OFFICIAL REPORT
AITHISG OIFIGEIL

Meeting of the Parliament

Tuesday 10 February 2026

Session 6

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Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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Tuesday 10 February 2026

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Scottish Parliament

Tuesday 10 February 2026

[The Presiding Officer opened the meeting at 14:00]

Time for Reflection

The Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone): Good afternoon. The first item of business is time for reflection, and our time for reflection leader is Kristers Lukins, member of the Scottish Youth Parliament.

Kristers Lukins (Scottish Youth Parliament): (*simultaneous interpretation from British Sign Language*) First, I thank the Presiding Officer and the members of the Scottish Parliament for inviting me to deliver this reflection.

As a profoundly deaf BSL user and a member of the Scottish Youth Parliament, representing Dundee City West since 2024, I see how some voices can go unheard, and I want to share what that has taught me.

Sometimes, people appear to be managing well on the surface, while their concerns remain unspoken—not because they have nothing to say, but because finding the right way to give feedback is not always easy, or because the space to share has not felt accessible. When communication is difficult, silence can be mistaken for agreement. Sometimes, it simply means that no one has asked. Distance or circumstances can add to that silence, and experiences can be overlooked quietly, making it harder to take part or be heard.

As a deaf MSYP, I have met deaf young people who suddenly feel able to share their experiences with me. Those moments have reminded me how important language and trust are in giving people a voice. But I also wonder about young people, deaf or otherwise, in other areas where there is no one like me. That shows the need for diverse representation and inclusion, which are essential for empowerment.

I am grateful for my experience in the Scottish Youth Parliament, where I have met young people from many different backgrounds. Listening to their stories has widened my understanding and reminded me how diverse young people's lives can be.

Being included in conversations is crucial. When communication works well, it becomes easier to share ideas, build confidence and take part fully. When it does not work well, some voices remain quieter, even in spaces that aim to be inclusive.

Empowerment grows when young people are truly listened to. When their voices are welcomed and communication works for everyone, even quieter voices can be heard. Creating spaces where all young people feel included—through support, representation or accessible opportunities—can make a real difference.

Voices that may be quieter are no less important and they deserve to be heard. Some young people, especially those who are marginalised or harder to reach, may need someone to gently extend a hand to bring them into the conversation and ensure that their experiences are valued.

Let us pause, truly listen and create spaces where every young person's experience is seen, valued and able to shape change. Let us extend a hand so that no young voice goes unheard.

Business Motion

14:04

The Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone): The next item of business is consideration of business motion S6M-20746, in the name of Graeme Dey, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, on changes to business.

Motion moved,

That the Parliament agrees to the following revisions to the programme of business for—

(a) Tuesday 10 February 2026—

delete

7.00 pm	Decision Time

and insert

5.05 pm	Decision Time

(b) Thursday 12 February 2026—

after

2.30 pm	Portfolio Questions: Social Justice and Housing

insert

followed by	Ministerial Statement: Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission

after

followed by	Motion on Legislative Consent: Medical Training (Prioritisation) Bill – UK Legislation

insert

followed by	Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body Motion: Amendments to the Scottish Parliament Salaries Scheme

delete

5.00 pm	Decision Time

and insert

5.05 pm	Decision Time—[*Graeme Dey*.]

Motion agreed to.

Topical Question Time

14:05

Allegations Concerning Former Chief Nursing Officer

1. **Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab):** To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to reports that a former chief nursing officer offered the parents of Sophia Smith £20,000 and a holiday following her death in the Queen Elizabeth university hospital in 2017. (S6T-02884)

The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care (Neil Gray): I offer my deepest condolences to the Smith family, who so tragically lost their daughter Sophia in 2017. I cannot begin to imagine the pain that Sophia's family has gone through, and I appreciate that the inquiry into the Queen Elizabeth university hospital will have reopened those wounds.

