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21 Feb 2019



The First Minister has refused to back the Car Park Tax in her own Govan constituency despite her support for it at Holyrood.

When asked by Jackson Carlaw, interim leader of the Scottish Conservatives, during First Ministers questions at Holyrood today, the First Minister declined to support the imposition of the Car Park Tax in her constituency.

Yesterday, every single Scottish Conservative council group leader said they will not support a Car Park Tax in their area.

And every single Scottish Conservative MSP will oppose the Car Park Tax in their constituency or region.

In contrast, the SNP will impose the Car Park Tax across Scotland and yet the First Minister doesn't even support it in her own constituency.

Jackson Carlaw, Scottish Conservative interim leader said;

"Nicola Sturgeon is twisting all over the place on the SNP's Car Park Tax. On the one hand, she is pushing it into law, on the other she won't support it being introduced in her own constituency.

"What kind of government introduces a tax that it doesn't have the courage to back?

"The case for this tax in Scotland is falling apart. If Glasgow and Edinburgh introduce the Car Park tax, as proposed, thousands of commuters who live outside the city boundaries will be hammered, having had no say over that decision.

"That's not a good example of local decision making – it's fundamentally anti-democratic.

"People doing the right thing, going to work, juggling drop offs for their children, or doing shift work at anti-social hours, when there are very few public transport options available, don't deserve to be punished.

"And businesses, care homes and retailers don't need yet another burden imposed upon them. The SNP must dump their Car Park Tax now."

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21 Feb 2019



Every Scottish Conservative council leader in Scotland has today signed a pledge opposing the introduction of the SNP's new Workplace Parking Levy.

The 30 council leaders say in their joint statement that the new tax – which could cost commuters as much as £500 each – is a “tax on jobs” that would “unfairly penalise workers” who cannot use public transport to get to work.

SNP Ministers have admitted that no consultation has taken place over the tax – which has been widely criticised by unions, local firms, and opposition parties.

However, the new tax is likely to be nodded through to the next stage of legislation today when the SNP and Scottish Greens support the introduction of their Budget deal.

Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary, Murdo Fraser said today:

“Right across Scotland, Scottish Conservatives are making it clear today that we oppose this unwanted, poorly thought-out tax.

“From Holyrood to local councils across Scotland, we will fight to stop it being introduced.

“Nicola Sturgeon has tried to argue that this won't impact people if their local council doesn't adopt it.

“Tell that to the tens of thousands of people from all over Scotland who commute into our cities and face having to pay up.

“it's now beholden on SNP councillors to follow suit, follow the lead of the Scottish Conservatives, and make clear that they too will oppose these ridiculous plans.

“That is the least they should do for their constituents.”

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19 Feb 2019



A car park tax introduced in Glasgow and Edinburgh would impact as many as a quarter of a million car journeys across the central Scotland region, according to official figures.

Analysis from Scotland's most recent census shows that 255,381 car and van work journeys are made into the two cities every day.

Of these, the majority – nearly 150,000 – begin outside the city boundaries, meaning that a tax imposed by Glasgow and Edinburgh city council would actually hit more people living outside those cities than in them.

Key areas affected include South Lanarkshire, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, West Lothian, East Dunbartonshire and Midlothian.

People living there would have no say on the imposition of a car park tax set by Glasgow or Edinburgh but would still be in line to pay it if they commuted to either of those cities.

Murdo Fraser, Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary said:

“Nicola Sturgeon claimed over the weekend that people who didn't live in areas where this tax is to be imposed wouldn't be affected. How out of touch can she be?

“These shocking figures show that even if only Glasgow and Edinburgh decide to go ahead and impose this levy, hundreds of thousands of commuters from those cities, and many other parts of Scotland, could be hit by the SNP's car park tax.

“That's thousands of people doing the right thing, going to work, and being punished by the SNP for the effort.

“When public transport is so bad, leaving with no option but to take the car,

it is a total disgrace.

“This week, the SNP is bringing its Budget back to Parliament. There’s been no consultation and no thought put into this absurd tax. For everybody’s sakes, Nicola Sturgeon should listen for once and bin it now.”

