



# The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 1, No. 103, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Tuesday 26 April 2022

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

- 1. Time for Reflection:** Billy Kay, Writer and Broadcaster, led Time for Reflection.
- 2. Topical Questions:** Questions were answered by Ministers.
- 3. Reducing the Cost of the School Day for Low Income Families:** The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (Shirley-Anne Somerville) moved S6M-04138— That the Parliament recognises the actions being taken to support children and young people in low-income families to access school education; notes that Scottish Government commitments include expansion of free school meals, provision of free school milk, removal of core curriculum charges, ensuring low-income families do not face costs for curriculum-related trips, abolition of fees for instrumental music tuition, increasing the school clothing grant, producing guidance to reduce school uniform costs, provision of a digital device and connectivity to every pupil, and services to support income maximisation, and recognises that this complements the wide range of policy initiatives set out in the Scottish Government's Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland, to maximise household resources and improve children's wellbeing and life chances.

Oliver Mundell moved amendment S6M-04138.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-04138 in the name of Shirley-Anne Somerville (Reducing the Cost of the School Day for Low Income Families), leave out from “recognises the” to end and insert “notes the actions being talked about again by the Scottish Government to support children and young people in low-income

families to access school education; further notes that the SNP administration has had 15 years in office to make a difference, but has failed to meaningfully improve the life chances of Scotland's young people; expresses concern at the sharp decline in Scotland's once world-leading education system and the widening of the attainment gap under this First Minister, and the significant cuts to council budgets, which have left schools short of resources, and believes that it is disappointing that Scottish ministers only make education and young people a priority at election time.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 48, Against 64, Abstentions 0).

Michael Marra moved amendment S6M-04138.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-04138 in the name of Shirley-Anne Somerville (Reducing the Cost of the School Day for Low Income Families), insert at end “; believes that accessible childcare is critical to poverty reduction to ensure access to education and the labour market, that this must be full wrap-around, affordable provision with qualified staff, and centred on the needs of the child; recognises that extracurricular and after-school activities are key to the mental health of young people, as well as ensuring children have a wide range of skills, but that this must be affordable and accessible to all children, particularly those from low-income backgrounds; calls for the Scottish Government to ensure the universal availability of summer clubs with activities, learning and free school meals, and further calls for the publication of up-to-date baseline data on child poverty, as well as a post-COVID-19 pandemic assessment of the health of the early years sector.”

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

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 80, Against 29, Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament recognises the actions being taken to support children and young people in low-income families to access school education; notes that Scottish Government commitments include expansion of free school meals, provision of free school milk, removal of core curriculum charges, ensuring low-income families do not face costs for curriculum-related trips, abolition of fees for instrumental music tuition, increasing the school clothing grant, producing guidance to reduce school uniform costs, provision of a digital device and connectivity to every pupil, and services to support income maximisation; recognises that this complements the wide range of policy initiatives set out in the Scottish Government's Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland, to maximise household resources and improve children's wellbeing and life chances; believes that accessible childcare is critical to poverty reduction to ensure access to education and the labour market, that this must be full wrap-around, affordable provision with qualified staff, and centred on the needs of the child; recognises that extracurricular and after-school activities are key to the mental health of young people, as well as ensuring children have a wide range of skills, but that this

must be affordable and accessible to all children, particularly those from low-income backgrounds; calls for the Scottish Government to ensure the universal availability of summer clubs with activities, learning and free school meals, and further calls for the publication of up-to-date baseline data on child poverty, as well as a post-COVID-19 pandemic assessment of the health of the early years sector.

**4. British Sign Language Bill - UK Legislation:** The Minister for Children and Young People (Clare Haughey) moved S6M-04115—That the Parliament agrees that the relevant provisions of the British Sign Language Bill, introduced in the House of Commons on 16 June 2021, relating to the encouragement of the use of British Sign Language, so far as they fall within the legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament, should be considered by the UK Parliament.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

**5. Revision to Business Programme:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-04172—That the Parliament agrees to the following revision to the programme of business for Thursday 28 April 2022—

after

2.30 pm Portfolio Questions: Rural Affairs and Islands

insert

followed by Ministerial Statement: Scotland's Census 2022

and after

followed by Stage 1 Debate: Non-Domestic Rates (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Bill

insert

followed by Financial Resolution: Non-Domestic Rates (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Bill

The motion was agreed to.

**6. Decision Time:** The Parliament took decisions on items 3 and 4 as noted above.

**7. MS Awareness Week 2022:** The Parliament debated S6M-03062 in the name of David Torrance—That the Parliament welcomes MS Awareness Week, taking place from 25 April to 1 May 2022; understands that Scotland has one of the highest rates per head of population of multiple sclerosis (MS) in the world, with more than 15,000 people living with the condition; notes that MS can cause a range of often fluctuating physical and mental symptoms, which impact the way people move and feel; understands that MS affects everyone with the condition differently; welcomes the work of charities, such as the MS Society and the MS Trust, in raising awareness of MS; believes that their work to fund research is of critical importance to stop MS; understands that there are now 17 treatments available for MS in NHS Scotland, when,

20 years ago, there were none, and notes the calls on MSPs across the Parliament to help raise awareness to stop MS.

The meeting closed at 6.05 pm.

**David McGill**  
Clerk of the Parliament  
26 April 2022

## **Appendix**

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

### **Committee Reports**

The following reports were published on 22 April 2022—

Education and Children and Young People Committee, 5th Report, 2022  
(Session 6): Legislative Consent Memorandum on the British Sign Language  
Bill (SP Paper 155)

COVID-19 Recovery Committee, 6th Report, 2022 (Session 6): Stage 1  
Report on the Coronavirus (Recovery and Reform) (Scotland) Bill (SP Paper  
161)

### **Subordinate Legislation**

#### **Affirmative Instruments**

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 26 April 2022 and is  
subject to the affirmative procedure—

Cross-border Placements (Effect of Deprivation of Liberty Orders) (Scotland)  
Regulations 2022 [draft]  
laid under sections 190(2)(c) and 197(2) of the Children's Hearings (Scotland)  
Act 2011

#### **Negative Instruments**

The following instruments were laid before the Parliament on 22 April 2022 and are  
subject to the negative procedure—

Building (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2022 (SSI 2022/136)  
laid under section 54(5) of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003

Environment and Trade in Animals and Related Products (EU Exit) (Scotland)  
(Miscellaneous Amendment) Regulations 2022 (SSI 2022/138)  
laid under paragraph 1(7) of Schedule 7 to the European Union (Withdrawal)  
Act 2018

#### **Laid Only Instruments**

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 22 April 2022 and is not  
subject to any parliamentary procedure—

Valuation Timetable (Scotland) Amendment Order 2022 (SSI 2022/139)  
laid under section 30(2) of the Interpretation and Legislative Reform  
(Scotland) Act 2010

## **Other Documents**

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 25 April 2022 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

**Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner Annual Report 2021-2022 SG/2022/80** laid under section 42(11)(b) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015

**The Electoral Commission Corporate Plan ELC/2022/01** laid under Schedule 1, Paragraph 15A of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 26 April 2022 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

**HM Fire Service Inspectorate - Management of Health and Safety: An Operational Focus SG/2022/71** laid under section 43C(5) of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005

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