



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 5, No. 26, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 10 September 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 Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.

2. Improving Scotland's Finances: Murdo Fraser moved S6M-18779—That the Parliament notes with deep concern the Scottish Fiscal Commission's forecast of a £4.7 billion funding gap in 2029-30; recognises that without the Union dividend of £2,578 per person there would be a substantial deficit, with Scotland's 2024-25 net fiscal balancing standing at -£26.5 billion (-11.7% of GDP); regrets that the Scottish Government continues to dismiss these realities and prioritise constitutional campaigning over sound financial management; calls for urgent measures to restore credibility to Scotland's finances, including a full multi-year spending review to identify priorities, savings, and reform needs, a strategy to cap welfare spending growth, which is currently consuming a significant amount of resource growth, and create jobs by moving more people into work through reskilling and apprenticeships, a focus on productivity and economic growth to broaden Scotland's tax base by allowing businesses to thrive, and a robust public service reform and stronger Audit Scotland oversight to deliver better value; believes that the Parliament must focus on NHS waiting times, education standards, and community safety rather than fiscal denialism, and resolves that Scotland's future depends on fiscal discipline, growth, and accountable government within the United Kingdom.

The Minister for Public Finance (Ivan McKee) moved amendment S6M-18779.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-18779 in the name of Murdo Fraser (Improving Scotland's Finances), leave out from "notes" to end and insert "that Scotland's public services have been hampered by the UK Conservative administration's austerity budgets; recognises the deep harm that the UK Conservative administration has done to the economies of the UK and Scotland with Brexit, and that this has reduced Scotland's public spending by £2.3 billion annually; further recognises that this loss of public finances impacts on Scotland's vital public services, including Scotland's NHS, support for a just transition, and skills training; notes that a public sector reform programme is underway with the aim of saving public money while protecting the delivery of frontline services; believes that the UK Labour administration should either explore the application of wealth taxation or devolve the necessary powers to Scotland so that the Scottish Parliament can do so; welcomes that the Scottish Government has already announced plans for a three-year spending review to be published alongside the upcoming Budget, and believes that it is only with the powers of independence and full control of the fiscal levers that a truly sustainable and fair system can be developed to support efficiency and public service delivery.

Michael Marra moved amendment S6M-18779.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-18779 in the name of Murdo Fraser (Improving Scotland's Finances), leave out from "notes" to end and insert "recognises that, as a result of the Barnett formula, spending per head of population is higher in Scotland and that full fiscal autonomy would end this arrangement."

After debate, amendment S6M-18779.3 was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 67 (including 1 proxy vote), Against 51 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 0). As a result, amendment S6M-18779.2 was pre-empted.

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 66 (including 1 proxy vote), Against 54 (including 2 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament notes that Scotland's public services have been hampered by the UK Conservative administration's austerity budgets; recognises the deep harm that the UK Conservative administration has done to the economies of the UK and Scotland with Brexit, and that this has reduced Scotland's public spending by £2.3 billion annually; further recognises that this loss of public finances impacts on Scotland's vital public services, including Scotland's NHS, support for a just transition, and skills training; notes that a public sector reform programme is underway with the aim of saving public money while protecting the delivery of frontline services; believes that the UK Labour administration should either explore the application of wealth taxation or devolve the necessary powers to Scotland so that the Scottish Parliament can do so; welcomes that the Scottish Government has already announced plans for a three-year spending review to be published alongside the upcoming Budget, and believes that it is only with the powers of independence

and full control of the fiscal levers that a truly sustainable and fair system can be developed to support efficiency and public service delivery.

3. Impact of Accommodating Asylum Seekers on Scottish Local Government: Craig Hoy moved S6M-18780—That the Parliament acknowledges that the current number of asylum seekers accommodated in Scotland's local authority areas is becoming financially "unsustainable" for them, as confirmed by the Scottish National Party leader of Glasgow City Council; believes that asylum seekers should never have originally been accommodated in taxpayer-funded hotels; calls for the closure of all asylum hotels across Scotland as soon as possible, and rejects the Scottish Government's position outlined in its response to the UK Government's immigration white paper, which would see a further increase in the number of asylum seekers coming to Scotland.

The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice (Shirley-Anne Somerville) moved amendment S6M-18780.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-18780 in the name of Craig Hoy (Impact of Accommodating Asylum Seekers on Scottish Local Government), leave out from "acknowledges" to end and insert " reaffirms individuals' rights to asylum under international law, including the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol; upholds the European Convention on Human Rights, and highlights Scotland's place in the world as a welcoming nation to those fleeing persecution, conflict or danger."

