

Parliamentary Patter is published by John Mason MSP to give members of the community a window into his parliamentary and constituency work. This newsletter is distributed monthly to those who have asked for an opportunity to read what their Member of the Scottish Parliament does and thinks.

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East end food bank opens

Local MSP, John Mason, has welcomed the launch of the new Glasgow North East food bank this month. The food bank is a voluntary effort designed to help people in crisis in the East End by providing emergency food supplies.

John Mason commented: "I regard it as a scandal that there are people in the East End in the 21st century who struggle to feed themselves and their families, but this situation is sadly a reality for some people. My own view is that changes happening in the benefits system just now are making this situation much worse.

"What is positive, however, is that so many people in the East End are concerned enough to act. Calton Parkhead Church of Scotland on Helenvale Street, working in partnership with the Trussell Trust, has set up the Glasgow North East food bank. The food bank will organise food parcels for those in need throughout the East End, and have already had many people referred to them by a number of agencies.

"I would commend the work being done in the community to meet the needs of families in crisis and wish all the volunteers well in their work. Some of the most vulnerable families in the East End are currently facing great uncertainty around their basic income and while I am saddened that this facility is needed, I am greatly heartened by the commitment of those providing it."

Local MSP condemns Royal Mail privatisation

Scottish MPs say no - London ploughs ahead anyway!

Glasgow Shettleston's MSP John Mason has reacted with anger following the announcement that the Westminster Government has confirmed the sale of shares in Royal Mail.

Commenting from the Scottish Parliament, local MSP John Mason said: "This is yet another deeply flawed Westminster decision, which threatens to have particularly harmful consequences for Scotland where so many of our communities rely on our existing Royal Mail service.

"Given our experience of previous privatisations from London-led Governments, no-one seriously believes that the regulator will provide real protection to consumers on either prices or services.

"Once again we see Scottish MPs voting one way and Westminster enacting the opposite. We saw it with the bedroom tax which 91% of Scottish MPs voted against and now we're seeing it with Royal Mail privatisation which 78% of Scottish MPs voted against. It is, therefore, my opinion that the only way to ensure that Scotland's voice really counts is for it to take on the normal powers of independence.

"Royal Mail must be viewed as part of our national infrastructure not just as another business. Devolution has certainly allowed us to take some of our own decisions, for example not to privatise the NHS like they're doing south of the border, but only independence will put Scotland's future in Scotland's hands.



Local MSP John Mason, pictured at the post-box on Abercromby Street in Calton, is critical of the UK Government's decision to privatise Royal Mail.

The Shettleston MSP continued: "Consistently Scotland's voice has been ignored by London Governments. It's time to take these decisions in Scotland, and for Scotland".

Speaking on TV recently, First Minister Alex Salmond has also called upon the Westminster Government to place a moratorium on its decision sell Royal Mail until such times as Scotland's constitutional future is decided following the referendum on independence.

John backs MacMillan coffee morning

Glasgow Shettleston's MSP, John Mason, is once again urging constituents to join him and take part in the World's Biggest Coffee Morning.

The Scottish National Party MSP, who in 2011 hosted his own MacMillan Coffee Morning, has been a big supporter of the MacMillan charity over the years. Mr Mason hopes to attend this year's East End Coffee Morning in Baillieston St Andrew's Church at 10am on September 27th.

Commenting ahead of the 2013 World's Biggest Coffee Morning, SNP MSP John Mason said: "I know that a considerable number of constituents have personal experience of the problems a cancer diagnosis can bring to both patients and their family, and I know that MacMillan has been there to support many of those in need.

"A local coffee morning is a fun and easy way to raise money to help MacMillan be there for people with cancer and their families when they need them most."



Pictured outside the Scottish Parliament, local MSP John Mason is supporting the 2013 World's Biggest Coffee Morning.

Sandybraes Factors

John Mason recently facilitated a public meeting in Barlanark to discuss factoring in the Sandybraes estate. The local MSP had previously been contacted by residents in the estate concerning the factoring and general maintenance of buildings and land in the Sandybraes area.

Commenting after the public meeting, John Mason MSP said: "I know that some residents have questioned whether factors are necessary at all but I have found throughout the constituency that areas without factors are not as well maintained as areas which do have factors. However, obviously we want the relationship with Cumming Turner & Watt or any other factors to be the best it can be and that was one of the key purposes of last night's meeting.

"I am delighted that over 100 folk took part in the May public meeting and now hope that the Residents Committee can go forward and build a strong relationship with the factors. It's not only in Barlanark that factoring is an issue. I've also been working on a similar case in Calton and I know that this continues to be an issue in Dennistoun and Broomhouse as well."

If you wish to raise a factoring issue with Mr Mason, please call the Constituency Office on 550-4327.

Report backs Government corporation tax plans

The findings of a new report by the Scottish Parliament's Information Centre have today backed up analysis by the Scottish Government that a reduction in corporation tax can increase economic growth and boost employment.

Analysis by the Scottish Government has shown that a 3% reduction in Corporation Tax could grow Scotland's GDP by 1.4% and create an additional 27,000 jobs.

A recent report from SPICe confirmed that "it is reasonable to suggest that in most plausible scenarios a 3% cut in corporation tax will expand the economy, create jobs and increase investment. Exports would also be expected to rise in absolute terms and as a share of Scotland's economy."

The SPICe paper also points out that the Scottish Government's analysis was based on the 2010 EY Attractiveness Survey and if the 2011 or 2012 surveys had been used in the model instead, the predicted increase in employment would have been even higher.

Commenting, local MSP John Mason - who is also Deputy Convener of the Parliament's Finance Committee - said: "This report provides extremely welcome backing to the Scottish Government's analysis of what we could achieve with powers over Corporation Tax.

"The report from SPICe confirms the robustness of the Scottish Government's analysis and indeed points out that using more recently published figures would see an even greater predicted impact on jobs and growth.

"Creating 27,000 additional jobs in Scotland would provide a huge shot in the arm to Scotland's economy and be a major spur to economic growth.

"As an independent nation, taking decisions about Scotland in Scotland we will be able to use the powers over tax and welfare to build a fairer, more prosperous country.

"That is one of the clearest gains that a Yes vote in next year's referendum will secure for people living in Scotland."



East End MSP John Mason is optimistic about the economic prospects of an independent Scotland.

Meallmore update

We have received a brief update below concerning the proposed care home on Glasgow Road:

"Marshall Construction Ltd have been awarded the contract as the main contractor and are about to commence works on the construction of Meallmore's 32 bed care home on the site that is formerly the Henry Boot Offices (just next to Farmfoods).

No machinery operations or deliveries will take place out with the hours of Monday to Friday 8.00am—6.00pm or on Saturdays 9.00am-1.00pm."

Meallmore are hoping to invite residents to a public exhibition to discuss plans for the new care home and discuss any local concerns about the facility.