



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 1, No. 4, Session 7

Meeting of the Parliament

Tuesday 26 May 2026

Note: (DT) signifies a decision taken at Decision Time.

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

- 1. Time for Reflection:** Rev Stewart Goudie, led Time for Reflection.
- 2. Ministerial Statement:** The First Minister (John Swinney) made a statement *Ambitious for Scotland*.
- 3. Ambitious for Scotland:** The First Minister (John Swinney) moved S7M-00105—That the Parliament welcomes the emphatic democratic mandate for bold and ambitious reform backed by the people of Scotland at the Scottish General Election; further welcomes the Scottish Government's clear commitment to eradicate child poverty, deliver a stronger NHS and public services, build a more prosperous economy and help people in the cost of living crisis and tackle climate change; recognises that the people of Scotland have returned the largest pro-independence majority ever elected to the Scottish Parliament; believes this majority affirms a clear mandate that decisions about Scotland's future are best taken in Scotland and that mandate must be respected; calls on the UK Government to make a Section 30 order under the Scotland Act 1998 to devolve the powers to the Scottish Parliament to hold a referendum on Scottish independence, and agrees that the Parliament is at its best when it works together in pursuit of a country that can be confident in its future.

Anas Sarwar moved amendment S7M-00105.4—

As an amendment to motion S7M-00105 in the name John Swinney (*Ambitious for Scotland*), leave out from "welcomes" to end and insert "recognises the

need for bold and ambitious reform in Scotland following the Scottish General Election; acknowledges that the majority of people in Scotland want the Scottish Government to focus on the issues that impact their day-to-day lives; considers that the priority of the Scottish Government should therefore be to improve the NHS and public services, make life more affordable, support communities and high streets, grow a fair and prosperous economy, which tackles inequality, and ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed; believes that this ambitious future can and should be achieved through the devolved powers of the Parliament and rejects any attempt by the Scottish Government to delay this work by dedicating resources towards returning to divisive arguments of the past."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 17, Against 84, Abstentions 27).

Ross Greer moved amendment S7M-00105.3—

As an amendment to motion S7M-00105 in the name of John Swinney (Ambitious for Scotland), insert at end "; believes that the most effective way in which to grow public support for Scottish independence and to meet the scale of the challenges currently facing Scotland is through more effective use of existing devolved powers; recognises that meeting the Scottish Government's stated ambitions will require a significant escalation in action and ambition; notes that no one party holds a majority in the current parliamentary session, but that there is a clear majority for progressive values, and agrees that, if all progressive parties work constructively and collaboratively, Scotland can be a fairer, greener and kinder country where household costs are reduced, where wealth is distributed more equally and where climate and natural environment are protected."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 72, Against 56, Abstentions 0).

Russell Findlay moved amendment S7M-00105.2—

As an amendment to motion S7M-00105 in the name John Swinney (Ambitious for Scotland), leave out from "welcomes" to end and insert "believes that its seventh session should be focused exclusively on resolving the issues that matter to most people in Scotland, such as dealing with NHS waiting times, reversing Scotland's falling educational standards, tackling the growing benefits bill and delivering value-for-money for Scotland's taxpayers; urges the Scottish Government to drop its demands to hold a second independence referendum, and calls for the Scottish Government to drop its position of a presumption against new oil and gas licences, as outlined in its Draft Energy Strategy published in the last session of the Parliament."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 28, Against 89, Abstentions 11).

Alex Cole-Hamilton moved amendment S7M-00105.1—

As an amendment to motion S7M-00105 in the name of John Swinney (Ambitious for Scotland), leave out from first "welcomes" to end and insert, "notes that the Scottish National Party's stated objective prior to 7 May 2026 was to secure an overall majority in the Scottish Parliament elections in order to pursue independence, but that the party achieved fewer votes and seats than in the previous elections, whereas the Scottish Liberal Democrats achieved gains across Scotland from the Borders to the Highlands, and believes that the Scottish Government must now focus on fixing the NHS and care, helping people with the cost of living crisis, fixing the roads and the ferries and getting Scottish education back to its best, in order to deliver the change that Scotland deserves."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 9, Against 84, Abstentions 34).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 72, Against 55, Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament welcomes the emphatic democratic mandate for bold and ambitious reform backed by the people of Scotland at the Scottish General Election; further welcomes the Scottish Government's clear commitment to eradicate child poverty, deliver a stronger NHS and public services, build a more prosperous economy and help people in the cost of living crisis and tackle climate change; recognises that the people of Scotland have returned the largest pro-independence majority ever elected to the Scottish Parliament; believes this majority affirms a clear mandate that decisions about Scotland's future are best taken in Scotland and that mandate must be respected; calls on the UK Government to make a Section 30 order under the Scotland Act 1998 to devolve the powers to the Scottish Parliament to hold a referendum on Scottish independence; agrees that the Parliament is at its best when it works together in pursuit of a country that can be confident in its future; believes that the most effective way in which to grow public support for Scottish independence and to meet the scale of the challenges currently facing Scotland is through more effective use of existing devolved powers; recognises that meeting the Scottish Government's stated ambitions will require a significant escalation in action and ambition; notes that no one party holds a majority in the current parliamentary session, but that there is a clear majority for progressive values, and agrees that, if all progressive parties work constructively and collaboratively, Scotland can be a fairer, greener and kinder country where household costs are reduced, where wealth is distributed more equally and where climate and natural environment are protected.

