



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 1, No. 20, Session 7

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 2 September 2026

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

1. Portfolio Questions: Questions on Social Justice and Housing, and then on Economy, Tourism and Transport were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and a Minister.

2. Ministerial Statement: The Cabinet Secretary for Education, Culture and Gaelic (Màiri McAllan) made a statement and answered questions on Raising Standards and Delivering Excellence for Every Child.

3. Improving Lives Through Delivering for Scotland: The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Care (Angela Constance) moved S7M-01003—That the Parliament notes the publication of the Scottish Government's Programme for Government, Ambitious for Scotland, which commits to renewing Scotland's public services through prevention, integration and reform; recognises the Programme for Government's focus on public service reform and commitment to ensuring that decision-making and service delivery sit at the level best placed to improve people's lives; agrees with the need to empower communities and regions to make the decisions that improve delivery; further agrees with the need to reduce NHS waiting times, support the shift of care from hospitals into communities through strengthened primary care, digital innovation and expanded community services; welcomes the need for action to tackle health inequalities, improve population health, and treat substance misuse as a public health priority, and agrees that public service reform must be shaped by and with the workforce, while delivering better outcomes for people and communities across Scotland.

Helen McDade moved amendment S7M-01003.5—

As an amendment to motion S7M-01003 in the name of Angela Constance (Improving Lives Through Delivering for Scotland), leave out from ",which commits" to end and insert "; is disappointed that the only tool that the Scottish Government is using to reform public services is centralisation; believes that the proposals to create only two health boards for the east and west further marginalises rural communities in the north and south; further believes that it is hypocritical for the Scottish Government to talk about making services local, when the proposed actions would remove locality by further centralising health services; notes that the Parliament has been told many times during the last 19 years by the SNP administration that it will empower communities, reduce NHS waiting times, support the shift of care from hospitals into communities, roll out digital innovation and expanded community services, tackle health inequalities, improve population health and treat substance misuse as a priority; believes that, over nearly two decades, the actions taken to address these priorities have been ineffective to such an extent that the current administration is still seeking agreement to take action on them; calls on the Scottish Government to set out in detail the capital and revenue budgets required to deliver healthcare reform and establishes an independent scrutiny body to oversee these reforms, and is opposed to a simple expansion of the existing governance structures, which it considers could be likened to the Scottish Government marking its own homework."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 17, Against 92 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 10).

Jackie Baillie moved amendment S7M-01003.1—

As an amendment to motion S7M-01003 in the name of Angela Constance (Improving Lives Through Delivering for Scotland), leave out from "welcomes" and insert "recognises that a properly funded social care sector, with a fairly rewarded workforce, will be necessary to achieve these aims; further recognises that mental health services require urgent attention; welcomes the need for action to tackle health inequalities, including in women's experience of healthcare, to improve population health, and to treat substance misuse as a public health priority; agrees that public service reform must be shaped by and with the workforce, while delivering better outcomes for people and communities across Scotland; regrets that the Scottish Government has had 19 years to transform public services but has failed to deliver, and believes that, if Scottish Ministers are committed to deliver, they must engage in cross-party working, especially in health and social care."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 51, Against 69 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 0).

Kayleigh Kinross-O'Neill moved amendment S7M-01003.2—

As an amendment to motion S7M-01003 in the name of Angela Constance (Improving Lives Through Delivering for Scotland), insert at end "; notes the

reported concerns raised by workers, patients and communities regarding the proposed centralisation of NHS services; calls for assurances that there will be no compulsory redundancies or loss of frontline services as a result of the scrapping of regional health boards, and further calls on the Scottish Government to urgently publish further information on Integration Joint Board reform, the responsibilities of the proposed two strategic health boards and how responsibility for local service delivery will be managed".

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 39 (including 1 proxy vote), Against 81, Abstentions 0).

