

SNP must back Scottish fishermen in negotiations with EU

3 Jun 2020



The Scottish Conservatives are demanding the SNP support Scottish fishermen against the EU demands for access to our waters.

In a statement on the Brexit negotiations in the Scottish Parliament this afternoon the Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, Mike Russell claimed, “never has a no deal been more likely.”

While Brexit negotiations have stalled, this is mainly due to the EU demands for access to UK fishing grounds as a precondition to further talks.

The Scottish Conservatives are clear that they will not sell the Scottish fishermen out and are asking the SNP government to do the same.

Murdo Fraser, Scottish Conservative shadow constitution secretary said:

“The SNP spent last year telling us that there would be no withdrawal agreement, that the UK would leave on a No-Deal basis, that the UK Govt were not even involved in serious negotiations.

“They were wrong on every single one of these claims, and inevitably they will be proved wrong again.

“The SNP knows that the real blockage to progress is the EU 27’s unreasonable demand to access our fishing grounds as a precondition to further talks.

“The Scottish Conservatives could not be clearer – we will not sell our fishermen out.

“But the question remains; whose side is the SNP on?

“Does the SNP government stand with our Scottish fishermen and the UK Government in holding firm against these unreasonable demands, or are they on the side of the EU27 who want our fish before negotiation?”

Care homes being failed ‘all over

again'

3 Jun 2020



The SNP government is failing care homes “all over again” on the issue of testing, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

Two weeks ago, health secretary Jeane Freeman pledged that all care home staff would be routinely tested for coronavirus.

However, latest testing figures have suggested that drive is falling well short, and at First Minister’s Questions today Nicola Sturgeon was unable to provide a statistical update.

One major provider – Renaissance Care – said barely half of its staff had been tested for Covid-19, despite the promise.

Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw challenged Ms Sturgeon on the issue today, and pointed out that 7000 tests a day would be needed to regularly test care home staff.

But even including all testing, some days have recorded half that number, meaning the target is well off-course.

And the party has today published a detailed account of just how severe SNP failings on testing have been.

‘Testing and the coronavirus: the record in Scotland’ analyses how major shortcomings have occurred in the SNP’s approach on testing from the outset.

It also reveals how Scotland has one of the poorest testing records not just in the UK, but also in comparison to countries across the world.

The paper was released on the day it was confirmed care homes have officially overtaken hospitals as the main place of death for Covid-19.

Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw said:

“Lessons about coronavirus testing in care homes should have been learned weeks ago.

“But instead, the SNP is failing care homes, their staff and their residents all over again.

“It has now been a fortnight since the SNP government said all staff would be routinely tested for Covid-19.

“However, it’s clear from testing figures that this drive has fallen woefully short. The fact the First Minister is so reluctant to provide statistics on this shows that she knows it.

“It would take around 7000 tests a day to ensure all care home staff were covered – but the SNP can’t even get close to that figure on the whole, let alone just for these workers.

“The World Health Organisation urged governments across the world to ‘test, test, test’.

“The SNP’s approach has been dither, delay and distract.

“The document published by the Scottish Conservatives today reveals the scale of these failings, and shows they have occurred over several weeks and are being repeated.

“Nicola Sturgeon said she would take full responsibility for her government’s approach to tackling coronavirus.

“As this shameful dossier tells us, the mistakes and shortcomings for Scotland have been considerable.”

[SNP must hand over ‘missing millions’ to councils now](#)

3 Jun 2020



The Scottish Conservatives have demanded that the SNP government hands over the ‘missing millions’ due to councils immediately.

In this morning’s local government committee meeting at Holyrood, Cosla confirmed that they still haven’t received the £155m promised by the SNP government to local authorities to help them deal with the Covid crisis.

The UK Government announced that Scotland would receive £155m in Barnett consequential for local government on the 18th April.

While initially reluctant, the Scottish Government finally agreed that all of this money would be given straight to local authorities, on the 6 May.