4. Urgent Question: An urgent question, to ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact on public confidence in political institutions in Scotland following the guilty plea entered by former SNP chief executive Peter Murrell in recent court proceedings, was answered by the First Minister (John Swinney).

5. Parliamentary Bureau Motion: Suspension and Variation of Standing Orders: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S7M- 00149 —

That the Parliament agrees, under Rule 17.2.1(b), to suspend and vary Rule 13.6 as follows, for the purpose of First Minister’s Question Time on Thursday 28 May 2026—

- (a) in paragraph A1, the words “may be lodged in writing in advance, or” are suspended, and for the word “1” there is substituted the word “3”
- (b) in Rule 13.6, paragraphs 1 and 2 are suspended
- (c) in paragraph 3, the words “In addition to questions selected in advance under paragraph
- (d) in paragraph 4, the words “so long as that question is not one which has been selected in advance” are suspended.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

6. Parliamentary Bureau Motion: Suspension and Variation of Standing Orders: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S7M-00150 —

That the Parliament agrees—

- (a) under Rule 17.2.1(b) to suspend and vary standing orders as follows for the purpose of plenary debates and Decision Time—
 - (i) in Rule 2.2.3, for “09:15 and 17:30 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday” substitute “09:15 and 18:00 on Tuesday and Wednesday, 09:15 and 17.30 on Thursday”
 - (ii) in Rule 2.2.5, for paragraphs (a) and (b) substitute:
 - “(a) 17:30 on Monday or Thursday;
 - (b) 18:00 on Tuesday;
 - (ba) 18:00 on Wednesday where the Parliament has not taken a decision under paragraph 4;”
 - (ii) in Rule 11.2.2, for “17:00” substitute “such time between 17:00 and 18:00 as the Presiding Officer may specify”;
- (b) under Rule 17.2.1(b) to suspend and vary standing orders as follows for the purpose of Oral Question Times—
 - (i) for Rule 13.3.2 substitute:
 - “2. Questions (other than First Minister’s Questions) shall be in writing and lodged with the Clerk.”
 - (ii) after Rule 13.3.3, insert:

“3A. Paragraph 3 (other than sub-paragraph (d)) applies to a First Minister’s Question as it applies to a question lodged under paragraph 2.”

(iii) in Rule 13.3.4, delete “at First Minister’s Question Time (“a First Minister’s Question”),”

(iv) for Rule 13.6, substitute:

“Rule 13.6 First Minister’s Questions

1. The Presiding Officer may, call any of the following members to ask a question or questions during First Minister’s Question Time:

(a) the leader of a political party represented by 5 or more members of the Parliament, or a representative of that leader (“a party leader”);

(b) a representative of any group formed in accordance with Rule 5.2.2 (“a group representative”).

(c) a member who is not a member of the Scottish Government or junior Scottish Minister and who is not a party leader or group representative (“a backbencher”).

2. At the first First Minister’s Question Time in each week, the Presiding Officer shall normally call only backbenchers to ask questions, and at the second such Question Time in each week, the Presiding Officer shall normally call only party leaders or group representatives to ask questions.

3. The requirements of these Rules, so far as they relate to questions being in writing and so far as they provide for lodging requirements, do not apply to First Minister’s Questions.”

(v) in Rule 13.6A, insert after paragraph 3:

“3A. After members have been notified that they have been selected and before the deadline for lodging questions under paragraph 4, members whose names are included in those selections may arrange with other such members to swap places, and notify the Clerk accordingly. The Clerk shall ensure that information about any such swaps is published alongside the information notified to members under paragraph 5.”

(vi) Rule 13.6B is suspended

(vii) for Rule 13.7.A1, substitute:

“A1. First Minister’s Question Time shall be a period of up to 30 minutes, normally each Tuesday, and another period of up to 30 minutes, normally each Thursday. General Question Time shall be a period of up to 25 minutes, normally each Tuesday, and another period of up to 30 minutes, normally each Thursday. Portfolio Question Time shall be a period of up to 60 minutes, normally each Wednesday.”

(viii) in Rule 13.7.1, for the words “selected for answer” substitute “asked”

(ix) in Rule 13.7. 9 paragraph (a) is suspended.

(c) that the suspensions and variations of Rules set out in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this motion shall have effect from 29 May 2026 and remain in effect until 31 January 2027 or such earlier date as the Parliament may decide, on a motion by the committee established under Rule 6.4.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

7. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 3, 5 and 6 as noted above.

The meeting closed at 5.29 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
26 May 2026

Appendix

(Note: this Appendix does not form part of the Minutes)

Other Documents

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 26 May 2026 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Analytics and Intelligence for people who access an NHS Sexual Assault Response Coordination Service (SARCS) following a recent rape, sexual assault or child sexual abuse: Fourth report on the operation of the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Act 2021 (SG/2026/119) laid under Section 15 of the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Act 202

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