

Scottish Budget – high streets need help

Scottish Labour has warned high streets are “fighting for survival”, as they urge the government to use this week’s budget to drive recovery.

The party claims that across Scotland high streets are on the brink, with the shock of the pandemic compounding years of long-term decline and leaving thousands of jobs on the line.

This week, ahead of the Scottish Government’s budget, Scottish Labour are calling for an ambitious fiscal stimulus package to aid economic recovery, including rates relief for struggling sectors and a voucher for every adult in Scotland. The call is for 50% rates relief for retail, hospitality and leisure properties to help them cope with the ongoing uncertainty caused by the pandemic.

The party are also proposing a £50 voucher for every adult to spend in bricks and mortar retail, to encourage people to shop in-person and to breathe life back into high streets.

Scottish Labour’s Finance and Economy spokesperson Daniel Johnson described these measures as a “lifeline” for high streets, giving businesses the boost needed to get by while waiting for meaningful long-term reforms.

Labour also reiterated calls for long-term reforms to level the playing field between bricks and mortar retail and online competitors, insisting online retailers must “pay their fair

share”.



Daniel Johnson MSP. Photo: Martin P. McAdam
www.martinmcadam.com

Mr Johnson said: “From big cities to small market towns, high streets across Scotland are fighting for survival.

“These problems have been mounting for years now, with the pandemic pushing things to crisis point. We need to act before we are faced with a sea of ‘To Let’ signs up and down every high street.

“This budget is a chance to correct the course and make sure our recovery saves businesses, protects jobs, and helps communities thrive.

“Scottish Labour’s bold proposals would be a lifeline for struggling shops, providing a much-needed boost for businesses and breathing fresh life into town and city centres.

“This would give us the time we need to make the long-term changes to level the playing field between bricks and mortar shops and their online competitors and ensure internet retailers pay their fair share.

“I urge the SNP to seize this opportunity to do something ambitious and deliver a real recovery for Scotland.”