

# **Scottish Government are “failing to deliver for Edinburgh festivals”**

**Sarah Boyack MSP has submitted various parliamentary questions to find out what assessment has been carried out on the impact of the ongoing effects of Covid-19, the rising inflation and rail strikes on Edinburgh Festivals this year.**

The Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development, Neil Gray, did not answer the questions lodged by the Scottish Labour MSP, referring Ms Boyack to a previous answer.

Commenting the MSP for Lothian, said: “That’s very much a non-answer.

“The answer Mr Gray referred to, did not provide any sort of clarity on the very specific, very real issues I raised.

“Edinburgh Festivals are extremely important not only for Edinburgh’s local economy but for Scotland’s culture and growth.

“As we’re emerging from the pandemic, we are hit by the cost of living crisis – many arts and culture organisation will struggle and some will simply not cope.

“Not having a clear picture of the impact of these factors on

Edinburgh Festival is short-sighted and will have a detrimental impact on the Festival's capacity to plan for next year."

The questions submitted are detailed as follows:

**S6W-11083**

Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Scottish Labour Party): "To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of the ongoing effects of COVID-19 on Edinburgh festivals in 2022."

Neil Gray: "I refer the member to the answer to question S6W-11081 on

29 September 2022. All answers to written Parliamentary Questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/written-questions-and-answers>"

**S6W-11082**

Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Scottish Labour Party): "To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of inflation on Edinburgh festivals in 2022."

Neil Gray: "I refer the member to the answer to question S6W-11081 on

29 September 2022. All answers to written Parliamentary Questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/written-questions-and-answers>"

**S6W-11080**

Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Scottish Labour Party): "To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of rail strikes on Edinburgh festivals in 2022."

Neil Gray: “I refer the member to the answer to question S6W-11081 on 29 September 2022. All answers to written Parliamentary Questions are available on the Parliament’s website, the search facility for which can be found at <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/written-questions-and-answers>”

### **S6W-11081**

Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): “To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of the rising cost of living on Edinburgh festivals in 2022.”

Neil Gray: “As detailed in our Programme for Government, we recognise the profound impact the current cost crisis is having across Scotland. Within this, we are acutely aware of the various challenges festivals have faced in 2022, including the ongoing effects of COVID-19, rail strike action, rising inflation and rising costs across the board.

“Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have provided a total of approximately £14.1 million in financial support to the festivals. We believe it is of vital importance to maintain an honest and open dialogue with the festivals. For example, the Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, and the Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development met with Festivals Edinburgh and a number of festival organisers on 18 May 2022 to assess the issues impacting festivals before the festival season, and offer support where appropriate and feasible. The Cabinet Secretary followed up this meeting on 27 July 2022 and has assured the festivals we will maintain this dialogue.

“The Scottish Government will remain in discussions with festival organisers in an ongoing assessment of their situation to establish the best ways to use what levers we can to mitigate the various issues related to rising costs, while

ensuring that the protection of the most vulnerable in our society remains our priority.”



Sarah Boyack Launch of 2022 Edinburgh Labour Manifesto at Coffee Saints with Cllr Cammy Day and Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar MSP PHOTO ©2022 The Edinburgh Reporter