

SNP “dragging Scotland back to the arguments of the past”

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Ruth Davidson has today reacted to the publication of the SNP’s independence blueprint, saying it is time for the Nationalists to move on from the “arguments of the past”.

The SNP’s latest independence plan, published today, has revealed that multi-billion cuts would be required after independence – something the pro-UK parties warned about prior to the 2014 independence vote, but which the SNP refused to accept.

The Scottish Conservatives are today calling on the SNP to “focus on the day job”, rather than constantly re-heat the independence debate.

The paper also confirms that the SNP would no longer support a monetary union with the rest of the UK after independence – in another u-turn from 2014.

Ruth said today:

“More than four years ago, the SNP delivered an independence blueprint which they claimed was the final word. Today, they are telling us to ignore the old version and have instead produced an entirely new manual which we’re expected to believe is credible.”

“One thing hasn’t changed: none of it adds up.”

“People in Scotland have had enough of Nicola Sturgeon grand-standing on independence. They want all politicians to focus on the here and now – improving school standards, ensuring fair funding for our NHS and building a Scottish economy that works for us all.”

“This is just the latest in a long line of attempted re-starts of an independence debate Nicola Sturgeon promised would be settled for a generation.”

“More and more Scots are waking up to the fact that, for the First Minister, it is independence first and everything else a long way behind.”

“The people of Scotland deserve a government at Holyrood that is focussed on the day job, not a First Minister constantly grandstanding in an attempt to drag Scotland back to the arguments of the past.”

Today's paper claims that an independent Scotland would start life with a deficit of 5.9% – and proposes reducing this to 2.6% within ten years.

Even using these figures – which the Scottish Conservatives do not accept are accurate – this would require savings equivalent of £27.1 billion over ten years to Scottish public services.

On the cost of the new independence plan, Scottish Conservative shadow Finance Secretary Murdo Fraser added:

“This is the price that the SNP is prepared to pay in order to break up Britain.”

“It would be cost felt in every ward, in every classroom and on every street in Scotland. It is austerity on stilts.”

“Nicola Sturgeon has ducked and dived on this report. She must now spell out whether she's happy to inflict this cost on Scotland purely so she can have a shot at history.”

“We will do all we can to fight against a second independence referendum in order to save our NHS and our schools from the SNP's ideological obsession.”