

Monday 23 March 2020

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Economy

Andy Wightman (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government when it will introduce non-domestic rates relief for small music venues.

(S5W-27817)

Ben Macpherson: On 18 March 2020, the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture announced a package of support worth £2.2 billion to limit the impact of COVID-19 on the business community. As part of this we are providing a 100% non-domestic rates relief for all retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, which includes premises used wholly or mainly as music venues.

The Scottish Government is committed to delivering a fair and sustainable non-domestic rates regime for businesses from all sectors. The Scottish Budget provides the most generous non-domestic rates regime anywhere in the UK, including the small business bonus scheme (SBBS), which is more competitive than any of the equivalent schemes in the rest of the UK and provides up to 100% rates relief for small and medium sized music venues in Scotland.

Dean Lockhart (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how much revenue will be raised from the Higher Property Rate, broken down by industry sector.

(S5W-27835)

Ben Macpherson: The following table sets out the net Non-Domestic Rates income that is estimated will be raised from the Higher Property Rate in 2020-21, broken down by property class. These estimates are representative of Non-Domestic Rates policy as at Budget time, and do not reflect more recent changes in Non-Domestic Rates policy.

Property class	Net Higher Property Rate income (£m)
Advertising	0.1
Care Facilities	0.1
Communications	0.6
Cultural	0.1
Education and Training	8.8
Garages and Petrol Stations	0.8
Health and Medical	3.9
Hotels	5.0

Industrial Subjects	18.4
Leisure, Entertainment, Caravans etc.	1.9
Offices	13.3
Other	2.0
Petrochemical	3.1
Public Houses	0.8
Public Service Subjects	5.3
Quarries, Mines, etc.	0.2
Religious	0.0
Shops	23.5
Sporting Subjects	0.2
Statutory Undertaking	24.0
Total	112.2

Source: Scottish Assessors' Valuation Roll; Local Authority Billing Information

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government by what date it will publish the final version of the Scottish National Review on the Sustainable Development Goals.

(S5W-27851)

Kate Forbes: The Scottish Supplementary Review on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is planned to be published by this Spring, as I confirmed to Parliament during the Members Debate on SDGs (16th January 2020).

The Scottish Government has been engaging widely with civic society in taking forward the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and we have worked closely with Scotland's Sustainable Development Goals Network in the production of this report. We have taken an open and transparent approach, with the review co-produced with co-drafters from the Network and shared on an open platform for feedback from the Network members (the latest available draft is available from the SDG Network website https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TyWg74I00xGgfF8g2oC_1YwQu3saaYq6/view).

Alex Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how much it estimates will be saved in business rates from the introduction of the new Intermediate Property Rate, broken down by each industry sector.

(S5W-27867)

Ben Macpherson: The following table sets out the net expected savings in Non-Domestic Rates Income that will result from the introduction of the Intermediate Property Rate in 2020-21, broken down by property class. These

estimates are representative of Non-Domestic Rates policy as at Budget time, and do not reflect more recent changes in Non-Domestic Rates policy.

Property class	Cost savings from introduction of Intermediate Property Rate (£m)
Advertising	0.01
Care Facilities	0.05
Communications	0.03
Cultural	0.02
Education and Training	0.59
Garages and Petrol Stations	0.15
Health and Medical	0.16
Hotels	0.31
Industrial Subjects	1.77
Leisure, Entertainment, Caravans etc.	0.21
Offices	1.27
Other	0.11
Petrochemical	0.01
Public Houses	0.36
Public Service Subjects	0.30
Quarries, Mines, etc.	0.04
Religious	0.01
Shops	1.84
Sporting Subjects	0.01
Statutory Undertaking	0.08
Total	7.33

Source: Scottish Assessors' Valuation Roll; Local Authority Billing Information

Jeremy Balfour (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S5W-27753 by Mairi Gougeon on 13 March 2020, and in light of the commitment to initiate legislation within the same parliamentary session, whether it will confirm on what date new regulations will be laid to give full effect to the proposed Pet Shop (Licensing) (Scotland) Bill.

