

Key workers demand just and green recovery

Protesters assembled outside St Andrew's House today demanding a coronavirus recovery which is fair and green.

The socially-distanced demonstration coincided with the publication of the report from the Scottish Government's Advisory Group on Economic Recovery.

Friends of the Earth Scotland's Director Dr Richard Dixon said: "Today marks a key moment in starting to rebuild from the coronavirus pandemic. As the report from the Economic Advisory Group is published, it is crucial that the Scottish Government listens to the voices of key workers, and the huge number of civil society groups, who are calling for people and planet to be placed at the heart of the recovery process.

"The Scottish Government must reject a simple return to business as usual or even worse, further austerity, which would create more poverty and pollution in the pursuit of profit. Instead, we need to see public investment in creating quality, sustainable jobs, introducing a more just tax system that redistributes wealth fairly, and strengthen and expand our vital public services. Only this kind of wide-ranging transformative recovery plan will deliver the kind of fairer, greener, future that we so desperately need."

Elle, a cleaner in Edinburgh, who was at the demonstration said: "We've seen a fantastic outpouring of public support for key workers, but now our voices must be heard. Too often, the challenges that we face have been overlooked by Governments

responding to the interest of big business – but we can't afford to let that happen again. We're asking the Scottish Government to deliver a recovery that puts the interests of people and planet first.

“This pandemic has laid bare and exacerbated the inequalities that exist in society, and any recovery plan must focus on addressing these. That means prioritising adequate incomes for all over shareholder bailouts, it means strengthening workers rights as more people return to work, and guaranteeing that any programmes aimed at economic recovery also tackle inequality.”