We established the inquiry that is being led by Lord Brodie so that families such as the Smith family can get the truth that they deserve. It is vitally important that the independence of Lord Brodie's inquiry be respected and that he be free to come to his conclusions without any attempted political interference.

The matters in Jackie Baillie's question relate to issues that are under consideration by Lord Brodie and, as she knows, it would be inappropriate for the Government to comment further. However, I again repeat to the Parliament, as I have said during the past four weeks, that the Scottish Government treats patient safety with the utmost importance. That is why there is a Patient Safety Commissioner for Scotland, and it is also why we established a new safety and public confidence oversight group for the Queen Elizabeth university hospital.

Jackie Baillie: These matters are in the public domain. My question concerned an employee of the Scottish Government, and it is entirely appropriate that the cabinet secretary should respond. The allegations against the former chief nursing officer, Fiona McQueen, are very serious, and they must be investigated. We know that the allegations tally with the evidence that was given by Dr Christine Peters to the Scottish hospitals inquiry, who said, quoting the chief nursing officer:

"At one point she said that she could not understand 'why [the health board] had not just offered the families 50 grand which is a trip to Disneyland, rather than deny that there had been harm caused'."

Does the cabinet secretary believe the accounts of Dr Peters and Sophia's parents, or does he believe Fiona McQueen and her current lack of recollection?

Neil Gray: It is not for me to judge; it is for the independent public inquiry, which is chaired by Lord Brodie, to get to the truth of these matters. We establish public inquiries so that they can get to the truth in a way that is independent from on-going commentary or political interference. Such independence is at the heart of the credibility that is gained by having independent public inquiries. I believe that these matters are under consideration by Lord Brodie, and it is right that he comes to his own conclusions without any interference.

Jackie Baillie: I asked a simple question of the cabinet secretary, which is whether he believes Sophia's parents and Dr Peters or whether he believes Fiona McQueen. Sophia Smith's family has effectively been offered a bribe rather than the truth. The Queen Elizabeth university hospital scandal showed how a culture of cover-up has grown under the Scottish Government's watch.

The cabinet secretary's predecessor, Jeane Freeman, committed to a review of the culture in the national health service at the same time as announcing whistleblowing champions, which was very welcome. Why has no successive cabinet secretary taken that proposal forward in the past five years?

Neil Gray: I am well aware of the work of the independent national whistleblowing officer, because I met the new incumbent of that post last week, and I have also met all the local whistleblowing champions. I take the culture of our NHS and social care services incredibly seriously.

We must have a speak-up culture. We must support patients and staff to be able to speak up and comment on patient safety issues, and their concerns must be taken seriously. I have clearly put forward that I expect board chairs and chief executives to follow that approach, and I will not just take a dim view if they do not—I will insist that there be a culture of openness and transparency in our health service. That is the route through which the safest possible patient care will come through.

Sandesh Gulhane (Glasgow) (Con): I declare an interest as a practising NHS general practitioner.

A grieving family has alleged that the former chief nursing officer and current chair of the Scottish Police Authority offered them £20,000 and a holiday following the death of their baby. She even went as far as to suggest that that was the maximum they might expect if they pursued compensation through the courts. She must answer questions on these alleged repulsive and crass comments. If she was this heartless over the death of a baby, how can we trust her to be chair of the SPA or to hold any senior role in public life?

I have written to the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs and the Criminal Justice Committee on the matter. Has the cabinet secretary spoken to her about the issue, and does he agree that the chair of the SPA should appear in front of the Criminal Justice Committee?

Neil Gray: It is up to members of the Criminal Justice Committee to determine who appears before it. Lord Brodie and the public inquiry are actively considering the questions that Jackie Baillie and Sandesh Gulhane have asked. It is right that we allow them the space to come to their determinations, including on the questions that have arisen from the evidence to the public inquiry, so that the families who are at the heart of the matter, including the Smith family, get the answers that they deserve. That is why we constituted the public inquiry in the first place.

