

Wednesday 03 April 2019

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Constitution and External Affairs

Angela Constance (Almond Valley) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answers to questions S5W-21305 and S5W-21308 by Humza Yousaf on 26 February 2019, although it has no power to provide consular assistance, what (a) financial and (b) other support it can offer to help the families (i) emotionally and practically and (ii) in meeting repatriation, translation, transport and other costs.

(S5W-22292)

Humza Yousaf: The Scottish Government will, when appropriate, raise concerns with the Foreign Office on behalf of Scots affected by deaths abroad and signpost them to agencies in Scotland to help them access the support they require. Following repatriation of the deceased, several organisations within Scotland can provide support for the bereaved families including 'Victim Support Scotland'.

In addition, there are a range of issues which Scottish families face when dealing with the death of a loved one abroad in suspicious circumstances, which are often also faced by victims of crime in Scotland. The Victims Taskforce will consider how these common issues can be tackled, informed by the experiences of victims themselves.

However, as I had previously indicated I do not believe that the current system is wholly satisfactory, and await with interest the report from the All-party UK Parliamentary Group on Deaths Abroad and Consular Services and Assistance and I am keen to explore this issue further.

Angela Constance (Almond Valley) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S5W-21305 by Humza Yousaf on 26 February 2019, how devolved services could be improved across the public and voluntary sector to provide better support for these families.

(S5W-22295)

Humza Yousaf: The Scottish Government are committed to doing everything it can to help families who suffer the death of a loved one abroad but as I know you are aware it is the role of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to provide consular support. However, as I had previously indicated I do not believe that the current system is wholly satisfactory, and await with interest the report from the All-party UK Parliamentary Group on Deaths Abroad and Consular Services and Assistance and I am keen to explore this issue further.

More generally, the Scottish Government is committed to improving the help we provide to victims of crime. As indicated previously, I am aware that there are a range of issues which Scottish families face when dealing with the death of a loved one abroad in suspicious circumstances, which are often also faced by victims of crime in Scotland. The Victims Taskforce will consider how these common issues can be tackled, informed by the experiences of victims themselves.

Economy

Clare Adamson (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what role science and technology can play in the development of the rural economy.

(S5O-03101)

Mairi Gougeon:

Science and technology plays a vital role in our rural economy. That is why we invest £45 million every year through our world leading institutes to undertake research on farming, food, forestry, plants and the environment. Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise support young people across Scotland to pursue STEM skills and careers in the rural economy and also, facilities for new and existing rural businesses to use to help develop and adopt new technologies to increase their efficiency. As part of our work on climate change, an industry led Agricultural Technology Group was launched in 2018 to share, disseminate and encourage adoption of advances in agricultural science and technology.

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what recommendations it has received regarding the protection of the curlew under phase one of the 2016 Special Protection Area Review, and how it has taken these forward.

(S5W-22272)

Mairi Gougeon: Further to the answer to question S5W-18706 answered on 26 September 2018, the 2016 UK Special Protection Area (SPA) Review recommended that 'consideration of the need for and provision of, additional conservation measures (outwith this SPA review) is required; that contemporary SPA provision is insufficient for the requirements of the species and appropriate changes or additions to the SPA suite should be considered; that a review of boundaries of the existing SPA is needed to ensure that important areas used for feeding etc. are included; that better ecological information on foraging habitat requirements of breeding curlew on agricultural grasslands near breeding sites is needed; and that better survey methods should be developed.'

The Scottish Government and Scottish Natural Heritage are considering whether any changes to the Scottish SPA network are required. Other related recommendations are being picked up under the Working for Waders project which is funded and coordinated by Scottish Natural Heritage. More information on that project is available via the following web link:

<https://www.workingforwaders.com> .

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 steps have been taken to implement an action plan for the protection of curlew since the 2018 conference, the Status and Future of Curlew in Scotland; whether it will publish this plan, and what the timetable is for its completion.

(S5W-22273)

Roseanna Cunningham: The Scottish Government is party to the UK Government's commitment, as a signatory to the African and Eurasian Waterbird Agreement, to the implementation of the International Single Species Action Plan for the conservation of the Eurasian Curlew. The Action Plan is available via the following web link: <https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/publication/international-single-species-action-plan-conservation-eurasian-curlew-ts-no-58> .

