

# SNP's 'devastating' £1bn black hole revealed

30 May 2019



A black hole exceeding £1 billion has been revealed at the heart of Scotland's budget as a result of slow economic growth under the SNP.

The Scottish Fiscal Commission revealed today that budgets were being adjusted to account for Scotland now collecting its own income tax.

That means the Scottish Government budget is more dependent on the country's own economic performance.

As a result, £229 million has been wiped off next year's budget, a further £608 million from the 2021-22 accounts, and £188 million from the following year.

The report also revealed wage growth for Scots would be worse over coming years.

Shadow finance secretary Murdo Fraser said the poor economic performance under the SNP would mean more tax rises, increased borrowing or the slashing of public services.

**Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary Murdo Fraser said:**

"This is a devastating blow for Scotland's finances totalling more than £1 billion.

"For years the SNP has been warned about the poor economic performance for which it is responsible, and now we see the consequences of that.

"This is disastrous news for public services as well as hardworking Scots who may be in line for even more of their payslip being seized by the SNP government.

"We already knew Scotland's growth and productivity was worse than the rest of the UK, and that people north of the border receive comparatively lower pay.

"Now we learn that's all set to continue for the years ahead.

"The SNP has the control to turn this around, but has instead obsessed about constitutional matters, bringing uncertainty and division to our economy.

"The hardworking people of Scotland are now reaping what the nationalists sowed."

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30 May 2019



The Scottish Conservatives will criticise the SNP's confused currency plans and their damaging effect on Scotland's international trade plans.

Speaking in the Scottish Parliamentary debate 'A Trading Nation' Dean Lockhart, Scottish Conservative shadow economy secretary will slam the SNP for announcing its plans to create a new currency which is "untested, the value of which is uncertain and with an exchange rate unknown to our international trading partners."

**Dean Lockhart, Scottish Conservative shadow economy secretary will say:**

"There is a fundamental flaw in the approach taken by the SNP to Scotland's international trade.

"The very same week as announcing a new policy to Increase Scotland's trade – the SNP also announced plans to introduce a new currency for Scotland.

"A currency which is untested, the value of which is uncertain and with an exchange rate unknown to our international trading partners.

"Scottish business and our trading partners cannot be 'currency agnostic' – business needs certainty.

"How can business in Scotland plan to increase trading relationships across the world, plan to build a long-term global customer network, plan their currency hedging arrangements when they don't know what currency they might be using in future trade?"

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# Campaign to improve hospital parking launched

30 May 2019



A campaign has been launched demanding a national review of parking at hospitals.

The Scottish Conservatives unveiled the drive today, arguing that better facilities were needed across the country for staff, patients and visitors.

Shadow health secretary Miles Briggs said the campaign was started after a series of revelations about parking at hospitals in different parts of the country.

Thousands of NHS staff are currently unable to access permits at their work, while some employees at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary have had their permits rescinded ahead of the opening nearby of the new Sick Kids hospital.

In Glasgow, nurses said they faced daily charges of more than £20 a day to park, and workers at Dundee's Ninewells hospital continue to be charged, despite SNP pledges to make hospital parking free.

## **Scottish Conservative shadow health secretary Miles Briggs said:**

"MSPs and MPs across the country are always being contacted by staff, patients and visitors about on-going parking problems at hospitals.

"We already know that our NHS is facing a workforce crisis under the SNP but NHS staff are increasingly saying if they can't park at their work, they won't be able to work at many hospital sites.

"For too long NHS staff, patients and visitors have had to pay far too much for parking at hospitals.

"We don't believe it is fair that Scots should have to pay such high fees simply because they are unwell or need to visit a loved one who is ill.

"It's also not right that NHS staff should have to pay to park at their place at work, especially given the long and awkward hours many of them work.

"That's why we want to see a national review of hospital parking, and for NHS staff to be refunded the cost of their parking.

"The Scottish Conservatives believe it's time there was a national review of hospital parking. That is why we have launched our petition and calling on SNP ministers to act."

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20 May 2019



The SNP is “stalling” on its pledge to provide access to superfast broadband for all homes and businesses by 2021, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

Opposition MSPs tabled a series of parliamentary questions seeking updates on progress with the Reaching 100 (R100) plans.

However, the SNP government has provided holding responses on every occasion.

Paul Wheelhouse, minister for energy, connectivity and the islands, has failed to answer a question on when a contractor will be announced for the R100 programme for nearly eight weeks now.

Another question on what action is being taken by the government to ensure superfast broadband access to all homes is delivered by the end of 2021 has not been answered.

Finlay Carson, Galloway and West Dumfries MSP and Scottish Conservative digital economy spokesman, accused the SNP of “dodging scrutiny” on the issue.

He said: “The R100 programme was launched with great fanfare by the SNP government – and ministers repeatedly talk up the promise to provide superfast broadband access to all.

“However, SNP ministers appear to be stalling and are unable to answer basic questions.

“It is concerning that a contractor has not yet been appointed to carry out this work – something that was supposed to happen in the early part of this year.

“An Audit Scotland report last year said the government was ‘unlikely’ to

meet its target to reach all homes and business in Scotland by 2021.

“If the timetable will not be met, then SNP ministers should stop dodging scrutiny and be honest with parliamentarians and with the public.

“People living in rural areas of Scotland are already at risk of being left behind when it comes to digital connectivity. They will rightly expect more urgency from the SNP government.”

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## [Sturgeon: I'll push for indyref2 even if Brexit is cancelled](#)

19 May 2019



Nicola Sturgeon has admitted she will still pursue a second referendum on independence, even if Brexit doesn't happen.

She was asked on this morning's Andrew Marr Show if the UK remaining in the European Union would mean she'd drop her demands to break up Britain.

She responded: “Not necessarily, no.”

This is despite the First Minister spending the last three years claiming the 2016 Brexit vote was cause alone for a referendum rerun.

Now, the Scottish Conservatives have said, her deceit on the issue has been exposed ahead of Thursday's European elections.

**Scottish Conservative chief whip Maurice Golden said:**

“Nicola Sturgeon has used Brexit as an excuse for pursuing a second independence referendum for the last three years.

“Today she has confirmed what we knew all along – Brexit was always just a fig leaf to hide her only real priority.

“Whether the UK is in or out of the EU, her answer will always be the same – independence.

“This Thursday, we need to make Nicola Sturgeon listen for once.

“Ruth Davidson's Scottish Conservatives stopped her in her tracks in the General Election two years ago when we beat the SNP in seats across the country.

"A vote for the Scottish Conservatives this week can do the same again.

"By voting for Ruth Davidson's Scottish Conservatives we can say no to more of Nicola Sturgeon's referendums.

"It is time for Scotland to move on from this endless uncertainty and to leave the division of the last decade behind us."