[£40 million to unlock Falkirk’s economic potential]

Press release

UK Government announces investment in Falkirk Growth Deal.

The UK Government has taken the latest step toward ‘levelling up’ for every part of Scotland by pledging £40 million for the Falkirk Growth Deal – this will boost investment, create new jobs and drive forward economic growth across the area.

The deal will see funding directed towards potential projects to boost the local economy by creating skilled jobs and investing in infrastructure improvements to support sustainable travel, tourism and energy.

It will also help support the region’s strong chemical manufacturing industry at Grangemouth, securing local jobs and driving forward innovation as we move to a low carbon economy.

The Falkirk growth deal is the 11th UK deal in Scotland. To date, the deals have set out support for numerous sectors across Scotland, including:

- north-east Scotland looking to become a global centre for expertise on decommissioning and sustainability
- the Borders region boosting tourism through the mountain biking centre
- Inverness Castle being transformed
- robotics and forensics attracting cutting-edge tech businesses to Scotland’s universities
- Scotland’s engineering legacy being reborn through new advanced manufacturing and aerospace clusters

Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

> We know that City Region and Growth Deals will be vital to Scotland’s economic recovery from coronavirus. The Falkirk Growth Deal will enable the regional economy to innovate, boosting

investment and providing sustainable, high-quality jobs.

The pandemic has called for extraordinary economic measures, and the UK Government has done everything we can to support jobs and businesses. We have supported 900,000 jobs in Scotland with our furlough and self-employed schemes, including 18,500 in Falkirk.

This new deal brings the UK Government's investment in growth deals across Scotland to £1.46 billion.

We look forward to working with our partners in Falkirk and the devolved administration in Scotland to develop innovative and effective proposals.

Background

The UK Government's Coronavirus Retention Scheme is supporting 15,500 jobs in Falkirk and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme has 3,000 recipients with payments worth £8.9 million issued locally.

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[Armed Forces personnel to receive 2% pay rise]

News story

Service personnel in the UK will receive an above inflation 2% pay rise this year, in recognition of the vital work they do every day protecting the country.

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This new award will bring the total pay rise over the last 3 years to 7%, and increase starting salaries for an officer by £545; £634 for a Corporal and £400 for a newly trained soldier, sailor or air man or woman.

As a result, the basic pay for other ranks on completion of their initial training will now be £20,400 and the average salary for a Corporal will be £32,797.

Personnel will see the 2020/21 rise implemented in their September pay packets and backdated to April 2020. The award comes in addition to the non-contributory pension and access to incremental pay progression.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

> Our people do vital work every day to protect this country and I'm pleased armed forces personnel will receive a recommended 2% pay rise this year.
>
> Whether through serving abroad or supporting public services during the coronavirus pandemic at home, this pay increase is a recognition of their hard work and dedication.

Over the past 3 years, service personnel have received pay rises totalling 7% which has helped defence attract and retain the best people for the armed forces.

The Armed Forces' Pay Review Body's recommendations on changes relating to allowances, recruitment and retention payments, bespoke pay arrangements, reservist bounties and food and accommodation charges have also been accepted and will be backdated to April, where applicable.

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NHS doctors and dentists to receive 2.8% pay rise

- Government accepts in full the recommendations in the latest Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration (DDRB) report
- 2.8% pay rise for NHS doctors and dentists in England, backdated to April
- Uplift is in line with the NHS Long Term Plan's funding settlement of a record £33.9 billion extra by 2023 to 2024

The government has accepted in full the pay recommendations in the latest

Review Body on Doctors’ and Dentists’ Remuneration (DDRB) report, which considers a range of evidence from the NHS and trade unions.

This pay award is worth, in basic pay:

- between £2,200 and £3,000 for consultants
- between £1,100 and £2,100 for specialty doctors
- between £1,500 and £2,600 for associate specialists

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

> These past few months have been an incredibly challenging time for our NHS, and the resolve, professionalism and dedication of staff has been on show throughout.
>
> We are able to accept the recommendations of the independent pay review body for dentists and doctors.
>
> I am committed to supporting the entire NHS and social care workforce through improved recruitment and retention and delivering 50,000 more nurses and 6,000 more doctors in general practice.

