

Alister Jack responds to October 2020 Scottish GDP figures

News story

Scottish Secretary responds to Scottish GDP figures for October 2020



Commenting on today's Scottish GDP figures for October 2020, Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

Today's figures show again the significant challenge we face to recover from the economic shock of the covid pandemic.

The UK Government continues to take unprecedented action to support jobs and business in Scotland. Yesterday, the Chancellor announced a further extension of furlough and business loan schemes, and we continue to support self-employed people and hardest-hit sectors with VAT cuts. The direct support is on top of £9.5 billion in additional funding from the UK Government to the Scottish Government.

As we look ahead to the new year, we will continue investing billions in our Plan for Jobs, supporting City and Region growth deals in Scotland, and driving green recovery and jobs.

The strength of the Union and the support offered by the UK Treasury have never been more important. Together, we will continue to get through these challenging times.

Background:

- The UK Government furlough scheme, paying 80 per cent of wages, will run UK-wide until the end of April. The scheme also offers employers flexibility to bring employers back to work part time with the UK Government continuing to pay 80% of salaries for the hours they do not

work.

- The self-employed support scheme will run till the end of March, paying 80% of average profits up to £7,500.
- At their peak in the summer the UK Government furlough and self-employed support schemes were supporting more than 930,000 jobs in Scotland. They will continue to provide a vital safety net for businesses and their employees over coming months.
- More than 76,000 businesses in Scotland have benefitted from UK Government loan schemes, worth more than £2.9 billion.
- The Scottish Government has been allocated an additional £9.5 billion from the UK Government for its COVID-19 response. This is on top of the block grant and in addition to direct UK Government support to people and businesses in Scotland.
- The UK Government is investing billions to help people back into work, including through our £2 billion Kickstart scheme to get young people into jobs, expansion of our sector-based work academy programme, and recruitment of thousands of Work Coaches in Jobcentres helping unemployed people of all ages back into work.
- At the Budget in March the Chancellor will outline the next phase of our plan to provide certainty and growth in the months ahead.
- The UK Government is providing the bulk of covid testing in Scotland including drive through and walk through test centres and providing the Scottish Government with one million lateral flow tests for mass community and student testing.
- The UK was the first country in the world to approve Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine with 40 million doses secured by the UK Government for distribution across all parts of the UK.

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