



# The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 5, No. 25, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Tuesday 9 September 2025

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

- 1. Time for Reflection:** Margot Henderson, Poet Storyteller, led Time for Reflection.
- 2. Topical Questions:** Questions were answered by a Cabinet Secretary and a Minister.
- 3. Ministerial Statement:** The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (Jenny Gilruth) made a statement and answered questions on Actions to Support Improved Relationships and Behaviour in Schools.
- 4. Urgent Question:** An urgent question, to ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body what discussions it has had with Police Scotland about the policing of the For Women Scotland rally outside the Parliament on 4 September, regarding reports of disruptive behaviour by an individual and a lack of action taken against him by the police, was answered by Claire Baker.
- 5. Twenty Years of Scotland's Railway Providing a Strong Platform for the Future:** The Cabinet Secretary for Transport (Fiona Hyslop) moved S6M-18763— That the Parliament recognises that it is now 20 years since the devolution of executive powers over rail funding, specification and strategy for Scotland's railway; celebrates the 15th anniversary of the completion of the Airdrie-Bathgate route, instigated by the Labour and Liberal Democrat coalition and completed under the Scottish National Party, the 10th anniversary of the reopening of the Borders Railway and the first anniversary of the reopening of the Levenmouth route; recognises the

many significant achievements over those 20 years, including electrification of over 570 kilometres of track, the opening of 30 new stations, and an increase of a fifth in ScotRail passenger numbers; welcomes the consistent delivery of operational performance and passenger satisfaction under public ownership and control, which are among the best levels in Britain; notes the need to continue to improve those performance levels; welcomes the investment of £13 billion over this period to sustain and grow the network through value-for-money projects, including the complete renewal of the Caledonian Sleeper fleet and operation; notes the cross-party support for the removal, for good, of ScotRail peak fares, first piloted while Scottish Green Party ministers were part of the Scottish Government; looks forward to the benefits from developments such as the completion of the electrification of the East Kilbride route, and the progression of procurement of new train fleets and further electrification, including the recently announced Fife and Borders routes; recognises that the UK Government's current proposals for rail reform draw heavily on the widely recognised success of the devolved approach to rail in Scotland; notes the Scottish Government's position that full devolution of rail is the optimal position but, in the absence of full devolution, Scotland's railway must benefit at least as much from those reforms as is promised for England and Wales, and agrees that any reforms that would diminish the Scottish Ministers' powers and the role of the Scottish Parliament already constrained by current UK legislation would be unacceptable to the Scottish Parliament, given the success the delivery model in Scotland has produced over the last two decades.

Sue Webber moved amendment S6M-18763.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-18763 in the name of Fiona Hyslop (Twenty Years of Scotland's Railway Providing a Strong Platform for the Future), leave out from first "welcomes" to end and insert "urges the Scottish Government to ensure that value-for-money and passenger satisfaction remain at the forefront of railway delivery in Scotland; notes that the cross-party support for the removal of peak rail fares was made possible thanks to a Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party motion that called on the Scottish Government to remove them; recognises the importance of rail to the Scottish economy and business, such as in the transportation of whisky and fresh produce, and agrees that rail is important to the future decarbonisation of transport; notes that new railway developments should be linked to future centres of population growth, such as at Winchburgh, and calls on the Scottish Government to outline how it plans to deliver upgraded rail links in existing towns and villages, and connect those that do not have a rail link; recognises that future development of the railway in Scotland is hindered by aging 19th century infrastructure; calls on the Scottish Government to outline how it plans to future-proof the rail network, and urges the Scottish and UK governments to outline how they will work together to deliver private investment in the rail network."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 32 (including 1 proxy vote), Against 80 (including 2 proxy votes), Abstentions 1).

Claire Baker moved amendment S6M-18763.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-18763 in the name of Fiona Hyslop (Twenty Years of Scotland's Railway Providing a Strong Platform for the Future), leave out from "that the UK Government's" to end and insert "the benefits of public ownership and welcomes proposals from the UK Government for the rest of the UK, including cross-border travel into Scotland; notes the repeated assurances from the UK Government that its plans on rail reform would not affect Scottish Government powers; welcomes the permanent removal of peak fares but notes that it only came about after significant pressure on the Scottish Government; acknowledges that ScotRail passenger numbers are still nearly 20% lower than pre-COVID-19-pandemic levels; recognises that, with punctuality and reliability being the highest complaint topics to ScotRail, more must be done to improve the service, including addressing overcrowding and short-forming, in order to achieve modal shift and attract passengers back to the railways, and acknowledges the importance of protections against violence and abuse for ScotRail workers."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 23 (including 2 proxy votes), Against 89 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 0).

