. This legislation was introduced by the then UK Government and includes a criminal offence relating to dogs being dangerously out of control. The Scottish Government does not offer views on how legislation should be interpreted because the investigation and prosecution of offences are the operational responsibility of Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service respectively, and interpretation of legislation is ultimately a matter for our independent courts.

Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its interpretation is of the definition of an “out of control dog”, as described in the Dangerous Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010.

(S5W-13605)
Annabelle Ewing: The Scottish Government does not offer an interpretation of the law. Interpretation of the law is a matter for our independent courts.

There is no legislation called the Dangerous Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010. There is however the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 which includes a definition of a dog being 'dangerously out of control' rather than a dog being 'out of control'. This definition of 'dangerously out of control' is contained in section 10(3) of the 1991 Act and is as follows:

'... For the purposes of this Act a dog shall be regarded as dangerously out of control on any occasion on which there are grounds for reasonable apprehension that it will injure any person or assistance dog, whether or not it actually does so, but references to a dog injuring a person or assistance dog or there being grounds for reasonable apprehension that it will do so do not include references to any case in which the dog is being used for a lawful purpose by a constable or a person in the service of the Crown.'

Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to establish a safe contact provision for children who have a parent or guardian who has been convicted of domestic abuse.

(S5W-13612)

Annabelle Ewing: The Scottish Government plans to launch a consultation in spring 2018 on the review of part 1 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. This consultation will cover issues in relation to parental responsibilities and rights, child contact and residence, alongside a wider Family Justice Modernisation Strategy. The consultation will take full account of issues being raised about contact and domestic abuse.

The Cabinet Secretary for Justice and the then Minister for Childcare and Early Years wrote to the Justice Committee in June 2017 to help inform the Committee's scrutiny of the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Bill. The letter is at http://www.parliament.scot/S5_JusticeCommittee/Inquiries/20170608CSfJandMfCEYtoMM.pdf.

In that letter, the Scottish Government acknowledged the need to review the links between the civil and criminal justice systems in the context of domestic abuse. The Scottish Government also intends to consider whether any changes are needed to exclusion orders, which can exclude a perpetrator of domestic abuse from the family home.

(S5W-13613)

Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on domestic abuse child safety reports being used more widely in family courts.

Annabelle Ewing: The Scottish Government plans to launch a consultation in spring 2018 on the review of part 1 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. This consultation will cover issues in relation to parental responsibilities and rights, child contact and residence, alongside a wider Family Justice Modernisation Strategy. The consultation will take full account of issues being raised about contact and domestic abuse.

As part of the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment process for the review of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 the Scottish Government has met with a number of key stakeholders. Stakeholders were asked about their views on the use of domestic abuse risk assessments. Notes of these meetings are being published at the link below:

(S5W-13614)
Michael Matheson: The Scottish Government has introduced into Parliament a new domestic abuse offence. This offence relates to abusive behaviour between partners and ex-partners and, if approved by Parliament, will strengthen the ability of the justice system to respond effectively to coercive controlling behaviour. This includes where attempts are made by one partner or ex-partner to exert power and influence over their partner or, where a relationship has ended, an ex-partner.

This offence is contained in the Domestic Abuse Bill which also includes provisions to:
- acknowledge the harm caused to children by domestic abuse;
- ensure courts must have particular regard to victim safety when sentencing; and
- give greater flexibility for courts when imposing non-harassment orders to protect victims.

Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on establishing a risk-based approach to reduce parental rights if there is a background of abuse.  

(S5W-13615)

Annabelle Ewing: The Scottish Government plans to launch a consultation in spring 2018 on the review of part 1 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. This consultation will cover issues in relation to parental responsibilities and rights, child contact and residence, alongside a wider Family Justice Modernisation Strategy. The consultation will take full account of issues being raised about contact and domestic abuse.

Section 11 of the 1995 Act makes provision on court orders relating to parental responsibilities. Section 11 was amended by the Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006 to add subsections (7A) to (7E). These lay down specific provisions on the court having regard to the need to protect the child from any abuse or the risk of any abuse which affects or might affect the child. The forthcoming consultation on the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 will seek views on the effectiveness of these provisions and whether any changes need to be made.

Annie Wells (Glasgow) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many female victims of sexual assault were examined by male doctors in (a) 2014-15, (b) 2015-16 and (c) 2016-17.  

(S5W-13620)

Michael Matheson: The information requested is not held centrally by the Scottish Government. 

In December 2017 Healthcare Improvement Scotland, commissioned by the Scottish Government, published the first Healthcare and Forensic Medical Services Standards for people who have experienced rape, sexual assault or child sexual abuse. These standards will ensure consistency in approach and high-quality care across Scotland.

Standard 2 is focused on NHS boards providing person centred and trauma informed care – this includes providing people with the opportunity to request the gender of the forensic examiner who will be involved in their care.


