

The first King's Speech in the reign of Charles III – political response

The first King's Speech in 70 years held little for Scotland except new licences for oil and gas extraction, according to the SNP's leader at Westminster, Stephen Flynn MP.

The speech included much to increase sentences for serious crime, an abolition of shorter sentences.

Ahead of the speech it was heralded as an agenda for Parliament to “put in the right laws, where we need them, to safeguard the future prosperity of the United Kingdom, seize economic opportunities and deliver a brighter future”.

Earlier in the week Mr Flynn called for the transfer of powers relating to energy, employment and the economy in a step up for devolution which he said would allow the government at Holyrood to be more effective. He said that the Tories have not delivered any new powers and nothing in the speech would help The Scottish Government to help people deal with the cost of living or boost economic growth.

SNP Economy spokesperson Drew Hendry MP said: “This threadbare King's Speech shows the Tories are bereft of ideas and have completely abandoned people in Scotland.

“While the SNP is helping families with a council tax freeze

and progressive policies like the Scottish Child Payment, the Tories are offering no help at all with the cost of living and no new powers for the Scottish Parliament – showing why independence is essential to deliver economic growth and boost household incomes.

“Millions of households in Scotland are suffering from a Westminster-made cost of living crisis. With Sunak and Starmer wedded to Brexit, Tory cuts and economic decline, it’s clear independence is the only way for Scotland to build a wealthier and fairer future.

“Independent European nations like Scotland are wealthier and fairer than the UK – so the question is, why not Scotland?”



Rishi Sunak Prime Minister speaking in the House of Commons after the King’s Speech ©UK Parliament_Jessica Taylor_

SCOTTISH LABOUR

Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar MSP said: “This King’s

Speech was the last gasps of a morally bankrupt government, out of ideas and running out of road.

“Across Scotland, people want an end to Tory incompetence, chaos and division and help with making ends meet.

“Instead, they have a government which has doubled down on putting the status quo before helping working people.

“While Rishi Sunak reaches for culture war politics, people across Scotland are crying out for meaningful change – to make work pay and put money back in their pockets.

“At the next general election, every community can choose that change with Labour so that we can boot the Tories out of Downing St and build a better future together.”

SCOTTISH GREENS

Scottish Greens climate spokesperson Mark Ruskell MSP branded it a “polluters’ charter” and a missed opportunity for advancing the renewables sector and tackling high energy bills.

Mr Ruskell said: “The Prime Minister seems determined to follow a scorched earth approach to our climate and with this polluter’s charter his UK Government is failing in its duty to protect people from harm.

“Their short-sighted actions can only make climate breakdown worse, and will continue to do so at the expense of future generations unless they can be prevented.

“There was nothing in this speech to suggest he is taking the climate crisis seriously, but everything for oil and gas firms to be jubilant about, when the focus could have been on advancing our renewables sector.”

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

Edinburgh West MP, Christine Jardine, MP said: “I had hoped to hear fresh ideas for tackling the biggest issue for people in Edinburgh West – the cost-of-living crisis.

“People desperately need support with soaring mortgages and rents, sky-high energy bills, and high food prices forcing families to make difficult decisions.

“I also wanted to see urgent action on major national problems – investment in public transport, better support for bereaved young people, and more to help our major industries like hospitality and tourism.

“Instead, all we got were empty promises and recycled ideas in a King’s Speech that proved the Tory Government is out of touch with the people of Edinburgh West.

“From the cost-of-living to the climate and conversion therapy, I will be pushing the Government on their missed opportunities in Parliament next week.”

CHARITY RESPONSE

Joanna Elson CBE, Chief Executive of Independent Age said:

“With more than two million older people living in poverty and at least another million living on the edge, systemic change is needed, and unfortunately, the government didn’t reveal anything in today’s King Speech that will tackle the injustice of pensioner poverty, which has been gradually rising for a decade.

“Inflation is still extremely high and causing misery for people on low incomes in later life up and down the country. Our helpline receives regular calls from frightened older people making desperate cutbacks just to get by. We have heard harrowing stories of people sitting in the dark or washing

less to save money, one person even resorted to eating dog food because it's less costly. As older people in financial hardship brace for another tough winter, the UK government has failed to recognise their plight by not setting out how it will tackle stubbornly high costs into next year and beyond.



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