Mark Griffin moved amendment S6M-18780.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-18780 in the name of Craig Hoy (Impact of Accommodating Asylum Seekers on Scottish Local Government), leave out from "acknowledges" to end and insert "regrets that the previous UK Conservative administration left the asylum system in a state of collapse; recognises the progress made by the UK Labour administration to clear the backlog of asylum claims, and believes that the failure to tackle the challenges facing Scotland's local authorities, public services and housing system, for which the Scottish Government has devolved responsibility and has received record levels of funding from the UK Labour administration, is the root cause of the housing emergency."

After debate, amendment S6M-18780.3 was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 72 (including 2 proxy votes), Against 45 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 0). As a result, amendment S6M-18780.2 was pre-empted.

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 91 (including 3 proxy votes), Against 27, Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament reaffirms individuals' rights to asylum under international law, including the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol; upholds the European

Convention on Human Rights, and highlights Scotland's place in the world as a welcoming nation to those fleeing persecution, conflict or danger

4. Bus Services (No. 2) Bill - UK Legislation: The Cabinet Secretary for Transport (Fiona Hyslop) moved S6M-18771—That the Parliament agrees, in relation to the Bus Services (No. 2) Bill, introduced in the House of Lords on 17 December 2024, and subsequently amended, that the five clauses affecting registration of zero-emission vehicles for local services in Scotland, so far as these matters fall within the legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament and alter the executive competence of the Scottish Ministers, should be considered by the UK Parliament.

The motion was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 93 (including 3 proxy votes), Against 0, Abstentions 27).

5. Business Programme: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-18788—That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Tuesday 16 September 2025

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Stage 3 Proceedings: Victims, Witnesses, and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

10.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 17 September 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 Stage 1 Debate: Leases (Automatic Continuation etc.) (Scotland) Bill

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 18 September 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 Motion of Condolence

followed by Portfolio Questions: Education and Skills

followed by Ministerial Statement: Improving Care on the Isle of Skye

followed by SPCB Supported Bodies Landscape Review Committee Debate: SPCB Supported Bodies Landscape Review

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.20 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 23 September 2025

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Stage 3 Proceedings: Housing (Scotland) Bill

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

10.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 24 September 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 Stage 3 Debate: Housing (Scotland) Bill

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 25 September 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: Climate Action and Energy, and Transport

followed by Stage 1 Debate: Tertiary Education and Training (Funding and Governance) (Scotland) Bill

followed by Financial Resolution: Tertiary Education and Training (Funding and Governance) (Scotland) Bill

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 15 September 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.

6. Substitution on Committees: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-18789—That the Parliament agrees that—

Jackie Dunbar be appointed to replace Stephanie Callaghan as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee;
Keith Brown be appointed to replace Stephanie Callaghan as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Public Audit Committee; and
Alasdair Allan be appointed to replace Jackie Dunbar as the Scottish National Party substitute on the Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

7. Substitution on Committees: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-18790—That the Parliament agrees that Foysol Choudhury be appointed to replace Rhoda Grant as the Scottish Labour Party substitute on the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

8. Social Security (Residence and Presence Requirements) (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) Regulations 2025 [draft]: The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice (Shirley-Anne Somerville) moved S6M-18785—That the Parliament recommends that the Social Security (Residence and Presence Requirements) (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) Regulations 2025 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

9. Motion Without Notice: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved without notice that, under Rule 11.2.4, Decision Time be brought forward to 5.27 pm.

The motion was agreed to.

10. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8 as noted above.

11. Improving Bladder Cancer Diagnosis in Scotland: The Parliament debated S6M-18138 in the name of Stuart McMillan—That the Parliament notes the view that it is important to improve bladder cancer diagnosis, care and treatment in Scotland, in light of reports that outcomes for patients lag behind outcomes for bladder cancer patients elsewhere in the UK and in Europe; further notes the view that there is a need to improve the availability of staff and resources to improve the standard of care, and to support all those involved in diagnosing and treating bladder cancer in Scotland, including in the Greenock and Inverclyde constituency, such as nurses, GPs, urological surgeons, oncologists and other specialised healthcare professionals; acknowledges what it sees as the current dedication, tirelessness and passion shown by those individuals and organisations, such as Fight Bladder Cancer, that work to ensure that the best care is provided for this potentially life-changing disease, and notes the calls for all organisations to play their part in ensuring that the general public has awareness of this cancer and its symptoms so that bladder cancer can be caught and treated as early as possible.

The meeting closed at 6.10 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
10 September 2025

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

Committee Reports

The following report was published on 10 September 2025—

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 62nd Report, 2025 (Session 6): Work of the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee 2024-25 (SP Paper 856)

Other Documents

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 10 September 2025 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

HM Fire Service Inspectorate: Inspection of Operational Assurance in the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SG/2025/155) laid under section 43C(5) of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005

Scottish Prison Service Annual Report and Accounts 2024 – 2025 (SG/2025/162) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

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