



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 1, No. 9, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Tuesday 8 June 2021

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

1. Time for Reflection: Rev Anna Rodwell, Minister, Kelso North and Ednam Parish Church, Scottish Borders, led Time for Reflection.

2. Topical Questions: Questions were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and a Minister.

3. Ministerial Statement: The First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon) made a statement and answered questions on COVID-19 Update.

4. Tackling Poverty and Building a Fairer Country: The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government (Shona Robison) moved S6M-00263— That the Parliament agrees that tackling child poverty and building a fairer, more equal country should be a national mission for the Scottish Government, the Scottish Parliament and society; acknowledges that action is required across all the drivers of poverty reduction, including delivering fair flexible work, affordable, accessible childcare, sustainable transport options, affordable housing, and reductions in the costs of living; commits to tackling the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on poverty and inequality; recognises the impact of UK Government welfare cuts and policies that exacerbate poverty, including the two-child cap, which could remove £500 million from the incomes of families in Scotland; recognises the positive action of the Scottish Child Payment and notes the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland's assessment that removal of the £20 uplift to universal credit will effectively "knock out the benefits that the Scottish Child Payment brings into families", undermining the work and mission of the Scottish Parliament to eradicate child poverty; urges the UK

Government to devolve all employment and social security powers to the Scottish Parliament, in order that it may take the further steps needed to make workplaces fairer, including through payment of the real Living Wage, and to establish a Minimum Income Guarantee, so that everyone has enough income to live a dignified life, and calls on the UK Government to match the ambition of the Scottish Parliament to eradicate child poverty.

Miles Briggs moved amendment S6M-00263.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-00263 in the name of Shona Robison (Tackling Poverty and Building a Fairer Country), leave out from "recognises the impact of" to end and insert "notes that the Scottish Ministers have been responsible for introducing the 11 new benefit payments devolved by the UK Government through the Scotland Act 2016; further notes that the Scottish Ministers promised to set up those benefits by 2021 but have failed to deliver on this promise; recognises the concerns that the economic impact of lockdown could push more people in Scotland into homelessness, with over 5,000 adults sleeping rough at least once per year and the number of children living in temporary accommodation in Scotland reaching its highest level since records began; calls on the Scottish Government to act now to establish a national Housing First programme across all local authorities, to get people into safe and stable housing as quickly as possible, and further calls on the Ministers to improve the support available to individuals and families in Scotland who have lost loved ones and for them to reform Carer's Allowance and extend payments for up to six months after bereavement."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 28, Against 71, Abstentions 22).

Pam Duncan-Glancy moved amendment S6M-00263.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-00263 in the name of Shona Robison (Tackling Poverty and Building a Fairer Country), leave out from the second "the impact of" to end and insert "that it is the responsibility of both the Scottish and UK governments to work for the eradication of poverty in Scotland and to implement social security policies that support this goal; believes that further steps are required to make workplaces fairer, including through payment of the Scottish Living Wage; commits to using all the powers available in Scotland to reform carers benefits, move from the 'safe and secure' transition of disability benefits to addressing their eligibility and adequacy as soon as possible, to increase incomes and lift people in Scotland out of poverty, and calls on the Scottish Government to double the Scottish Child Payment to £20 a week at the earliest opportunity and introduce a supplement for families with a disabled person in them".

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 54, Against 67, Abstentions 0).

Maggie Chapman moved amendment S6M-00263.4—

As an amendment to motion S6M-00263 in the name of Shona Robison (Tackling Poverty and Building a Fairer Country), after "eradicate child poverty;" insert "welcomes the pandemic relief payment scheme, which will provide an essential additional income for families this year; calls on the Scottish Government to introduce a permanent doubling of the Scottish Child Payment at the earliest possible opportunity; notes that a Universal Basic Income would have helped many through the COVID-19 pandemic and calls on the UK and Scottish governments to work together to bring forward pilots at the earliest possible opportunity; commits to exploring funding options to end the benefit cap;".

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 70, Against 50, Abstentions 0).

