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Peter Peacock
Scottish Labour Regional MSP for the Highlands and Islands

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MSP supports Town Centre Regeneration

Peter Peacock, Highlands and Islands Regional Labour MSP, has been calling for additional funding from the government to allow for Highland town centre regeneration.

During a debate in Parliament last week on Business Improvement Districts (BID) initiatives, he urged local authorities to continue to fund their own towns.

“The good thing about BIDs is that they are a co-operative enterprise.

“They do not happen without the consent of the local business community and they provide it with more power and influence over its environment.

“BIDs add value to that environment, and therefore add value to trading and the local economy as a whole,” said Mr Peacock.

“However, the finance raised by the BID process should be additional to the expenditure that the local authority would otherwise have incurred. If that is not the case, we will simply overtax business to replace current expenditure.”

He called for the Scottish Government to advance a town centre regeneration fund, which Labour advocated at the previous election.

“Many other areas have expressed interest in town centre regeneration, including, in my region, Oban, Dunoon, Wick, Thurso, Tain, Dingwall, Elgin and Fort William.

"I hope that they will have that opportunity."

He also highlighted the need for BID city Inverness to continue to receive funding the Cities Growth Fund it had previously been given.

"The Government was wrong to end ring fencing of that fund.

"The local council is yet to decide what to put in its place.

"It would be wholly wrong, just when the business community is prepared to puts its hand deeper into its pocket for extra funds for the city centre, if the council reduced the previous commitments that were enabled through the fund.

"I hope that that will not happen."

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Website links:

Peter Peacock MSP : www.peterpeacock.org.uk

Highlands and Islands Labour : www.handilabour.org.uk