Stephen Kerr (Central Scotland) (Con): This is not commentary or political interference—the cabinet secretary is absolutely wrong to say that. The inquiry should not be used as a shelter for wrongdoing that whistleblowers are revealing in the here and now. "Speak up and be ignored" cannot be the policy of the Scottish Government.

My question is very simple: who is investigating the allegations and who will uncover the truth? Cabinet secretary, please do not respond by saying, "The inquiry." This is a current issue that must be explained now.

Neil Gray: The reason that we have a public inquiry is to get independent answers to those questions. Nobody can hide behind a public inquiry. A public inquiry gets to the truth without fear or favour, and without any political slant being attached to it. This independent, judge-led process has been established so that the families can get to the truth. Families must be at the heart of this—they deserve answers about what happened at the Queen Elizabeth university hospital, as well as at the hospitals in Edinburgh that are part of the inquiry. We await the judgment of the inquiry, and we allow it to do its job without interference.

Brian Whittle (South Scotland) (Con): This is hardly a unique situation. Nearly 10 years ago, my constituent Fraser Morton was in a similar situation and was offered compensation not to take forward his case. Why are we continually finding ourselves in a situation in which people would rather pay compensation than take the opportunity to learn from mistakes? That culture must change.

Neil Gray: We are seeking to learn lessons from what has happened at the Queen Elizabeth university hospital. The public inquiry was established to get to the truth and give the families the truth that they deserve.

It is up to health boards to consider and determine any compensation actions in consultation with patients and their representatives. We should always seek to learn lessons, which is why we have taken a more robust approach to significant adverse event reviews and, in this case, why we established a public inquiry.

Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission Report

2. **Stephen Kerr (Central Scotland) (Con):** To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the final report and recommendations of the sentencing and penal policy commission, in light of the reported high levels of public concern regarding the findings. (S6T-02885)

The Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs (Angela Constance): The Scottish Government welcomes the publication of the independent sentencing and penal policy commission's considered and evidence-based report "Justice That Works".

Prison will always be necessary, but we must accept the need to tackle an increasing prison population. Many of the recommendations in the report reflect what is known: that community-based sentences are more effective than short prison sentences at reducing reoffending, which means fewer victims and safer communities, which is something that we all want to see.

I will make a statement to Parliament on Thursday to present the Scottish Government's initial response to the report, acknowledging that the breadth of recommendations will require detailed consideration and prioritisation.

Stephen Kerr: In 2016 and again in 2023, the man who threatened to kill me was sent to prison. In 2022, he was arrested in the street leading to our home. My wife was terrified. Under the proposals in the report, that individual would not receive a custodial sentence at all. This report is a gift to criminals and a slap in the face to victims of crime across Scotland. It has been produced by people who are far more concerned with offenders than with the harm that they cause.

Will the cabinet secretary rule out implementing any recommendation from the report that would remove or restrict the use of custody in cases involving credible threats of violence—yes or no?

Angela Constance: I am deeply sorry and concerned to hear about the member's experience. I cannot imagine how that would have felt for him or the distress and trauma that it would have caused his dear family.

I say in all seriousness that victims are paramount in our considerations and that public safety will always be paramount to me. I say to the member that I am very sorry that I cannot reduce this debate to the point of giving a knee-jerk or two-dimensional response, because the issues are complex and significant. The crux of the matter to me, as has always been the case, is that a high prison population does not necessarily equate to a safer Scotland.

That is why I commissioned the report, so that we could look sincerely and deeply at the evidence. I know that, at the end of the day, we all want safer communities, fewer victims and fewer crimes. To have that, we have to have the courage to follow the evidence and engage with victims and communities about what will work to make them safer.

Stephen Kerr: Locking up violent criminals does make Scotland safer. That is where the public is on the question, and I think that the cabinet secretary knows that, because my experience is not unique. Across Scotland, there are tens of thousands of victims. I have seen people who harmed them, threatened them and robbed them released early or not imprisoned at all. Victims deserve a justice system that takes their safety seriously and puts public protection first. Scottish National Party policy has consistently moved in the opposite direction, weakening judicial discretion and prioritising offenders over victims. Victims will find the report terrifying.

