

Boyack warning over ending of furlough

According to new analysis carried out for Scottish Labour, over 360,000 jobs in Scotland are at risk if the furlough scheme is withdrawn next month.

The study found that in Scotland, almost 78,400 people were partially furloughed and 288,400 fully furloughed at 31 July. There has also been a total of 126,000 claims made across Scotland to the self-employment income support scheme.

In the UK, the sector with the highest proportion of its workforce eligible for the Job Retention Scheme who were actually furloughed was the arts, entertainment and recreation industry at 45%, followed by the accommodation and food services sector at 43%. In all, 58% of employers in the arts, entertainment and recreation sector were using the furlough scheme at the end of July and 57% of employers in accommodation and food services.

There have been 12,600 claims for self-employment support in the city of Edinburgh with a further 9,400 in Lothians, a total of 22,000.

Scottish Labour MSP Sarah Boyack said: "These are anxious times for families across Edinburgh and Lothians as they try to keep their children in school and hold on to their jobs. Today's figures reveal that over 360,000 people are facing a furlough cliff-edge next month – and this could lead to long-term unemployment on a scale the people have not seen in their

lifetimes.

“The Tories are leaving hundreds of thousands of families living in fear in Scotland. Boris Johnson must think again over his government’s rash plan to withdraw the furlough scheme next month.

“Given the Tories’ failure, the Scottish Government must implement their youth jobs guarantee scheme urgently. And SNP ministers must think again over their proposal to cut off support at the age of 25.

“Workers of all ages, especially women, are facing the prospect of unemployment. Edinburgh and Lothians needs a quality Jobs Guarantee Scheme that equips workers with skills they can use for the rest of their lives.”