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Nicola Sturgeon is more interested in appeasing independence diehards annoyed at her separation blueprint than dealing with key devolved issues, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

At today's First Minister's Questions, Ruth Davidson asked why the SNP government was ignoring matters like health, education and justice in favour of defending last week's widely-criticised Growth Commission.

The Scottish Conservative leader pointed out that, just yesterday, Ms Sturgeon issued seven tweets on the document after a series of high profile independence-backers slammed its content.

But she ignored figures this week showing some of the worst waiting times ever in Scotland's NHS, a lower rate of people from deprived areas getting places at university, and rising levels of violent crime and anti-social behaviour.

Today, former NFUS head Jim Walker lambasted the First Minister for her government's failure to pay farmers CAP money on time.

He described the ongoing fiasco as "a national scandal of epic proportions" and "the biggest funding scandal in modern Scottish history".

And it has emerged that the state of Scotland's fire engines is so poor, Audit Scotland warned there will be an increase in vehicle breakdowns unless the SNP government takes action.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

"In a week where we've seen rising waiting lists in hospitals, fewer poor young people getting to university and violent crime on the increase, Nicola Sturgeon made her priorities perfectly clear.

"Instead of addressing the concerns of patients, students and victims of crime, she chose to spend her time appeasing the diehards of her independence movement.

"These are the important issues that people across Scotland really care about.

“But the only people getting attention from the First Minister are Yes campaigners angry at the independence blueprint who she is desperate to get back inside.

“Scotland’s public services have already suffered at the hands of the SNP government’s independence obsession – that can’t be allowed to happen again.”