(S5W-27929)

Mairi Gougeon: The Scottish Government remains fully committed to bringing forward new regulations covering dog, cat and rabbit breeders, pet sellers, animal sanctuaries and rehoming activities in this Parliamentary session.

Delivery of the Animals and Wildlife (Penalties, Protections and Powers) (Scotland) Bill has however taken priority and this has impacted on the timetable for delivery. The work to deliver the new licensing regulations continues to progress and we will lay draft legislation before the Scottish

Parliament for its approval as soon as possible, subject to parliamentary business.

Education, Communities and Justice

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S5W-18158 by Christina McKelvie on 7 September 2018, whether it will provide an update on how long the waiting lists are for rape survivors at each rape crisis centre.

Holding answer issued: 23 March 2020 **(S5W-27805)**

Christina McKelvie: A holding answer was provided.

Mark Griffin (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government which of the recommendations in the *British Sign Language Interpreting in Scotland: A Landscape Review 2019* it has adopted.

(S5W-27819)

Maree Todd: The 'BSL Interpreting in Scotland: Landscape review' was commissioned by the Scottish Government to identify steps that could strengthen the BSL/English interpreting profession in Scotland, arising from a commitment in the BSL National Plan.

It is worth noting that some of the report's recommendations are for the Scottish Government to consider, whilst others are for the wider BSL interpreting sector to take forward.

An initial gathering of key stakeholders (registration bodies, membership associations, training providers & the national BSL/English interpreting union) took place in November 2019 to directly consider the recommendations; further collaborative work will be undertaken in 2020.

Mark Griffin (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the *British Sign Language Interpreting in Scotland: A Landscape Review 2019*.

(S5W-27820)

Maree Todd: The Scottish Government welcomes the 'BSL Interpreting in Scotland: Landscape review'. The research incorporates various perspectives on BSL/English interpreting and interpreter provision in Scotland, and provides an invaluable overview of the current landscape.

The Scottish Government will consider the findings of this review and use these to support and contribute towards future decision-making to strengthen the BSL/English interpreting profession in Scotland.

Mark Griffin (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it has requested that Queen Margaret University publishes (a) the interview data and transcripts and (b) a statistical summary of the characteristics of participants for the *British Sign Language Interpreting in Scotland: A Landscape Review 2019*.

(S5W-27821)

Maree Todd: The review was designed to capture a range of perspectives and views and participants were interviewed on the basis that their contributions would not be publicly identified. Therefore the Scottish Government has not requested the individual data, transcripts or detailed statistical summaries of the characteristics of participants be published.

Mark Griffin (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the statement in the *British Sign Language Interpreting in Scotland: A Landscape Review 2019* that "one specialist BSL agency... was perceived by some as being unethical in winning contracts, and caring about profit before staff well being or the BSL community", and "has a monopoly on contracts and service level agreements for various public bodies".

(S5W-27822)

Maree Todd: The views expressed in the report are those of the people and organisations involved in the research undertaken by Queen Margaret University, and do not necessarily represent those of the Scottish Government or Scottish Ministers. Public bodies have their own procurement processes and rules, and Scottish Government expects that each will abide by procurement regulations, as it does itself.

Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of any impact on the 2020 exam diet arising from potential restrictions being introduced in response to COVID-19, what discussions it is having with the SQA regarding the development of contingencies for the exams, including to mitigate any associated impact on students studying for and sitting them.

(S5W-27852)

John Swinney: In response to the current challenging set of circumstances, I have had extensive discussions with the Chief Examiner. This culminated in my announcement on 19 March that the exam diet will not go ahead this year. SQA are now working to deliver a credible certification model that can be put

in place and can command confidence in the absence of the exam diet. This will ensure that young people in our schools and colleges who, through no fault of their own, are unable to sit exams, are not disadvantaged.

We will continue to work with the education sector and SQA to achieve this.

