

1.

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 12:08 PM

To: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>

Subject: Letter to Permanent Secretary

Good afternoon,

Please find attached a letter from Jackie Baillie, Deputy Leader of the Scottish Labour party, for the attention of the Permanent Secretary.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Regional Administrator | **The Scottish Labour Party**

Sent by email from the Scottish Labour Party, promoted by John Paul McHugh, Scottish General Secretary, on behalf of the Scottish Labour Party, both at 290 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4RE.

Website: <https://www.scottishlabour.org.uk>.

To join or renew call 0345 092 2299.

The Scottish Labour Party

Head Office

7 East Kilbride Road, Rutherglen G73 5EA
0141 572 6900 | scotland@labour.org.uk

John Paul Marks
Permanent Secretary
Scottish Government
By email: PermanentSecretary@gov.scot

30th May 2024

Dear John Paul

RE: Role of the office of the First Minister during a General Election

I am writing to seek clarification on the role of the office of the First Minister during a General Election.

I note that on Wednesday 29th May 2024 John Swinney conducted a visit in his capacity as First Minister and used it as a campaign event. I note from the SNP press release: First Minister and SNP Leader John Swinney has called for Labour to follow Scotland's lead by bringing railway services into public ownership – and finish the job by nationalising Network Rail.

Ahead of officially opening the Levenmouth Rail Link tomorrow (Wednesday), the First Minister has said the SNP will force Labour to the left at Westminster – and urged them to end austerity with a major infrastructure investment package which will reverse cuts to Scotland's capital budget imposed by the Tories.

Notwithstanding the fact that Mr Swinney was calling for the already nationalised Network Rail to be nationalised, this does seem like an inappropriate blurring of the lines between his role as SNP leader and First Minister.

Mr Swinney presumably intended to make a similar campaign stop in Shetland on May 24th, using Scottish Government resources to travel and then make a campaign announcement there, however poor weather meant his plane couldn't land.

Obviously during a General Election Holyrood still sits and the Government should be getting on with the day job, but doing so in a way which may be conceived as an SNP campaign events risks the reputation of impartial Scottish Government civil servants. I would be grateful if you could investigate these matters, and issue clear guidance that is publicly available.

Due to the obvious public interest in this issue, I will be making this letter public.



2.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 3:42 PM
To: Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
Cc: Cabinet Secretariat Inbox [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Letter to Permanent Secretary

Many thanks, both. Really appreciate such quick and quality advice.

We have made a few tweaks, updated version attached.

I still have to discuss properly with JP but will come back to confirm timings.

[REDACTED]

From: Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 2:18 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; Cabinet Secretariat Inbox [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Letter to Permanent Secretary

Thanks [REDACTED]

Suggested amends here

[REDACTED]– you'll want to tweak for JP style perhaps too

H

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 1:15 PM
To: Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED]; Cabinet Secretariat Inbox <[REDACTED]>
Subject: FW: Letter to Permanent Secretary

Helen,

Draft response to Jackie Baillie for your consideration.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Head of Cabinet Business and Governance | Cabinet Secretariat
Cabinet, Parliament and Governance Division | Communications and Ministerial Support
Directorate
Email: [REDACTED] | Mobile: [REDACTED]

Please copy e-mails which concern Cabinet business to the Cabinet Secretariat Inbox

From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Permanent Secretary
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 12:16 PM
To: [REDACTED]; Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED] **Subject:** FW: Letter to Permanent Secretary

Dear Helen and [REDACTED],

Please find attached a letter received from Jackie Baillie. We would be very grateful if you could please consider this and share prompt advice on a draft response?

Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 12:08 PM
To: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>
Subject: Letter to Permanent Secretary

Good afternoon,

Please find attached a letter from Jackie Baillie, Deputy Leader of the Scottish Labour party, for the attention of the Permanent Secretary.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED] Regional Administrator | **The Scottish Labour Party**

Sent by email from the Scottish Labour Party, promoted by John Paul McHugh, Scottish General Secretary, on behalf of the Scottish Labour Party, both at 290 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4RE.

