

# Jackson: Call in the Army to help with PPE delivery

9 Apr 2020



The Scottish Government should consider calling on the armed forces to ensure vital protective equipment is delivered to key health and care workers.

Nicola Sturgeon has admitted that while there are adequate supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) in Scotland, there have been issues transporting them to the right places.

It has been reported that key workers have had to go without the crucial gear because some distribution centres were closed, and there are fears that could be repeated over the Easter Weekend.

Today, at a virtual First Minister's Questions session, Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw said the SNP government should consider asking the Army to help.

The UK armed forces have already contributed to efforts to cope with the coronavirus pandemic, with a logistics team based at St Andrew's House.

Mr Carlaw also challenged the First Minister on the disparity in emergency support grants small and medium businesses are receiving in Scotland compared to elsewhere in the UK.

Firms are angry that the UK Government is paying a £25,000 grant per property, where-as the Scottish Government are releasing only £25,000 per business, irrespective of the number of premises.

It has been warned that will cost jobs and drive many businesses to the wall, and flies in the face of earlier pledges from the SNP that support packages here would match those from Westminster.

However, Ms Sturgeon refused to say she would change tack.

Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw said:

"We have some of the best armed forces in the world who are standing ready to help.

"If the Scottish Government is having difficulty in getting vital PPE to those who need it most, they must call on the army to help.

"It would be a perfectly acceptable solution in this unprecedented crisis, and would help protect our very brave health workers in hospitals, care homes and community settings.

“It was disappointing to hear Nicola Sturgeon say she won’t be addressing disparity in support grants for businesses.

“Many have warned that only paying by business, rather than by property, is deeply unfair and will almost certainly cost jobs.

“It’s blatantly wrong that businesses in England and Wales could be receiving several times the level of support than those here, all because the SNP wants to follow a different path.”

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## Local newspapers must be protected amid crisis

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Scotland’s regional media must be supported by both Scotland’s governments to ensure their survival now and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Scottish Conservatives said the vital role played by the country’s trusted traditional press was clearer than ever as the coronavirus crisis continues.

Shadow finance secretary Donald Cameron has now urged his SNP counterpart Kate Forbes to work with the UK Government to ensure action is taken as quickly as possible.

He said a 100 per cent rates holiday was essential, and that the Scottish Government should direct more advertising in the direction of newspapers.

Ministers are spending considerable sums on public health messages, but most of that is online to companies who are ultimately based overseas.

He also suggested investing in a similar scheme to the Danish government, which has introduced a fund for media organisations during the crisis.

A similar initiative by the Scottish Government could be replicated for around £25 million.

A trusted media loan scheme has also been floated, which established titles could sign up to.

As well as providing a vital public service, news publishing supports around 4000 jobs in Scotland.

**Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary Donald Cameron said:**

“We are seeing throughout the coronavirus crisis just how vital newspapers and broadcast media are.

“They play a crucial role in holding both the Scottish and UK governments to account, and in carrying vitally important public health messages.

“But these are also publications who, in some cases, are a month away from collapse.

“We simply cannot allow this industry to disappear, and the Scottish Government needs to step in and ensure these publications are supported.

“It should be providing support in the form of a rates holiday, and channelling more of its considerable advertising budget in the direction of the local press.

“It would be extremely regrettable if newspapers, having played such a critical role during this health and economic emergency, were allowed to collapse immediately afterwards.

“We know papers have been struggling for years, but this could be a chance to finally boost their resources and ensure they can continue operating for generations to come.”

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## [‘Shielded’ family hit out at lack of delivery slots](#)

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The daughter of a vulnerable pensioner in the coronavirus “shielded” category has described her difficulty in securing supermarket delivery slots.

Leanne Tervit, whose 72-year-old mother Margaret has received three transplants and recently survived sepsis and pneumonia, is struggling to get hold of vital daily items.

The Fife woman is on the Scottish Government’s “shielded” list, but those details haven’t been shared with supermarkets.

That means Ms Tervit has to spend hours online in the hope of a slot opening up for her mother.

She’s a member of a UK-wide transplant network, and has spoken to counterparts south of the border who have been able to secure delivery slots.

That's because the UK Government has informed supermarket chains of England's most vulnerable patients, but the SNP has failed to do the same.

At today's virtual First Minister's Questions, Nicola Sturgeon said she hoped 130,000 vulnerable people would receive a text about sharing their details today, and that a system may be up and running by next week.

But for many, that process is taking far too long.