Gordon Lindhurst (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party):

To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S5W-27616 by Kevin Stewart on 5 March 2020, what discussions it has had with the City of Edinburgh Council regarding how the increase in the number of hotel rooms in the city over the last decade has impacted on the city's local housing strategy and development plans, including the impact on (a) property prices and (b) housing (i) affordability and (ii) availability.

(S5W-27916)

Kevin Stewart: Scottish Government officials have met with the City of Edinburgh Council ('the Council'), and other local authorities within the South East area of Scotland, at the South East Scotland Housing Forum, to discuss matters of relevance to the development and review of their local housing strategies. At this forum, there has been no discussion concerning the number of hotel rooms in Edinburgh.

Discussions with the Council on a range of planning matters including City Plan 2030 have not involved the number of hotel rooms.

Gordon Lindhurst (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party):

To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S5W-15195 by Kevin Stewart on 15 March 2018, what impact the increase in the number of hotel rooms in Edinburgh during the last decade is having on its target to increase the (a) housing supply and (b) number of homes available for purchase in the city.

(S5W-27917)

Kevin Stewart: The Scottish Government has not made a specific assessment of the impact of the increase in the number of hotel rooms in Edinburgh on its target to increase the (a) housing supply and (b) number of homes available for purchase in the city.

Over the life of the previous Parliament, the Scottish Government exceeded its five-year target of delivering 30,000 affordable homes by end March 2016, and delivered 33,490 affordable homes. Of these, 4,570 were in the City of Edinburgh.

Over the lifetime of this Parliament, we have an ambitious target to deliver 50,000 affordable homes, including 35,000 homes for social rent. Between

April 2016 and December 2019, some 31,136 affordable homes have been delivered. Of these, 3,764 were in the City of Edinburgh.

Between 2011-12 and 2018-19, there have been a total of 84,777 residential property sales registered in the City of Edinburgh, of which there have been 9,052 sales of new build properties. The annual number of sales has increased over this period from 7,703 in 2011-12 to 12,262 in 2015-16 and has remained at relatively similar levels with 11,236 sales in 2018-19 of which 1,304 were new build.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what measures it is taking in response to the coronavirus, COVID-19, pandemic to (a) monitor stock levels at foodbanks, (b) maintain adequate supplies in foodbanks and other voluntary settings and (c) ensure that (i) vulnerable individuals and (ii) people who are self-isolating receive (A) food, (B) medicines, (C) hygiene products and (D) other essential supplies.

(S5W-27924)

Aileen Campbell: The Scottish Government has introduced a £350m package of funding and coordinated support for individuals and communities affected by COVID-19, allowing better support for people who may be worried about accessing food and other essentials whether due to an income drop or self-isolation, including older adults.

We are in frequent contact with key national stakeholders such as the Trussell Trust, the Independent Food Aid Network and FareShare who are monitoring the availability of food supplies to community based organisations. We will be connecting these groups to Local Resilience Partnerships who are undertaking vital frontline work to respond to the needs of vulnerable people.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what discussions it has had with foodbanks regarding providing additional assistance to people affected by the current pandemic.

(S5W-27978)

Aileen Campbell: In addition to introducing a £350m package of funding and coordinated support for individuals and communities affected by COVID-19, we are in frequent contact with key national stakeholders such as the Trussell Trust, the Independent Food Aid Network and FareShare who are monitoring the availability of food supplies to community based organisations.

We will be connecting these groups to Local Resilience Partnerships who are undertaking vital frontline work allowing better support for people who may be worried about accessing food and other essentials whether due to an income drop or self-isolation, including older adults.

Health and Social Care

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many hospital beds have been available in each year since 2007, broken down by NHS board.

(S5W-27667)

Jeane Freeman: ISD Scotland routinely publishes data on average available staffed beds in its "Acute Hospital Activity and NHS Beds Information (Annual)" publication. The latest annual publication released on 10 September 2019 gives bed numbers back to 2009-10 and can be found at the following link:

<https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/health-services/hospital-care/acute-hospital-activity-and-nhs-beds-information-annual/>

Previous releases of this publication containing bed numbers for 2007-08 and 2008-09 (published 7 November 2017) can be found at the following link:

<https://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Hospital-Care/Publications/index.asp>

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will consider undertaking a campaign to raise public awareness of the symptoms of ovarian cancer.

