

Friday 2 May 2014

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Enterprise and Environment

Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when it will provide guidance on unconventional gas extraction and hydraulic fracturing.

(S4W-20586)

Fergus Ewing: Proposals for unconventional gas extraction in Scotland will be studied on their merits. Each proposal will be considered through the normal planning process and the appropriate regulatory regimes including the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency's guidance on the regulation of shale gas and coal bed methane published December 2012.

There are no proposals which involve the use of hydraulic fracturing techniques in Scotland at this time. The Scottish Government will follow a rigorous, evidence-based approach in the development and deployment of this technology.

Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what direction it gives to Scottish Enterprise regarding its ethical and sustainable investment policies.

(S4W-20691)

Fergus Ewing: Scottish Enterprise (SE) aligns its investment policies to the Government Economic Strategy and to the guidance provided through its strategic guidance letter, which is issued on an annual basis.

The national performance framework highlights three key components of sustainable economic growth i.e. solidarity, cohesion and sustainability, which also informs SE's approach.

Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of its pension funds regarding investment in payday loan companies.

(S4W-20692)

John Swinney: The main Principal Civil Service Pension Schemes of which, most Scottish Government employees are members, are unfunded. There are no investments as you would find in a normal pension scheme.

The only exception to this is the partnership stakeholder pension which is a funded scheme currently provided by either Scottish Widows or Standard Life, however, the Scottish Government has no influence over which providers are used to run the stakeholder pensions or where funds are invested.

Governance and Communities

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how gender issues are mainstreamed in the Scottish Welfare Fund and related guidance.

(S4W-20602)

Margaret Burgess: The Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) is intended to help vulnerable people across Scotland, regardless of gender.

An equality impact assessment (EQIA) on the differences between the Discretionary Social Fund and SWF was published in April 2013. It did not find any evidence to suggest that there would be a differential effect between men and women under the SWF.

Gender issues have been mainstreamed in guidance by ensuring that vulnerabilities which are more commonly experienced by women are taken in to consideration in the decision making process.

Factors listed in the guidance as increasing a person's vulnerability include: people fleeing domestic violence, looking after children for a relative or friend as a kinship carer, being a lone parent, being pregnant, recent childbirth or adopting a child and having responsibility as a main care giver. There are also several vulnerabilities listed relating to the presence of children which are intended to impact

child poverty but will advantage women who are mothers. The EQIA can be found at the following link:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/welfarereform/socialfund/FullEQIA>.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it collects data on the Scottish Welfare Fund disaggregated by gender.

(S4W-20603)

Margaret Burgess: For every application to the Scottish Welfare Fund, we ask for the gender of each person in the household, including the main applicant, their partner, children and any other person living with them. Whilst this question is completed for 94% of people overall, the gender of the main applicant is known in 99.98% of applications.

Further details of the information we collect can be found in the data monitoring specification. This is available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/15257/1529/swf-dataspec>.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it has provided funding for gender sensitive advice and support services for women's organisations dealing with welfare reform.

(S4W-20604)

Margaret Burgess: The Scottish Government contributed £5.1 million to the £7.45 million making advice work fund, the remainder being contributed by money advice services. Stream three of this funding was focussed on tackling barriers in accessing advice for priority groups, one being people experiencing domestic abuse and several of the projects focussed on advice for women.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many applications have been made to the Scottish Welfare Fund by (a) men and (b) women, and how many of these were successful.

(S4W-20605)

Margaret Burgess: The Scottish Welfare Fund comprises of community care grants and crisis grants.

The table below shows the total number of community care grants and crisis grants decided between 1 April and 31 December 2013, broken down by the gender of the main applicant and whether the applications were successful or not.

	Rejected	Accepted	Total	Proportion Accepted
Community Care Grants				
Gender Not Recorded	2	4	6	
Male	6,059	9,848	15,907	62%
Female	6,001	12,506	18,507	68%
Total	12,062	22,358	34,420	65%

	Rejected	Accepted	Total	Proportion Accepted
Crisis Grants				
Gender Not Recorded	8	8	16	
Male	13,124	29,197	42,321	69%
Female	9,113	24,531	33,644	73%
Total	22,245	53,736	75,981	71%

For community care grants, 62% of males were successful and 68% of females were successful. For crisis grants, 69% of males were successful and 73% of females were successful. Statistics on the Scottish Welfare Fund can be found at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Social-Welfare/swf>.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what the cost is to the economy of occupational segregation.