Ms Tervit, an SNP member, said she felt "let down" by the Scottish Government's approach.

As she lives with her mother, who is extremely vulnerable, she cannot herself leave the house for fear of picking up the virus and passing it on, and therefore relies on supermarket delivery.

**She said:**

"The only way I can get a delivery slot is by checking all the big supermarkets several times a day in the hope one opens up.

"I'm a member of a couple of UK transplant support groups and when the letters telling us to shield came out, the people in England could register and are now able to get priority delivery slots online.

"There are people in Scotland with no support, so their only alternative is to risk going out to the shops when that's specifically against official advice.

"I'm feeling let down right now by the Scottish Government. There should have been something in place before we were told to shield."

**Scottish Conservative shadow economy secretary Maurice Golden said:**

"This family are in an impossible position purely because the SNP hasn't shared the list of vulnerable people with supermarkets.

"The UK Government has managed it for shielded people in England, so there's no reason why the Scottish Government can't follow suit.

"Failure to do so is having a very real and damaging impact on families across Scotland."

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## **[Big supermarket chains confirm they are still waiting for 'shielded' list](#)**

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- Big supermarket chains confirm they are still waiting for 'shielded' list

8 Apr 2020



Supermarket giant Sainsbury's has confirmed stores are still waiting for the SNP government to share its list of Scotland's most vulnerable patients.

Big grocery retailers are standing ready to prioritise delivery slots for those who need them most as the coronavirus pandemic intensifies.

However, although the UK Government has made this list available for English stores, the SNP government has so far failed to do so.

The letter, sent this morning to customers from Sainsbury's chief executive Mike Coupe, states: *"At the end of last week we received the government database, which includes details of all the people in England who have registered with the government to say that they are vulnerable and need help getting a food shop. We are waiting for the databases for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and will contact vulnerable customers in those areas as soon as we are able."*

The Scottish Government has already written to around 120,000 "shielded individuals" setting out measures they should take to protect their own health.

The Scottish Conservatives have said that same list should be given to supermarkets to allow them to target the most vulnerable for delivery slots which are increasingly hard to come by.

**Scottish Conservative shadow economy secretary Maurice Golden said:**

"This is confirmation from one of the UK's biggest supermarket chains that the SNP government still hasn't acted.

"The list exists, and indeed these people have already been contacted by the Scottish Government about the coronavirus.

"We now need to get those details to supermarkets so they can start prioritising delivery slots.

"As it stands, it's far too difficult for vulnerable people to access this service.

"That's either forcing them to go without, or making them risk their own health by venturing out to the stores themselves.

"The UK Government has managed to do this for people in England – it's time the SNP government stepped up and did the same for Scotland."

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# Care homes can't be forgotten in PPE emergency

8 Apr 2020



Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw has urged Nicola Sturgeon not to forget about care homes as her government attempts to roll-out delivery of personal protective equipment.

Much of the SNP government's focus has been on providing PPE to hospitals and GP surgeries as the country battles the Covid-19 pandemic.

But care homes across the country are now raising concerns that they haven't been supplied with the adequate gear for their staff.

The Scottish Conservatives have spoken to a number of care homes across the country who back that argument up.

They say they either don't have the PPE they need, or are concerned about supplies running out.

Some care homes across Scotland have already recorded a number of deaths in their facilities, and the First Minister is expected to make an announcement later about the challenges facing care homes.

And today, it was reported in the *Times* that Scottish care home workers have been denied PPE because a key distribution centre was closed for the day.

It is understood that home providers in four parts of the country were unable to obtain supplies because local health and social care partnerships had closed the centres.

Donald Macaskill, the chief executive of Scottish Care, said that other hubs had indicated they would shut for the Easter weekend, potentially leaving those looking after the elderly and vulnerable short of supplies.

Yesterday, care homes in the north east described themselves as "cannon fodder" in the coronavirus fight.

## **Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw said:**

"Much of the attention has understandably gone on hospitals and GPs when it comes to the provision of PPE.

"But the SNP government needs to remember that care homes are on the front line too.

“Many of them feel they’ve been treated like second-class citizens amid this pandemic, and things aren’t changing quickly enough.

“We know from our own work that care homes across the country simply don’t have the equipment they need to save lives and protect their hardworking staff.

“And when they do have PPE equipment, they’re fearful of it running out soon.

“At a time when we’re seeing some care homes record alarmingly high numbers of deaths, it’s something Nicola Sturgeon must focus her attention on as a matter of urgency.”