Miles Briggs moved amendment S7M-01003.4—

As an amendment to motion S7M-01003 in the name of Angela Constance (Improving Lives Through Delivering for Scotland), insert at end "; notes the projected £5 billion gap in public service funding after 19 years of an SNP-led Scottish Government; further notes the First Minister's recognition that underperforming areas must change, but notes that Scottish Ministers have failed to outline how social security spending will be reformed in response to estimates that the Scottish Government will be spending more than £9.2 billion a year on benefits by 2030-31; welcomes the debate around public sector reform, which guarantees the delivery of local accountability for services and equity of access to services as close to or in people's homes, and agrees with the principle of creating a state that spends Scottish taxpayers' money more wisely."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 27, Against 78 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 15).

Adam Harley moved amendment S7M-01003.3—

As an amendment to motion S7M-01003 in the name of Angela Constance (Improving Lives Through Delivering for Scotland), insert at end "; believes that there is no way to fix the NHS without fixing care, and that removing the care bottleneck would tackle the number of patients remaining in hospital due to delayed discharge, reduce waits in departments such as A&E, and reduce instances of corridor care; agrees that where public service reform seeks to improve lives and end practices that may cause harm, there should be mechanisms in place to evaluate proposals and properly measure outcomes, and calls, therefore, on the Scottish Government to set out how it will measure, monitor and report on the volume and frequency of corridor care as part of the work required to eradicate it."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 106, Against 14 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 0).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 91, Against 19 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 10).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament notes the publication of the Scottish Government's Programme for Government, Ambitious for Scotland, which commits to renewing Scotland's public services through prevention, integration and reform; recognises the Programme for Government's focus on public service reform and commitment to ensuring that decision-making and service delivery sit at the level best placed to improve people's lives; agrees with the need to empower communities and regions to make the decisions that improve delivery; further agrees with the need to reduce NHS waiting times, support the shift of care from hospitals into communities through strengthened primary care, digital innovation and expanded community services; welcomes the need for action to tackle health inequalities, improve population health, and treat substance misuse as a public health priority; agrees that public service reform must be shaped by and with the workforce, while delivering better outcomes for people and communities across Scotland; believes that there is no way to fix the NHS without fixing care, and that removing the care bottleneck would tackle the number of patients remaining in hospital due to delayed discharge, reduce waits in departments such as A&E, and reduce instances of corridor care; agrees that where public service reform seeks to improve lives and end practices that may cause harm, there should be mechanisms in place to evaluate proposals and properly measure outcomes, and calls, therefore, on the Scottish Government to set out how it will measure, monitor and report on the volume and frequency of corridor care as part of the work required to eradicate it.

4. Business Programme: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S7M-00984—That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Tuesday 8 September 2026

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by General Questions

followed by First Minister's Questions (Backbench Members)

followed by Scottish Government Debate: Programme for Government - An Economy Fit for the Future

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.30 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 9 September 2026

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Deputy First Minister Responsibilities, Finance and Local Government, Parliamentary Business and Veterans; Public Service Reform, Europe, External Affairs and Energy

followed by Scottish Government Debate: Building Stronger, Safer and Inclusive Communities, Together

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.30 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 10 September 2026

1.30 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

1.30 pm General Questions

2.00 pm First Minister's Questions (Party Leaders)

followed by Scottish Government Debate: Scotland's Energy Opportunity

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Tuesday 15 September 2026

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by General Questions

followed by First Minister's Questions (Backbench Members)

followed by Scottish Government Business

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.30 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 16 September 2026

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Justice; Health and Care

followed by Scottish Green Party Debate

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.30 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 17 September 2026

1.30 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

1.30 pm General Questions

2.00 pm First Minister's Questions (Party Leaders)

followed by Scottish Government Business

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

(b) that, for the purposes of Portfolio Questions in the week beginning 7 September 2026, in rule 13.7.3, after the word "except" the words "to the extent to which the Presiding Officer considers that the questions are on the same or similar subject matter or" are inserted.

