

# ECONOMY AND FAIR WORK COMMITTEE

**9<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 2022 (Session 6), Wednesday 30  
March 2022**

## **Town Centres and Retail**

### **Introduction**

1. This paper has been prepared for the Economy and Fair Work Committee to aid Committee members during the first evidence session of the Committee's inquiry into town centres and retail
2. The remit of the inquiry is to—  
  
Identify the new realities of retail and ecommerce in Scotland and the resulting impact on town centres. What is the subsequent policy response needed to create living and resilient town centres?
3. The Committee launched a call for views on Tuesday 1 February which closed on Wednesday 16 March. Responses to the call for views can be accessed [here](#).
4. On 24 March, the Scottish Government published its retail strategy "[Getting the Right Change](#)" with the aim of delivering successful, profitable retail businesses, creating of new, better jobs and to become an exemplar for inclusive growth.

### **Evidence Session**

5. This is the first evidence session of the inquiry. The purpose of this opening session is to set the scene for the inquiry and give an overview of the issues being faced across Scotland.
6. Future evidence sessions will focus on the view from the ground in Scotland's towns, the new realities of Scottish retail, ecommerce activity, and keeping town centres alive.

## Witnesses

7. At today's evidence session the Committee will hear from [Professor Leigh Sparks](#), Deputy Principal and Professor of Retail Studies and the University of Stirling. Professor Sparks is also Chair of [Scotland's Town Partnership](#).

**Clerk to the Committee  
25 March 2022**