(S5W-27788)

Jeane Freeman: Through the Detect Cancer Early programme, the Scottish Government aims to increase the proportion of cancers that are detected at the earliest stages and includes increasing awareness of the symptoms of ovarian Cancer.

Our social marketing strategy and the latest 'Survivors' campaign aims to reduce fear of all cancer, which we know remains a key barrier to people presenting early and encourage those with any unusual or persistent changes to their body to visit their GP practice.

This is supported by our 'Getcheckedearly' website which has an ovarian cancer specific page with case studies and links to Target Ovarian Cancer and Cancer Research UK.

As March is ovarian cancer awareness month we would encourage any women with any potential signs of ovarian cancer to contact their GP practice.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to a recent BMA Scotland survey of 800

doctors, which reported that 71% of respondents said that they had gone to work when they felt too ill to do so.

Holding answer issued: 23 March 2020

(S5W-27799)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many people in each NHS board area have been referred for residential rehabilitation in each of the last 10 years to be given for treatment to deal with (a) alcohol, (b) drug and (c) gambling addiction, or a combination of these addictions.

Holding answer issued: 23 March 2020

(S5W-27801)

Joe FitzPatrick: A holding answer was provided.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many diabetes specialist nurses there are in each NHS board; what its position is on whether this is a sufficient number, and what assessment it has made of how caseload, complex needs and projected demand for service can impact on these staffing levels.

Holding answer issued: 23 March 2020

(S5W-27808)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of the comment by the World Health Organization regarding the reaction to the coronavirus, COVID-19, that "severe and mounting disruption to the global supply of personal protective equipment, caused by rising demand, panic buying, hoarding and misuse, is putting lives at risk", what action it is taking to ensure that NHS and emergency service staff have adequate supplies of such equipment, including gloves, medical masks, respirators, goggles, face shields, gowns and aprons.

Holding answer issued: 23 March 2020

(S5W-27809)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Elaine Smith (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its latest advice is to older people and people who live with underlying health conditions who are not exhibiting symptoms of the coronavirus, COVID-19, but who live with someone who has been advised to self-isolate.

(S5W-27881)

Jeane Freeman: The main source of medical advice remains the NHS Inform website. The website contains a range of measures people should take to minimise the spread of the virus. These include but are not limited to, staying at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) away from other people in your home whenever possible, sleeping alone if possible and to plan ahead and ask others for help to make sure you can stay at home successfully.

Elaine Smith (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what advice it provides on the precautions that people living with a person who does not exhibit symptoms of the coronavirus, COVID-19, but who is self-isolating, should take.

(S5W-27882)

Jeane Freeman: I refer the member to my answer to question S5W-27881 on 23 March 2020. 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>

Scottish Exchequer

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it supports the UK Government's budget decision to not increase Corporation Tax.

(S5W-27930)

Kate Forbes: The Scottish Government believes in fair taxation that supports economic growth and protects Scotland's position as an attractive proposition for businesses. However, Corporation Tax remains reserved to the UK Government. It is important that any developments in this area are balanced and evidence-based.

In terms of headline corporate tax rates, we would not support a race to the bottom. Ultimately, the Scottish Government believes that all tax powers should be devolved to the Scottish Parliament so that fiscal decisions that affect the people of Scotland can be made here.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it supports the UK Government's budget decision to not increase the top rate of income tax.

(S5W-27931)

Kate Forbes: The Scottish Government is proud of our fair and progressive approach to income tax, and would encourage the UK Government to do the same. Whilst we have continued to prioritise this for a number of years, the

UK Government has previously prioritised tax cuts for the well off. The Scottish Government welcomes the fact that, at Budget 2020, the UK Government stuck to their previous commitments, didn't deliver another tax cut only for the rich, and didn't increase the tax gap for higher earning Scots relative to the rest of the UK.