



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 1, No. 36, Session 7

Meeting of the Parliament

Thursday 8 October 2026

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

The meeting opened at 1.30 pm.

1. General Questions: Questions were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.

2. First Minister's Questions (Party Leaders): Questions were answered by the First Minister (John Swinney).

3. Ministerial Statement: The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Care (Angela Constance) made a statement and answered questions on Planning for Winter and Improving Hospital Flow.

4. Strengthening Scotland's Cyber Resilience: The Cabinet Secretary for Justice (Neil Gray) moved S7M-01517—That the Parliament recognises that strong cyber resilience is essential to protecting people's rights, safety and access to essential public services as well as ensuring Scotland's national resilience, economic prosperity and the delivery of public services; notes that the increasing reliance on digital technologies is exposing individuals, businesses, public services and the democratic system to growing cyber threats, including cyber crime, online fraud, scams, and ransomware; acknowledges the importance of improving public awareness and personal online security and protecting people's safety; recognises that cyber resilience is a shared responsibility requiring coordination and action across all sectors, and robust regulation of new technologies; welcomes progress through the Strategic Framework for a Cyber Resilient Scotland, the CyberScotland Partnership and the Scottish Cyber Coordination Centre; recognises that these strategies must be effectively resourced; supports more robust cyber resilience standards for public, private and third sector organisations, and supports continued

collaboration and cooperation with partners across Scotland, the UK and internationally to identify, manage and respond to evolving digital risks.

Pauline McNeill moved amendment S7M-01517.1—

As an amendment to motion S7W-01517 in the name of Neil Gray (Strengthening Scotland's Cyber Resilience), insert at end "; welcomes the UK Government's Cyber Security and Resilience (Network and Information Systems) Bill as a step towards building nationwide protocols for protecting critical infrastructure, and calls on the Scottish Government to ensure that areas within its devolved competence are adequately resourced to establish any additional security measures or reporting mechanisms that may be required."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 96, Against 13, Abstentions 0).

Amanda Bland moved amendment S7M-01517.3—

As an amendment to motion S7M-01517 in the name of Neil Gray (Strengthening Scotland's Cyber Resilience), insert at end "considers that, despite a substantial framework of strategies, significant gaps remain in the implementation of cyber resilience across Scotland's public sector; expresses concern that only 64% of Scottish public sector organisations have reported carrying out cyber resilience exercises in the previous 12 months; believes that the priority should now be the effective implementation, testing and enforcement of existing cyber resilience standards and to resist the tendency to create further strategies and frameworks to achieve simple objectives; understands that resource constraints are limiting the ability of organisations to implement lessons learned from incidents and exercises to address identified weaknesses, and calls on the Scottish Government to establish clear minimum standards for regular testing of cyber defences and incident response arrangements across the public sector, and to ensure that public bodies have sufficient financial, technical and specialist resources to address identified vulnerabilities."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 35, Against 74, Abstentions 0).

Maggie Chapman moved amendment S7M-01517.2—

As an amendment to motion S7W-01517 in the name of Neil Gray (Strengthening Scotland's Cyber Resilience), insert at end "; recognises that digital sovereignty is an increasingly important aspect of cyber resilience, including the risks arising from excessive dependence on a small number of multinational technology companies and foreign-owned digital infrastructure; further recognises the importance of strong privacy, human rights and democratic safeguards; supports diversified, interoperable and secure digital infrastructure, open standards, responsible public procurement and investment in Scotland's cyber security skills, research and public-interest technological capability; notes steps being taken at a European level to strengthen digital sovereignty; agrees that the UK Government should be

more proactive in pursuing digital sovereignty, and believes that the Scottish Government should begin work to develop a Scottish digital sovereignty strategy, given that this will be necessary in the event of independence."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 65, Against 42, Abstentions 0).

