

# Local papers need long term support from SNP

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The Scottish Conservatives are asking the SNP government to implement a long term strategy to support local newspapers as they continue to fight for survival.

Fresh from securing the same financial support for these trusted new sources as retail, leisure and the hospitality industry via amendments to the Coronavirus Act, Murdo Fraser, Scottish Conservative MSP, is now asking the Scottish Government to go further.

The amendments securing the support for regional press were secured despite SNP opposition.

Local press has lost 75 per cent of advertising revenue and 25 per cent of circulation cash, a staggering loss of income that could deal the fatal blow to many of the smaller papers already operating with the tightest of margins.

In the light of these significant cost challenges, and given that journalism has now been recognised as a key industry, the Scottish Conservatives are asking that the SNP draft a plan to make local newspapers sustainable in Scotland for the long-term.

## **Scottish Conservative MSP Murdo Fraser said:**

“It is absolutely right that local newspapers now have access to the same financial support as other sectors of our economy, despite SNP opposition.

“Given the clear majority who recognise the importance of regional media, the Scottish Government must now consider how best to create a sustainable future for this industry.

“A functioning local media is a crucial part of our democracy and is essential for an informed public.

“Prior to the Covid outbreak local papers were already on the brink of survival – their income has now been decimated.

“The Scottish Government must act further than the amendments yesterday and draft a plan that will support local papers to a vibrant and sustainable future.”