Scottish Natural Heritage has advised that the actions arising from the Status and Future of Curlew in Scotland conference, which took place at the Battleby Conference Centre on 27 September 2018, have been, or will be, delivered through the Working for Waders project. This collaborative project brings together a wide range of organisations, government bodies and individuals. More information is available via the following web link:

<https://www.workingforwaders.com> .

The conference was an important milestone in raising awareness of the plight of the curlew and in identifying what action needs to be undertaken. The Conference report is available via the following weblink:

<http://www.curlewcall.org/record-of-the-battleby-conference-september-2018/>

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how much funding it is providing towards the conservation of wading birds in 2018-19, and plans to provide in (a) 2019-20 and (b) 2020-21.

(S5W-22274)

Roseanna Cunningham: Funding committed by the Scottish Government under the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS) options for (i) wader grazed grassland and (ii) wader and wildlife mown grassland is provided in the following table.

AECS	2018	2019	2020	2021
£ Committed	5,770,255	6,335,564	5,444,801	4,085,973
Ha Managed	40,930.66	49,096.73	49,116.28	38,282.77
Number of Businesses	1,209	1,495	1,495	1,246

These management Options cover a five year commitment period and include both management and capital costs. The 2019 AECS round opened on 16 January 2019 and is due to close on 12 April 2019.

In addition, Scottish Natural Heritage has committed the following funding for curlew conservation:

2018-19 : £115k (comprised of £83k to the Working for Wader Challenge Fund; £25k to a Curlew Trial Management Project; £7k admin and promotion)

2019-2020 : £80k (projects yet to be finalised but the emphasis will be on collaboration and delivery of “on the ground” action)

2020-2021 : £70k

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when it plans to publish a wader sensitivity map for woodland expansion to help guide forestry planting decisions and protect sensitive areas for globally threatened species, such as curlew.

(S5W-22275)

Fergus Ewing: A collaborative project involving Forestry Commission Scotland, the British Trust for Ornithology, Scottish Natural Heritage and RSPB Scotland will generate spatial information on the key hotspot locations for curlew populations in Scotland. An initial report is due at the end of March 2019.

When the Scottish Government is in receipt of this report, an assessment will be made on next steps, including how this information could be published and used to help inform forestry planting decisions to mitigate the risk of negative impacts on sensitive areas for curlews and other waders.

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to prevent (a) conifer and (b) other non-native tree species spreading to non-forestry land outwith their native range, including open habitat that supports breeding waders.

(S5W-22276)

Fergus Ewing: Forestry Commission Scotland has published guidance which sets out the responsibilities of forest owners and managers to control the spread of non-native species in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard. The guidance is available via the following web link:

<https://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/images/corporate/pdf/managing-invasive-and-non-native-forestry-species.pdf>).

Through Scotland's Rural Development Programme, grant support is available to landowners to remove regenerating (a) conifer and (b) other non-native trees and scrub from designated open habitats, where the presence of that regeneration is leading to a loss in open habitat condition, including nesting habitats for breeding waders.

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will ensure that the conservation of curlew is made a priority when it updates the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.

(S5W-22277)

Roseanna Cunningham: The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (SBS) is a high level strategy document that focuses on the delivery of biodiversity across all of Scotland. It sets out the principles and approaches, rather than listing the wide range of actions, policies, strategies and individual species that have an impact on biodiversity. Curlew conservation projects are part of the SBS Route Map to 2020 and it is likely that they will also form part of the key actions under any updated SBS.

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what steps Scottish Natural Heritage is taking to implement the recommendations of phase one of the 2016 Special Protection Area (SPA) Review, including the designation of internationally important curlew breeding sites as SPAs.

(S5W-22278)

Mairi Gougeon: I refer the member to the answer to question S5W-22272 on 3 April 2019. 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> .

Alison Johnstone (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many species licenses were issued by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) in 2018, broken down by species, and how much it cost SNH to carry out this exercise.

(S5W-22282)

Mairi Gougeon:

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) issued 2,890 species licences in 2018. It cost SNH around £450,000 to administer the licence scheme, which covers the cost of the service, support and management, including full staff costs.

A copy of the table providing a breakdown of the licences issued by species has been placed in SPICe (Bib number 60594)

Education, Communities and Justice

Ruth Maguire (Cunninghame South) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many baby boxes each NHS board has delivered.

