

# ECONOMY AND FAIR WORK COMMITTEE

## 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 2022 (Session 6), Wednesday 27 April 2022

### Town Centres and Retail

#### Introduction

1. This paper has been prepared for the Economy and Fair Work Committee to aid Committee members during the third evidence session of the Committee's inquiry into town centres and retail.
2. The remit of the inquiry is to—  
  
Identify the new realities of retail and ecommerce in Scotland and the resulting impact on town centres. What is the subsequent policy response needed to create living and resilient town centres?
3. The Committee launched a call for views on Tuesday 1 February which closed on Wednesday 16 March. Responses can be accessed [here](#).
4. On 24 March, the Scottish Government published its retail strategy "[Getting the Right Change](#)" with the aim of delivering successful, profitable retail businesses, creating new, better jobs and to become an exemplar for inclusive growth.

#### Evidence Session

5. The main theme of this session is "the new realities of Scottish retail", the Committee will hear evidence across two panels as follows—
  - Paul Gerrard, Campaigns and Public Affairs Director, [Co-op](#);
  - [David Lonsdale](#), Director, [Scottish Retail Consortium](#);
  - [Martin Newman](#), a member of the [KMPG/IPSOS Retail Think Tank](#); and
  - Maxine Smedley, Head of Stores (Scotland), [Boots](#).

And then from—

- Ruth Boyle, Policy and Parliamentary Manager, [Close the Gap](#);
- Joanne Cairns, Head of Research, [USDAW](#); and
- Bryan Simpson, Industrial Organiser, [UNITE Hospitality](#).

6. Prior to the evidence session the following written evidence was received from witnesses as part of the Committee's call for views—
  - [Written evidence from Boots](#)
  - [Written evidence from Close the Gap](#)
  - [Written evidence from the Scottish Retail Consortium](#)
7. Future evidence sessions will focus on ecommerce activity and keeping town centres alive.

**Clerk to the Committee  
22 April 2022**