

Wednesday 21 May 2014

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Enterprise and Environment

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how many sheep inspections (a) have taken place and (b) are planned during the current lambing season, broken down by Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate area office, as reported in *The Scottish Farmer* on 18 April 2014.

Holding answer issued: 20 May 2014

(S4W-20998)

Richard Lochhead: Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate have carried out two sheep and goat identification and traceability inspections during the traditional Scottish lambing season, one in the Ayr and one in the Perth area office commands.

The inspections were carried out at the request of European Commission audit officials.

There are no further inspections planned during the 2014 traditional Scottish lambing season.

Governance and Communities

Malcolm Chisholm (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what funding streams are available to help the Edinburgh Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre in addition to the Violence Against Women Fund and the Rape Crisis Specific Fund.

(S4O-03244)

Shona Robison: The Edinburgh Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre currently receive funding through both of these funding streams, which are fully committed until March 2015. However, I am aware that Rape Crisis Scotland has funded a consultant to work with the Edinburgh Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre to support them on a range of issues including their funding strategy.

Mike MacKenzie (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking in relation to permitted development rights on battlefields.

(S4W-21061)

Derek Mackay: The Scottish Government is already taking steps to ensure planning authorities protect, conserve and where appropriate seek to enhance, the key landscape characteristics and special qualities of sites on the current inventory of historic battlefields which includes Culloden.

Last year we consulted on proposals as part of our draft planning policy to reflect recent legislation around the protection and management of battlefields and we will publish the finalised policy in June 2014. We will also amend the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 to remove the current permitted development rights from agricultural and forestry buildings to ensure that planning applications are required for any new buildings on designated battlefields.

Health and Social Care

Claire Baker (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many sports clubs in Fife have received tickets for the Commonwealth Games.

(S4O-03245)

Shona Robison: As part of the Scottish Government's legacy ticket initiative, Sportscotland will be distributing at least 1,000 tickets to key individuals who have made a significant contribution to sports clubs.

It is not yet possible to say how many of these tickets will be allocated to individuals in Fife because the nomination process is currently still open and will close on Friday 23 May 2014.

I will be happy to provide information on the clubs that have benefitted from the Scottish Government ticket initiative once the tickets have been allocated to successful nominees in June 2014.

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government how athletes and their families were informed that a “Scotland House facility” offered them a home from home during the 2012 London Olympics and how many attended as visitors.

(S4W-21056)

Shona Robison: Sportscotland worked directly with the British Olympic Association on inviting athletes and their families to Scotland House during the 2012 London Olympics.

More than 3,000 visitors came to Scotland House. Further information on Scotland House can be found at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/ArtsCultureSport/Sport/MajorEvents/Glasgow-2014/London2012>.

For the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, Scotland House will provide a safe and relaxed environment for Team Scotland athletes and their families. Athletes will be notified of this facility through Commonwealth Games Scotland.

Roderick Campbell (North East Fife) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4O-02081 by Michael Matheson on 8 May 2013 (Official Report, c.19500), what the level of uptake has been for the shingles vaccine.

(S4W-21064)

Michael Matheson: The shingles immunisation programme was introduced to the Scottish immunisation programme from 1 September 2013. Uptake rates for the 2013-14 programme, which runs to the end of August 2014, will be published in November 2014 on the Information Services Division website at:

<http://www.isdscotland.org/>

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government when it will publish its consultation on National Care Standards and whether this will include an option for an obligation to offer provision of arts and creativity as part of the regular care of older people.

(S4W-21067)

Alex Neil: As I set out in my parliamentary statement on 8 May 2014, the Scottish Government will publish a consultation on the review of National Care Standards in the next few weeks. The consultation will seek views on taking a human rights based approach to developing new standards, giving people who use services greater opportunities to choose and personalise their care and support according to their needs and particular interests.

Learning and Justice

Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the report of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which expressed concern at the under-representation of women and girls in so-called STEM apprenticeships in Scotland.

(S4O-03253)

Angela Constance: This Government notes the concerns and recommendations from the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Achieving a more balanced workforce across STEM employment is a challenge for the wider labour market and is not specific to the Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programme, but one that this Government is committed to improving.

We launched CareerWISE Scotland, with £250,000 funding, to encourage young women to consider careers in STEM subjects, including as MAs. CareerWISE has established a programme of paid student placement and will see STEM sector champions meeting girls at primary school age.

We also agreed with the aspirations of the interim report from the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce which included recommendations for increasing the number of STEM MAs. An important stage of the second half of this work is a focus on equality issues and we look forward to receiving these in the final report due in June 2014.