(S4W-20606)

Angela Constance: Occupational segregation contributes to the gender pay gap, restricts women's employment opportunities and prevents them from achieving their fullest potential in the labour market.

We know that the causes are complex and include issues relating to gender stereotyping during education and career formation, inflexible work practices, and the under-valuing of roles and occupations associated with 'women's work'.

To translate these factors into a financial 'bottom line' is a challenge but one we are beginning to address, building on the work carried out by the Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) with the advice of the late Professor Ailsa MacKay, on the economic impact of transforming Scotland's childcare in an independent Scotland.

The CEA will follow up that work with an analysis of further steps Scotland can take to maximise economic opportunities for women.

We have also funded The Fraser of Allander Institute, via our key partners Close the Gap, to look at the economic benefits, measured in gross value added to Scotland of removing barriers to women's participation and progress in the labour market.

This will include estimating the loss of economic activity caused by barriers to women's participation and progress in some sectors, detailed in the Scottish Government's economic strategy.

Angus MacDonald (Falkirk East) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many people in the Falkirk Council area have received support from the Open Market Shared Equity Scheme since 2011, broken down by parliamentary constituency.

(S4W-20679)

Margaret Burgess: Between January 2011 and December 2013 a total of 34 homes were purchased in the Falkirk Council area under the Open Market Shared Equity scheme. Information on the parliamentary constituency of these homes is not held centrally.

Angus MacDonald (Falkirk East) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many (a) housing association and (b) local authority new build homes were completed in the Falkirk Council area in (i) 2011, (ii) 2012 and (iii) 2013, broken down by parliamentary constituency.

(S4W-20680)

Margaret Burgess: The following table shows the number of housing association and local authority new build homes completed in Falkirk Council area in 2011, 2012 and 2013. Information on the parliamentary constituency in which these homes are located is not held centrally.

	2011	2012	2013	Total
Housing association	82	28	10	120
Local authority	60	24	36	120

Note: Recent figures may be revised when future quarterly statistics releases are published.
Source: Scottish Government Housing Statistics for Scotland quarterly update, March 2014

Kevin Stewart (Aberdeen Central) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what measures it is taking to increase the provision of adult changing places in premises that it owns or operates.

(S4W-20809)

John Swinney: The Scottish Government does not have any facilities that comply with the requirements of adult changing places in the premises that it owns or operates.

The need for this type of facility across the Scottish Government estate will be kept under review and any requirements identified will be considered as part of our programme of future works.

Learning and Justice

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what labour market factors are different between Sweden and Scotland apart from childcare and whether these factors could impact on Scotland achieving a similar rate of female participation.

(S4W-20583)

Angela Constance: Although there are some broadly comparable features in the Swedish and Scottish labour markets, it should be noted that female participation is affected by a range of matters and not just the nature of the labour market.

However, we are clear that there is consistent and robust evidence across a range of international comparators that supports the argument for a significant link between affordable childcare and higher maternal employment rates.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to take a gendered approach to its employability programmes.

(S4W-20598)

Angela Constance: The Scottish Government, through Skills Development Scotland, ensures that there is fair and open access to all our national training programmes, including modern apprenticeships. Government supported training programmes are delivered by a wide range of stakeholders such as local authorities, colleges, training providers and employers. They must all meet their statutory obligations and operate within the appropriate laws, such as The Equality Act 2010 and the Employment Relations Act 1999.

The recent interim report from the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce makes a number of recommendations relating to government supported training programmes, and I am currently considering these recommendations, with the final report due in early summer. An important stage in the second half of the Wood Commission will include a focus on equality issues, looking to make meaningful recommendations to improve employment outcomes in relation to gender, disability and ethnicity.

