

### **Tolson Welcomes Water Charge Reprieve**

It was confirmed on Friday by the Scottish Government that small charities, churches and voluntary organisations will continue to be exempt from paying water charges until 2014. Jim Tolson MSP for Dunfermline West welcomed the announcement from the Scottish Government.

Jim said "I am delighted that the Government has listened and taken notice of the strong representations made by many groups. The e-petition submitted to the Scottish Parliament by Rev Jock Stein on behalf of Dunfermline Presbytery was signed by over 2000 people.

There has been concern expressed by many charities, churches and voluntary organisations that they could be forced to reduce services provided or even close down if water charges had been introduced in 2010. Now at last, these organisations can plan for the future.

Earlier this year, I received many letters and phone calls from concerned constituents about this issue. Some have submitted responses to the consultation document as well as signing the petition. In March, I tabled a Motion noting the financial pressures incurred by the voluntary sector organisations and churches across Scotland and welcoming the petition introduced by Rev Jock Stein. This Motion received much support from members of the Scottish Parliament. "