

# **Coronavirus – Wightman calls for more clarity on ‘essential work’**

**There must be clearer guidance around what is and isn’t essential work during the coronavirus lockdown, Scottish Green MSP Andy Wightman has said.**

Andy Wightman raised the issue at a meeting of the Economy, Energy and Fair Work Committee in the Scottish Parliament this morning, following reports that some businesses were attempting to operate as normal despite clear instructions from UK and Scottish Governments.

He said: “The First Minister has said people should only travel to essential work if it cannot be carried out at home, but there has been confusion about what counts as essential work. Meanwhile, the UK Government has this morning sent a text out to mobile phones linking to advice that says people can travel to any work only so long as it cannot be carried out at home”

“For example, many contact centre staff have been asked to go to work today, with UK Government guidance saying online retail is to be encouraged. There needs to be clearer guidance about what businesses should be operating as normal, especially when their staff cannot work from home.

“Meanwhile, the Cabinet Secretary told us they estimate there are 330,000 self-employed people in Scotland. They range from essential tradespeople to entertainers, who are seeing all their work cancelled for months. Those people urgently need a guarantee of income and that they will not be evicted from

their homes.”