

Tories must end public sector pay cap

The Tories and SNP have failed to stand up for our public sector workers.

Shadow Scottish Secretary Lesley Laird used the first Scottish Questions since the election today to tell the Tories they are in 'complete chaos' on the future of the unfair public sector pay cap.

Chancellor Philip Hammond has reportedly said public sector workers are 'overpaid' – a statement which Scottish Secretary David Mundell failed to condemn this afternoon.

The SNP is unfortunately no better than the Tories after Nicola Sturgeon's MSPs voted against lifting the cap for NHS workers.

Public sector pay restraint has been in place since 2010 and previous research from the independent Scottish Parliament Information Centre shows that the average nurse is £3,400 worse off.

In May, SNP MSPs voted against a Labour motion in the Scottish Parliament to scrap the pay cap for NHS staff, while the SNP's own submission to the NHS pay review body recommended a 1 per cent overall cost cap this year. But SNP Finance Secretary Derek Mackay has since performed a U-turn following Labour pressure.

Of the total 542,200 people employed in the public sector in Scotland, 89.5 per cent are accounted for by employment in the devolved public sector. The Tory government is responsible for the vast majority of pay rates for workers in the reserved sector.

Labour would choose a different path from the Tories and the SNP.

Scottish Labour has said our dedicated NHS workers deserve a pay rise right now.

We would abolish the public sector pay cap and put an end to the low paid economy for all workers with a £10 minimum wage. Only Labour has a plan to create a country that works for the many, not the few.