Will the cabinet secretary commit to a formal consultation with victims and victims organisations and guarantee that their views will carry decisive weight? She used the word "paramount" earlier. Will their views be paramount in the Government's response—yes or no?

Angela Constance: I want to assure Mr Kerr that I spend much of my time engaging with victims and victim support organisations on an on-going basis. It is important to note that the commissioners also engaged with victims.

From my engagement with victims, I know that at the very core of a victim's concerns is that they do not want the experience that they had and the crime that was committed against them to happen to anyone else. That means that justice being served is—yes—about prevention, punishment and deterrence, but it is also about rehabilitation and reintegration, bearing in mind that the majority of people who are incarcerated will one day return to their community.

On that note, with regard to public opinion, the commission's report says that 92 per cent of people agree that prisons should help to change behaviour and 55 per cent agree that prisons should be for those who commit the most serious offences.

Jamie Hepburn (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP): Although the Scottish Government is taking action to tackle the challenge around the prison population, we continue to see a large number of short-term prison sentences being imposed. What assessment has the Government undertaken on the contribution of those sentences to some of the challenges that we see in the prison population?

Angela Constance: Although the longer-term trend has been away from shorter-term sentences, the most recent figures show that 73 per cent of sentences are of 12 months or less, so a high number of short sentences continue to be imposed, despite the presumption against them. As an illustrative example, on 2 February, there were 562 prisoners with an overall sentence of 12 months or less.

There are complex reasons for that, and we are working to understand how the current presumption operates. We recognise that there might be merit in exploring whether further steps should be taken. We know that short sentences disrupt lives, including family relationships, housing, employment and access to healthcare—all things that help to reduce the risk of reoffending—and therefore put pressure on our prisons and, in turn, our communities.

Pauline McNeill (Glasgow) (Lab): The sentencing commission's report suggests that only suspects with a prospect of being sent to jail for more than two years following conviction should be held on remand. The report says:

"Remanding people accused of minor crimes, or those who fail to attend court due to disorganisation, is disproportionate".

It also points out that the

"High use of remand"

often results in

"loss of housing, employment, income and family stability".

Does the Government support that view of remand? Will the cabinet secretary outline how the Scottish Government plans to improve ways in which those who are bailed into the community are supported and monitored, to give reassurance to victims?

Angela Constance: There are a lot of detailed questions in what Ms McNeill said. I reassure her that, given the breadth and complexity of the recommendations in the report, we will consider them carefully.

I am acutely aware that our remand population is currently higher than it was in pre-Covid times. Ms McNeill will be aware of the new bail test, which was finally implemented in May this year. There have been some changes to bail and, in particular, progress has been made on assessment and bail supervision. However, further work needs to be done on bail support to increase the prospect of people meeting the requirements. There is considerable progress, but there is much more to do on the use of technologies.

I will come back to Parliament in a few days, when we can continue the discussion and debate in the collaborative tone that Ms McNeill has exemplified. The work that the commission has done is independent, and it is important that we can all pursue these matters together.

Business Motion

14:23

The Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone): The next item of business is consideration of business motion S6M-20723, in the name of Graeme Dey, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, setting out a timetable for the stage 3 consideration of the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill. I ask any member who wishes to speak to the motion to press their request-to-speak button. I call Lorna Slater to move the motion.

Motion moved,

That the Parliament agrees that, during stage 3 of the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill, debate on groups of amendments shall, subject to Rule 9.8.4A, be brought to a conclusion by the time limits indicated, those time limits being calculated from when the stage begins and excluding any periods when other business is under consideration or when a meeting of the Parliament is suspended or otherwise not in progress:

Groups 1 to 3: 1 hour

Groups 4 and 5: 1 hour 40 minutes.—[*Lorna Slater*]

Motion agreed to.

Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill: Stage 3

14:23

The Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone): The next item of business is stage 3 proceedings on the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill. In dealing with the amendments, members should have the bill as amended at stage 2—that is, Scottish Parliament bill 62A—the marshalled list and the groupings of amendments. The division bell will sound and proceedings will be suspended for around five minutes for the first division of the stage 3. The period of voting for the first division will be 30 seconds. Thereafter, I will allow a voting period of one minute for the first division after a debate.

Members who wish to speak in the debate on any group of amendments should press their request-to-speak buttons or enter RTS in the chat as soon as possible after the group has been called. Members should now refer to the marshalled list of amendments.

Section 1—Community wealth building statement

The Presiding Officer: Group 1 is on measures that may be taken. Amendment 1, in the name of Richard Leonard, is grouped with amendments 2, 13, 14, 5, 6, 17 and 18.

Richard Leonard (Central Scotland) (Lab): I will speak to amendment 1 and the other amendments in my name in this group.

The purpose of amendments 1 and 5 is to challenge the outsourcing of public services, especially by local anchor institutions. A founding principle of community wealth building is to stop leakage and to build greater local and community self-sufficiency. That is why we should be encouraging in-sourcing, not outsourcing, of public services.

We have seen some good examples of it in the national health service, where, over the past year, bank nursing/agency spend has been driven down by local health boards, and, over the past few years, facilities and staff at hospitals such as Cumnock community hospital have been brought in-house, and, in Lanarkshire, Serco has been removed from Wishaw general hospital. Other examples can be seen in the Scottish Prison Service, where HMP Kilmarnock has been brought in-house, and Serco has been removed; and on the railways, where Abellio and—again—Serco are now gone, and ScotRail and the Caledonian Sleeper service are run in-house.

A recent Scottish Trades Union Congress-commissioned report into outsourcing pointed out that the outsourcing of social care and, in particular, soft facilities management means that women are much more likely to be outsourced than men. Paragraph 9.3 of that STUC report addresses the five pillars of community wealth building. It says:

"Each of these elements"

of community wealth building

"is undermined by the outsourcing of public services. Smaller economic delivery units are most likely to re-spend money earned from providing services at a local level; the smallest economic unit of delivery is directly employed staff, and the shortest supply chain is direct provision."

Amendments 2 and 6 ask the Scottish Parliament to use this bill to promote and encourage more democratic forms of ownership and control in financial services, including the encouragement of municipal banks, of mutual banks and building societies and of credit unions. That should be recognised as part of the mosaic of community wealth building, in both the community wealth building ministerial statement and in local community wealth building action plans. That was a feature of the Economy and Fair Work Committee's stage 1 report, and finance is one of the key pillars of community wealth building.

I move amendment 1.

Paul Sweeney (Glasgow) (Lab): I will speak to amendments 13 and 17, which are in my name. They would both insert "co-operative financial institutions" into the measures that are associated with the ministerial statement and community wealth building action plans.

Amendment 13 would require Scottish ministers to set out how they will promote or support co-operative financial institutions when they set out the measures that they are taking or intend to take to support community wealth building.

Amendment 17 would ensure that promoting or supporting co-operative financial institutions is included in the list of measures that community wealth building partnerships may include in their community wealth building action plans.

Those amendments will act to support the valuable contribution that co-operative financial institutions, such as credit unions, make to our local communities and economies. I therefore commend the amendments to the Parliament and invite all members to support them.

Lorna Slater (Lothian) (Green): My amendments 14 and 18 would replace the word "investment" with the words "funding and finance". The line that is affected, which reads

"promoting access to investment opportunities that provide a benefit to the community and to local businesses",

was added by the Scottish Government as a late stage 2 amendment. It was not made completely clear to me why that was added. It did not come from any of the evidence that we took at the Economy and Fair Work Committee, although many questions were raised about funding for community wealth building and access to finance.