Website: <https://www.scottishlabour.org.uk>.

To join or renew call [0345 092 2299](tel:03450922299).

[NB – removed duplicate letter from Jackie Baillie as already provided]

[DOCUMENT REDACTED]

3.

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 5:05 PM

To: John-Paul Marks <John-Paul.Marks@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

JP,

To see lines below on the issue raised by Ms Baillie today. I'm happy with the lines – grateful for confirmation you are also.

Also attached is the draft response to Ms Baillie for your consideration. I have discussed timing with Julie. She is relaxed given that it was raised and addressed at the post-FM briefing (and it was relatively contained). She said we could go tomorrow and draw a line under it promptly but equally early next week would be fine. I'm happy to discuss further if you wish.

Let me know your thoughts on the lines ASAP and the letter in slower time so that we have a final version we can share internally ahead of issue at an agreed point.

Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 4:45 PM

To: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>

Subject: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

PO / Permanent Secretary

Cc for awareness: FMPO.

Good afternoon,

SG Comms has received several queries for response to the below copied news release issued by Scottish Labour. It includes text of a letter sent to the Permanent Secretary asking for an investigation into observation of pre-election guidance.

Comms, SpAds and Cabinet Secretariat colleagues are in agreement on the below response. Grateful if the Permanent Secretary could indicate whether he is content for it to issue.

SG Comms will also make text of the Permanent Secretary's response letter available to press once this has issued.

[REDACTED]

LABOUR RELEASE

NEWS FROM SCOTTISH LABOUR

BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

IMMEDIATE

John Swinney is facing questions as to whether he abused the office of First Minister for party political purposes during campaign events in the first week of the General Election.

Scottish Labour Deputy Leader Jackie Baillie has written to John Paul Marks, Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government asking for an investigation into recent campaign stops.

The text of Jackie Baillie's letter to the Permanent Secretary is below:

Dear John Paul

Role of the office of the First Minister during a General Election

I am writing to seek clarification on the role of the office of the First Minister during a General Election.

I note that on Wednesday 29th May 2024 John Swinney conducted a visit in his capacity as First Minister and used it as a campaign event. I note from the SNP press release:

First Minister and SNP Leader John Swinney has called for Labour to follow Scotland's lead by bringing railway services into public ownership – and finish the job by nationalising Network Rail.

Ahead of officially opening the Levenmouth Rail Link tomorrow (Wednesday), the First Minister has said the SNP will force Labour to the left at Westminster – and urged them to end austerity with a major infrastructure investment package which will reverse cuts to Scotland's capital budget imposed by the Tories.

Notwithstanding the fact that Mr Swinney was calling for the already nationalised Network Rail to be nationalised, this does seem like an inappropriate blurring of the lines between his role as SNP leader and First Minister.

Mr Swinney presumably intended to make a similar campaign stop in Shetland on May 24th, using Scottish Government resources to travel and then make a campaign announcement there, however poor weather meant his plane couldn't land.

Obviously during a General Election Holyrood still sits and the Government should be getting on with the day job, but doing so in a way which may be conceived as an SNP campaign event risks the reputation of impartial Scottish Government civil servants.

I would be grateful if you could investigate these matters, and issue guidance that the public can understand.

Due to the obvious public interest in this issue, I will be making this letter public,

Kind regards,

Jackie Baillie MSP
Deputy Leader of Scottish Labour

ENDS

Sent by email from the Scottish Labour Party, promoted by John Paul McHugh, Scottish General Secretary, on behalf of the Scottish Labour Party, both at 290 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4RE.

Website: <https://www.scottishlabour.org.uk>.

To join or renew call [0345 092 2299](tel:03450922299).

Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
m: [REDACTED]

Senior Media Manager | [First Minister](#) | [Scottish Government](#) |

media enquiries (call group): [0300 244 9020](tel:03002449020) | [Media enquiries - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

Any amends to comms products please use high contrast colours as I'm colourblind and often miss additions in faint red.

