



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 4, No. 106, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 7 May 2025

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

1. Portfolio Questions: Questions on Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, and then on Health and Social Care, were answered by a Cabinet Secretary and Ministers.

2. Programme for Government: Building the Best Future for Scotland: The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic (Kate Forbes) moved S6M-17437—That the Parliament recognises the actions outlined in the Programme for Government 2025-26 to grow the Scottish economy and eradicate child poverty; further recognises that these missions are inextricably linked, with a strong economy providing access to fair work opportunities and supporting investment in public services and ambitious climate and anti-poverty measures; notes that, over the year ahead, the actions within the Programme for Government will build on Scotland's economic strengths to address the additional challenges the country faces from economic volatility, capturing the economic opportunities ahead to drive improvements in living standards, reduce child poverty and build a strong foundation for the future, to weather the global economic uncertainty; welcomes the Scottish Government's continued focus on delivering action across the drivers of child poverty reduction, to increase earned incomes, reduce the costs of living and maximise incomes from social security and benefits in kind, and commits to working together to grow the economy, and deliver on the 2030 child poverty targets unanimously supported by the Scottish Parliament.

Murdo Fraser moved amendment S6M-17437.4—

As an amendment to motion S6M-17437 in the name of Kate Forbes (Programme for Government: Building the Best Future for Scotland), leave out from first “the actions” to end and insert “that all good Scottish Government outcomes, including supporting household incomes, reducing poverty, creating wealth and funding public services, depend on delivering stronger economic growth; regrets that, despite the overriding importance of stronger economic growth, the Programme for Government 2025-26 fails to contain the policies needed to deliver it, and instead signals the continuation of the UK’s harshest tax regime on households and businesses, and fails to commit to the actions needed to deliver a growth-promoting regulatory and planning environment, and calls on the Scottish Government to adopt the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party’s common-sense proposals to grow the economy, including by reducing taxes on individuals and businesses and by improving the skills of the workforce.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 28, Against 88 (including 2 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

Paul O’Kane moved amendment S6M-17437.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-17437 in the name of Kate Forbes (Programme for Government: Building the Best Future for Scotland), leave out from first “recognises” to end and insert “believes that, after 18 years, the Scottish National Party (SNP) has taken Scotland in the wrong direction and made every institution in Scotland weaker, with almost one in six people in Scotland on an NHS waiting list, falling attainment, and thousands stuck in poverty or living in inadequate housing or on the streets; regrets that the SNP administration’s failure to use the levers that it has to meet statutory child poverty targets, tackle the housing crisis, reduce violence in schools, provide child and adolescent mental health services when young people need them, and prioritise skills development is denying young people a more prosperous and stable future; recognises that the SNP administration has had no industrial strategy or plan for skills, building a low-growth economy and delivering the lowest wage growth of any region or nation in the UK over the last two years; believes that this economic underperformance has had negative implications for public services and the living standards of families and working people, and that the Programme for Government lacks the scale of action needed to make Scotland’s economy work for people across Scotland, and calls on the Scottish Government to prioritise skills and regional economic development, reform Scotland’s enterprise agencies and cut waste, harness the power of technology to help business grow, and ensure that people get the support that they need to find secure work.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 48, Against 68 (including 2 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

Lorna Slater moved amendment S6M-17437.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-17437 in the name of Kate Forbes (Programme for Government: Building the Best Future for Scotland), leave out from first “to grow” to end and insert “could have been an opportunity for bold,

decisive action towards building a more equal, healthier and greener Scotland with an economy that works for people and planet; recognises the substantial changes to Scotland's transport, industry, land use and homes and buildings systems that are required to meet the challenges of the climate emergency, as described by the UK Climate Change Committee; further recognises the need for action to create well-paid, skilled jobs in growing low-carbon industries; believes that tackling poverty requires not only strong, resilient economies that provide access to fair work opportunities and support investment in public services, but also measures that secure the human rights of all citizens, from affordable, accessible housing and education to a social security system based on care and compassion; regrets the weakening of commitments to tackle climate change and the housing emergency, such as the watering down of the proposed Heat in Buildings Bill and the Housing (Scotland) Bill; expresses its dismay that the proposed Bills to tackle misogyny and end conversion practices have been dropped from this Programme for Government, and calls on the Scottish Government to reconsider its position on human rights and equalities legislation and urgently produce an ambitious plan to tax wealth more effectively in Scotland to ensure appropriate investment in public services, support communities and build a fairer Scotland."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 7, Against 108 (including 2 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

