

Douglas Ross proposes Aberdeen economic recovery plan

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Scottish Conservative party leader Douglas Ross MP has today proposed a recovery plan to protect jobs and businesses in Aberdeen.

On his second day as leader, Douglas has set out solutions to help the city get through the localised lockdown that was announced yesterday afternoon.

The practical steps include a commitment to double coronavirus testing and financial support for businesses and workers who have lost out.

In July, Oil and Gas UK said more than 7,500 jobs have already been lost in the North East as a result of coronavirus and up to 30,000 positions may be at risk.

Douglas has also started work on delivering a jobs plan within his first month as leader.

Scottish Conservative leader Douglas Ross said: “The new restrictions placed on Aberdeen will be a further blow to the local economy that has already suffered severely from coronavirus and the drop in oil and gas prices.

“The decision to reintroduce these measures was from a public health standpoint and it is vital that we work together to make sure Aberdeen is not left behind and local people are fully supported through this extremely difficult time that will have hit many businesses and workers hard.

“That’s why I am putting forward a set of straightforward, practical proposals to help the city get through this new lockdown and kick-start the Aberdeen economy as soon as it is safe to do so.

“We must do all we can to keep jobs and businesses in Aberdeen safe and I urge the Scottish Government to take these proposals forward as soon as possible.”

Scottish Conservative co-leader of Aberdeen City Council, Douglas Lumsden, said: “It’s absolutely vital that we do everything we can to support businesses and workers in Aberdeen through this tough period.

“I hope the Scottish Government will take on board these serious and sensible proposals, and work with the council to get support to everyone who needs it.”

Notes

Oil and Gas UK warned 7,500 workers had already lost their jobs:

<https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/politics/uk-politics/2323814/oil-and-gas-bosses-renew-calls-for-sector-deal-as-coronavirus-crisis-claims-7500-north-sea-jobs/>

Douglas Ross' economic recovery plan for Aberdeen is as follows:

1. Commit to doubling testing in the city over the next week, working with the Armed Forces and UK Government wherever necessary, to get the virus under control and help ensure people can get to work safely.
2. Follow the success of the UK Government Eat Out to Help Out scheme and commit to providing a discount on meals at bars, restaurants, cafes and pubs when they reopen in a few weeks.
3. Establish a financial support scheme to help hospitality workers who have lost wages this week.
4. Set up a general Hardship Fund for workers and small businesses in the area who have lost out directly because of the immediacy of the lockdown.
5. Establish a financial support scheme for the hospitality industry to help them with losses on food and perishable stock that will go to waste this week.