[DOCUMENT REDACTED]

4.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 10:12 AM
To: John-Paul Marks <John-Paul.Marks@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED]; Anna Kynaston <Anna.Kynaston@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

V welcome. A few minor tweaks from SGLD (final attached). We will share shortly with FMPO for awareness and plan to issue later this afternoon. Julie/News are in the loop.

Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: John-Paul Marks <John-Paul.Marks@gov.scot>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 3:59 PM
To: [REDACTED]; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>
Cc: ; Anna Kynaston <Anna.Kynaston@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

Thank you for the hard work on this [REDACTED], am grateful

From: [REDACTED],
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 3:57 PM
To: John-Paul Marks <John-Paul.Marks@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED], ; Anna Kynaston <Anna.Kynaston@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

Will do. Thanks, [REDACTED],

From: John-Paul Marks <John-Paul.Marks@gov.scot>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 3:54 PM
To: [REDACTED]; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED],; Anna Kynaston <Anna.Kynaston@gov.scot>
Subject: Re: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

Cool. That's me, so share with others for comment; maybe get [REDACTED] to check too as their changes to previous advice was v helpful; and we can issue when all are content thanks

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 3:52:02 PM
To: John-Paul Marks <John-Paul.Marks@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary

<PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]; Anna Kynaston <Anna.Kynaston@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: John-Paul Marks <John-Paul.Marks@gov.scot>

Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 2:59 PM

To: [REDACTED]; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]; Anna Kynaston <Anna.Kynaston@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

Thanks – [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 2:55 PM

To: John-Paul Marks <John-Paul.Marks@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]; Anna Kynaston <Anna.Kynaston@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

JP,

To see final version of your response to Ms Baillie below. Helen is content and I have shared with Andy and Chris also.

If you are content, we will share the final response with FMPO for their awareness and issue to Ms Baillie (likely tomorrow).

Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: John-Paul Marks <John-Paul.Marks@gov.scot>

Sent: Friday, May 31, 2024 10:29 AM

To: [REDACTED]; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]; Anna Kynaston <Anna.Kynaston@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

Thanks, [REDACTED], and please revert and we can finalise and issue next week, thanks, JP

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 5:05 PM

To: John-Paul Marks <John-Paul.Marks@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

JP,

To see lines below on the issue raised by Ms Baillie today. I'm happy with the lines – grateful for confirmation you are also.

Also attached is the draft response to Ms Baillie for your consideration. I have discussed timing with Julie. She is relaxed given that it was raised and addressed at the post-FM briefing (and it was relatively contained). She said we could go tomorrow and draw a line under it promptly but equally early next week would be fine. I'm happy to discuss further if you wish.

Let me know your thoughts on the lines ASAP and the letter in slower time so that we have a final version we can share internally ahead of issue at an agreed point.

Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 4:45 PM

To: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>

Subject: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

PO / Permanent Secretary

Cc for awareness: FMPO.

Good afternoon,

SG Comms has received several queries for response to the below copied news release issued by Scottish Labour. It includes text of a letter sent to the Permanent Secretary asking for an investigation into observation of pre-election guidance.

Comms, SpAds and Cabinet Secretariat colleagues are in agreement on the below response. Grateful if the Permanent Secretary could indicate whether he is content for it to issue.

SG Comms will also make text of the Permanent Secretary's response letter available to press once this has issued.

[REDACTED]

Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

m: [REDACTED]

Senior Media Manager | First Minister | Scottish Government |

media enquiries (call group): 0300 244 9020 | [Media enquiries - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

Any amends to comms products please use high contrast colours as I'm colourblind and often miss additions in faint red.

[DOCUMENT REDACTED]

5.

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 7:58 PM

To: [REDACTED]; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>

Cc: First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];

Subject: RE: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

Many thanks, [REDACTED].

