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- Ruth: Only Scottish Conservatives – not Scottish Labour – can take on the SNP

18 Nov 2017



In a speech at the Scottish Conservative's autumn convention in Perth today, Ruth Davidson said that only her party has the strength to offer a credible alternative to the SNP.

As Scottish Labour picks its ninth leader since devolution today, Ruth warned that the party is "holed below the waterline."

She said the Scottish Conservatives can appeal to "thousands of Labour voters who are looking for a party to do a job for them", taking on the SNP.

Ruth said:

"Scottish Labour's leadership contest has revealed a party that is divided and bitter.

"A party that, under Jeremy Corbyn, preaches social justice but practices match-fixing.

"The truth is, barring Johann Lamont, every single person who has tried to lead Scottish Labour over the last few years has either fallen on their sword or fallen short.

"Surely the lesson is – it doesn't matter who the captain is, the ship is holed below the water line.

"And so it doesn't matter who takes over today, Labour is a marooned on the rocks.

"It means my party must step up to do the job that people in Scotland desperately want to see: holding the SNP to account.

"To oppose the Nationalists' obsession with independence – and to set out a mainstream alternative: improving schools, investing in services and supporting business.

"We can appeal to those thousands of Labour voters who are looking for a

party to do a job for them.

“I’ve met many of them over the last couple of years – people who never thought they’ve vote Scottish Conservatives, but who now see us as the only credible Scottish alternative to the Nationalists.

“The fact is this.

“People have run out of patience with Scottish Labour’s endless infighting.

“Only the Scottish Conservatives have what it takes to remove Nicola Sturgeon from government and take Scotland forward.”

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17 Nov 2017



Scottish Conservatives are calling for a full and urgent Independent Inquiry into allegations that children are being sexually exploited in Govanhill.

Specialist agencies, social workers, community representatives and residents have been reported saying that children in Govanhill are being sold for sex.

According to media reports, repeated police investigations have not found any evidence of child sexual exploitation despite widespread community concerns.

Scottish Conservative Glasgow MSP Annie Wells commented;

“It’s shocking and heart-breaking to see reports that children are being sold for sex in Govanhill; that concerned community organisations have known about it, yet been unable to do anything about it.

“We should be doing our utmost to protect children from all cultures and learn from the mistakes that were made in Rotherham, not burying our heads in the sand.

“The Scottish Government must set up an independent inquiry to establish all the facts of this case as a matter of urgency.

“The children of Govanhill have been condemned to poverty and neglect by decades of Labour and SNP politicians.

“Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government should hang their heads in shame at the decay and deprivation that is all too evident in Govanhill.”

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Figures obtained by the Scottish Conservatives have highlighted that many local councils are not using the powers they have to ensure properties are kept in a safe and habitable state.

The figures show that, this year only 6 Councils have used Section 30 work notices in order to make essential repairs and only 1 has used a section 42 Maintenance order.

In 2012, 12 councils used the section 30 work notices, and none used the section 42 Maintenance Orders.

The last Scottish Housing Conditions Survey showed that 8% of pre 1919 built dwellings are in “critical, urgent and extensive disrepair” increasing from 5% in 2014, to 8% in 2015.

As a result of these findings, Scottish Conservative Housing Spokesman, Graham Simpson, has written to all local councils to find out why they aren't using these measures.

Graham Simpson commented:

“The Scottish Government has neglected housing maintenance for a decade, which is only storing up problems for the future.

“80% of our housing stock will still be in use in 2050 so it is vital it is well maintained to ensure people are safe and warm and not faced with costly and preventable repairs in years to come.

“The statistics show that 8% of our homes are in need of urgent repair so I am extremely concerned that people may already be living in dangerous and unfit accommodation.

“Councils have some powers but are not using them to any great extent. I have written to all local authorities to find out why this is.

“The Scottish Conservatives are examining ways in which the situation across the country can be improved and whether new legislation is required.”

[Swinney's hypocrisy on tax exposed](#)

16 Nov 2017



Deputy First Minister John Swinney's hypocrisy on taxation has been laid bare.

At First Minister's Questions today, Ruth Davidson challenged the former finance secretary on a series of remarks he made suggesting he was opposed to tax increases prior to the 2016 Holyrood elections.

That includes a statement to parliament last year where he said increasing taxes for teachers and local government workers was the “last thing” an SNP government would do.

He also described tax rises as “a punishment”.

Since then, the SNP has outlined its plans to increase income tax, compounding Scotland's position as the highest-taxed part of the UK.

And the Scottish Conservative leader demanded to know why Mr Swinney had so radically changed his mind in the space of a year.

In response, the education secretary – standing in for Nicola Sturgeon – defended the Scottish Government's move to raise taxes.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

“The SNP told people one thing on tax when it wanted their votes, then the complete opposite once it had got them.

“John Swinney used to see tax hikes as a ‘punishment’ – now he says they're a virtue.

“This is astonishing hypocrisy from the SNP government on a vital issue.

“Quite simply, the nationalists completely misled the people of Scotland on tax before last year’s election, and there’s no good explanation as to why.

“Under their plans everyone in Scotland earning more than £24,000 will be hit in the pocket by a higher tax.

“Making Scotland the highest-taxed part of the UK will damage our economy, and punish workers right across the board.

“An urgent rethink is required.”

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15 Nov 2017



Official figures have revealed that Scotland’s economic productivity has plummeted to its worst level in three years.

It comes as new statistics show unemployment north of the border also increased slightly.

And while productivity – a measure of workers’ output per hour to the economy – has risen across the UK, Scotland continues to lag behind.

Today’s statistics from the Scottish Government revealed that in quarter two of 2017 – the most recent for which Scottish productivity data is available – real terms output per hour here dropped by 0.6 per cent.

That’s the worst since the same three months of 2014.

On a UK-wide basis, the Office for National Statistics figures released today showed productivity increased by 0.9 per cent in quarter three. The equivalent numbers for Scotland are not yet available.

Last month the Scottish Conservatives formed the Scottish Future Growth Council, which identified low productivity as one of the main problems for the Scottish economy.

Scottish Conservative shadow economy secretary Dean Lockhart said:

“Scotland’s productivity lags behind the rest of the UK’s, and that’s a major problem for our economy.

“We now need to see action from the Scottish Government, and a willingness to work with its counterparts in the UK Government to come up with a strategy to fix this.

“The fact productivity has fallen to its lowest level in Scotland for three years will be a concern to companies of all sizes right across the country.”