

Ross launches Retrain to Rebuild manifesto promise

Leader of the Scottish Conservatives, Douglas Ross MP, will unveil a new policy proposal for £500 'Retrain to Rebuild' accounts to help people get back into work and progress their career when he speaks to the party's conference on Monday.

In his headline speech, the party leader will outline a manifesto pledge for the 2021 election aimed at setting a skills revolution in motion.

The pledge for everyone to be able to claim £500 for training every year through a 'Retrain to Rebuild' account will be a key element of the party's skills and employment policies in their manifesto for the 2021 Scottish Parliament election.

The party will aim to roll out the scheme to 100,000 people for two years before expanding it to a universal scheme in 2023.

During the first two years, the scheme would primarily be targeted at people who are currently unemployed, anyone facing redundancy, and people earning less than £30,000.

The proposals would also bring businesses, colleges and skills providers together in new Institutes of Technology to deliver rapid retraining courses and identify employment

opportunities.

The Scottish Conservatives said they would fund the new proposal by streamlining some of the current Scottish Government skills and employment budget, and say this has been topped up by some of the recent £1.2 billion additional Barnett funding from the UK Government.

Ross will say: "We may be nearing the end of the health crisis, thanks to the success of the vaccine scheme, but the economic crisis will loom over us for years to come.

"The UK furlough scheme has protected around a million Scottish jobs but to rebuild Scotland, we need to start focussing on the jobs of the future.

"Faced by a tsunami of unemployment we need an emergency response that matches the scale of the problem.

"Our Retrain to Rebuild accounts would give people in work the support to learn new skills and progress.

"It would give people struggling for work the chance to rapidly retrain and get a new job or kick-start a new career.

"We would target support at the 100,000 Scots who need it most to start with, and expand this plan to a universal skills offer by 2023.

"The benefits would flow to all of us by driving up productivity, attracting more investment, fostering new businesses and ultimately, increasing funding to local services.

"The SNP close doors and limit opportunity, telling people that they have to wait for independence to achieve and get ahead.

"While their top priority will always be indyref2, my party will have a relentless focus on rebuilding Scotland now.

“By stopping an SNP majority, we can get the Scottish Parliament 100% focussed on job-protection proposals like Retrain to Rebuild.

“So let’s meet this challenge with bold and ambitious plans to tackle it.

“Let’s be the party that delivers opportunity and gives people the tools they need to succeed and achieve their ambitions.

“Let’s deliver a skills revolution.”



PHOTO Greg Macvean 31/07/2020 Scottish Conservatives Douglas Ross today announced his leadership bid for the Scottish Conservatives. His campaign is being supported by former leader Ruth Davidson. Both are pictured at the Apex Hotel in the Grassmarket of Edinburgh.