We will use the findings from this work to develop a way forward for government supported training programmes which will better meet our aims and ambitions for Scotland.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what the average spend on apprenticeships is, broken down by gender.

(S4W-20599)

Angela Constance: This data is not held centrally. I will ask the chief executive of Skills Development Scotland to write to you with the information you have requested.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to tackle occupational segregation (a) in apprenticeships and (b) more generally.

(S4W-20600)

Angela Constance: When the Scottish Government and the STUC held the Women's Employment Summit in September 2012, discussion covered a wide range of areas. Since that time, a ministerial strategic group on women and work has met regularly to consider actions underway and what more can be done at all levels to enable women to fulfil their potential in the labour market. While we know many issues still remain, progress is being made in a number of areas, including occupational segregation.

With over 69% of women in paid work today, in Scotland women are represented in every sector in the labour market and at every level. Women's contribution to the economy through unpaid work must also be recognised. However, steps to tackle occupational segregation are a priority for the Strategic

Group on Women and Work, which I chair and we are closely monitoring the actions on this which are being co-ordinated through a cross directorate group on occupational segregation.

The Scottish Government, through Skills Development Scotland (SDS), ensures that there is fair and open access to all our national training programmes, including modern apprenticeships. Training interventions are designed to help us address skills gaps across the economy in response to employer demand and learner preferences.

The Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programme is a fully employed programme in Scotland and as a result recruitment decisions are in the hands of participating employers. There is therefore an important role for employers in terms of adapting their behaviour to attract and retain a balanced workforce. We agreed with the Equal Opportunities Committee recommendation that SDS should campaign to raise awareness of the MA programme with disadvantaged groups, and Scottish apprenticeship week in May 2014 will have equalities as a major focus.

The biggest impact in addressing the occupational choices of individuals comes through the provision of good careers advice, making young people aware of opportunities in any given sector and allowing them to undertake the appropriate qualifications and training to move into these opportunities.

Achieving a balanced workforce which reflects Scottish society as a whole is a challenge for the labour market as a whole and is not specific to government supported training programmes. We appreciate, however, that we need to do more to ensure young people understand the nature and opportunities available across the labour market, and that employers recognise the economic and social value of a balanced workforce.

The recent interim report from the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce makes a number of recommendations relating to government supported training programmes, and I am currently considering these recommendations, with the final report due in early summer. An important stage in the second half of the Wood Commission will be a focus on equality issues, looking to make meaningful recommendations to improve employment outcomes in relation to gender, disability and ethnicity.

We will use the findings from this work to develop a way forward for government supported training programmes which will better meet our aims and ambitions for Scotland.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many apprenticeships there have been in each of the last five years, broken down by (a) gender and (b) occupation.

(S4W-20601)

Angela Constance: Skills Development Scotland (SDS) publishes management information on government supported training programme, including modern apprenticeships on a quarterly basis.

The published data is broken down by gender, age, framework followed (which relates to the apprentice's occupation) and local authority area. I attach a link to SDS published data:

<http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/statistics/modern-apprenticeships/>.

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what the cost would be of the third phase of its childcare proposals as outlined in its white paper on independence.

(S4W-20629)

Aileen Campbell: In *Scotland's Future* we set out our plans for the first Parliament after independence. In our first budget after independence we will commit £100 million to extend 600 hours of childcare a year to nearly half of Scotland's two year olds. By the end of the first Parliament these two years olds and all three and four year olds will be entitled to 1,140 hours of childcare a year, with a further investment of £600 million.

By providing access to both sides of the balance sheet, independence also provides the opportunity to reinvest higher revenues from improved economic activity back into expanding childcare provision.

As set out on page 195 of *Scotland's Future*, we will undertake a review of our cost structure, based on international examples, to ensure that our future investment in early learning and childcare achieves the best possible outcomes.

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on the analysis of the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) that the third phase of the childcare proposals as outlined in the white paper on independence would cost £1.2 billion.

