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Supporting local businesses

I was delighted to meet the team at New Life Gym at Lochburn Road in Maryhill who tell me support from the Scottish Government's Small Business Bonus scheme was important in getting them to setting up in the local area.

The scheme means that 100,000 small businesses now pay no rates at all.

Warmer homes

My thanks to Cora and George who invited me to visit their home in Parkhouse to see the benefits of newly installed external wall insulation.



This was funded by the Scottish Government's Warmer Homes programme.

It was good to hear the property is now warmer and bills have been reduced.

To see if you could benefit call the Energy Saving Trust free on 0808 808 2282.

Backing North West Citizens Advice Bureau



I met with staff and volunteers at a local Citizens Advice to hear about the work they do helping constituents across north Glasgow.

It is vital that the advice and advocacy services of CAB are delivered in our constituency and they have assisted many constituents in a variety of ways, not least of all with regards welfare reform.

I am pleased they have now moved to new larger premises at 1455 Maryhill Road.



Parliamentary advice surgeries

I hold regular advice surgeries right across Maryhill and Springburn at various locations. These have included Summerston, Cadder, Lambhill, Maryhill, Springburn, Parkhouse, Royston, Milton, Ruchill and Possilpark. These vary each month.

Please call 01419467700 for details and an appointment; or to request an advice surgery in your local area.

Job Centre campaign

I was proud to be part of the campaign to save Maryhill Job Centre, helping make a strong case to the UK Government for its retention.

Unfortunately the powerful arguments were rejected by the Department of Work and Pensions. Many vulnerable constituents, such as lone parents, must now

make the trip to Springburn with fears of increased travel costs, sanctions and a poorer service.

I did not oppose reform. Community based job hubs should be explored. They could combine Job Centre, skills and advice agency staff in the same hub. I will continue to make the case for this.



Elected members and protesters outside Maryhill job centre

Bob Doris MSP

Parliamentary Annual Report 2017



Member of the Scottish Parliament for Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn constituency



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Boosting high rise fire safety

Our constituency has dozens of high rises, home to many families. Following the tragedy of the Grenfell Tower fire in London, understandably residents had concerns. **I was pleased to gain reassurances that no Grenfell type cladding was used in any high rise properties across our constituency.**

As Convener of Scotland's Local Government and Communities Committee I led an inquiry into building standards and high rise fire safety. We took evidence from building and fire safety experts, the Scottish Fire Service, Councils, the Scottish Government and others. It became clear that fire safety standards for high rise properties were more robust in Scotland than England.

There is a consensus that this should not lead to complacency. The Scottish Government set up a Ministerial Working Group to oversee a review of building standards and fire safety. My committee has



Balgrayhill flats, Springburn. Photo credit: Peter Atkinson

also made a series of recommendations to the Scottish Government which are now being considered. This will hopefully build on our strong safety record.

Given the significant amount of high rises right across Maryhill and Springburn, I pledge to continue to scrutinise these matters closely.

• **See the parliamentary debate following our Committee Inquiry here: www.bit.ly/FireSafetyDebate**

Supporting Pitstops Project in north Glasgow



A partnership between ng Homes, Kelvin College and the School of Hard Knocks has successfully taken dozens of local residents through an 8 week course where participants learn and play competitive rugby, gain qualifications and get support to move into employment, volunteering or College.

I saw first hand the benefit to the first all-female group of participants last year and I intend to support this initiative going forward.

Kinship care event in Possilpark



I was privileged to host a major kinship care event for north Glasgow at Possilpark Parish Church. My thanks to the kinship carers from Kinship For The North who did much of the organising and catering.

I invited cross-party elected representatives from the UK and Scottish Parliament's as

well as councillors to hear about improvements requiring to be made to the system of support when loved ones die and kinship carers step in to look after vulnerable children.

We must do better and I will continue to campaign for this.

North Glasgow activated to learn with Glasgow Uni



I recently had the privilege of presenting certificates to dozens of locals at the Glasgow University Activate awards.

The course was completed by local residents and some of those who work in our communities.

The course supports capacity building, learning and community development.

Thanks to the funding by ng Homes around 200 individuals in north Glasgow have been through the course in recent years with many moving on to further and higher education, or have become more active in their local area.

Tackling child poverty

Along with local councillors Allan Gow and Jacqueline McLaren, I attended the launch of the Queens Cross Housing Association Community Chest fund.