Alex Cole-Hamilton moved amendment S6M-00263.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-00263 in the name of Shona Robison (Tackling Poverty and Building a Fairer Country), leave out from "urges the UK Government" to end and insert "notes the risk that Scotland's 2024 interim child poverty reduction target, unanimously agreed by the Parliament, could be missed and agrees therefore that families cannot afford for any delay on the part of either the Scottish or UK governments for additional action, backed by stronger fair work principles and a social security system that operates on a human rights basis; believes that poor mental health, the poverty-related attainment gap, and insecure and substandard housing are among the factors that prevent people from achieving their potential and getting on in life, and calls for urgent interventions to therefore include an immediate end to the scandal of thousands of children and adults waiting over a year for mental health treatment as the first step towards meeting the 18-week targets for the first time ever, the extension of funded early learning and childcare, Pupil Equity Funding and in-class support for children and young people, and the building of at least 40,000 new homes for social rent during the current parliamentary session as part of a plan to end homelessness and raise the standard of housing in Scotland."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 26, Against 94, Abstentions 0).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 68, Against 53, Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved— That the Parliament agrees that tackling child poverty and building a fairer, more equal country should be a national mission for the Scottish Government, the Scottish Parliament and society; acknowledges that action is required across all the drivers of poverty reduction, including delivering fair flexible work, affordable, accessible childcare, sustainable transport options, affordable housing, and reductions in the costs of living; commits to tackling the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on poverty and inequality; recognises the impact of UK Government welfare cuts and policies that exacerbate poverty, including the two-child cap, which could remove £500 million from the incomes of families in Scotland; recognises the positive action of the Scottish Child Payment and notes the Children

and Young People's Commissioner Scotland's assessment that removal of the £20 uplift to universal credit will effectively "knock out the benefits that the Scottish Child Payment brings into families", undermining the work and mission of the Scottish Parliament to eradicate child poverty; welcomes the pandemic relief payment scheme, which will provide an essential additional income for families this year; calls on the Scottish Government to introduce a permanent doubling of the Scottish Child Payment at the earliest possible opportunity; notes that a Universal Basic Income would have helped many through the COVID-19 pandemic and calls on the UK and Scottish governments to work together to bring forward pilots at the earliest possible opportunity; commits to exploring funding options to end the benefit cap; urges the UK Government to devolve all employment and social security powers to the Scottish Parliament, in order that it may take the further steps needed to make workplaces fairer, including through payment of the real Living Wage, and to establish a Minimum Income Guarantee, so that everyone has enough income to live a dignified life, and calls on the UK Government to match the ambition of the Scottish Parliament to eradicate child poverty.

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

6. Impact on Scottish Agriculture of Tariff-free Trade Deals: The Parliament debated S6M-00058 in the name of Jim Fairlie—That the Parliament recognises that agriculture is a vital part of Scotland's economy, including in the Perthshire South and Kinross-shire constituency; believes that it underpins the food and drink sector and has a huge role to play in achieving the country's climate change targets; considers that there might be potential for hugely-damaging consequences to the most remote rural communities from any tariff-free trade with major agricultural producer nations, and notes the view that, in its pursuit of trade deals, the UK Government must take due cognisance of the vulnerability of Scotland's agriculture sectors.

7. Motion without Notice: Jim Fairlie MSP moved without notice that, under Rule 8.14.3, the debate be extended by up to 30 minutes. The motion was agreed to.

The meeting closed at 6.33 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
8 June 2021

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

Subordinate Legislation

Made Affirmative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 4 June 2021 and is subject to the made affirmative procedure—

Health Protection (Coronavirus) (International Travel) (Scotland) Amendment (No. 12) Regulations 2021 (SSI 2021/230)

laid under section 122(6) and (7) of the Public Health etc. (Scotland) Act 2008

Other Documents

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 4 June 2021 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Statutory Duties in Secure Accommodation: Unlocking Children's Rights

CCYP/2021/01 laid under section 11(4) of the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2003

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