

John Wilson MSP

Representing Central Scotland

January 2016 Newsletter



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Call for public ownership of essential transport services

John offered his support to ferry workers who visited the Scottish Parliament to protest against the possible privatisation of Clyde and Hebridean Ferry services. The contract which carries foot passengers and cars between many Scottish Islands may be awarded to private company Serco, causing a great deal of anxiety amongst workers and those who rely on the ferry services to travel to the mainland.



John has also submitted a series of questions to the Scottish Government asking about the new operations of Abellio Scotrail, who were recently awarded the contract to run Scotrail services following a controversial bidding process.

The written questions challenged the government over how rail workers rights would be affected, the identity of the consultants involved and the cost of the exercise to the taxpayer .

“These are vital services, allowing people to travel for work , leisure and to keep in touch with family.. They are also essential for business. Public ownership would generate money for the government and create a reliable, affordable service, for the benefit of the people of Scotland.

For contracts already in the private sector, we must ensure that any new contracts and negotiations allow room for worker representation, as workers will face the day-to-day realities of any change in contracts.”



Respect at work

John spoke in a recent members debate to encourage and support workers’ rights in Scotland. The debate followed a motion congratulating USDAW on running Respect for Shopworkers Week , which aims to highlight the legal rights Shopworkers have to protect themselves from physical and verbal abuse from customers and to ensure workers are able to recognise and fight for their employment rights.

John also highlighted how the proposed proposed UK Governments Trade Union Bill will impact workers’ rights, affecting the ability of unions to organise action and to collectively bargain on pay and conditions.

“This issue applies to workers across the board. If we are to be serious about respect at work, we must continue to fight for and provide workers’ rights. Respect and dignity are rights, not privileges. Stripping unions of their rights and their ability to fairly, accurately and freely represent workers is an insult to the hardworking people of the UK.”

The costs of this publication have been met out of Scottish Parliamentary resources. Please note that the Scottish Parliament is not responsible for the content of other internet websites.

Condemning Airstrikes

John submitted a motion for member's debate to parliament raising concerns over the UK Parliament decision to begin air strikes in Syria and calling for the Scottish Parliament to condemn the decision. The fact that the bombing of heavily populated areas will inevitably lead to substantial numbers of civilian casualties, led to the motion achieving cross party support and a chamber debate.

“The decision taken by the Commons demonstrates a defiant will to march headlong towards war and ignore the many lessons we should have learned from previous interventions, this campaign will have one outcome only; scores of dead civilians.”

Costly alternative to public ownership

Government answers reveal that £12million has been spent on consultancy costs, as a result of Westminster's rail franchise policies and the decision by Scottish ministers to separately award the Caledonian Sleeper Service franchise to outsourcing company Serco.

“The scope of contracts being awarded to these specialist outsourcing companies is shocking, Companies without historic expertise, running these lifeline services at massive profit, often to the detriment of employees, when they could be taken back into public ownership is a national disgrace.”

Regional Focus:

To thank Post Office workers for all their hard work to ensure Christmas mail deliveries reach their destinations on time, John paid an early morning visit to **Motherwell** sorting office

John attended an event at New College Lanarkshire – **Coatbridge**, bringing together local voluntary organisations as well as groups aimed at tackling fuel poverty.

Representatives of Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) met John to discuss the potential closure of the HMRC offices in **East Kilbride**.

John was delighted to attend the Salvation Army Carol concert in **Falkirk** and be asked to give a bible reading.



This will be the last monthly newsletter of this parliamentary session

SURGERIES

Monday 11th Jan

Chryston Cultural Centre - 10.00am

Coatbridge, New Townhead Community Centre
11.30am

Coatbridge ASDA - 1.00pm

Friday 8th Jan

Falkirk ASDA - 11am

Monday 18th Jan

Bellshill Cultural Centre -10.00am

Motherwell, South Dalziel Studios -11.00am

No Appointment Required

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