The problem with the phrasing in the bill, which refers to

"promoting access to investment opportunities that provide a benefit to the community and to local businesses"

is that external or foreign investment in local assets would meet that criteria if it created jobs or facilitated the building of infrastructure. Neither of those is a bad thing, but that is absolutely not what community wealth building is about.

14:30

Community wealth building is about the community and local people owning and benefiting from the assets. It is absolutely necessary for community wealth building projects to access "funding and finance", however, and I think that the distinction is important. I ask members, therefore, to support my amendments, so as not to inadvertently undermine the purpose and intention of the bill.

I am unable to support Richard Leonard's amendments 2 and 6, because I do not think that it is appropriate for the Government to try to influence commercial lending, as the amendments propose to do. I think that Scotland's enterprise agencies should improve their support for co-operatives and other democratic and employee-owned business models, and that more should be done to support mutual banks and credit unions, and I would have supported any amendment that was framed in that way.

I am happy to support Paul Sweeney's amendment 13, which would include co-operative finance organisations.

I find that Richard Leonard's amendment 1 is too prescriptive. I would support increasing in-sourcing, but I cannot accept that it is always, and in every case, the best option.

Finally, I cannot support the amendment in Murdo Fraser's name, which suggests that the interests of the generic term "businesses" should be considered on an equal footing with "the community" and "social enterprises" in a community wealth building bill. The amendment would make a substantial change to my amendment to the bill that was agreed to at stage 2, which was all about ensuring community engagement. Mr Fraser's amendment would allow

that to be hijacked by local business interests and would do much to undermine the intention of the bill, and I ask members not to support it.

Stephen Kerr (Central Scotland) (Con): I think that Lorna Slater is speaking to an amendment that is not in this group. I just wanted to make that clear.

Lorna Slater: My apologies—I was speaking to amendment 16, and the member is right: I was looking at the wrong grouping. I thank Mr Kerr.

The Minister for Public Finance (Ivan McKee): The Government is not in a position to support Richard Leonard's amendments 1 and 5, which seek to introduce additional measures into both the community wealth building action plans and the ministerial statement. Although I understand that the member's intention is to increase direct service provision by the public sector, the amendments do not define what is meant by "in-sourcing" or "outsourcing", nor do they clarify which services are being referred to. Without clear definitions, the scope and practical implications are uncertain.

Amendments 1 and 5 also refer to services that are provided by the community wealth building partnerships. In practice, a partnership itself would not deliver services—delivery would sit with individual public bodies such as local authorities. The member has given some good examples of where in-sourcing has taken place and I commend him for raising the issue, but, as I said, the Government cannot accept the amendments as drafted.

Turning to amendments 2, 13, 6 and 17, we fully recognise the important role that credit unions and other co-operative financial institutions can play in supporting community wealth building. The amendments on that issue that were lodged at stage 2 could not be supported, largely because they would have placed statutory duties on ministers and the community wealth building partnerships in ways that would risk cutting across established financial regulatory frameworks and the operational independence of lenders.

Paul Sweeney's amendments 13 and 17 relating to financial institutions represent a proportionate and workable approach in comparison with Richard Leonard's amendments 2 and 6, as they would support access to finance aligned with community wealth building objectives without creating unintended statutory or regulatory consequences.

Financial mutuals play an important role in the United Kingdom's financial services industry and include building societies, credit unions, mutual insurers and friendly societies, co-operative and community benefit societies and funeral-plan providers. They are owned by their members, with deep roots in communities, and that ownership model means that they can focus on delivering value exclusively to their members and provide access to financial services that may not otherwise be available. As such, they support the generation, circulation and retention of wealth in their communities.

The Scottish Government regularly engages with the financial services sector, including mutuals and regulators, to identify and raise specific needs of consumers, communities and organisations based in, and operating in, Scotland. Although my position is to oppose amendments 2 and 6 in the name of Richard Leonard, the Scottish Government is open to working with the member and with other colleagues to identify how best to use our engagement with the sector and the regulator to unlock the barriers that exist and to support investment by financial mutuals in our communities.

