

Steven Paterson MP
Member of Parliament for the Stirling Constituency

Newsletter

November 2016

Dear friend,

Recently, I held a series of drop-in surgeries across the constituency to give residents an opportunity to pop in, sit down, and talk to me about their problems, concerns, or questions. By far, the most talked about issue at these surgeries is that of Brexit and Scotland's place in the European Union. Since being elected to serve the Stirling Constituency at Westminster, the EU referendum and result has been the issue that my office and I have received more letters, emails, and phone calls about than any other.

This comes as little surprise as 75% of people here voted in the EU referendum with support for Remain receiving 67.7%. With such huge support in Stirling and across the whole of Scotland for our EU membership, it is vital that Scotland's voice is heard. Whilst the UK Government remains reluctant to give much of a glimpse into what "Brexit means Brexit" will actually mean for Scotland, I fully support the First Minister and Scottish Government's efforts to seek ways in which to protect our status and rights as an EU member.

As always, if you have an issue you would like to discuss with me, please do not hesitate to contact my office on: **01786 406 375** or by email: **steven.paterson.mp@parliament.uk**.

Yours for Scotland,

Steven Paterson MP

Get in touch...

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Parliamentary Work

The Human Rights Act

The disappointing UK vote to leave the European Union has seen the new UK Government use the platform to push some of their more controversial policies. This includes the scrapping of the Human Rights Act - a proposal that I am completely opposed to.

Recently, I highlighted that it had been noted within the Council of Europe that the UK Government's refusal to provide a clear timeframe on this matter had created "an atmosphere of anxiety and concern in civil society and within devolved administrations."

It is deeply worrying that this UK Government intends to compromise on something as fundamental as human rights in the event that they no longer have to listen to a minimum standard as agreed within the European Union.

The right to remain of EU nationals working in Scotland

Before the EU referendum on June 23rd, my office was contacted by a large number of EU citizens living in the constituency who had concerns about what a potential Brexit meant for their right to remain.

The Freedom of Movement mechanism of the EU allows EU nationals to live and work in the UK as well as UK nationals to live and work elsewhere in the EU. Leaving the EU means that we may no longer have access to this system and calls into question the status of those who rely on these rights already.

I have consistently raised this matter with UK Government ministers and called on them to commit to protecting. With the Prime Minister's failure to commit to protecting EU nationals, I called for immigration to be devolved to the Scottish Parliament - where we have a Government who can lead and will do the right thing by EU citizens.

A City Deal for all of Stirling

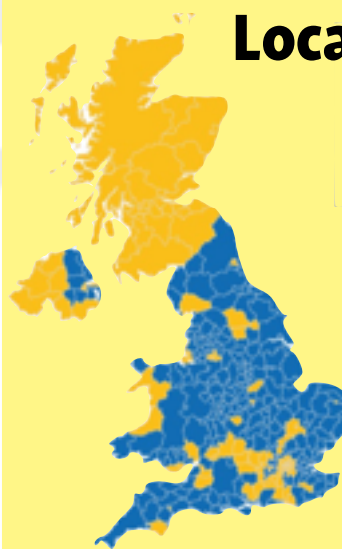
Recently, I led a cross-party delegation of local elected representatives from Stirling down to Whitehall to meet with Under-Secretary of State for Scotland and other officials of the Scotland Office in order to discuss our City Deal bid.

A City Deal for Stirling has the potential to create growth and job opportunities locally by improving infrastructure and encouraging investment. UK Government Ministers have praised the competency of Stirling's business plan and - alongside the Scottish Government - have signalled their support for our bid. This is due to the hard work and determination of Stirling Council officers and their expertise should be commended.

With the UK Chancellor's Autumn Statement later this month, I hope to see a firm commitment from his Government to investing in Stirling.



Local EU Funding



I have raised the issue of EU funding that the Stirling constituency receives on a number of occasions with UK Government ministers. We are yet to hear the Government's plan to ensure that being pulled out of the EU won't negatively affect funding in Stirling.

It would be completely unacceptable if we lost out on various funding vehicles that we receive through our membership of the EU despite voting by a large majority to remain. The UK Government must be clear on their plans to protect and fund the benefits Scotland has through being a member of the EU.



In the Stirling Constituency

Bonnie the Rhino



Welcoming the latest addition to Blair Drummond Safari Park, I had the chance to meet Bonnie - a one-week-old baby white rhino (photographed above alongside Ailsa McCormick - one of the rhino keepers). Bonnie is the fifth rhino to have been born at Blair Drummond and joins four lion cubs who were also born this year at the park.

Consulting Local Businesses on VAT

Over the summer period, I consulted a large number of businesses in the Stirling area who are either hospitality or tourism related. I wanted to gain a better understanding as to how current rates of VAT are affecting business growth potential and job creation.

The responses indicate that current VAT arrangements inhibit growth and job creation in the sector and we could drive business growth and job opportunities in this area by following the example of other European countries by reducing VAT on tourism-related businesses.

I have taken the evidence gathered to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the UK Government's consideration. It is important that he takes seriously the ability for Scottish businesses to grow - especially when faced with uncertainty brought about by the vote to leave the European Union.

Police Scotland's new recruit



I was delighted to catch up recently with Sgt Young and PC Inglis of Forth Valley Police Division's Dog Unit.

One of the police dogs in service, Kai, is due for retirement in coming months so Chase (right) is currently being trained up to take his place. Chase is 7-months-old and will be working across the whole of the Forth Valley area, including Stirling in assisting officers with general duties including events and searches. Also pictured is Otis, a spaniel who works as a specialist search dog - helping recover missing persons as well as lost property.

The work that the team does goes a long way in helping to keep our streets safe and this is due to the dedication of both officers and canine companions.



Drop-in Surgeries

My next round of surgeries will be on November 19th:

Killearn Village Hall: 10:30-11:15

Drymen Library: 11:45-12:30

Milton of Buchanan Memorial Hall: 12:45-13:30

Strathblane Village Club: 14:30-15:15

Social Media...



@Steven4Stirling



Steven Paterson MP