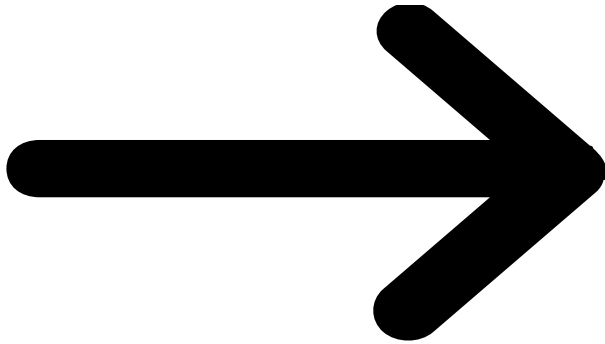


Sturgeon vows again to use Brexit to pursue break-up of UK

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- Sturgeon vows again to use Brexit to pursue break-up of UK

15 Nov 2018



Nicola Sturgeon made it clear again today that she intends to use the Brexit process to agitate for independence.

She was challenged on the issue by Scottish Conservative interim leader Jackson Carlaw in Holyrood at First Minister's Questions.

The First Minister repeatedly talked up the prospects of Scotland being ripped out of the UK, and admitted she and her party have "never stopped" campaigning for separation.

Mr Carlaw demanded to know why she felt breaking up the union that matters most to Scotland would be a good idea, pointing out the UK market was worth four times more in value than the European Union.

And he urged her to start acting "in the national interest, not the nationalist one".

Scottish Conservative interim leader Jackson Carlaw said:

"The last thing the people of Scotland want is more division and uncertainty.

"Yet the First Minister is using Brexit developments to do exactly that.

"Far from acting in the national interest, Nicola Sturgeon is only acting in the nationalist one.

"Using Brexit to agitate for independence didn't work for the SNP immediately after the Brexit vote, and it won't work this time.

"It's time for Nicola Sturgeon to take the threat of another independence referendum off the table, and start governing in Scotland's interests."

Only 16% of school food is sourced in Scotland

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- Only 16% of school food is sourced in Scotland

15 Nov 2018



Schools north of the border source less than a fifth of school food from Scotland, according to new figures.

Ahead of the Scottish Parliament debate on 'physical activity, diet and healthy weight', the Scottish Conservatives have revealed a freedom of information response showing that Scotland Excel, the shared national procurement service, spends just 16 percent of its budget for school food on food sourced in Scotland.

A further 15 per cent of school food is sourced elsewhere, and is then manufactured here.

Scotland Excel spends £42.5 million on school food on behalf of councils, meaning that it spends £6.7 million on school food from Scotland, and £6.4 million on school food that is manufactured in Scotland.

While not all school food is purchased through Scotland Excel, 28 of the 32 local authorities do use the procurement service.

The Scottish Conservatives have said that this needs to change, to support children's health and wellbeing, to support food producers and to reduce food miles.

Brian Whittle, Scottish Conservative spokesman for sport and wellbeing said:

"We ask our farmers to produce the highest quality produce; we charge them with custodianship of the countryside; with paying the living wage and with the highest standards of animal welfare.

"Yet when it comes to public food procurement it is clear that our farmers are not being supported in the way that they should.

"These figures show that a substantial amount of school food is still travelling thousands of food miles before reaching a child's plate.

"One of the key elements in tackling health inequalities and the stubborn attainment gap surely should be ensuring the high quality food produced right

here in Scotland makes its way to the Scottish Schools' dining halls.

“That is evidently not the norm and needs to change, to support our children’s health and wellbeing, to support our food producers and to cut back on an unnecessary carbon footprint”.

[SNP on course to miss recycling target by 12 years](#)

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- SNP on course to miss recycling target by 12 years

11 Nov 2018



The SNP are on course to miss their household recycling targets by a significant margin according to analysis undertaken by the Scottish Conservatives.

The figures come as the Scottish Conservatives prepare to use this week in the Scottish Parliament to highlight new ideas to boost the environment, and deliver a cleaner, greener Scotland.

The SNP has committed to recycling 60 percent of household rubbish by 2020. However, between 2011 and 2017, the percentage of recycled household waste has only risen from 40.1 percent to 45.6 percent.

This shows that the average annual increase of household waste recycling is less than 1 percent, which, if this trend continues, means that the SNP will only hit this target in 2032, a staggering 12 years late.

