

Scotland can have a job guarantee or the Fiscal Commiss...

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Common space, the news website linked to the Common Weal think tank in Scotland, [reported last Thursday that](#):

FIRST MINISTER Nicola Sturgeon has tentatively revealed that some form of Job Guarantee scheme may be included in the next Programme for Government in September.

Speaking at a public meeting of the Scottish Cabinet in Stirling on 7 August, Sturgeon was asked whether a Job Guarantee scheme would be part of her vision for a Scottish Green New Deal.

A Job Guarantee is an economic policy intended to address both inflation and unemployment, which is generally understood to involve the state acting as an 'employer of last resort' to the unemployed.

Different versions of the idea have been proposed across the world, most recently in the United States by presidential candidate Senator Bernie Sanders, who in 2018 announced a plan for the US federal government to guarantee a job to every American worker "who wants or needs one" across hundreds of projects in areas such as education, infrastructure and caregiving.

Doing other things has prevented me commenting since Thursday, but it's still appropriate to do so.

First, of course I welcome this.

Second, a job guarantee is a logical part of a Green New Deal, which offers work in every constituency by ensuring jobs are available everywhere to transform our green infrastructure, and most especially our housing.

Third, it has to then be noted that this policy is linked to modern monetary theory, which is the only current school of economic thought that makes full employment for those who want work its core objective.

And fourth, and inevitably, this policy is in opposition to the SNP's commitment to Andrew Wilson's Growth Commission plan for Scotland.

The Growth Commission prioritised what it saw as financial stability for Scotland. So sterlingisation was proposed. And fiscal constraint to build up foreign currency reserves is the stated intention. Whilst market interests are appeased. All of which spells Engkush-imposed austerity, in summary.

Austerity and a job guarantee are inconsistent. Austrerity is about fiscal contraction and a job guarantee is about fiscal expansion to the limit of full employment within a chosen carbon constraint. These options are incompatible with each other.

The SNP has to choose, and only a job guarantee to support a Green New Deal serves the interests of the people of Scotland. It's time for the SNP leadership to say so.