Graham Simpson, Scottish Conservative shadow communities secretary said:

“The UK government announced the £155m in Barnett consequential for local government support over six weeks ago, but the SNP still hasn’t passed it on.

“Councils came into this crisis ill-equipped to cope after years of the SNP slashing their budgets to the bone.

“Despite this, local authorities have worked tirelessly on the frontlines keeping essential services running and supporting their residents and businesses through this crisis.

“First the SNP made them fight for the money and now, for unknown reasons, they still haven’t handed it over.

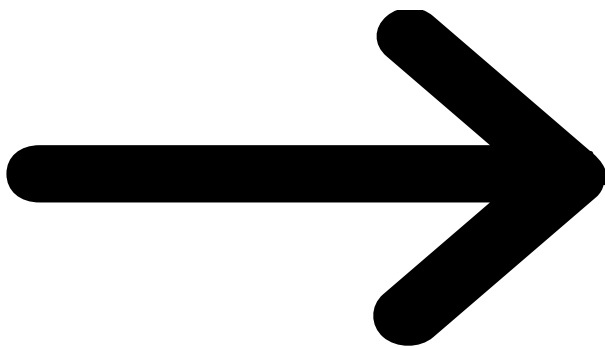
“Some local authorities barely have any reserves left thanks to the SNP’s botched approach to funding.

“This is a totally unacceptable situation, the SNP government must hand over these missing millions to councils now.”

[Sturgeon and Freeman clash exposes need for transparency on scientific advice](#)

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- Sturgeon and Freeman clash exposes need for transparency on scientific advice

2 Jun 2020



A public disagreement between Nicola Sturgeon and her health secretary on Covid-19 scientific advice proves the need for more transparency, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

Today, the First Minister denied she’d ever claimed that her advisers had told her there was no chance of asymptomatic patients passing on coronavirus to others.

Less than an hour later, Jeane Freeman directly contradicted that, saying: “The clear advice we were receiving from scientific experts was there was no

transmission from asymptomatic individuals.”

The clash comes on the same day the SNP government refused to publish exchanges its chief medical officer had conducted with UK counterparts.

The Scottish Conservatives said the nationalists should abandon their secretive ways and ensure all key documents were published to ensure better transparency.

Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw said:

“The inconsistencies between the First Minister and her health secretary could hardly be more blatant on this crucial matter.

“One says scientific advice showed asymptomatic patients couldn’t transmit the disease, the other says the opposite.

“Of course, this could be settled if the SNP government was willing to publish these key documents.

“Instead, it reverts to its secretive ways in a bid to stop the Scottish public finding out the truth.

“That’s unacceptable government at any time, let alone under these most serious of circumstances.”

[New figures show over-75s were ‘rushed out of hospital’](#)

2 Jun 2020



Figures released today have revealed an exodus of over 75s from hospitals to care homes and the community as Covid-19 spread.

According to the ISD Scotland data, there were 1108 “bed blocking” patients over that age in hospital in the month of February, despite being fit to leave.

By April, the delayed discharge data has revealed that figure dropped to just 331.

That means nearly 800 of the most vulnerable individuals were sent out of hospital either to care homes, or back home to be looked after by family or carers in that crucial two-month period.

And as numerous reports have now confirmed, these individuals were not routinely tested for coronavirus.

The Scottish Conservatives said it was the latest revelation showing how the SNP government failed to protect care homes, their staff and residents.

Despite pledges to test all carers and residents, still numbers remain at their lowest since the testing programme began at the end of April.

Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw said:

“These figures show very starkly how the over 75s were rushed out of hospital, either to care homes or back to the community.

“And as we now know, they weren’t routinely tested for coronavirus.

“These were the most vulnerable people in our society, and they were sent out of hospital to places where they would mingle with equally vulnerable individuals.

“It’s no wonder Covid-19 has spread like wild fire in our care homes.

“The SNP government now needs to explain why so many over 75s were chased out of hospital during a global health pandemic without proper testing or protection.

“The situation has become an issue of national disgrace for the SNP.”