



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 1, No. 28, Session 7

Meeting of the Parliament

Tuesday 22 September 2026

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

- 1. Time for Reflection:** Rev Anne Robertson, Minister, Danestone Congregational Church, led Time for Reflection.
- 2. General Questions:** Questions were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.
- 3. First Minister's Questions (Backbench Members):** Questions were answered by the First Minister (John Swinney).
- 4. Scotland's Right to Decide:** The First Minister (John Swinney) moved S7M-01264—That the Parliament agrees that Scotland is a nation that has a right to decide its own future.

Michael Marra moved amendment S7M-01264.2—

As an amendment to motion S7M-01264 in the name of John Swinney (Scotland's Right to Decide), insert at end " ; recognises that Scotland faces pressing challenges that require urgent action to improve people's lives; believes that the Scottish Government must strengthen its efforts to build a fairer, more equal and prosperous Scotland; recognises that tackling child poverty must be an immediate national priority; believes that parties across the Parliament should work together to deliver the actions needed to reduce child poverty; recognises the positive impact of measures such as the Scottish Child Payment and the removal of the two-child limit in tackling child poverty; further

recognises the importance of secure employment, education, housing and strong communities in achieving this, and reaffirms its commitment to achieving the targets set out in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017, including reducing relative child poverty to fewer than one in 10 children by 2030."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 91, Against 12, Abstentions 0).

Malcolm Offord spoke to amendment S7M-01264.3—

As an amendment to S7M-01264 in the name of John Swinney (Scotland's Right to Decide), insert at end "and did so on 7 May 2026 where the Scottish National Party failed to meet the target set in its manifesto, which stated that "based on the 2011 precedent, an SNP majority at this election is a mandate for the transfer of powers to the Scottish Parliament to enable an independence referendum"; considers that the Scottish National Party has had nearly 20 years to maximise devolution and demonstrate how Scotland could be better off under its leadership; understands that the Scottish National Party's 38% vote share in the 2026 Scottish Parliament election is the lowest since the 2007 election, and believes that this does not give it a mandate to discuss independence, let alone break up the UK."

The amendment was not moved.

Gillian Mackay moved amendment S7M-01264.5—

As an amendment to motion S7M-01264 in the name of John Swinney (Scotland's Right to Decide), insert at end ", and recognises that in the 2026 Scottish Parliament election, the people of Scotland returned the biggest ever majority of pro-independence MSPs."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 85, Against 12, Abstentions 6).

Russell Findlay moved amendment S7M-01264.4—

As an amendment to motion S7M-01264 in the name of John Swinney (Scotland's Right to Decide), leave out from "is" to end and insert "voted decisively to remain within the UK; believes that Scotland's future is best served by a government focused on the priorities of the people of Scotland, including reducing taxes, bolstering economic growth and delivering value for money in public services."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 12, Against 85, Abstentions 6).

David Green moved amendment S7M-01264.1—

As an amendment to motion S7M-01264 in the name of John Swinney (Scotland's Right to Decide), insert at end "and recalls that in the 2014

independence referendum people voted firmly to remain part of the UK, representing the will of the Scottish people; 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, and believes that the Scottish Government must now focus on fixing the NHS and care, helping people with the cost of living crisis, ensuring that communities have the power and resources to shape where they live through more decentralised decision-making, 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 35, Against 68, Abstentions 0).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 84, Against 18, Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament agrees that Scotland is a nation that has a right to decide its own future; recognises that Scotland faces pressing challenges that require urgent action to improve people's lives; believes that the Scottish Government must strengthen its efforts to build a fairer, more equal and prosperous Scotland; recognises that tackling child poverty must be an immediate national priority; believes that parties across the Parliament should work together to deliver the actions needed to reduce child poverty; recognises the positive impact of measures such as the Scottish Child Payment and the removal of the two-child limit in tackling child poverty; further recognises the importance of secure employment, education, housing and strong communities in achieving this; reaffirms its commitment to achieving the targets set out in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017, including reducing relative child poverty to fewer than one in 10 children by 2030, and recognises that in the 2026 Scottish Parliament election, the people of Scotland returned the biggest ever majority of pro-independence MSPs.

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

6. Child Maintenance, Protecting Children and Families in Scotland: The Parliament debated S7M-00974 in the name of Steven Bonnar—That the Parliament recognises what it considers to be the significant impact that failures within the UK Child Maintenance Service can have on children and families in Scotland; notes the concerns highlighted by the recent BBC Panorama investigation into the operation of the service; acknowledges the experiences of Scottish families who are struggling to secure maintenance payments to which their children are entitled, including those in the Uddingston and Bellshill constituency; notes the belief that children in Scotland should not bear the consequences of failures within a reserved UK system; recognises the Scottish Government's commitment to supporting children and families within its devolved responsibilities, and notes the calls for continued engagement between the Scottish and UK governments to ensure that the experiences and voices of Scottish families are properly reflected in the reform of the

Child Maintenance Service and that future reforms better protect children and families across Scotland.

The meeting closed at 6.12 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
22 September 2026

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

Committee Reports

The following report was published on 18 September 2026—

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 6th Report, 2026 (Session 7):
Sporting Events Bill (UK Parliament legislation) - delegated powers
exercisable within devolved competence, with reference to LCM-S7-1, LCM-
S7-1a and LCM-S7-1b (SP Paper 8)

Subordinate Legislation

Affirmative Instruments

The following instruments were laid before the Parliament on 18 September 2026
and are subject to the affirmative procedure—

Air Departure Tax (Administration) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2026 [draft]
laid under section 42(1)(c) and (d) of the Air Departure Tax (Scotland) Act
2017

Air Departure Tax (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2026 [draft]
laid under section 42(1)(a) and (d) of the Air Departure Tax (Scotland) Act
2017

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 22 September 2026 and
is subject to the affirmative procedure—

Visitor Levy (Amendment of Returns and Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland)
Regulations 2026 [draft]
laid under section 28A(3) of the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Act 2024

Negative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 18 September 2026 and
is subject to the negative procedure—

Representation of the People (Absent Voting at Local Government Elections)
(Scotland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations 2026 (SSI 2026/263)
laid under section 61(3) of the Local Electoral Administration and Registration
Services (Scotland) Act 2006

Laid Only Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 18 September 2026 and
is not subject to any parliamentary procedure—

Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Act 2026 (Commencement) Regulations
2026 (SSI 2026/265 (C. 28))

laid under section 30(2) Interpretation and Legislative Reform (Scotland) Act 2010

Other Documents

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 22 September 2026 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Scottish Forestry Annual Report and Accounts 2025-26 (SG/2026/209) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

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