Those under 25 who are disadvantaged by poverty can apply for up to £150 to help pay for school trips, access to sports clubs and so on.

Targeting money to assist the poorest youngsters fits in well with two Scottish Government commitments I have supported in Parliament. That is the new Child Poverty strategy (including a £50m budget), as well as an additional £3m direct to schools in my constituency (£120m nationwide) to tackle the poverty related attainment gap.



With Allan and Jackie at launch of new cash fund

Springburn regeneration



In partnership with Springburn Community Council, I have established a Regeneration Forum. I hope to work constructively with others to improve facilities and amenities and to make the area a better place to visit and stay.

I make no rash promises as to what can be delivered but I found it unacceptable that there was no regeneration strategy. Launching the Regeneration Forum is an opportunity to put that right.

Whether it is the Talisman pub - a long term eyesore or the poor range of services in and

around the shopping centre- or any number of concerns - I want to drive community led regeneration in the local area.

Wider Regeneration

I continue to support regeneration efforts across the constituency including the new community centre planned for Roystonhill, proposals for new community facilities in the Possil area and plans for new homes across the constituency including major developments at Sighthill and Hamiltonhill.

photo gallery

1. With Cllrs Cannon and Campbell to support the Musical Memories team (they deliver a dementia friendly weekly sing-along) at Springburn Parish Church
2. It was a privilege to address the first annual 'People Make Maryhill' awards, recognising the immense contribution so many make in our communities
3. With Cllr Casey following a Royston drop-in advice surgery
4. Supporting the successful campaign against closure of 44th Glasgow Scouts in Kelvindale
5. Roseanna Cunningham MSP, Scottish Environment Secretary, seeing excellent work at Lambhill Stables which has received Scottish Government funding
6. Myself and Cllr Casey meeting Germiston residents to discuss local issues
7. With Patrick Grady MP at our community advice surgery in Maryhill promoting uptake of the new Baby Box.
8. Backing Sugar Smart campaign in Milton which seeks to improve diet and health



Can new Transport Bill improve bus services?

Whether it is the recent hike in bus fares from First Glasgow or a variety of route alterations or cuts leading to a poorer service for many communities, I am regularly in contact with the bus company raising concerns and requesting changes to their plans.

I met First Glasgow along with Patrick Grady MP to discuss concerns. I have also met with Humza Yousaf MSP, Scotland's Transport Minister to share my views.

I welcome that there will be a Transport Bill from the Scottish Government shortly. For my part it would be good to see greater Council influence over bus travel including helping develop a public sector bus



provider, considering a franchise system for routes which takes better account of community need and being able to put constraints on price increases. The Scottish Government has indicated these matters will be considered and I intend to pursue them as the Bill makes its way through Parliament.

Getting trains back on track

Improvement continues to be required with regards local train services.

Ticketing enhancements will hopefully finally be made at Summerston station but

more has to be done to end ticket congestion when passengers disembark at Queen Street from Maryhill train line services.

I also remain concerned over

the level of service cancellations, particularly at peak times, and I will be taking this and various other matters up with the new Scotrail managing director Alex Hynes.



IN PARLIAMENT

Bob backs Scottish Government ban on fracking

Minister Paul Wheelhouse MSP stated to the Scottish Parliament on 3 October 2017 that fracking 'cannot and will not take place in Scotland'. The Scottish Government had a temporary moratorium on fracking in place to effectively block the practice whilst it commissioned expert reports along with a public consultation.

This protected areas of our constituency such as Milton which was at risk of fracking taking place.

The consultation demonstrated that 99% of the 60,000 respondents supported a ban. I am delighted the temporary ban will now be made indefinite by using planning powers and I voted in the Scottish Parliament (24 October 2017) to support the Scottish Government position and to protect our communities from fracking.

Opposing the Rape Clause

In the last year I have supported a series of Scottish parliamentary motions opposing the UK's Government's restrictions of child tax credits commonly known as the Rape Clause.

I have been approached by a number of constituents to oppose this, which I absolutely do. I voted against the Rape Clause in the Scottish Parliament. However the power over tax credits sits in the UK Parliament.

Loneliness strategy can learn from local groups

I praised several local organisations including local seniors groups such as those in Summerston (pictured), Cadder, Lambhill and Springburn.

This was during a Scottish Government debate on a new strategy to tackle loneliness and isolation in Scotland. This will drive public policy. I would encourage those interested to respond to the consultation. See my speech here: www.bit.ly/LonelinessDebate

