

View from Westminster



WRITTEN BY

David Mundell

David Mundell is MP for Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale & Tweeddale

Paying tribute to 'young' Mollie

There's rarely a quiet week in politics and despite all the dramas at Westminster, Holyrood and in council chambers around the country, there is an army of volunteers rarely in the limelight.

They are the grass-roots activists from all political parties who keep the wheels of democracy oiled by promoting policies and ideas in their communities with the aim of making things better, or simply volunteering to do practical or administrative work.

This came to mind this week when I sent my best wishes and flowers to a lovely Borders lady, Mollie McIntosh, who has just celebrated her 99th birthday. She joined the Conservative and Unionist Party at 18 and has been actively involved with the party ever since, and has never missed voting in an election.

I enjoy telling Molly, who lives in Walkerburn, that she is among our most active 'Young Conservatives' and still volunteers her services to her local branch at every opportunity.

Molly's interests are much wider than purely politics. She has been active in organisations such as the WVS and Red Cross, and at one point was serving on 17 different committees.

It was no wonder that in 1990 she was awarded an MBE for services to the community, has received other awards and was made a Tweeddale Citizen of the Year.

During her working life she was on the administrative side at the old Ballantyne's Mill, also running the mill shop for a period during which she met such stars as Gracie Fields and Judy Garland.

Birthday good wishes, Molly. You are a real star too!

VITAL BUS SERVICE

It was good to see that the threatened 101/102 bus services to Edinburgh will be remaining on the road, although there will be some adjustments.

Scottish Borders Council (SBC), which cut its subsidy on the route from £135k to £35k, partners other local authorities in supporting the services.

A new altered timetable, reflecting the SBC contribution cut, has been accepted by South West of Scotland Transport Partnership (SWestrans). The Stagecoach-operated contract, which begins on August 19, ensures the services will continue to stop in West Linton and Dolphinton where particular concerns were expressed.

I'm pleased a compromise has been reached which retains regular buses on the route while also freeing up funds for other essential public services.

FISHING BREAKTHROUGH

Back at Westminster, I was pleased to see details of the fisheries White Paper which, post-Brexit, should see a much more sustainable fishing industry.

Fishing is a hugely important industry for Scotland, which is home to almost half the United Kingdom's fishermen and women – an estimated 4823 people.

Leaving the European Union will provide us with the opportunity to develop Scotland's fishing industry and ensure it has a thriving and sustainable future.

The White Paper, to be introduced in this session of parliament, is an important step towards this goal.

It outlines how powers to be proposed in the Bill will give the UK full control of its waters and the ability to set fishing opportunities.



David Mundell with 99-year-old 'young Conservative' Mollie McIntosh.

Independent review of proposed RBS branch closure in Melrose

Johnston Carmichael has been appointed to independently review the proposed closure of the Royal Bank of Scotland branch in Melrose. If you are likely to be affected by the closure we would like to hear your views by 5pm on 14 August 2018.

Johnston Carmichael, the largest independent firm of Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers in Scotland, has been appointed by the Royal Bank of Scotland plc ("RBS") to independently review the proposed closure of ten branches in Beaulay, Biggar, Castlebay, Comrie, Douglas in Lanarkshire, Gretna, Inveraray, Kyle, Melrose and Tongue.

We will be reviewing the usage of each branch on its own merits and then providing RBS with a recommendation on whether we consider each branch should remain open or be closed.

As part of our independent review, we would welcome the views of anyone who uses the RBS branch in Melrose and who would be directly affected by its closure. Specifically, we would like to hear how often you currently use the branch and what you use it for. We would also like to hear if you are aware of alternative ways to bank if the branch was to close and whether those alternatives would reasonably fulfil your everyday banking needs.

**JOHNSTON
CARMICHAEL**

You can share your views with us at any time by:

- Writing to us at The RBS Review Team, Johnston Carmichael LLP, 29 Albyn Place, Aberdeen, AB10 1YL; or
- Completing a short online questionnaire available at www.jcca.co.uk/rbsbranchreview

You can also talk to us in person at the branch on Friday 3 August 2018:

- Members of our review team will be visiting the Melrose RBS branch on Friday 3 August and would welcome the opportunity to meet customers and users of the branch to discuss their banking needs on a one to one basis. Our team members will be at the branch during normal branch opening times and will be looking to meet with as many people as possible. Appointments of 20 minutes will be made available.
- We strongly advise you to book an appointment to avoid extended waiting times. **To book an appointment, please telephone 01224 259353** between the hours of 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Please note that the deadline for the submission of your views is 5pm on Tuesday 14 August 2018 and all comments that you share about how you use the branch will be kept confidential. We look forward to hearing from you.

The Johnston Carmichael RBS Review Team