The Scottish Government has established a Taskforce for the improvement of services for adults and children who have experienced rape and sexual assault, chaired by the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland. As set out in the Taskforce’s five year work plan, key priorities include increasing the number of (particularly female) forensic physicians who are able to carry out this work, as well as on ensuring consistent, national data collection (Standard 5 of the national standards). The Taskforce’s 5 year work plan can be accessed here: https://beta.gov.scot/publications/rape-and-sexual-assault-victims-taskforce-high-level-work-plan/High%20Level%20Work%20Plan.pdf?inline=true

The Scottish Government will provide £250k in 2017-18 and £2.0m in 2018-19 to support Health Boards to embed the new standards and support delivery of the work plan.
Annie Wells (Glasgow) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many victims of sexual assault were examined in police stations in (a) 2014-15, (b) 2015-16 and (c) 2016-17.

Michael Matheson: The information requested is not held centrally by the Scottish Government.

In December 2017, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, commissioned by the Scottish Government, published the first Healthcare and Forensic Medical Services Standards for people who have experienced rape, sexual assault or child sexual abuse. These standards will ensure consistency in approach and high-quality care across Scotland.

Standard 3 states that each NHS board ensures that the facilities and equipment for forensic examinations are appropriate, safe and effectively managed. This includes a criteria that forensic examinations take place in facilities that are located in health or designated multi-agency settings with health and social care facilities. Standard 5 requires that the details of the examination are recorded using consistent documentation and data collection. The standards can be accessed here:

http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/person-centred_care/resources/sexual_assault_services.aspx

The Scottish Government has established a Taskforce for the improvement of services for adults and children who have experienced rape and sexual assault, chaired by the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland. As set out in the Taskforce’s five year work plan, an early priority is to support health boards to have the equipment they need and to move any forensic medical examination facilities from police settings to health and social care settings. The Taskforce’s 5 year work plan can be accessed here:


The Scottish Government will provide £250k in 2017-18 and £2.0m in 2018-19 to support Health Boards to embed the new standards and support delivery of the work plan.

Michelle Ballantyne (South Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what action it will take to tackle the reported lack of confidence of staff at Education Scotland, in light of the findings of the Civil Service People Survey 2017.

John Swinney: These results are deeply disappointing. I believe, however that the appointment of the new Chief Inspector of Education and Chief Executive of Education Scotland, Gayle Gorman, last month will come to be seen as the critical step in improving the situation.

She is an experienced teacher, inspector, and, most recently, Education and Children’s Services Director of Aberdeen City Council.

She is urgently reviewing the steps that need to be taken to ensure that the key concerns raised in the survey are addressed. A draft improvement plan, taking account of the concerns raised, is under development and has been shared with staff to seek their views. It is expected that the final plan, taking full account of staff views, will be implemented early in this new year.

Michelle Ballantyne (South Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to tackle the reported increase in the number of assaults on emergency service workers, and what its response is to statistics, which suggest that these are at a three-year high.

Annabelle Ewing: We do not tolerate any attacks on emergency services workers. All workers deserve protection from abuse and violence at work. That is why Scotland's justice system provides
for protection for all workers under our common laws of assault, threatening and abusive behaviour and breach of the peace, as well as the Emergency Workers (Scotland) Act 2005.

We fully support our police, prosecutors and courts in dealing robustly with people who offend against any emergency service workers. Those charged with attacks against our emergency services workers can face up to life imprisonment, an unlimited fine or both.

Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when it will announce a replacement programme for school building.  

(S5W-13698)

John Swinney: The Scottish Government intends to build upon the success of the Scotland's Schools for the Future programme and options are currently being developed, with an announcement expected later this year.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on progress towards the university student intake targets for (a) primary and (b) secondary school teacher education.  

(S5W-13716)

John Swinney: We expect the agreed student intake targets for initial teacher education in 2018-19 to be announced by the Scottish Funding Council by the end of February.

Health and Social Care

Alex Cole-Hamilton (Edinburgh Western) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to work with the English and Welsh governments to advise and advocate on the extension of the clinically safe, home use of abortion medication in their jurisdictions.  

(S5W-13732)

Shona Robison: It is for the UK Government and Welsh Government to make decisions about the delivery of abortion services in England and Wales.

The Scottish Government will continue to share information when appropriate about the Scottish approach to permitting misoprostol to be taken at home.

Scottish Exchequer

Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how much it will cost (a) it, (b) its agencies, (c) other public bodies and (d) local authorities to (i) set up and (ii) administer the proposed five-band Scottish income tax structure.  

(S5W-13535)

Derek Mackay: HMRC have estimated annual running costs of between £1.5 and £2m if income tax rates and bands remained the same as the rest of the UK. A more significant divergence between the rates and bands that apply in Scotland when compared to the rest of the UK may lead to an increase in costs of up to a total of £5m.

