

Tuesday 10 December 2013

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

### Enterprise and Environment

**Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking ahead of the independence referendum to identify pension schemes that operate both in Scotland and across the rest of the UK; what information it has on how many of the schemes fail to meet the requirement in the EU directive for occupational retirement schemes that they should be fully-funded at all times, and what information it has on (a) the size of the funding shortfall and (b) how many have a recovery plan to deal with this.

(S4W-18568)

**John Swinney:** Information on the valuations and recovery plans of UK defined benefit and hybrid pension schemes is published by The Pensions Regulator and is available on its website: <http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/docs/scheme-funding-appendix-2013.pdf>. Data held by The Pensions Regulator does not identify which of these schemes operates both in Scotland and in the rest of the UK.

Our paper on *Pensions in an Independent Scotland* clearly sets out the steps we think should be taken to agree pragmatic transitional arrangements to address the impact of the cross-border requirements on existing schemes and set out how schemes which become cross-border at the date of independence would be required to adjust.

The Scottish Government proposes that discussions with the UK Government and the European Commission on this issue should start immediately, with a view to agreeing appropriate transitional arrangements.

**Ken Macintosh (Eastwood) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on the analysis of Financial Service Authority (FSA) product sales by HM Treasury that suggests that 70% of all pension products bought by consumers in Scotland are from firms based in the rest of the UK.

(S4W-18572)

**John Swinney:** HM Treasury analysis of FSA product sales data reveals a highly integrated market for financial services between Scotland and the rest of the UK, as reflected by the fact that 25% of pension products bought by consumers in the rest of the UK are from firms based in Scotland.

The Scottish Government's White Paper *Scotland's Future – Your Guide to an Independent Scotland* sets out a framework for the continuation of a single market in financial services and products across the Sterling Area.

**Kezia Dugdale (Lothian) (Scottish Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide the dates of all communications between the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth and the University of Edinburgh regarding the use of so-called zero-hours contracts since 2011, broken down by (a) telephone calls, (b) letters, (c) emails and (d) face-to-face meetings.

(S4W-18575)

**John Swinney:** This issue was raised by the University and Colleges Union (UCU) during the STUC bi-annual meeting with the First Minister in June 2013, which the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth attended. Under direction from the Cabinet Secretary, Scottish Government officials raised the matter with the University of Edinburgh on 4 July 2013. As a result, the Principal of the University of Edinburgh, Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea, wrote to the Cabinet Secretary on 5 July 2013 advising that the University was committed to working in partnership with UCU. A response was also received from the University's Director of Human Resources on 5 July 2013 which confirmed that the University would work with UCU on a comprehensive review of the use of zero-hours contracts.

**Angus MacDonald (Falkirk East) (Scottish National Party):** To ask the Scottish Government how many requests for assistance the Scottish Investment Bank has received from businesses in (a) Falkirk East and (b) the Falkirk Council area.

**(S4W-18735)**

**John Swinney:** This is an operational matter for Scottish Enterprise. I will ask its chief executive to write to you in this regard.

#### **Governance and Communities**

**Cameron Buchanan (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party):** To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-18188 by Margaret Burgess on 11 November 2013, how many of the housing need and demand assessments appraised were revised upward and by how many units.

**(S4W-18542)**

**Margaret Burgess:** I refer the member to the answer to question S4W-18188 on 15 November 2013, the Centre for Housing Market Analysis has appraised 23 Housing Need and Demand Assessments (HNDAs) and recommendations were made to 21 based on the process and methodology. In 17 cases no change was made to the final figures. Of the remainder, two resulted in an upward revision and two in a downward revision by the applicable local authorities. The upward revisions amounted to a total of 157 units per annum and the downward revisions to a total of 200 units per annum, averaged over the planning periods.

#### **Transport Scotland**

**Alison Johnstone (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party):** To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-18051 by Keith Brown on 6 November 2013, where Babcock's figures are published.

**(S4W-18605)**

**Keith Brown:** The figures can be found in the environmental statement submitted by Babcock (section 6.5, a copy of which is available in the Parliament's reference centre, Bib. number 55487) and in the report of the public local inquiry (page ii and in section 11) published on the Transport Scotland website:

<http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/water/ports-harbours/decision-letters/Report-of-Inquiry>.