



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 1, No. 25, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Thursday 9 September 2021

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

The meeting opened at 11.40 am.

1. General Questions: Questions were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.

2. First Minister's Questions: Questions were answered by the First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon).

3. Mineworkers' Pension Scheme: The Parliament debated S6M-00430 in the name of Christine Grahame—That the Parliament notes the recent report by the UK Parliament's Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Select Committee into the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme; understands that the scheme, established in 1994, meant a 50/50 split in surplus sharing between the miners and the UK Government and that, to date, the UK Government has received £4.4 billion, with at least a further £1.9 billion due and the UK Government paying nothing into the fund; further understands, however, that many beneficiaries are struggling to make ends meet, including those in the Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale constituency; notes that the committee therefore recommended amending the 50/50 surplus sharing arrangements in the miners' favour, and immediately giving the £1.2 billion currently held in the Investment Reserve to former miners; understands that the Welsh Government has registered support for these recommendations, and notes the calls on the Scottish Government to do likewise.

4. Portfolio Questions: Questions on Social Justice, Housing and Local Government and then on Constitution, External Affairs and Culture were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.

5. Ministerial Statement: The Cabinet Secretary for Justice (Keith Brown) made a statement and answered questions on The Deaths of John Yuill and Lamara Bell.

6. COVID Vaccine Certification Scheme: The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery (John Swinney) moved S6M-01123—That the Parliament commends the extraordinary effort of vaccination teams throughout Scotland, which means that, as of 6 September 2021, 84% of eligible over 18-year-olds were double-vaccinated against COVID-19; recognises that case numbers remain stubbornly high and that action is needed from all sectors to ensure that baseline COVID measures are rigorously implemented; acknowledges that a number of other countries have introduced COVID certification schemes and that the UK Government has plans to introduce a vaccine certification scheme in England; believes that, in line with the Scottish Government's strategic intent, a COVID Vaccine Certification scheme can provide a targeted means to maximise Scotland's ability to keep certain higher risk settings open, while reducing the impact of transmission and encouraging the remaining sections of the population to get vaccinated; supports the implementation of a COVID Vaccine Certification scheme; agrees that the scheme will apply to nightclubs, sexual entertainment venues, indoor unseated live events with 500 or more attendees, outdoor unseated live events with 4,000 or more attendees and all events with 10,000 or more attendees; notes that measures are being taken to ensure digital inclusivity and to ensure that disabled people are not disproportionately impacted, and agrees that this scheme will be kept under regular review.

Douglas Ross moved amendment S6M-01123.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-01123 in the name of John Swinney (COVID Vaccine Certification Scheme), leave out from "recognises" to end and insert "notes that the Scottish Government has rushed out its proposals for COVID-19 vaccine certification without proper consultation or the infrastructure in place to deliver them; notes that the Deputy First Minister described the introduction of a certification scheme as the 'wrong way to go'; recognises that the affected businesses have not been able to prepare for the introduction of a certification scheme, and believes that, for these reasons, this COVID-19 vaccine certification scheme should not be introduced."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 55, Against 68, Abstentions 0).

Jackie Baillie moved amendment S6M-01123.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-01123 in the name of John Swinney (COVID Vaccine Certification Scheme), leave out from "rigorously implemented" to end and insert "effective at containing the spread; notes suggestions that vaccine certification could increase vaccine hesitancy; believes that the approach to improving uptake should be based on persuasion and that, to support the vaccination of young people and harder to reach groups, the government must improve the accessibility of vaccination, with greater use of mobile vaccination clinics and particularly in schools, at events and in areas of low coverage; acknowledges that individuals may still be able to pass on the virus even if fully

vaccinated, especially with the transmissibility of the Delta variant, and so considers that proof of a negative test should be more important than vaccination for entry to higher risk locations; notes with concern the declining ability of Test and Protect to carry out effective contact tracing, and calls on the government to prioritise investment in the service so that it has the resources required to contain the virus."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 55, Against 68, Abstentions 0).

Alex Cole-Hamilton moved amendment S6M-01123.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-01123 in the name of John Swinney (COVID Vaccine Certification Scheme), leave out from "recognises" to end and insert "believes that vaccinations are the way through the pandemic, but that vaccine passports are not; recognises that the Scottish Government's proposal to introduce a vaccine certification scheme would mean that people in Scotland will, for the first time, be required to share personal medical information in order to access freedoms in society; notes with concern the precedent that this would create and the scope for expansion and the lack of any end date in the Scottish Government's proposals; further notes practical concerns regarding the IT capabilities required, and the ability of COVID ID cards to recognise vaccines received outwith Scotland; recognises that there is no clear evidence that the introduction of COVID ID cards will materially impact on case numbers or vaccination rates; further recognises that there is concern that their introduction may lead to a false sense of security, in light of the fact that vaccines cannot stop people catching COVID-19 or passing it on; understands that case numbers reached record highs in recent weeks, due in part to unaddressed pressure on contact tracing services; notes that, as a result of this pressure, Test and Protect has been required to limit contact tracing scripts and that cases have been closed before contact has been established; believes that concentrating Scottish Government resources on establishing an effective contact tracing system would result in more beneficial outcomes, and confirms its opposition to the introduction of COVID ID cards."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 33, Against 68, Abstentions 22).

The motion was then agreed to ((DT) by division: For 68, Against 55, Abstentions 0).

7. Approval of SSI: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-01163—That the Parliament agrees that the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (International Travel) (Scotland) Amendment (No. 13) Regulations 2021 (SSI 2021/237) be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

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

The meeting closed at 5.52 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
9 September 2021

Appendix

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

Committee Reports

The following report was published on 9 September 2021—

COVID-19 Recovery Committee, 2nd Report, 2021 (Session 6): Subordinate legislation considered by the Committee on 9 September 2021 (SP Paper 8)

New Subordinate Legislation

Laid Only Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 9 September 2021 and is not subject to any parliamentary procedure—

Animals and Wildlife (Penalties, Protections and Powers) (Scotland) Act 2020
(Commencement No. 3 and Transitional Provision) Regulations 2021 (SSI 2021/303
(C. 17))

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

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