The figures above are found in a 2014 analysis of travel to work flows between Local Authority areas in Scotland, conducted by Edinburgh City Council. The link is here, with figures for car and van work journeys on page 44

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/4512/census_2011_-_travel-to-work_flows_between_scottish_local_authorities_2011_and_2001_pdf

The figures for Edinburgh and Glasgow are as follows:

Edinburgh

Total car and van work journeys: 109,887

From within Edinburgh: 54,142 (originating outside Edinburgh 55,742)

Top Local Authority areas going into Edinburgh

12,381 West Lothian

10,316 Midlothian

10,070 East Lothian

7,923 Fife

Glasgow

Total: 145,494

From within Glasgow: 55,113 (originating outside Glasgow 90,381)

Top Local Authority areas going into Glasgow

17,408 South Lanarkshire

14,703 North Lanarkshire

12,735 Renfrewshire

12,665 East Dunbartonshire

10,864 East Renfrewshire

SNP’s broken promise on income tax

18 Feb 2019



The Scottish Conservatives will today (Tuesday) highlight the SNP’s broken promise on income tax during the Holyrood debate on the Rates Resolution.

The Scottish Government has set out the increased Scottish income tax rates and bands, which will further widen the tax gap between Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom.

Murdo Fraser, Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary will point out that the SNP government was elected on a manifesto not to increase the basic rate of income tax.

The Scottish Conservatives will vote against this increase, thereby keeping their own manifesto promise.

Murdo Fraser, Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary will say:

“Today’s Rates Resolution is another broken promise to the Scottish people.

“This is an SNP government elected on a manifesto not to increase income tax rates, and it has again broken that promise.

“In 2016 almost two-thirds of Scots, 64.6%, voted for parties that promised not to raise taxes in the Scottish Parliament’s election, either the SNP or the Scottish Conservatives.

“Today the SNP have let these people down again.

“We will say to the Scottish people, there is at least one party that is on your side, one party that does not want to see the income tax gap between Scotland and the rest of the UK growing, one party which will oppose the unfair car park tax, and that is the Scottish Conservatives.

“We will oppose the Rates Resolution today which can only damage the Scottish economy and our hard-working families.”

[Health boards shortchanged by SNP budget](#)

18 Feb 2019



Health boards in Scotland have been shortchanged by tens of millions of pounds as a result of SNP budget decisions, it has emerged.

In finance secretary Derek Mackay’s budget, he increased the overall health spend by 5.3 per cent, according to the Scottish Parliament’s Information Service (SPICe).

However, territorial health boards – who are in charge of delivering the vast majority of NHS care – received just a 3.8 per cent uplift.

The changes saw health board budgets for 2019/20 rise from £9.452 billion to £9.811 billion.

But if the 5.3 per cent figure had been applied, they would have got £9.953 billion – a difference of £142 million.

In previous years, overall health budget increases have been passed on entirely to health boards.

Shadow health secretary Miles Briggs said that gulf could help fund thousands of nurses and better equip health boards at a time of increasing challenges.

SPICe said the overwhelming reason for the disparity was a transfer of £120 million from the health budgets to local government.

Thanks to the UK Conservative Government's decision to invest an extra £20 billion in the NHS, an additional £2 billion will be available to invest in Scotland's health service – the largest cash injection in its history.

Scottish Conservative shadow health secretary Miles Briggs said:

“Health boards are the ones on the front line, and responsible for delivering the vast majority of NHS work.

“It's therefore crucial that, when the overall health budget increases, that is passed on to the territorial health boards too.

“Instead, the SNP is short-changing them to the tune of tens of millions of pounds. That could pay for nurses, midwives, GPs and go some way to addressing the chaotic situation on many of our hospital wards.

“There's no-one to blame but the SNP for this – the party has been in sole charge of health for almost 12 years now.

“What's more, the nationalists have even more money to spend on health thanks to increased health spending in the UK, which then comes to Scotland via Barnett Consequentials.”