Indeed, this comes after the SNP has already clearly missed the previous target to recycle 50 percent of household waste by 2013.

Maurice Golden, Scottish Conservative shadow environment secretary has said these failures show that this SNP government is ‘asleep at the wheel’.

While this is concerning enough, these figures are compounded by the fact that the SNP is planning to increase incineration capacity by 500% over the next 5 years.

Maurice Golden, Scottish Conservative shadow environment secretary said:

“The SNP are once again asleep at the wheel while presiding over a series of missed environmental targets.

“The SNP has already missed one crucial recycling target and is clearly on course to miss another by a staggering amount.

“The SNP appear to have no ability to substantially improve household recycling and would rather bury waste in the ground, export to China or burn it.

“The Scottish Conservatives will this week be focussing attention on ways to improve the environment and create a cleaner, greener Scotland.

“The SNP must dramatically increase our recycling rate and ensure that Scotland is playing its part in tackling climate change.

“The SNP is clearly a tired government, running out of ideas and failing to deliver.”

[SNP should give farmers ‘certainty’ on payments by matching new clauses in Agriculture Bill](#)

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- SNP should give farmers ‘certainty’ on payments by matching new clauses in Agriculture Bill

9 Nov 2018



The SNP government should give the farming industry “certainty” on post-Brexit payments by matching new clauses in the UK Agriculture Bill, the Scottish Conservatives have said today.

DEFRA Minister George Eustice has tabled amendments to the legislation working its way through Westminster to clarify the legal status of payments from 2020 onwards.

The changes ensure there is a legal mechanism for payments to continue after the UK leaves the EU. At present, the bill only covers the period up to 2020.

The SNP government has refused to join the rest of the UK on the Agriculture Bill. The legislation allows for Wales and Northern Ireland, as devolved administrations, to develop their own support systems to replace the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy, under UK-wide frameworks.

Colin Clark MP, the Scottish Conservative spokesman on farming at Westminster, sits on the agriculture bill committee that is scrutinising the legislation.

He said: "Scottish farmers need clarity from the Scottish Government on the future of payments.

"The National Farmers Union Scotland has said 'the engine is running' on the Agriculture Bill currently going through parliament, and it is time for the SNP to get on board.

"The new clauses in the Bill clarify the legal status of payments from 2020 on. It is essential that Scotland, like Wales and Northern Ireland, is covered by this act of collective responsibility to the internal UK market.

"The UK Government has made a clear financial commitment up to the end of this parliament in 2022.

"As a member of the agriculture bill committee, I will hold the government to account to continue financial support to the farming industry.

"I would implore Fergus Ewing to use the new Clause 3 to give farmers clarity.

"As a farmer myself, I recognise the historic problems on payments have been painful. We cannot afford any further prevarication."

[Scots firms hit for £190m by SNP's high-tax agenda](#)

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- Scots firms hit for £190m by SNP's high-tax agenda

9 Nov 2018



Businesses in Scotland have been hit by an additional £190 million thanks to the doubling of rates by the SNP.

Latest figures have revealed medium and large firms north of the border have had to cough up the extra cash as a result of changes to the large business supplement.

In 2018/19, it is estimated the total bill for big companies will be £129,252,100, according to the parliamentary written answer by SNP ministers.

But if that rate had been kept on par with the rest of the UK, businesses would only have to pay £64,626,550.

Since 2016/17, the additional burden totals £190,776,450.

Shadow economy secretary Dean Lockhart warned the nationalists' high-tax agenda would hurt the economy and reduce job opportunities.

And he warned that SNP plans to consider an "out of town" levy would result in a double-whammy for businesses here.

That proposal has been criticised by leading business organisations in Scotland as adding "complexity, unpredictability and cost to a wide range of businesses that are already working hard to contribute to their local communities".

Scottish Conservative shadow economy secretary Dean Lockhart said:

"The Scottish economy continues to suffer under this SNP government.

"The SNP has now made Scotland the highest-taxed part of the UK for income tax and the highest-taxed part of the UK to run a business.

"The SNP has increasingly asked Scottish businesses to pay more and now they are considering an out-of-town levy that will add more cost and more complexity to business taxes.

"It is no wonder that our high streets are struggling and business numbers are falling dramatically across Scotland.

"The SNP must focus on improving the Scottish economy, not imposing unsustainable taxes on Scottish businesses."