I will issue the line and background note you've provided below.

[REDACTED]

Duty comms

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 7:50 PM

To: [REDACTED]; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>

Cc: First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];

Subject: Re: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

[REDACTED],

I have discussed with Perm Sec and he doesn't want to pre-empt the process, ahead of his response issuing to Ms Baillie, in our lines.

He would like to stick to the following line and factual background info.

"We have received the letter and will respond in due course."

Background:

The pre-election period commenced at 00:01 on 25 May, as is clear in the UK Government's own pre election guidance, and mirrored in the guidance published by the Scottish Government.

The First Minister's planned visit to and announcement of support for Scotland's island communities last week took place before the pre-election period began.

The event marking the opening of the Levenmouth rail link was planned before the election was called on 22 May.

From: [REDACTED];
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 7:25:59 PM
To: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>
Cc: First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];
Subject: RE: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

PO Permanent Secretary,

Grateful if you could confirm whether the Perm Sec is content to clear the below lines.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]
Duty comms

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 5:47 PM
To: [REDACTED]; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
Cc: First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; >; Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];
Subject: RE: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

Adding [REDACTED] for duty comms. [REDACTED] will issue once cleared.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 4:48 PM
To: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>
Cc: First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];
Subject: RE: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

PO / Permanent Secretary,

With apologies for duplication – grateful if the Permanent Secretary could consider this version...

[REDACTED]

m: [REDACTED]

Senior Media Manager | First Minister | Scottish Government |

media enquiries (call group): 0300 244 9020 | [Media enquiries - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 4:45 PM

To: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>

Subject: FOR PERM SEC CLEARANCE // Media response - Labour calls for FM pre-election guidance probe

PO / Permanent Secretary

Cc for awareness: FMPO.

Good afternoon,

SG Comms has received several queries for response to the below copied news release issued by Scottish Labour. It includes text of a letter sent to the Permanent Secretary asking for an investigation into observation of pre-election guidance.

Comms, SpAds and Cabinet Secretariat colleagues are in agreement on the below response. Grateful if the Permanent Secretary could indicate whether he is content for it to issue.

SG Comms will also make text of the Permanent Secretary's response letter available to press once this has issued.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED – RELEASE ALREADY PROVIDED ABOVE/IN PUBLIC DOMAIN]

Many thanks,

[REDACTED];

[REDACTED]

m: [REDACTED]

Senior Media Manager | First Minister | Scottish Government |

media enquiries (call group): 0300 244 9020 | [Media enquiries - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

Any amends to comms products please use **high contrast colours** as I'm colourblind and often miss additions in **faint red**.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 10:55 AM
To: [REDACTED]; Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

We have been approached by The Sun and The Courier who are seeking an SG response to this letter.

Will hold off progressing lines until we have clarity on the letter and have seen [REDACTED] FMQ lines. Adding [REDACTED] who will coordinate response for FM comms.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 10:54 AM
To: Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

We haven't received the Jackie Baillie letter as yet.

Looping in [REDACTED] who will share suggested lines shortly for FMQs.

[REDACTED]

From: Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 10:38 AM
To: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED]; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

Adding [REDACTED] and Helen for views and Andy for awareness.

If we are approached for comment would suggest the usual response:

"We have received/once we received the letter we will respond in due course."

[REDACTED], for awareness - please pass on any calls to [REDACTED].

Many thanks

Julie

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 10:28 AM

To: Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

Julie/[REDACTED],

Could we sort a line on this thanks

Thanks

[REDACTED]

Please note Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot for information.

6.

From: Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 1:49 PM
To: Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

While this was covered at the post FMQs briefing, would suggest the following as a SG response:

Scottish Government spokesperson said:

[REDACTED]

I said to media at the briefing we would make available a copy of the Perm Sec's response once it had been sent.

Thanks

Julie

From: Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 11:14 AM
To: Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

Added

H

From: Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 11:10 AM
To: [REDACTED]; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

The lines need an additional point re Shetland making clear it preceded the restricted period.