The uplift is in line with the NHS Long Term Plan’s funding settlement of a record £33.9 billion extra by 2023 to 2024 and will build on the NHS Interim People Plan’s ambition to make the NHS the best place to work.

It follows the settlement for more than one million NHS workers who continue to benefit from the 3-year Agenda for Change pay deal agreed with NHS trade unions. Under this deal the starting pay for a newly qualified nurse has increased by over 12% since 2017 to 2018 and all nurses have received pay increases of at least 6.5%.

The NHS Pay Review Body, who cover Agenda for Change staff, is expected to return to making recommendations for next year’s pay awards.

For specialty doctors and associate specialists (SAS doctors) the government recognises the DDRB’s comments on the need for improved recognition and career development. Negotiations on a multi-year pay and contract reform deal for this group of doctors are progressing, and agreement is expected to be reached in time for the next pay year.

For salaried GPs, the minimum and maximum pay range will be uplifted by 2.8% in line with DDRB’s recommendations. The DDRB were not asked to make a pay recommendation for contractor GPs or doctors and dentists in training as both groups are in the second year of their respective multi-year deals. For junior doctors, each year of the deal there is an annual basic uplift of 2% and all junior doctor pay scales will have increased by 8.2% by the end of the deal.

The DDRB has a standing remit to consider what pay uplifts are necessary for the NHS to continue to recruit, retain and motivate its staff whilst taking account of affordability. The DDRB considers a range of evidence from different stakeholders including NHS system partners and trade unions.

The government acknowledges the DDRB’s comments on Clinical Excellence Awards for consultants, and their reasons for not recommending an increase in their value relating to equality of distribution and access to awards. With this in mind, we will progress plans to reform these awards with a view to introducing new arrangements from 2022.

The minimum and maximum of the pay range in the model terms and conditions for salaried GPs will be uplifted by 2.8%. As self-employed contractors, it is largely up to GP practices how they distribute pay to their employees. Employers have the flexibility to offer enhanced terms and conditions, for example, to aid recruitment and retention.

The multi-year GP contract provides funding clarity and certainty to practices for 5 years (2019/20 to 2023/24). On top of significant investment, the multi-year GP contract also sought to address workload by providing additional staff though the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme and the introduction of the state-backed scheme for GP indemnity which started in April 2019.

General dental practitioners will receive a 2.8% general uplift in the pay element of their contract backdated to April 2020.

For doctors and dentists in training, their current multi-year deal means all junior doctor pay scales will have increased by 8.2% by the end of the deal, and in addition around £90 million is being invested to reform the contract, including to create a new, higher pay point to recognise the most experienced doctors in training.

Since the start of the AfC deal in 2017 to 2018 this multi-year deal has delivered year on year pay increases for our much valued NHS staff and as part of this we have increased the starting salary for a newly qualified nurse by over 12% and increased the lowest starting salary within the NHS by over 16%.

Chancellor launches Comprehensive Spending Review

News story

The Chancellor has today launched the 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). The Review, which will be published in the autumn, will set out the government’s spending plans for the parliament.

The review will set UK Government departments’ resource budgets for the years 2021/22 to 2023/24 and capital budgets for the years 2021/22 until 2024/25, and devolved administrations’ block grants for the same period.