On amendments 14 and 18, I consider the term "investment" to be sufficiently broad and appropriate in this context. It is already part of the wider community wealth building framework that investment activity must support local benefit and the retention of wealth in communities in line with the community wealth building approach. In my view, the term does not imply support for extractive or externally driven investment models. The wider purpose and principles of community wealth building make it clear that activity must align with inclusive, locally rooted economic outcomes. I do not understand the distinction between investment on the one hand and funding and finance on the other. The current wording is wider, more accurate and better aligned with the aims of the bill, so the Government cannot support the amendments in Lorna Slater's name.

The Presiding Officer: I call Richard Leonard to wind up and indicate whether he wishes to press or withdraw amendment 1.

Richard Leonard: I must say that it is interesting that the minister recognises examples of in-sourcing, some of which have been conducted by his own Government, but then goes on to say that he cannot define what in-sourcing is in the bill. I am slightly confused by his position on that.

Ivan McKee: More accurately, I said that the member had not accurately defined in-sourcing in his amendments.

Richard Leonard: On the one hand, we are told that this is a general permissive piece of legislation and that we cannot have too much prescription in it. However, now, I am being told that I have not been prescriptive enough with the amendments.

Again, I am slightly baffled by the position that the minister and the Government are taking.

Let me go back to something that the minister told me about in-sourcing at stage 2. He said to me that it would have

"an unintended consequence"

and that:

"it would prevent the very businesses that we are trying to support locally from gaining contracts with public enterprises via public procurement."—[*Official Report, Economy and Fair Work Committee*, 14 January 2026; c 44.]

However, what the issue is about is bringing services in-house to local public sector organisations. This is not about procurement. The beneficiaries of the contracts I mean are not local small and medium-sized enterprises, they are huge multinational corporations—Mitie, Serco, Sodexo, GEOAmey, Teleperformance, HC-One and Compass. The list goes on.

Community wealth building is about the generation, circulation and retention of wealth in a local community. Those are all examples of extractive forms of business and capitalism that take—rob, even, albeit it is legalised robbery—money out of local economies and off of local communities. These amendments are designed to point to a better way. I press amendment 1.

The Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 1 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Presiding Officer: There will be a division. As this is the first division of the stage, I will suspend the meeting for around five minutes to allow members to access the digital voting system.

14:38

Meeting suspended.

14:44

On resuming—

The Presiding Officer: We come to the vote on amendment 1, in the name of Richard Leonard. Members should cast their votes now.

For

Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Don-Innes, Natalie (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)

Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

14:45

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 13, Against 82, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 1 disagreed to.

Amendment 2 moved—[Richard Leonard].

The Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 2 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Don-Innes, Natalie (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 14, Against 83, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 2 disagreed to.

Amendment 13 moved—[Paul Sweeney]—and agreed to.

Amendment 14 moved—[Lorna Slater].

The Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 14 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Don-Innes, Natalie (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
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Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
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Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
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Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 6, Against 91, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 14 disagreed to.

The Presiding Officer: Group 2 is on targets, indicators and reporting. Amendment 3, in the name of Richard Leonard, is grouped with amendments 4, 19, 7, 20, 28, 29, 10, 30 to 32 and 34.

Richard Leonard: Amendment 3 simply seeks to set a target of doubling the size of the worker co-operative and employee ownership sector in Scotland by 2030, and then to revise that number in subsequent ministerial community wealth building statements to this Parliament. Worker co-operatives and employee-owned businesses are widely recognised as democratic forms of local ownership. They are at the heart of any community wealth building strategy. This rather modest target is in line with existing stated Scottish Government policy from the 2021 programme for government, with a target of 500 employee-owned businesses registered in Scotland by 2030.

I move amendment 3.

Murdo Fraser (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): I have four amendments in this group, all of which basically deal with the same point.