The motion was agreed to.

5. Substitution on Committees: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S7M-00985—That the Parliament agrees that—

Mark Simpson be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Criminal Justice Committee

David Kirkwood be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee

Kim Schmulian be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Economy, Tourism and Energy Committee

Julie MacDougall be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Education and Gaelic Committee

Senga Beresford be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee

Thomas Kerr be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

Angela Ross be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Finance and Public Administration Committee

Victor Currie be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Health, Care and Sport Committee

Duncan Massey be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Public Audit Committee

Graham Simpson be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Public Petitions Committee

Helen McDade be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Public Service Reform Committee

Max Bannerman be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Rural Affairs Committee

Julie MacDougall be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Social Justice, Housing and Local Government Committee

Jamie Langan be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

Amanda Lindsay be appointed as the Reform UK substitute on the Transport Committee

Finlay Carson be appointed as the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party substitute on the Climate Action Committee

Meghan Gallacher be appointed as the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party substitute on the Criminal Justice Committee

Liam Kerr be appointed as the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party substitute on the Economy, Tourism and Energy Committee

Rachael Hamilton be appointed as the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party substitute on the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee

Murdo Fraser be appointed as the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party substitute on the Finance and Public Administration Committee

James Adams be appointed as the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party substitute on the Rural Affairs Committee

Tim Eagle be appointed as the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party substitute on the Social Justice, Housing and Local Government Committee

Rachael Hamilton be appointed as the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party substitute on the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

Alexander Burnett be appointed as the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party substitute on the Public Audit Committee

Craig Hoy be appointed as the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party substitute on the Public Service Reform Committee

Mark Ruskell be appointed as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Climate Action Committee

Laura Moodie be appointed as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Criminal Justice Committee

Kayleigh Kinross-O'Neill be appointed as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee

Iris Duane be appointed as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Education and Gaelic Committee

Ross Greer be appointed as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Economy, Tourism and Energy Committee

Kate Nevens be appointed as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee

Kate Nevens be appointed as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

Cara McKee be appointed as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Health, Care and Sport Committee

Q Manivannan be appointed as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Public Petitions Committee

Kristopher Leask be appointed as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Public Service Reform Committee

Ariane Burgess be appointed as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Rural Affairs Committee

Patrick Harvie be appointed as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Transport Committee

Donald MacKinnon be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Climate Action Committee

Daniel Johnson be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Criminal Justice Committee

Katy Clark be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee

Paul Sweeney be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Economy, Tourism and Energy Committee

Jenny Young be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Education and Gaelic Committee

Jackie Baillie be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee.

Katherine Sangster be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

Joe Fagan be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Finance and Public Administration Committee

Jackie Baillie be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Health, Care and Sport Committee

Monica Lennon be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Public Audit Committee

Irshad Ahmed be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Public Petitions Committee

Michael Marra be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Public Service Reform Committee

Carol Mochan be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Social Justice, Housing and Local Government Committee

Mark Griffin be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

Monica Lennon be appointed as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Transport Committee

Andrew Baxter be appointed as the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party substitute on the Climate Action Committee

Adam Harley be appointed as the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party substitute on the Education and Gaelic Committee

Alex Cole Hamilton be appointed as the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party substitute on the Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

Alex Cole Hamilton be appointed as the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party substitute on the Finance and Public Administration Committee

Duncan Dunlop be appointed as the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party substitute on the Health, Care and Sport Committee

David Green be appointed as the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party substitute on the Rural Affairs Committee

Yi-pei Chou Turvey be appointed as the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party substitute on the Social Justice, Housing and Local Government Committee

Sanne Dijkstra-Downie be appointed as the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party substitute on the Transport Committee

Pauline Stafford be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Climate Action Committee

Colm Merrick be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Criminal Justice Committee

Collette Stevenson be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee

Lloyd Melville be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Economy, Tourism and Energy Committee

