



Rhoda Grant

Scottish Labour MSP for the Highlands and Islands

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MSP 'dross' comment branded a disgrace

Rhoda Grant, Highlands and Islands Regional MSP has challenged her SNP counterpart to justify what she says are 'outrageous' comments made in a parliamentary debate on the Voluntary sector.

The SNP's Rob Gibson was condemned by opposition parties after saying that elements of the voluntary sector were "dross".

His speech was supported by fellow SNP minister for Communities and Sport Stewart Maxwell.

The Labour debate on Thursday morning called for Parliament to applaud the vital contribution made to society and the economy by the voluntary sector.

In addition, it sought to raise the widespread fear that pressures on local authority budgets is set to bring about cuts in support to voluntary sector organisations.

Mrs Grant commented: "Rob Gibson's attempt to try to cover cuts to the sector by discrediting valuable service providers doesn't work.

"He should apologise for these outrageous comments or he should identify those organisations that are 'dross' in his opinion.

"I'm sure voluntary groups like those which meet to support those with learning disabilities in Council cut threatened day centres in Inverness, Caithness, Fort William and in Invergordon will be interested to hear Mr Gibson's views on cuts to services and Voluntary Organisations."

"Which organisations are 'growing like Topsy', are healthy living centres dross?"

"It is insulting to the many people who give up their time to support real people in our communities that their efforts should be disrespected in this way.

"We at last see the SNP attitude to the voluntary sector," she said.

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Rhoda Grant's website : www.rhodagrants.org.uk

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