The CSR will prioritise:

- strengthening the UK’s economic recovery from COVID-19 by prioritising jobs and skills
- levelling up economic opportunity across all nations and regions of the country by investing in infrastructure, innovation and people – thus closing the gap with our competitors by spreading opportunity, maximising productivity and improving the value add of each hour worked
- improving outcomes in public services, including supporting the NHS and taking steps to cut crime and ensure every young person receives a superb education
- making the UK a scientific superpower, including leading in the development of technologies that will support the government’s ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050
- strengthening the UK’s place in the world
- improving the management and delivery of our commitments, ensuring that all departments have the appropriate structures and processes in place to deliver their outcomes and commitments on time and within budget

Due to unprecedented uncertainty, the Chancellor did not fix a set spending envelope, but confirmed that departments’ resource and capital budgets would grow above inflation and that the government will deliver on the commitments made at Budget to level up and invest in the priorities of the British people.

Given the impact COVID-19 has had on the economy, the Chancellor was clear there will need be tough choices in other areas of spending at the review. As part of their preparations for the CSR departments have been asked to identify opportunities to reprioritise and deliver savings. Departments will also be required to fulfil a series of conditions in their returns, including providing evidence they are delivering the government’s priorities and focussing on delivery.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, said:

> The first phase of our economic response to coronavirus was about

> safeguarding employment as far as possible. Our goal in the second phase is to protect, create and support jobs and we set out our plan to achieve this two weeks ago.
>
> The Comprehensive Spending Review is our opportunity to deliver on the third phase of our recovery plan – where we will honour the commitments made in the March Budget to rebuild, level up and invest in people and places spreading opportunities more evenly across the nation.

To help frame the government's approach at the Spending Review, an interim report of the Net Zero Review will be published this Autumn, followed by a final report in the Spring.

HMT has opened a process for the Comprehensive Spending Review to allow external stakeholders to submit representations.

Further information

- The Chancellor's letter outlined that in the interest of fairness we must exercise restraint in future public sector pay awards, ensuring that across this year and the spending review period, public sector pay levels retain parity with the private sector.
- The date for the conclusion of the review will be confirmed in due course.
- Representations to the CSR can be submitted here.

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New standards to improve safety for taxi and private hire vehicle passengers

News story

New standards for taxi and private hire vehicles sector will protect passengers.

- government introduces robust new statutory standards for the taxi and private hire vehicle sector across England and Wales to protect passengers
- new recommendations include enhanced DBS criminal record checks for drivers every 6 months
- latest step taken by the government to reduce the risk of harm to passengers and help improve consistency across local authorities

Passengers travelling in taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs), including app-based services, will be kept safer under tough new licensing standards introduced by the government, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps announced today (21 July 2020).

The new [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards] which local authorities will be expected to implement are designed to improve consistency in the licensing system, reducing the risk of harm posed to children and vulnerable passengers in the process. It follows historic and serious cases of taxi and PHV drivers abusing their position of trust.

Criminal record checks for drivers every 6 months form a key part of the standards, as does safeguarding training to help drivers identify and respond to passengers that may be being abused or exploited. A recommendation for licensing authorities to consider whether the use of CCTV would be beneficial or proportionate in their areas is also included, which sets out that potential privacy issues must be taken into account.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

> We know the majority of drivers provide an important and safe service for communities, but in light of appalling incidents in places like Rochdale, Oxford, Newcastle and Rotherham, more must be done to protect passengers from those who abuse their position of trust.
>
> That’s why we’re looking to licensing authorities to enforce these rigorous new standards, ensuring drivers are fit to transport passengers in a safe environment and to stop those who aren’t.
>
> We expect all licensing authorities to implement the standards and won’t hesitate to introduce legislation if they don’t fulfil their

responsibilities to keep the public safe.

Following extensive consultation across government as well as with industry and regulators, the strengthened measures will mean all drivers applying for a licence should now be required to disclose if they hold or have previously held a licence in another area. Local authorities will also now have to have robust reporting systems in place to make sure passengers feel comfortable reporting incidents and or suspicious behaviour. This follows the Casey Report which found there was inadequate investigation of some complaints in Rotherham.

Licensing authorities will be expected to fully implement these measures as soon as possible. The department will closely monitor progress, work with authorities not meeting their responsibilities and look to introduce legislation if licensing authorities fail to adopt the standards and update their operations.

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