

Beat: Politics

Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Conference

EICC, Edinburgh, 14-16 March 2014

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USPA NEWS - 14-16 March, The Scottish Conservatives will be holding their annual conference at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC).

Edinburgh is expected to receive an economic boost of almost £2million with the hosting of the Scottish Conservatives' annual conference.

The Scottish Conservative party conference will begin on Friday with a welcome to the conference by Richard Keen Q.C. (Chairman of the Scottish Conservative Party) followed by a rally & reception and a session on home affairs. The day will close with a opportunity for party members to put their questions to the Strathclyde Commission on the future Governance of Scotland.

On Saturday the conference morning session will start with Mrs Pat McPhee, Conference Convener with the party's annual general meeting and a speech by The Rt Hon David Mundell MP. Later that day there will be a Defence Debate and session on the European election 2014 with Struan Stevenson MEP and Ian Duncan. The Conference will also welcome Martin Callanan MEP, leader of the European Conservatives and Reformists. There will also be an opportunity for party members to have their say on Europe.

A Tribute to David McLetchie MSP by Baroness Goldie and The Rt Hon Sir Malcolm Rifkind QC MP. David McLetchie MSP died in August 2013, and was a Scottish politician, a Scottish Conservative and Unionist Member of the Scottish Parliament for the Lothian electoral region. He was formerly the leader of the Scottish Conservatives between 1999 and 2005, and MSP for the Edinburgh Pentlands constituency (2003-2011).

Saturday's afternoon session will start with a Justice Debate with Margaret Mitchell MSP, Conservative Justice Spokesman. Later the agenda will include; Scotland - Part of the United Kingdom' with a speech by Francis Maude MP, Minister for the Cabinet Office. 'Local Government Question Time' chaired by Party Vice Chairman James Reekie and joined by Cllr Joanna Mowat, City of Edinburgh; Cllr Michelle Ballantyne, Scottish Borders and Cllr Ross Thomson, Aberdeen City. 'Economy and Welfare Debate' with Gavin Brown MSP, Finance spokesman.

Sunday 16 March. 'Open House Forum' chaired by Jackson Carlaw MSP, Deputy Leader of the Party. This session will give party members a chance to put questions to a panel with Brooks Newmark MP, Mary Scanlon MSP and Nosheena Mobank, European Candidate and Cllr Jason Rust of Edinburgh City.

'The Union' Chaired by Scottish Office Minister Rt Hon David Mundell MP. There will also be a speech by The Rt Hon Kenneth Clarke QC MP and Leader's Address to the Conference by the Leader of the Scottish Conservative Party, Ruth Davidson MSP.

UPDATE !

Prime Minister David Cameron gave a speech at the Scottish Conservative party conference where he backed more fiscal powers for the Scottish Parliament. Speaking to the conference David Cameron told the party faithful that further devolution was "not a consolation prize" for Alex Salmond. he told his party's members, he believed it was "the right thing to do" and said that the Scottish Tory leader Ruth Davidson agreed with him. "So here's the re-cap: vote yes, that is total separation. Vote no, that can mean further devolution more power to the Scottish people and their Parliament, but with the crucial insurance policy that comes with being part of the UK."

David Cameron insisted there would be "no going back" and "no second chances" if Scotland votes to become an independent country.

UPDATE !

Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party Leader Ruth Davidson would scrap free prescriptions. This would be done to fund 1,000 extra nurses and midwives in the NHS. She told a packed conference "That's why today I am able to announce the Scottish Conservatives

will pledge an extra 1,000 nurses and midwives for Scotland. And, once introduced, we will not let numbers drop below that mark." Ms Davidson added: "Not for the young, the pensioner, the pregnant or the poor - they'll stay exempt as they always were.

"But for people who're earning, who are overwhelmingly happy to make their contribution, they will know that their small sum will make a world of difference in wards across the country."

Scottish Conservative policy pledge

to reintroduce prescription charge of £6.85.

Exemptions would remain for children and students aged up to 19.

The over-60s would continue to benefit.

Pregnant women would not be charged.

And people on income support and job seekers allowance would be exempt.

She also told the conference: " Our United Kingdom belongs to all of us.

"We've built it together. We've traded together. We've fought together. We've lived together. We've loved together.

"We've settled and built our lives together.

"This land is our land and we will allow no-one to break it apart."

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