

# [Scottish Labour and Lib Dems must clarify Brexit bill stance](#)

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- Scottish Labour and Lib Dems must clarify Brexit bill stance

3 May 2018



The Scottish Conservatives have called on Scottish Labour and the Scottish Liberal Democrats to clarify their stance on the Brexit bill.

This comes after senior members of their parties in the House of Lords backed the UK Government's position.

**Scottish Conservative constitution spokesman, Adam Tomkins said:**

"It is good to see committed supporters of devolution in the House of Lords offer their support to the compromise that the UK Government has proposed here."

"Labour and Lib Dem peers have backed the UK Government's fresh plan – because it does now respect devolution."

"Richard Leonard and Willie Rennie now need to make their positions clear on this, so we know where they stand."

"As for the SNP, it is time to drop the political games and accept a deal that both supports our own UK internal market and hands huge new powers to the Scottish Parliament."

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# [Sturgeon must come clean on plans to cut police numbers](#)

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- Sturgeon must come clean on plans to cut police numbers

3 May 2018



The First Minister must come clean on how many police officers will be cut to balance the books of the single force, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

It emerged this week that officer numbers are at a nine-year low, with reports that up to a further 1200 could be cut as Police Scotland attempts to address its £30 million black hole.

But while Nicola Sturgeon said she agreed such a reduction would be “unacceptable”, she refused to say by how many the headcount would fall in future.

In Holyrood today, Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said Police Scotland was under immense financial strain, despite efficiency being one of the reasons the SNP cited for creating the organisation.

Hundreds of charges last year had to be dropped because under-pressure officers couldn't get the paperwork in on time, including allegations of firearms offences, child sex crimes and drug dealing.

However, instead of pledging to support frontline numbers, Ms Sturgeon merely pointed to the situation elsewhere in the UK.

**Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:**

“Police officers and the public are rightly worried about the prospect of further cuts to frontline policing.

“That’s why Nicola Sturgeon has to come clean on how many officers face the axe as she attempts to reduce the single force’s deficit.

“Both the justice secretary and the First Minister seem to think reductions in police numbers are fine, yet officers themselves have criticised these claims.

“We were told the creation of a single force would free up resources and provide huge savings, all of which could be invested in the front line.

“Instead, we have a financial black hole with cuts on the way.

“Officers are questioning whether or not they can do their job under these circumstances.

“The least they should expect from this First Minister is honesty about future plans.”

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**[Call for ‘complete transparency’ over](#)**

# [baby box safety fears](#)

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- Call for 'complete transparency' over baby box safety fears

3 May 2018



The SNP should publish all documents relating to the safety and certification of baby boxes following fears over a fire risk with the products.

It was revealed yesterday that experts had raised significant concerns in relation to the SNP's flagship giveaway.

Tens of thousands of boxes have already been given out across the country, even though no officially recognised safety standards had been drawn up.

Shadow health secretary Miles Briggs has demanded "complete transparency" from ministers over advice received about the safety of baby boxes.

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

"The information that has emerged over the last 24 hours is deeply concerning.

"The SNP used photocall after photocall to tell parents these boxes were safe.

"Only now we are learning of the safety concerns raised in private by their own advisers.

"The SNP has used every opportunity to talk up the baby box policy and attack anyone who asked questions about their use.

"We now must see complete transparency from Nicola Sturgeon and her ministers.

"All official documentation relating to the safety and the certification of baby boxes must be published immediately.

"Only that way can parents have faith in this SNP government's plans.

"This is not a public relations exercise – it is about child safety."

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# [Campaign to save ATMs is launched in the Scottish Parliament](#)

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- Campaign to save ATMs is launched in the Scottish Parliament

2 May 2018



Dean Lockhart MSP will today lead a debate in the Scottish Parliament on changes to the LINK network which threaten to cut off free access to cash across Scotland.

Hundreds of free to use cashpoints are at risk of removal due to plans announced by the UK's largest cashpoint network.

LINK runs a network of 70,000 cashpoints and has announced that it is cutting its interchange fee from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2018. This fee is paid by card issuers to ATM operators and its reduction will significantly impact the funding of cash points and has the potential to put many at risk.

With many rural and deprived communities across the region relying on easy access to their cash, Dean will call on the Payment Services Regulator to step in immediately to stop these plans.

The campaign was launched by consumer organisation Which? and the Federation of Small Businesses who's petition has so far attracted over 75,000 signatures from across the UK.

**Dean Lockhart, Scottish Conservative shadow economy secretary said:**

''I am pleased to be given the opportunity to highlight this important issue for consumers across Scotland in the Scottish Parliament this week.

''At a time when bank closures increase across Scotland, so too does the reliance on free-to-use ATMs.

''Demand for cash remains high, especially in rural and deprived communities and these facilities often act as a crucial replacement for the lack of banking services.

''These proposals from LINK will undoubtedly also hit our high-street and small businesses, many of whom rely upon a customer's ability to access cash.

''Access to cash is absolutely vital to local growth in communities across Scotland and I urge the regulator to take action to guarantee that consumers can access their money if access to cash is threatened.

‘‘I have therefore written to the Chairman of the Link Scheme to call for the proposed changes to be reconsidered – and for the Link Network and member banks to take another look at the impact of these proposals on consumers, small businesses and communities.’’

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## [Energy efficiency targets ten years too late](#)

2 May 2018



The Scottish Conservatives have derided the new Scottish Government target on energy efficiency as ten years too late.

In the 2016 manifesto, the Scottish Conservatives set out a clear target to “achieve transformative change in energy efficiency across Scotland – with all properties achieving an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) C rating or above by the end of the next decade at the latest.”

In contrast, the First Minister today launched the Route Map to an Energy Efficient Scotland, which includes a target that “by 2040, all homes are improved so they achieve an EPC rating of at least Band C.”

The Scottish Conservatives have also criticised the route map for having energy efficiency targets which lack serious ambition on tackling emissions from domestic heating.

### **Alexander Burnett, Scottish Conservative energy spokesman said:**

“The Scottish Conservatives recognise how vital it is that everyone in Scotland has a warm home as soon as possible.

‘We have repeatedly called on the SNP to adopt the bold and ambitious target of EPC C rating by 2030 as set out in our 2016 manifesto and, once again, it has failed to do so.

‘Their target of ensuring all homes being at EPC ‘C’ rating by 2040 is a decade too late.

‘There has long been support for this target across the chamber so it is ridiculous that the SNP has taken such a long time to come up with targets that are much less ambitious than our own.

‘What we have today is an SNP Government proposing unambitious targets for those in fuel poverty, as well as failing to tackle the wider picture of reducing emissions.’’

**Graham Simpson, Scottish Conservative housing spokesman said:**

“The so-called plan put out by the SNP is a woolly wish-list with no detail.

“They have not said a word about how they will help home-owners to improve the energy efficiency of their homes and by giving a date of 2040 to achieve targets they are effectively kicking the issue into the long grass.”