Jamie Greene moved amendment S6M-17437.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-17437 in the name of Kate Forbes (Programme for Government: Building the Best Future for Scotland), insert at end "; notes that, whilst the Programme for Government 2025-26 contains plans and policies to eradicate child poverty, the Scottish Government has already missed the interim child poverty targets of less than 18% of children living in relative poverty and less than 14% living in absolute poverty by 2023-24; believes that action is also required on Scotland's housing and planning systems in order to not only help the economy grow and encourage investment, but also to ensure that everyone has a safe, warm place to call home, particularly given that an estimated 10,360 children and their families are living in temporary accommodation in Scotland; understands that, whilst there are wider economic challenges both domestically and internationally, there remains concern that the work and reform that may be required to eradicate intergenerational poverty is not taking place at the necessary pace, as noted by The Wise Group, and is further concerned that, despite the actions announced in the Programme for Government 2025-26, these will not be enough to drive the economic growth required and the 2030 child poverty targets, of less than 10% of children living in relative poverty, will be missed."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 30, Against 84 (including 2 proxy votes), Abstentions 1).

The motion was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 59 (including 2 proxy votes), Against 55, Abstentions 1).

3. Business Programme: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-17450—That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business--

Tuesday 13 May 2025

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Stage 1 Debate: Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

7.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 15 May 2025

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, and Parliamentary Business; Justice and Home Affairs

followed by Ministerial Statement: Impact of UK Government Decisions on Scotland's Social Care Sector

followed by Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Business

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Approval of SSIs (if required)

5.40 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 15 May 2025

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

followed by Members' Business

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Education and Skills

followed by Ministerial Statement: Secure Care and the Wider Care System

followed by Scottish Government Debate: Scotland in Today's Europe

followed by Appointment of the Patient Safety Commissioner for Scotland

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 20 May 2025

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Stage 3 Proceedings: Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Bill

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

6.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 21 May 2025

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Deputy First Minister Responsibilities, Economy and Gaelic; Finance and Local Government

followed by Scottish Government Business

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Approval of SSIs (if required)

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 22 May 2025

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

followed by Members' Business

2.30 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.30 pm Portfolio Questions: Net Zero and Energy, and Transport

followed by Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee Debate: Committee Effectiveness Inquiry

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

(b) that, for the purposes of Portfolio Questions in the week beginning 12 May 2025, in rule 13.7.3, after the word “except” the words “to the extent to which the Presiding Officer considers that the questions are on the same or similar subject matter or” are inserted.

The motion was agreed to.

4. Stage 1 Timetable: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-17451—That the Parliament agrees that consideration of the Dog Theft (Scotland) Bill at stage 1 be completed by 3 October 2025.

The motion was agreed to.

5. Designation of Lead Committee: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-17452—That the Parliament agrees that the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the Children (Withdrawal from Religious Education and Amendment of UNCRC Compatibility Duty) (Scotland) Bill at stage 1.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

6. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 2 and 5 as noted above.

7. Mental Health Awareness Week 2025: The Parliament debated S6M-17320 in the name of Roz McCall—That the Parliament notes that 12 to 18 May 2025 is Mental Health Awareness Week; welcomes the work of the Mental Health Foundation in driving this annual campaign across the country to raise awareness, and improve education and campaigning, to ensure that no one is deprived of the opportunity for good mental health because of who they are, the community they come from or where they live; recognises what it sees as the relevance of this year’s theme of “Community” in emphasising that being part of a safe, positive community is vital for people’s mental health and wellbeing; supports the idea that people thrive when they have a strong connection with other people and supportive communities that remind them that they are not alone; notes with concern reports that those living with a mental illness in Scotland continue to be left behind, despite targeted interventions by the Scottish Government and others, and still have a shorter life expectancy than the rest of the population; understands that waiting lists for child and adolescent mental health services remain too long and that access to psychological services is increasingly difficult; considers that the reported closure of autism assessment services around Scotland by health and social care partnerships has left many without access to a diagnosis; notes the belief that addressing poor mental health is something that needs to be done as a society, within communities and as individuals, and commends all who make this week possible.

The meeting closed at 5.55 pm.

David McGill

Clerk of the Parliament
7 May 2025

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

Committee Reports

The following report was published on 7 May 2025—

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 30th Report, 2025 (Session 6): Subordinate Legislation Considered by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee on 6 May 2025 (SP Paper 777)

Other Documents

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 7 May 2025 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

The North Highland College Report & Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2023 (SG/2025/4) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

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