



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 3, No. 94, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Tuesday 26 March 2024

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

1. Time for Reflection: Rev Neil Glover, Minister for Aberfeldy, Dull & Weem, Grantully, Logierait and Strathtay, led Time for Reflection.

2. Revision to Business: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-12668—That the Parliament agrees to the following revisions to the programme of business for Tuesday 26 March 2024—

after

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

insert

followed by Ministerial Statement: Working Towards a Tobacco-Free Scotland by 2034 and Tackling Youth Vaping

delete

5.00 pm Decision Time

and insert

5.30 pm Decision Time

The motion was agreed to.

3. Topical Questions: Questions were answered by a Cabinet Secretary and a Minister.

4. Motion Without Notice: Stuart McMillan moved a motion without notice that, under Rule 17.2.1(a), the Parliament agree to suspend part of Rule 13.8.1 to remove the words “by 10.00” for the purposes of the meeting.

The motion was disagreed to (by division: For 49, Against 55, Abstentions 0).

5. Ministerial Statement: The Minister for Public Health and Women's Health (Jenni Minto) made a statement and answered questions on Working Towards a Tobacco-Free Scotland by 2034 and Tackling Youth Vaping.

6. Gender Representation on Public Boards (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill: The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice (Shirley-Anne Somerville) moved S6M-12639—That the Parliament agrees to the general principles of the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

7. Widening Access - Equality of Access to Higher Education: The Minister for Higher and Further Education; and Minister for Veterans (Graeme Dey) moved S6M-12642—That the Parliament notes the recent report by the Commissioner on Fair Access; welcomes the progress that has been made to widen access to university, with a 45% increase in students from the most deprived communities entering university since 2013-14; is grateful for the work of the higher education sector in achieving this success; agrees with the commissioner's finding that increasing the share of students from the most deprived areas has not led to fewer students progressing to higher education from less deprived areas; reaffirms its commitment to widening access and to meeting the 2026 interim target and the 2030 target, which it agrees will require concerted effort from government and institutions to meet this challenge; agrees that it is vital that higher education continues to be based on the ability to learn rather than the ability to pay, and further agrees that undergraduate students in Scotland should not be expected to pay any form of tuition fees, whether up front or in the form of charges during their course or after graduation, such as graduate endowments or graduate taxes.

Liam Kerr moved amendment S6M-12642.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-12642 in the name of Graeme Dey (Widening Access - Equality of Access to Higher Education), leave out from “, and further” to end and insert “; acknowledges that a cap on university places for Scottish domiciled students exists due to the Scottish Government's underfunding of Scotland's institutions; condemns the decision to cut at least a further 1,200 university places for Scottish domiciled students next year, and calls on the Scottish Government to recognise that the current funding model is unsustainable, and that it needs to build a consensus around an optimum model that commands broad public support to end the underfunding of

Scotland's universities and ensures that world-leading university education can be offered to all who want it, regardless of means and background."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 31, Against 69, Abstentions 20).

Pam Duncan-Glancy moved amendment S6M-12642.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-12642 in the name of Graeme Dey (Widening Access - Equality of Access to Higher Education), insert at end “; notes the Scottish Government's own Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement accompanying the 2024-25 budget, which warns of 'a significant risk that the reduction in the HE resource budget will increase competition for remaining university places, which could disadvantage learners from socio-economically disadvantaged areas with lower prior attainment'; understands that this funding crisis extends to the whole tertiary education sector, with Audit Scotland noting that it will be 'difficult for colleges to balance delivering high-quality learning at the volume expected while contributing to other Scottish Government priorities'; calls on the Scottish Government to set out its plans to meet its commitment in the 2023-24 Programme for Government to lead development of a new post-16 education funding model, and believes that a sustainably funded tertiary education sector is crucial to the future of Scotland.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 22, Against 97, Abstentions 1).

The motion was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 69, Against 49, Abstentions 1).

8. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 6 and 7 as noted above.

9. Brain Tumour Awareness Month: The Parliament debated S6M-12066 in the name of Foysol Choudhury—That the Parliament notes that March 2024 is Brain Tumour Awareness Month, a month dedicated to raising awareness of what it sees as the importance of brain tumour research and shining a light on the patient population across Scotland; understands that one in three people know someone affected by what it considers to be this devastating disease; further understands that, unlike in many other cancers, brain tumour survival statistics have changed little in over a generation, and notes the belief that brain tumours must be treated as a clinical and strategic priority by government, and that, as brain tumours are recognised as a “cancer of unmet need”, money must be ring fenced to support the discovery science that, it understands, could transform patient outcomes in the field.

2. Motion without Notice: Foysol Choudhury 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 6.46 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
26 March 2024

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

Committee Reports

The following reports were published on 25 March 2024—

Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee, 5th Report, 2024 (Session 6): Report on The National Smart Ticketing Advisory Board (Public Services Reform) (Scotland) Order 2024 (SP Paper 546)

Economy and Fair Work Committee, 4th Report, 2024 (Session 6): Inquiry into a just transition for the North East and Moray (SP Paper 556)

The following reports were published on 26 March 2024—

Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee, 3rd Report, 2024 (Session 6): The Legal Aid (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) Regulations 2024 [draft] (SP Paper 557)

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 23rd Report, 2024 (Session 6): Subordinate Legislation considered by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee on 26th March 2024 (SP Paper 558)

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 24th Report, 2024 (Session 6): Delegated powers in the Social Security (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill at Stage 1 (SP Paper 559)

Subordinate Legislation

Affirmative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 22 March 2024 and is subject to the affirmative procedure—

Sea Fisheries (Remote Electronic Monitoring and Regulation of Scallop Fishing) (Scotland) Regulations 2024 [draft]
laid under section 51(4)(b) and paragraph 5(2)(c) of schedule 8 of the Fisheries Act 2020

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 26 March 2024 and is subject to the affirmative procedure—

Transport Partnerships (Transfer of Functions) (Scotland) Order 2024 [draft]
laid under section 52(3) of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005

Negative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 26 March 2024 and is subject to the negative procedure—

Scottish Local Government Elections Amendment (Denmark) Regulations 2024 (SSI 2024/101)

laid under paragraph 4 of schedule 6A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973

Other Documents

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 25 March 2024 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Assurance review of the acquisition, use and retention of images and photographs for criminal justice and police purposes (SBC/2024/01) laid under Section 20(2) of the Scottish Biometrics Commissioners Act 2020

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