(S5W-22270)

Maree Todd: NHS boards are not responsible for the delivery of Baby Boxes, rather they facilitate the registration of pregnant women for the Boxes via midwife appointments. The Scottish Government employs a managing agent, APS Group (Scotland), to assemble, pack and distribute Baby Boxes across the whole of Scotland.

Please see the following table that details distribution of Scotland's Baby Boxes by Health Board from the beginning of the policy until 17 March 2019.

Baby Boxes Delivered by Health Board – 19-6-17 – 17-3-19

Health Board	Boxes Delivered
NHS Ayrshire and Arran	4825
NHS Borders	1521
NHS Dumfries and Galloway	1916
NHS Fife	5212
NHS Forth Valley	4173
NHS Grampian	9153
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde	20244
NHS Highland	3916
NHS Lanarkshire	9032
NHS Lothian	14193
NHS Orkney	280
NHS Shetland	335
NHS Tayside	5778
NHS Western Isles	295
Total	80873

Rona Mackay (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what information it has on the most recent figures for the number of (a) police officers and (b) prison service staff per 100,000 people in (i) Scotland and (ii) England and Wales.

(S5W-22324)

Humza Yousaf:

The most recent comparable figures on the number of (a) police officers and (b) prison service staff per 100,000 population for (i) Scotland and (ii) England and Wales are reported as at the 30 September 2018 in the following tables.

Table (a): Number of full time equivalent police officers per 100,000 population, 30 September 2018

<u>Police Force</u>	<u>Total Number of Police Officers</u>	<u>Number of Police Officers per 100,000 population</u>
Scotland 1	17,147	316
England & Wales 1	122,787	209

Source: Police Officer Quarterly Strength Statistics Scotland, Police workforce England and Wales statistics and Population estimates for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: mid-2017.

1. To ensure comparability the figures exclude officers working for the British Transport Police.

Table (b): Number of full time equivalent prison staff per 100,000 population, 30 September 2018

<u>Prison Service</u>	<u>Total Number of Prison Staff</u>	<u>Number of Prison Staff per 100,000 population</u>
Scotland 1	4,261	79
England & Wales 1,2	39,266	67

Source: Scottish Prison Service Quarterly Submission, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service workforce statistics and Population estimates for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: mid-2017.

1. Includes staff in both operational and non-operational roles.

2. To ensure comparability with Scotland the figures for England and Wales do not include

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service staff working in Probation related functions.

Organisational Development and Operations

Sandra White (Glasgow Kelvin) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on the publication of its older people's framework.

(S5W-22481)

Christina McKelvie: Today the Scottish Government published A Fairer Scotland for Older People – A Framework for Action:www.gov.scot/isbn/9781787815438

This Framework identifies the issues that older people have told us are key to ensuring they are healthy, happy and secure in older age. It brings together the action that the Government is taking to tackle the barriers people face as they age in areas as diverse as health and housing, but importantly it highlights the positive contribution our older people bring to wider society and the economy, by the valuable roles they undertake including unpaid caring, volunteering and by continuing in employment.

The Older People's Strategic Action Forum, which I chair, have been instrumental in informing and progressing the direction for this framework. I thank them for helping us to develop this work and combat the negative perceptions held about older people.

Transport Scotland

Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many jobs will be (a) directly and (b) indirectly lost because of the Highlands and Islands Airports Limited (HIAL) remote towers project, also broken down by the total value in salaries lost, and what the economic impact will be on each community affected.

(S5W-22301)

Michael Matheson: The project is in its infancy and at this stage job losses are not anticipated as a result of HIAL's Air Traffic Management 2030 Strategy.

Colin Smyth (South Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when it will launch its review on young people's concessionary travel, including its appraisal of free bus travel for people under 26; what the terms of reference will be; who will carry it out, and by what date the findings will be published.

(S5W-22391)

Michael Matheson: As part of the National Transport Strategy (NTS) Review, Transport Scotland is working with stakeholders to review an extension of discounts on public transport available to those under the age of 26 (this

incorporates a cost and benefits appraisal on extending free bus travel as any changes to concessionary travel schemes must fully consider financial sustainability). The initial stages of scoping out this work has just begun with a view to the outcomes informing thinking on actions which Government will take forward to deliver the NTS (due for publication at the end of 2019).