(S4W-20630)

Aileen Campbell: The Scottish Government has already committed to significant spend on childcare. Through the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act, we have committed more than a quarter of a billion pounds (£280m) to expand funded, quality childcare from 12.5 hours to almost 16 hours a week for three and four year olds and around 15% of two year olds from August 2014, rising to around 27% of 2 year olds from August 2015.

In addition, in *Scotland's Future* we set out our plans for the first Parliament after independence. In our first budget after independence we will commit £100 million to extend 600 hours of childcare a year to nearly half of Scotland's two year olds. By the end of the first Parliament these two years olds and all three and four year olds will be entitled to 1,140 hours of childcare a year, with a further investment of £600 million.

The SPICe figure of £1.2 billion to deliver our childcare policy in full is a high level estimate and is not based on a detailed assessment of the service model or detailed figures for costs.

Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what analysis it has made of the possibility of women already in the labour market increasing their hours of work rather than an overall increase in labour market participation as a result of its proposals for childcare in an independent Scotland.

(S4W-20632)

Aileen Campbell: The Scottish Government has assessed the evidence base setting out the links between childcare and female labour force participation. In a recent report from the European Commission, among mothers in the UK citing childcare as a barrier to working full-time, over 70% say it is because of the costs.

Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what the (a) remit and (b) timescale is for its review of the childcare workforce; who is on the review panel, and whether it plans to publish minutes of its meetings.

(S4W-20644)

Aileen Campbell: A terms of reference for the Independent Review of Early Years Workforce and Out of School Care Workforce Review, setting out the remit, will be published on the Scottish Government website shortly.

A Core Reference Group of stakeholders will be established to support the chair, and the list of members will be included in the terms of reference. No meetings have been arranged at this stage. The minutes of any meetings which take place will be published.

Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether its review of the childcare workforce will consider the economics of childcare policy.

(S4W-20652)

Aileen Campbell: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-20644 on 2 May 2014. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>

Mary Fee (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-13410 by Kenny MacAskill on 15 March 2013, what progress has been made in establishing a sentencing council.

(S4W-20677)

Kenny MacAskill: The Scottish Government is committed to establishing the Scottish sentencing council within the lifetime of this Parliament. We are working, in dialogue with senior judiciary, to ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place with a view to the council being established before the end of this Parliament.

Anne McTaggart (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it considers that the Lands Tribunal for Scotland should have the authority to vary or extinguish servitudes contained in the dispositions of residential property.

(S4W-20686)

Roseanna Cunningham: The Lands Tribunal for Scotland has a jurisdiction under the Title Conditions (Scotland) Act 2003 to vary or discharge title conditions, including servitudes. Further information can be found on the Lands Tribunal's website:

<http://www.lands-tribunal-scotland.org.uk/jurisdictions.html>. The government does not plan any changes in this area but would be happy to consider representations on any particular points, which could be taken into account for any future legislation in this area.

Jenny Marra (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when it will bring forward proposals to the Parliament to deal with dangerous dogs.

(S4W-20811)

Kenny MacAskill: The consultation '*Promoting responsible dog ownership in Scotland: microchipping and other measures*' closed on 31 March 2014 with in excess of 2,000 responses received. The responses will be independently analysed and thoroughly considered and it is expected that an analysis report will be published during summer 2014.

In addition, the Scottish Government held a responsible dog ownership summit on 27 March 2014. This was an opportunity to bring together key stakeholders including representatives from local authorities, the police, prosecutors and animal welfare charities to discuss how the current laws and approach on dangerous and out of control dogs is operating and whether further measures are needed to improve public safety.

The Scottish Government will be informed by the views offered in response to both the consultation and at the summit as we consider next steps in relation to improving responsible dog ownership within our communities.

Transport Scotland

Elaine Smith (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government for what reason trade union representatives are not included in the membership of the Expert Ferry Group.

(S4W-20827)

Keith Brown: Membership of the Expert Ferry Group is on the basis of an individual's knowledge and expertise rather than as a representative of a particular stakeholder group. Members of the Expert Ferry Group include key transport professionals, academics and operators of ferry services.

The work of the Expert Ferry Group will be in relation to strategic issues. It is open to members of the group to propose strategic issues for consideration by the group.