Alex Cole-Hamilton moved amendment S7M-01517.4—

As an amendment to motion S7M-01517 in the name of Neil Gray (Strengthening Scotland's Cyber Resilience), insert at end: "; recognises that cyber resilience depends on the security and resilience of the physical infrastructure on which digital services rely; understands the risks to critical digital infrastructure of accidental, environmental and deliberate disruption, including sabotage and the actions of hostile actors, and recognises the particular importance of resilient and diverse connectivity for Scotland's island and remote communities."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to (DT).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 70, Against 37, Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament recognises that strong cyber resilience is essential to protecting people's rights, safety and access to essential public services as well as ensuring Scotland's national resilience, economic prosperity and the delivery of public services; notes that the increasing reliance on digital technologies is exposing individuals, businesses, public services and the democratic system to growing cyber threats, including cyber crime, online fraud, scams, and ransomware; acknowledges the importance of improving public awareness and personal online security and protecting people's safety; recognises that cyber resilience is a shared responsibility requiring coordination and action across all sectors, and robust regulation of new technologies; welcomes progress through the Strategic Framework for a Cyber Resilient Scotland, the CyberScotland Partnership and the Scottish Cyber Coordination Centre; recognises that these strategies must be effectively resourced; supports more robust cyber resilience standards for public, private and third sector organisations; supports continued collaboration and cooperation with partners across Scotland, the UK and internationally to identify, manage and respond to evolving digital risks; welcomes the UK Government's Cyber Security and Resilience (Network and Information Systems) Bill as a step towards building nationwide protocols for protecting critical infrastructure; calls on the Scottish Government to ensure that areas within its devolved competence are adequately resourced to establish any additional security measures or reporting mechanisms that may be required; recognises that digital sovereignty is an increasingly important aspect of cyber resilience, including the risks arising from excessive dependence on a small number of multinational technology companies and foreign-owned digital infrastructure; further recognises the importance of strong privacy, human rights and democratic safeguards; supports diversified, interoperable and secure digital infrastructure, open standards, responsible public procurement and investment in Scotland's cyber security skills, research and public-interest technological capability;

notes steps being taken at a European level to strengthen digital sovereignty; agrees that the UK Government should be more proactive in pursuing digital sovereignty; believes that the Scottish Government should begin work to develop a Scottish digital sovereignty strategy, given that this will be necessary in the event of independence; recognises that cyber resilience depends on the security and resilience of the physical infrastructure on which digital services rely; understands the risks to critical digital infrastructure of accidental, environmental and deliberate disruption, including sabotage and the actions of hostile actors, and recognises the particular importance of resilient and diverse connectivity for Scotland's island and remote communities.

5. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on item 4 as noted above.

6. Face Coverings in Public Places: The Parliament debated S7M-01375 in the name of Thomas Kerr—That the Parliament notes the ongoing debate across Scotland, and particularly in Glasgow, regarding the wearing of full-face coverings, including the burqa and niqab, in public places; recognises that legislation in Scotland already provides police with powers to require the removal of face coverings in specified circumstances where there are reasonable grounds to believe that they are being used to conceal identity in connection with criminality or disorder; notes the Scottish Government's current position that existing police powers are sufficient; further notes that a number of European countries have introduced restrictions on face coverings in public places, and notes calls for the Scottish Government to set out its assessment of the potential benefits of introducing further restrictions on full-face coverings in public places, including consideration of public safety, individual liberty and community cohesion.

7. Motion without Notice: Thomas Kerr moved without notice that, under Rule 8.14.3, the debate be extended by up to 30 minutes.

The motion was disagreed to by division: (For 14, Against 51, Abstentions 0).

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
8 October 2026

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

Committee Reports

The following report was published on 8 October 2026—

Criminal Justice Committee, 2nd Report 2026 (Session 7): The First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Transfer of Functions and Members of the Police Appeals Tribunal) Amendment Regulations 2026 [draft] (SP Paper 23)

Subordinate Legislation

Affirmative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 8 October 2026 and is subject to the affirmative procedure—

Electronic Monitoring (Use of Devices and Information) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2026 [draft]
laid under section 15 of the Management of Offenders (Scotland) Act 2019

Negative Instruments

The following instruments were laid before the Parliament on 8 October 2026 and are subject to the negative procedure—

Scottish Land Commission (Number of Land Commissioners) Regulations 2026 (SSI 2026/284)
laid under section 126(2)(a) of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016

Electronic Monitoring (Approved Devices) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2026 (SSI 2026/285)
laid under section 15 of the Management of Offenders (Scotland) Act 2019

Laid Only Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 8 October 2026 and is not subject to any parliamentary procedure—

Crofting and Scottish Land Court Act 2026 (Commencement No. 1) Regulations 2026 (SSI 2026/283 (C. 32))
laid under section 30(2) of the Interpretation and Legislative Reform (Scotland) Act 2010

Other Documents

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 8 October 2026 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

The Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024: Second Annual Report on the Review of its Operation (2025-26) (SG/2026/238) laid under Section 34 of the Children's (Care and Justice) Act 2024

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