HMRC estimate total implementation costs of between £20m and £25m for the Scottish Rate of Income Tax, with a further £2.6m for the Scotland Act 2016 income tax powers. These costs are required to implement the income tax powers devolved to the Scottish Parliament in Scotland Acts 2012 and 2016, and are independent of the rates and bands the Scottish Parliament sets.

Transport Scotland

Elaine Smith (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, in order to meet its objectives for increasing the number of women entering and remaining in the industry, what support it can give to Forth Ports to ensure the development of a more diverse workforce, including through maximising the opportunities offered by the development of the new training academy.
Humza Yousaf: The Scottish Government is committed to equality between men and women and we believe that women should be fairly and properly represented across all sectors. Forth Ports offers a wide range of career opportunities across its business with a focus on schools, further education and higher education to facilitate applications from all sections of the local community.

We have set out how we will tackle gender imbalances and promote equality of access in relation to subject and career choices, through the Modern Apprenticeship Equality Action Plan and Scottish Funding Council Gender Action Plan for colleges and universities.

We are taking action to ensure women’s equality in the workplace and to ensure women are represented in senior and decision making roles, including in the boardroom.

We are delivering a Returner’s programme to assist women to re-enter the workforce following a career break.

We are developing a Workplace Equality Fund aimed at reducing employment inequalities, in particular those face by women and other equality groups.

Jamie Greene (West Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government when the new Ardrossan-Arran ferry will come into service; what the total cost of the project will be, and how these compare with the original estimates.

Humza Yousaf: In October 2015, Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) announced that Ferguson Marine Engineering Ltd (FMEL) in Port Glasgow had been awarded the contracts worth £97 million to build two 100 metre ‘dual-fuel’ ferries; i.e. £48.5m per vessel.

In my letter of 9 November 2017 to the Convenor of the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee, I noted that FMEL has indicated that delivery of the first of these ferries, the MV Glen Sannox, is expected to be delayed from summer 2018 to winter 2018-19. The vessel will subsequently enter into service following trials and familiarisation by CalMac Ferries Ltd.

There have been some agreed design changes during the build process. Additional costs agreed between CMAL and FMEL relate to enhanced mooring winching arrangements at £800k per vessel.

Jamie Greene (West Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether the new Ardrossan-Arran ferry sea trials have suggested any concerns regarding its ability to (a) meet the requirements of its specification and (b) perform its originally intended operational duties.

Humza Yousaf: The MV Glen Sannox was launched on 21 November 2017. Sea trials are normally carried out by the shipyard 4 to 8 weeks prior to vessel delivery.

Ferguson Marine Engineering Ltd (FMEL) have advised that they aim to deliver the vessel in Winter 2018-2019.

Jamie Greene (West Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether the new Ardrossan-Arran ferry will require upgrades to (a) it and (b) (i) Ardrossan and (ii) Brodick Harbour to facilitate its berthing.

Humza Yousaf: Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) has undertaken a major redevelopment of Brodick harbour. No upgrades will be required to facilitate berthing of the new ferry.

A Ministerial Task Force for Ardrossan was established in February 2016 to ensure improvement of the operational effectiveness of the Ardrossan facility in supporting the lifeline ferry services and the new vessel on the Arran route.
A number of options for infrastructure improvements at Ardrossan Harbour are currently being considered by Transport Scotland, North Ayrshire Council, Peel Ports, CalMac and CMAL as they look collectively to improve resilience of the facility over the long-term.

The original vessel design has been updated with the additional provision of mooring winches.

**Jamie Greene (West Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party):** To ask the Scottish Government under what (a) weather and (b) sea conditions the new Ardrossan–Arran ferry will be able to operate, and how this compares with the existing service.

**Humza Yousaf:** The new ferries are being designed and built by Ferguson Marine Engineering Ltd (FMEL) to be capable of operating in the challenging weather conditions experienced on the Clyde and Hebrides ferry services.

The new ferry for Arran has 3 x bow transverse thrusters, each rated at 620kW and one stern transverse thruster rated at 480kW.

The new vessel has 3 times the transverse thruster power in comparison to MV Caledonian Isles, the larger of the two vessels currently operating the route; which has 2 x 360 kW bow transverse thrusters (total 720kW).

Operation of a vessel in adverse weather will remain at the Master's discretion, in accordance with maritime legislation.

**Alison Johnstone (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party):** To ask the Scottish Government, in light of it appearing under the Support for Sustainable and Active Travel budget line in the Draft Budget, whether all of the £80 million set aside for active travel in its Programme for Government will be allocated to walking and cycling.

**Humza Yousaf:** All of the £80 million set aside for active travel in the Scottish Governments Programme for Government will be allocated to walking and cycling. This will come from the Support for Sustainable and Active Travel (SSAT) and Future Transport Fund budget lines and includes the maintenance of the figure of £7.36 m for Cycling Walking Safer Streets which is funding outwith the Local Government finance settlement.

*The following questions received holding answers:*

SSW-13476
SSW-13499
SSW-13500
SSW-13505
SSW-13506