Elaine Smith (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how the interests of workers in the ferry industry are represented on the Expert Ferry Group.

(S4W-20828)

Keith Brown: I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-20827 on 2 May 2014. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Elaine Smith (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what steps it is taking to prevent private operators from promoting their interests at the Expert Ferry Group, and whether members of the group can redact sections of official minutes of the group's meetings.

(S4W-20829)

Keith Brown: Only one of the 10 members of the group is a private ferry operator. The other members cover a broad range of interests and are mostly drawn from the public or academic sectors.

Transport Scotland provides secretariat support to the Expert Ferry Group and Transport Scotland prepare the minutes of the meeting of the group. Members of the group are asked to comment on and clear minutes prior to publication on the Transport Scotland website. Members cannot redact sections of the minutes of the group meetings. The minutes are open and transparent and are published on the Transport Scotland website:

<http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/water/expert-ferry-group>

Elaine Smith (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will publish the names of all former and current members of the Expert Ferry Group.

(S4W-20830)

Keith Brown: Details of the current members of the Expert Ferry Group can be found on the Transport Scotland website: <http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/water/expert-ferry-group>

Professor Neil Kay was formerly a member of the Expert Ferry Group, however he resigned from the group in February 2014.

Elaine Smith (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many times the Expert Ferry Group has met; who attended the meetings, and whether it will publish the (a) draft and (b) final minutes of the meetings.

(S4W-20831)

Keith Brown: There have now been two meetings of the Expert Ferry Group, with the next meeting scheduled for 14 May 2014. Minutes of each meeting, including details of who attended, are published on the Transport Scotland website:

<http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/water/expert-ferry-group>

Mark McDonald (Aberdeen Donside) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what discussions it had with officials from Aberdeen City Council in advance of the public exhibition of the Haudagain improvement proposals on 24-25 April 2014.

(S4W-20869)

Keith Brown: Regular meetings have taken place between officials from Transport Scotland and Aberdeen City Council since April 2013 to discuss the Haudagain Improvement scheme which included the public exhibitions.

Mark McDonald (Aberdeen Donside) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government when the booking of the Lord Provost Henry E Rae Community Centre was made for the public exhibition of the Haudagain improvement proposals on 24-25 April 2014 and whether it was made by means of contact with Aberdeen City Council.

(S4W-20870)

Keith Brown: Aberdeen City Council officials booked the community centre for the Haudagain exhibitions on behalf of Transport Scotland on 20 February 2014.

Mark McDonald (Aberdeen Donside) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it has received any correspondence from members of Aberdeen City Council administration in relation to the public exhibition of the Haudagain improvement proposals on 24-25 April 2014.

(S4W-20871)

Keith Brown: Aside from two local councillors accepting our invitation to attend the exhibition, no correspondence has been received from elected members of Aberdeen City Council in relation to the public exhibitions.

Regular meetings have taken place between officials from Transport Scotland and Aberdeen City Council since April 2013 to discuss the Haudagain improvement scheme which included the public exhibitions.

Mark McDonald (Aberdeen Donside) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it received prior confirmation from Aberdeen City Council that council officials would attend the public exhibition of the Haudagain improvement proposals on 24-25 April 2014.

(S4W-20872)

Keith Brown: Council officials had agreed to attend the public exhibitions to discuss the Middlefield regeneration programme and assisted in distributing posters and leaflets.

Mark McDonald (Aberdeen Donside) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government when Aberdeen City Council advised it that council officials would not attend the public exhibition of the Haudagain improvement proposals on 24-25 April 2014.

(S4W-20873)

Keith Brown: Transport Scotland were advised by telephone on 17 April 2014 that Aberdeen City Council officials would not attend the exhibitions.

Mark McDonald (Aberdeen Donside) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether the notification that Aberdeen City Council officials would not attend the public exhibition of the Haudagain improvement proposals on 24-25 April 2014 was issued by a council official or an elected member.

(S4W-20874)

Keith Brown: Notification was given by Aberdeen City Council officials.

The following questions received holding answers:

S4W-20574

S4W-20575