Bruce Crawford (Stirling) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what action Skills Development Scotland is taking to encourage apprenticeships in traditional skills.

(S4O-03254)

Angela Constance: Skills Development Scotland works with Sector Skills Councils and other partners, to promote the uptake of all apprenticeship frameworks through My World of Work and Our Skillsforce. This includes working with Historic Scotland to promote opportunities for apprenticeships in traditional skills.

This week during the fourth annual Scottish Apprenticeship Week Scottish Ministers, and indeed MSPs from across the Chamber, will take part in a range of activities and events across the country to promote the benefits that apprenticeships bring to individuals, employers and the economy.

Right now Historic Scotland are promoting apprenticeships in traditional sectors, with a two day event taking place in St Andrew's Square showcasing traditional building skills.

Hanzala Malik (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what support it can provide to young people from economically-deprived areas who want to apply to the Commonwealth Youth Fund and the Commonwealth Apprentice Initiative.

(S4O-03255)

Angela Constance: These initiatives are funded by Glasgow City Council to help young people from that area into apprenticeships or other employment.

Across Scotland, Opportunities for All ensures that every 16 to 19 year old is guaranteed the offer of a place in training or education, while Activity Agreements provide a first-step for those furthest from the labour market, including access to a wide range of learning opportunities in the community and third sector. Within the Glasgow City Council area this will include referral to these initiatives where appropriate.

Through our own £5 million Legacy 2014: Young Persons' Fund, we will support 2,500 young people to help them progress toward and into employment, education or training. To date, over 1,600 young people have been supported into an apprenticeship or volunteering opportunity through our Legacy 2014 Employer Recruitment Incentive and Scotland's Best initiative.

Strategy and External Affairs

Liz Smith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many private meetings (a) Cabinet Secretaries and (b) Ministers have had with newspaper editors in each year since 2007, broken down by newspaper.

(S4W-21060)

Nicola Sturgeon: All meetings between the First Minister and newspaper editors between 2007 and March 2014 are listed on the Scottish Government website. Also listed are all meetings between Cabinet Secretaries/Ministers and newspaper editors between 2007 and August 2012:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/People/14944/proprietors-editors-execs>

Meetings between Cabinet Secretaries/Ministers and newspaper editors subsequent to August 2012 are included within their ministerial engagements which are proactively published on the Scottish Government website:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/People/14944/Events-Engagements/MinisterialEngagements>

Transport Scotland

Liz Smith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to extend the electrification of the railway line to Dunblane to include the line to Perth.

(S4W-21058)

Keith Brown: The Scottish Government plans to invest £5 billion between 2014 and 2019 to improve rail infrastructure and services. Network Rail will also oversee the development of a rolling programme of electrification at 100km of track per year upon the completion of the Edinburgh to Glasgow Improvement Programme. Priorities for future electrification, following the electrification of

the line between Edinburgh and Glasgow Queen Street via Falkirk High, will be determined in due course.

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-15721 by Keith Brown on 28 June 2013, how many training roles Serco NorthLink offered to new ratings in 2013-14 as a result of its work with Orkney College and how many new ratings the company plans to train in 2014-15.

(S4W-21066)

Keith Brown: In the summer season 2013, Serco NorthLink recruited six new entrant ratings into the industry. Five were from Orkney and one from Aberdeen. In 2014 Serco Northlink recruited 14 new entrant ratings from the North-East: 11 from Orkney, one from Shetland and two from the Aberdeen area.

As part of this recruitment exercise a range of mandatory training is undertaken, elements of which are delivered in conjunction with Orkney College.

The Operations Director and HR Manager from Serco NorthLink are due to visit both Orkney and Banff Colleges in the immediate future to further enhance and develop local relationships in this area.

Angus MacDonald (Falkirk East) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what progress has been made regarding the re-instatement of a passenger rail service between Grangemouth and Falkirk.

(S4W-21093)

Keith Brown: A passenger rail station at Grangemouth was not raised during the consultation process for the 2008 Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) which sets out the Scottish Government's 29 transport investment priorities over the period to 2032. As the STPR forms the main basis for the specification of future transport spending until 2032, the Scottish Government has no current plans to re-instate a passenger service between Grangemouth and Falkirk.

We understand that Falkirk Council, in conjunction with the South East Scotland Transport Partnership, is updating an earlier feasibility study in line with Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance on a potential new railway station at Grangemouth. The Scottish Ministers are willing to consider proposals for new services where there are clear benefits, subject to affordability and taking into account the potential negative effect on other passengers on the network.

The following question received a holding answer:

S4W-21057