

Johann Lamont's Holyrood Briefing – December 2009 / January 2010

TACKLING CHILD POVERTY

It was a privilege to participate in a *Glasgow The Caring City* event highlighting its Cross Out Child Poverty in Scotland campaign.

The campaign statement outlines a challenge for us all:

We believe that Scotland's children deserve better. We believe that no society can be truly at ease with itself while significant numbers of children live in poverty.

We believe that the elimination of child poverty must be a priority for us all - for politicians, community leaders and every member of society. We believe that poverty should be defined more widely than lack of money, that it encompasses a lack of education, of health, of welfare, of self-esteem and of love.

We believe that poverty corrodes children's health, their happiness, their safety and their aspirations. We recognise that children whose lives are blighted by poverty are at higher risk of educational failure.

We recognise that a life lived in poverty can lead to a life of drug abuse and exploitation. We believe that only through the elimination of child poverty can we expect the children of Scotland to live their lives to the full, and to be able to enjoy the opportunities that the rest of society take for granted.

We, the undersigned, believe the time for change is here.

We all know that a childhood lived in poverty can lead to an adulthood without opportunity or hope. Too many of our children do not achieve their potential. The campaign has brought together people across political parties, across faiths and across our communities in a determination to address the problems facing Scotland's young people.

It is fitting as we head towards the festive season when we reflect on the past and look forward to the future that we resolve to tackle a problem which blights Scottish society.

I hope you will add your support to this campaign.

PARLIAMENTARY MOTIONS

Motions from individual members are a useful way in which Members of the Scottish Parliament can highlight issues of importance both in their communities and beyond.

Recently I have had the pleasure of submitting 4 motions on a range of issues.

One of these was congratulating the Evening Times and Glasgow City Council on its very successful **Community Champion Awards**.

A second motion congratulated Glasgow City Council on its **Living Wage Campaign**. The motion noted that 100 companies have followed the lead of the City Council and signed up to guaranteeing all employees a wage of at least £7 per week.

My third motion was to mark **International Credit Union Day**. It went on to recognise the important role of credit unions in tackling financial exclusion in Pollok constituency and expressed a belief that credit unions can play a valuable role in the future of Scotland's financial industry.

I also submitted a motion congratulating the **West Highland Free Press** on becoming Britain's first employee-owned newspaper. My motion praised the radical role of the paper over 37 years and concluded that it should serve as an example to other businesses to develop.

2009 CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

My annual Christmas card competition has come up with another cracker!

The competition, open to all Primary 7 pupils in the constituency, was won by **Faaria Amjid from Howford School**.

Second Prize was won by Matthew Wilson from Darnley Primary and Third Prize was won by Khloe Croal from St Monica's Primary.

Many thanks to all who took part! The brilliant designs sent in show just how talented children across the constituency are.

JOHANN LAMONT SPEAKS OUT

Season's Greetings

Another year over - and the last briefing of the year written. It is as much a privilege and an honour for me to be your MSP now as it has been for the last 10 years. Thank you for all your help, the challenges you have brought and your kindness to me.

2009 has been a tough year for many people and the challenges of these difficult economic times have had a real impact on individuals and families and on the groups who volunteer their time to improve their local communities.

My resolution for 2010 is to continue to fight for the resources and action which can support and strengthen our communities.

May I wish you a Happy Christmas and a very peaceful 2010. Keep in touch - working together to make a difference to the south west of Glasgow.

SURGERIES

Friday 11th December - 2.00pm - The Wedge, 1066 Barrhead Road, Pollok

Saturday 19th December - 10.00am – Labour Rooms, 996 Mosspark Drive,
Cardonald

Friday 15th January - 2.00pm – Labour Rooms, 996 Mosspark Drive,
Cardonald

Saturday 30th January - 10.00am - Pollok Civic Realm, 27 Cowglen Road,
Pollok