

Seven times Sturgeon made Covid-19 briefings about politics

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Nicola Sturgeon has repeatedly used the live Covid-19 briefings to score party political points, analysis has revealed.

Pressure is mounting on the BBC to stop providing an almost-daily platform to the First Minister in relation to coronavirus updates amid criticism they are becoming increasingly partisan in their content.

Now research by the Scottish Conservatives has shown how Ms Sturgeon regularly uses the event, which until recently took place seven days a week, to make political criticism and promote SNP policy.

The evidence includes referring to the UK Government approach on airbridges as “shambolic”, criticising Boris Johnson for remarks on the Scotland-England border, and raising questions about immigration policy.

She even blasted the UK Government’s rebranded “stay alert” guidance, only to herself adopt an almost identical message weeks later.

Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw said:

“It was quite right for the First Minister to embark on these daily briefings at the outset of this crisis, and for them to continue in the months that followed.

“But increasingly, as the statistics have improved and there’s inevitably less to say about them, the First Minister has turned to political point-scoring.

“This analysis shows how what starts with a daily data update soon descends into an SNP party political broadcast.

“She shouldn’t be doing that, and the BBC shouldn’t be indulging it.

“Either Nicola Sturgeon reverts to this being purely a factual event, or the corporation takes a stand and refuses to give her the airtime.”