



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 4, No. 91, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Tuesday 18 March 2025

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

1. Time for Reflection: Carol Telfer, Chaplain of Glasgow Hospice, Marie Curie, led Time for Reflection.

2. Topical Questions: Questions were answered by the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretaries.

3. Protecting and Growing Scotland's Iconic Food and Drink Sector: The Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands (Mairi Gougeon) moved S6M-16839—That the Parliament recognises the value and importance of Scotland's food and drink sector in terms of economic benefits, its particular importance to Scotland's rural and island communities and, importantly, its role in enhancing Scotland's reputation on a global scale; further recognises the risks of the proposal for an English whisky geographical indication that could undermine Scotch whisky and single malt, which is central to the economy; acknowledges the challenges and opportunities faced by the sector in an ever-changing world; calls for cross-party support to ensure that the sector continues to receive backing and support in order to grow sustainably and contribute to a prosperous and thriving economy; notes the new risk from tariffs, and calls on the UK Government to do all that it can to protect Scotland's businesses and consumers from their impact.

Tim Eagle moved amendment S6M-16839.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-16839 in the name of Mairi Gougeon (Protecting and Growing Scotland's Iconic Food and Drink Sector), leave out

from “notes the new” to end and insert “recognises the need to rapidly deliver key infrastructure projects to aid the movement of goods and services, particularly in remote and rural communities; notes that further exploration of gene-editing technology should be undertaken in order to improve plant resilience and domestic food security; believes that the failed implementation of the Deposit Return Scheme, the further review of restrictions on marketing and sponsorship of alcoholic products, and the failure to fully pass on rates relief to all of Scotland’s hospitality operators has driven up costs and created uncertainty for food and drink businesses; welcomes the commitment by food and drink businesses to enhance self-regulation; notes the risk from tariffs, and calls on both of Scotland’s governments to do all that they can to protect businesses and consumers from their impact.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 46, Against 64 (including 3 proxy votes), Abstentions 3).

Rhoda Grant moved amendment S6M-16839.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-16839 in the name of Mairi Gougeon (Protecting and Growing Scotland’s Iconic Food and Drink Sector), insert at end “; notes the further risk to Scotland’s food and drink industry posed by rural depopulation, caused by a lack of housing supply and weakened transport links; acknowledges that the Food and Drink Federation estimates that the sector needs nearly 35,000 new recruits by 2031 to fill skills gaps; welcomes the commitment by the UK Labour administration to not water down the legal definition of single malt whisky; believes that the Scottish Government can do more to promote the unique nature of Scotch whisky and other Scottish food and drink exports to maximise the reach of Brand Scotland; calls on the Scottish Government to work across every department to drive a coherent strategy on food and drink as part of a wider industrial strategy, and further calls for clear career pathways in these industries to address skills gaps and drive excellence in the world-famous sector.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 24, Against 85 (including 3 proxy votes), Abstentions 6).

The motion was agreed to (DT).

4. Decision Time: The Parliament took a decision on item 3 as noted above.

5. MacDiarmid’s Brownsbank Cottage, a Scottish Cultural Treasure: The Parliament debated S6M-16290 in the name of Clare Adamson— That the Parliament commends the work of MacDiarmid’s Brownsbank; notes that it is a charitable organisation, which was founded in 2015 to preserve and promote the legacy of Brownsbank Cottage in the Peebleshire Hills near Biggar, South Lanarkshire; understands that Brownsbank Cottage is an A-listed building, most notably remembered as the former home of the renowned poet, Christopher Murray Grieve, who was better known by his pen-name, Hugh MacDiarmid; further understands that the charity works to restore and upgrade the cottage, to conserve its contents, to promote the works of Hugh MacDiarmid nationally and internationally,

to re-establish the Brownsbank Writing Fellowship for writers in residence to work from the cottage and to generate educational and community creative involvement, as well as promote literary tourism; recognises that Hugh MacDiarmid stood as a significant Scottish poet, journalist, essayist and political figure, and believes that he is widely regarded as one of the most influential Scottish writers of the 20th century, making a profound and lasting impact on Scottish culture and politics; acknowledges that MacDiarmid's Brownsbank has, to date, been supported by the Clyde Wind Farm Community and Development Fund, Architectural Heritage Fund, SSE Renewables Community Investment Programme, the William Grant Foundation and generous donations from the public, but that further support is urgently required; notes that distinguished past occupants of Brownsbank include the award-winning author and publisher, Matthew Fitt, and James Robertson, the inaugural Scottish Parliament Writer in Residence and author of the Booker Prize-nominated, *The Testament of Gideon Mack*; believes that Brownsbank Cottage has made an indelible imprint on Scottish cultural heritage and that its preservation, with immediate works required, is a cultural priority; commends the board of trustees and volunteers of MacDiarmid's Brownsbank on what it sees as their tireless efforts to protect and promote this historical Scottish landmark; notes the view that the protection and development of Scotland's literary heritage is vital to the nation's cultural health, identity and confidence, and further notes the calls for the Scottish and UK governments to assist with the restoration of Brownsbank Cottage, to preserve this historic and national treasure.

The meeting closed at 5.38 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
18 March 2025

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

Committee Reports

The following reports were published on 14 March 2025—

Education, Children and Young People Committee, 3rd Report, 2025 (Session 6): The Public Appointments and Public Bodies etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 (Treatment of Qualifications Scotland as Specified Authority) Order 2025 [draft] (SP Paper 756)

Finance and Public Administration Committee, 4th Report, 2025 (Session 6): Subordinate Legislation: The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (Part 2 Further Extension) Order 2025 [draft] (SP Paper 757)

The following report was published on 17 March 2025—

Finance and Public Administration Committee, 5th Report, 2025 (Session 6): Subordinate Legislation: The Budget (Scotland) Act 2024 Amendment Regulations 2025 [draft] (SP Paper 758)

The following report was published on 18 March 2025—

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 19th Report, 2025 (Session 6): Subordinate Legislation Considered by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee on 18 March 2025 (SP Paper 755)

Subordinate Legislation

Negative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 18 March 2025 and is subject to the negative procedure—

Environmental Protection (Disposal of Polychlorinated Biphenyls and other Dangerous Substances) (Scotland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations 2025 (SSI 2025/78)

laid under section 58(5) of the Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Act 2014

Laid Only Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 17 March 2025 and is not subject to any parliamentary procedure—

Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 (Commencement No. 5, Saving and Transitional Provision) Amendment Regulations 2025 (SSI 2025/73 (C. 7))

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

Other Documents

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 17 March 2025 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Disclosure Scotland Code of Practice (SG/2025/42) laid under section 55 of the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020

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