

Scotland's economic performance. This includes additional capital investment to support sustainable and broad-based economic recovery and make the country as a whole more internationally competitive.

Investing in infrastructure

We firmly believe that additional investment in Scotland's infrastructure, and that of the rest of the UK, is an important part of building the wider strength of our economy and society. Our proposals for additional expenditure in the next Parliament will include substantial new infrastructure investment. Properly deployed, capital expenditure has the ability to reduce inequalities by providing good, well paid employment, with opportunities for the long-term unemployed, for apprenticeships and for wider skills and professional development. It also serves to expand the productive capacity of Scotland, making our economy more competitive, with improved connectivity and infrastructure that is fit for the 21st century.

The additional investment we seek should include investment in our energy infrastructure so we can continue to maximise renewables generation, in particular offshore. Current Westminster plans put at risk the creation of a strong domestic renewables industry, including a sustainable supply chain, and threaten Scotland's security of supply. We will, for example, press for further progress and a clear timescale for the delivery of the islands interconnector and reform of the transmission charging regime which could lead to the premature closure of Longannet power station.

We will also support steps to increase the capital available to the Green Investment Bank and will ask the next UK government to report on options including new borrowing powers for the bank.

We will also seek adequate transport infrastructure investment, with a particular aim of improving transport and communication links across the north of these isles. That includes connecting Scotland to HS2 as a priority, with construction beginning in Scotland as well as England, and a high speed connection between Glasgow, Edinburgh and the north of England as part of any high-speed rail network. In addition, we will seek additional investment to support a more rapid roll out of superfast broadband and 4G across Scotland and to support wider and affordable access to the internet in our most disadvantaged communities, and for a Universal Service Obligation to be applied to telecoms and broadband providers ensuring everyone is able to access the communications they need.

We will back investment a house-building target across the UK of 100,000 affordable homes per year. We are determined to use capital investment to create jobs, and support higher levels of economic growth. This additional investment would support at least 6,500 jobs in the construction sector in Scotland.

Supporting Scotland's job creating businesses

We want to make it much easier for growing businesses across Scotland to access finance and will look for an expansion of lending options, including peer-to-peer