C

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 11:06:56 AM
To: Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

Some suggested lines. Note Helen hasn't seen these yet but for speed sharing here for consideration. I haven't shared with TS colleagues either. I also attach the advice we provided to TS colleagues about the launch.

FMQ Lines

- The official opening of the Levenmouth Rail Link on 29 May and my attendance at it was fully in line with the pre-election period guidance published by the Scottish Government on 24 May.
- Transport is a devolved matter and this event was planned long before the UK Government called the general election on 22 May.
- Publicising the reopening of this rail line is essential Scottish Government business, necessary to encourage as many people as possible to switch from car to rail travel to help Scotland to reach net zero by 2045.
- Separate campaigning by the SNP on the day was completely separate from the Scottish Government event and no public resources or official support was provided for this.
- The pre-election period commenced at 00:01 on 25 May, as is clear in the UK Government's own pre election guidance, and mirrored in the guidance published by the Scottish Government. The announcement of support for Scotland's island communities fell ahead of the restricted period.
- The Scottish Government's guidance on the pre-election period is available for everyone to read on the Scottish Government's website.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED];

Head of Cabinet Business and Governance | Cabinet Secretariat
Cabinet, Parliament and Governance Division | Communications and Ministerial Support Directorate
Email: [REDACTED] | Mobile: [REDACTED]

Please copy e-mails which concern Cabinet business to the [Cabinet Secretariat Inbox](#)

From: Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 10:59 AM
To: [REDACTED]; Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

All

As I understand it, for Levenmouth opening, there was a government event, and a separate SNP event/briefing. Colin could you clarify / confirm if this is accurate?

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H

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 10:54 AM
To: Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

We haven't received the Jackie Baillie letter as yet.

Looping in [REDACTED] who will share suggested lines shortly for FMQs.

[REDACTED]

From: Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 10:38 AM
To: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED]; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

Adding [REDACTED] and Helen for views and Andy for awareness.

If we are approached for comment would suggest the usual response:

"We have received/once we received the letter we will respond in due course."

Matt, for awareness - please pass on any calls to [REDACTED]

Many thanks

Julie

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 10:28 AM
To: Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED];
Subject: FW: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

Julie/[REDACTED]

Could we sort a line on this thanks

Thanks

[REDACTED]

Please note Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot for information.

7.

From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Permanent Secretary
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 12:08 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Letter to Permanent Secretary

Good Afternoon,

Please find a letter from John-Paul Marks, Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government.

Grateful if you could please confirm receipt.



Adobe Acrobat
Document

Kind regards,
Office of the Permanent Secretary

[REDACTED] | Private Secretary | Permanent Secretary's Office | 1N-07, St Andrew's House,
Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | [REDACTED]

Responsibility for filing key documents and communications on the record, including those sent to and received from the Permanent Secretary, rests with relevant policy and operational areas within Directorates. The Permanent Secretary Team does not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.

Scottish Ministers, Special Advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016.
See www.lobbying.scot

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 12:08 PM
To: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>
Subject: Letter to Permanent Secretary

Good afternoon,

Please find attached a letter from Jackie Baillie, Deputy Leader of the Scottish Labour party, for the attention of the Permanent Secretary.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Regional Administrator | **The Scottish Labour Party**

sent by email from the Scottish Labour Party, promoted by John Paul McHugh, Scottish General Secretary, on behalf of the Scottish Labour Party, both at 290 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4RE.

Website: <https://www.scottishlabour.org.uk>.

To join or renew call [0345 092 2299](tel:03450922299).

8.

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 12:32 PM

To: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>

Cc: Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; Christopher Mackie <Christopher.Mackie@gov.scot>; Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Anna Kynaston <Anna.Kynaston@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Letter to Permanent Secretary

FMPO,

With apologies, a slightly updated letter is attached for the FM's awareness.

Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Permanent Secretary

Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 10:22 AM

To: First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>

Cc: Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; Christopher Mackie <Christopher.Mackie@gov.scot>; Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Anna Kynaston <Anna.Kynaston@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Letter to Permanent Secretary

Good Morning,

For your awareness, please find attached a draft response to the Jackie Baillie letter that was received on 30 May 2024 which we plan to issue shortly.

We would be very grateful if you could confirm that the First Minister has noted this.

Thank you very much to all for your help and support with this matter.

Kind regards,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | Private Secretary | Permanent Secretary's Office | 1N-07, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | [REDACTED]

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Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 12:08 PM
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Yours sincerely,

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Regional Administrator | **The Scottish Labour Party**

Sent by email from the Scottish Labour Party, promoted by John Paul McHugh, Scottish General Secretary, on behalf of the Scottish Labour Party, both at 290 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 4RE.

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[attachment referred to is as provided above]

9.

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 11:07 AM

To: Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

12h40 - 12h50 Drive [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] - Activists meeting across the road. (Approx 10 mins)

12h50 - 13h15 Photocall with Activists.

13h15 - 14h20 Drive [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] (Approx 1h 5m)

SWINNEY – “LABOUR MUST COMMIT TO NATIONALISE UK RAILWAYS”

SNP WILL FORCE LABOUR LEFT AT WESTMINSTER

First Minister and SNP Leader John Swinney has called for Labour to follow Scotland’s lead by bringing railway services into public ownership – and finish the job by nationalising Network Rail.

Ahead of officially opening the Levenmouth Rail Link tomorrow (Wednesday), the First Minister has said the SNP will force Labour to the left at Westminster – and urged them to end austerity with a major infrastructure investment package which will reverse cuts to Scotland’s capital budget imposed by the Tories.

The Scottish Government has brought ScotRail into public ownership, delivered new rail lines and stations and is piloting the removal of peak fares across the country – driving down ticket prices and saving daily commuters hundreds of pounds per month.

John Swinney said:

“The SNP’s record in government shows what is possible with a government operating from the left of centre - we’ve brought ScotRail into public ownership, invested in new infrastructure and taken action to drive down ticket prices, saving people hundreds of pounds during the cost of living crisis.

“This is the approach Keir Starmer must take in government rather than simply continuing with Tory austerity. He should commit to a significant infrastructure investment programme to reverse the cuts to Scotland’s capital budget and invest in the future. And he needs to follow the SNP’s lead by taking rail services south of the border into public hands – and finish the job by nationalising Network Rail and cross-border services.

“Keir Starmer has spent his entire career running away from traditional left of centre values like public ownership – and taken left wing voters for granted by lurching to the right and adopting Tory policies.

“But we cannot afford more of the same – Westminster has inflicted austerity, Brexit and a cost of living crisis on the people of Scotland – and it is time for a genuine alternative.

“The SNP will push Labour to the left and demand that they are focused on Scotland’s values – meaning they can’t take Scotland or left-leaning voters for granted.”

ENDS

From: Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 11:05 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

Thanks – could you send details to me and [REDACTED] please, we should include specifics for FMQs

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 11:04 AM
To: Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Cc: Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] ; Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

Hi Helen,

Yes, that's accurate. The separate party event took place after and at a completely different location.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 11:01 AM
To: Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

Here is what issued ahead of the proposed Shetland trip [£5 million for Scotland's island communities - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/consultations/information/2024/05/30/12422/£5-million-for-Scotland-s-island-communities-gov-scot)

Thanks

Julie

From: Helen Webster <Helen.Webster@gov.scot>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2024 10:59 AM
To: [REDACTED] Julie Grant <Julie.Grant@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] Andrew Bruce <Andrew.Bruce@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

All

As I understand it, for Levenmouth opening, there was a government event, and a separate SNP event/briefing. Colin could you clarify / confirm if this is accurate?

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[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: BAILLIE DEMANDS SWINNEY PURDAH PROBE

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[REDACTED] for awareness - please pass on any calls to [REDACTED]

Many thanks

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