The motion was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 69 (including 2 proxy votes), Against 44 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 1).

**6. Revision to Business Programme:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-18786— That the Parliament agrees—

(a) to the following revisions to the programme of business for Wednesday 10 September 2025—

after

*followed by* Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Debate: Impact of Accommodating Asylum Seekers on Scottish Local Government

insert

*followed by* Motion on Legislative Consent: Bus Services (No. 2) Bill - UK Legislation

delete

5.10 pm Decision Time

and insert

5.40 pm Decision Time

(b) that, for the purposes of consideration of the legislative consent memorandum on the Bus Services (No. 2) Bill, Rules 9B.3.5 and 9B.3.6 of Standing Orders are suspended.

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 87 (including 2 proxy votes), Against 0, Abstentions 25).

**7. Referral of SSI:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-18787— That the Parliament

agrees that the Social Security (Residence and Presence Requirements) (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) Regulations 2025 [draft] be considered by the Parliament.

The motion was agreed to.

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

**9. Celebrating Residential Outdoor Education for Young People:** The Parliament debated S6M-18576 in the name of Liz Smith—That the Parliament recognises what it sees as the outstanding contribution of Scotland's residential outdoor education centres, including PGL Dalguise in the Mid Scotland and Fife region, in developing key life skills for young people, including confidence, independence, teamwork and resilience; considers that the will of the Parliament has been expressed on the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill, with a majority of MSPs, including those representing all political parties, agreeing to the general principles at stage 1 on 27 March 2025; notes that the Scottish Government must lodge a financial resolution by 26 September 2025 or the Bill falls; further notes that the Member in Charge of the Bill has produced a series of policy proposals and associated costings for consideration by the Scottish Government that, it believes, would mean the Bill would cost significantly less; understands that the Scottish Government is yet to provide a view on any of these policy proposals and that it is yet to identify at what level of cost it considers the Bill would become "affordable" to enable a financial resolution to be lodged; further understands that the Scottish Government has not produced financial modelling with associated draft amendments on any proposals on affordability despite what it considers a commitment from the Minister for Children, Young People and The Promise when appearing before the Education, Children and Young People Committee to share draft amendments with the Member in Charge by the start of July 2025; notes the calls by members from all political parties, the outdoor education sector, and children and young people from across Scotland for the Bill to proceed to stage 2 for further scrutiny, and further notes the associated calls for a financial resolution to be lodged.

**10. Motion without Notice:** Liz Smith 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 6.25 pm.

**David McGill**  
Clerk of the Parliament  
9 September 2025



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

**Committee Reports**

The following reports were published on 9 September 2025—

Education, Children and Young People Committee, 9th Report, 2025 (Session 6): Stage 1 report on the Tertiary Education and Training (Funding and Governance) (Scotland) Bill (SP Paper 847)

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 61st Report, 2025 (Session 6): Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum: delegated powers exercisable within devolved competence in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill (SP Paper 855)

**Subordinate Legislation**

**Affirmative Instruments**

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 5 September 2025 and is subject to the affirmative procedure—

Carer's Assistance (Miscellaneous and Consequential Amendments, Revocation, Transitional and Saving Provisions) (Scotland) Regulations 2025 [draft]  
laid under section 96(2) of the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018

**Legislative Consent Memorandum**

The following memorandum was lodged on 5 September 2025—

Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Transport: Legislative Consent Memorandum on the Bus Services (No. 2) Bill (UK Parliament legislation) (LCM-S6-63)

**Other Documents**

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 5 September 2025 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

**The Scottish Ministers response to the Scottish Commission on Social Security Recommendations on the Carer's Assistance (Miscellaneous and Consequential Amendments, Revocation, Transitional and Saving Provisions) (Scotland) Regulations 2025: (SG/2025/187)** laid under section 97(9)(a) of the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 8 September 2025 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

**General Pharmaceutical Council - Annual Report Annual Fitness to Practise  
Report Annual Accounts 2024/25 (SG/2025/184)** laid under Paragraph 7 and 8 of  
Schedule 1 to the Pharmacy Order 2010

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