Jackie Dunbar be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Education and Gaelic Committee

Steven Bonnar be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee

Heather Anderson be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

Alex Kerr be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Finance and Public Administration Committee

David Torrance be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Health, Care and Sport Committee

Zen Ghani be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Public Audit Committee

Laura Mitchell be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Public Petitions Committee

Paul McLennan be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Public Service Reform Committee

David Barratt be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Rural Affairs Committee

Fulton MacGregor be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Social Justice, Housing and Local Government Committee

Patricia Gibson be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

Martyn Day be appointed as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Transport Committee

The motion was agreed to (DT).

6. Designation of Lead Committee: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S7M-00986—That the Parliament agrees that the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the legislative consent memorandum on the Immigration and Asylum Bill.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

7. Designation of Lead Committee: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S7M-00987—That the Parliament agrees that the Finance and Public Administration Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the supplementary legislative consent memorandum on the Public Office (Accountability) Bill.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

8. Designation of Lead Committee: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S7M-00988—That the Parliament agrees that the Economy, Tourism and Energy Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the supplementary legislative consent memorandum on the Sporting Events Bill.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

9. Parliamentary Recess Dates: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S7M-01014—That the Parliament agrees the following parliamentary recess dates under Rule 2.3.1: 13 to 21 February 2027 (inclusive), 3 to 18 April 2027 (inclusive), 26 June to 29 August 2027 (inclusive), 9 to 24 October 2027 (inclusive), 20 December 2027 to 2 January 2028 (inclusive).

10. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 as noted above.

11. Driving Test Delays and the Impact on Learners in Scotland: The Parliament debated S7M-00832 in the name of Keith Brown—That the Parliament notes with concern the experiences of learners and families across the

Clackmannanshire and Dunblane constituency regarding continuing difficulties in accessing practical driving tests through the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA); believes that these experiences are reflected across communities in Scotland, where what was initially presented as a temporary backlog has become a longstanding problem affecting learner drivers; understands that many learners report logging on before 6.00am only to find themselves behind tens of thousands of others in online booking queues, often waiting hours without securing a test appointment; further understands that some learners have incurred significant additional costs through extended periods of driving lessons and, in some cases, the expiry of theory test certificates before they have been able to obtain a practical driving test, requiring them to pay to sit the theory test again through no fault of their own; recognises the importance of access to driving as a means of supporting employment, apprenticeships, education, caring responsibilities and social mobility, particularly in rural and semi-rural communities where public transport options may be limited; believes that urgent measures are needed to reduce waiting times, improve access to driving tests and extend the validity of theory test certificates for learners affected by excessive delays; is concerned that recent reforms to the booking system have failed to deliver their intended objectives; and concludes that, should the UK Government prove unable to deliver a driving test system that meets Scotland's needs, serious consideration should be given to devolving responsibility for driver testing to the Scottish Parliament.

The meeting closed at 6.25 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
2 September 2026

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

Subordinate Legislation

Documents subject to parliamentary control

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 2 September 2026 and is subject to parliamentary control—

Welfare of Equidae Code of Practice (Revocation) (Scotland) Notice 2026 (SG/2026/193)
laid under section 37(7)(a) of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006

Legislative Consent Memorandum

The following memorandum was lodged on 2 September 2026—

Stephen Flynn, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport:
Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum on the Sporting Events Bill (UK Parliament legislation) (LCM-S7-1b)

Other Documents

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 2 September 2026 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

CSAE national review (HMICS/2026/08) laid under section 79(3) of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012

General Pharmaceutical Council Annual report, Annual fitness to practise report and Annual Accounts 2025/26 (SG/2026/185) laid under Paragraph 7 of Schedule 1 to the Pharmacy Order 2010

National Crime Agency Annual Report and Accounts 2025-2026 (SG/2026/180) laid under Paragraph 8(3) of Schedule 2 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013

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