At stage 2, I lodged an amendment requiring community wealth building plans to include a target for the amount of procurement spend that would be spent in the local economy, therefore supporting local businesses. We heard an ask for that in stage 1 evidence from the Federation of Small Businesses, among others, and I was pleased that the committee agreed to that amendment at stage 2. My amendments in this group seek to remove the wording that was added to the bill at stage 2 and replace it with what could fairly be called more accurate and precise wording.

Amendment 19 would leave out subsection (5A) of section 5, which is the wording that was inserted at stage 2, replacing that with new wording, as shown in amendment 19, which has the same intention but recognises that a community wealth building partnership is not, in itself, intended to have legal personality. The wording refers instead to "an indicative target" for spend with individual "local economic operators"

"pursuant to public contracts entered into by the community wealth building partners"

but not by the partnership itself.

Amendment 28 would define the term "public contract" in a way that draws on the equivalent term in the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015, making it clear that the provision relates only to contracts for works, supplies or services and does not extend to other forms of contractual arrangement, such as contracts for the lease or purchase of land, employment contracts or other contracts not typically subject to public procurement policy or legislation.

Amendment 30 states that a report is to be produced, under section 7A of the bill, containing data on the percentage spent with local economic operators by the community wealth building partners, so that we can keep track of that. Amendment 32 would delete a summary requirement that was inserted into the bill at stage 2.

Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab): In many ways, I pick up where Murdo Fraser left off. One of the committee's key concerns or observations during stages 1 and 2 was that, without any system of measures or monitoring, there is a risk that the legislation could produce reports that are not comparable and that do not necessarily lead to action. The minister observed that we must be careful about targets because, first and foremost, community wealth building must be about community-led action.

I lodged an amendment at stage 2 seeking to come up with a system of measures. I thank the Government for dialogue since then and for the handout amendments that I will speak to today, which I think provide a way forward.

Amendment 20, in my name, sets out a list of measures that community wealth building partnerships "may" use, such as business output, employment, the number of employee-owned businesses or co-operatives, use of the community right to buy and so on. I think that that is a good approach, because it provides a list of things that "may" be monitored, thereby creating a common set of measures that allows us to have some regard to how community wealth building is progressing and how community wealth building partnerships seek to work.

Amendment 29, in my name, would simply remove the amendments in my name that were agreed to at stage 2, making way for the amendments I am speaking to today.

Amendment 31 would ensure that the five-yearly reports that community wealth building partnerships will produce state the progress that they have made against the measures that they set out in their original plans.

Paul Sweeney: Amendment 34 is in the name of Sarah Boyack, but she is away on Commonwealth Parliamentary Association business, so I am delighted to speak on her behalf.

Amendment 34 would require ministers to report regularly on the steps that they were taking to promote co-operatives and support co-operative development. It asks for clarity on the practical resources, including financial support, that have been made available and on how effective those measures have been. The amendment covers community-owned and democratic businesses to ensure that the models of ownership and control keep wealth rooted locally, which is critical, given that so much of Scotland's wealth leaks out of the country due to overseas ownership.

Co-operatives are a core part of the community wealth building approach. Amendment 34 would ensure that their promotion was not just incidental but actively monitored, reported on and taken seriously as part of delivering the bill's aims.

I commend amendment 34 to the Parliament.

Lorna Slater: I am happy to support Richard Leonard's amendment 3, which would set a target for co-operatives and employee-owned businesses, because that key indicator has been asked for by the sector. Likewise, Murdo Fraser's and Daniel Johnson's amendments seek to set

sensible targets, so I am happy to support them. The need for clear targets and measurements of progress was reported during evidence gathering, so the Scottish Greens will support amendments that will have that effect, including Sarah Boyack's amendment 34.

Ivan McKee: I met Richard Leonard on 29 January to discuss the bill and his ideas for stage 3 amendments. I thank him for his interest in the bill and his firm support for community wealth building as a policy approach.

However, the Government does not support any of Richard Leonard's amendments in this group. Amendments 3 and 7 seek to introduce duties on the Scottish ministers and local community wealth building partnerships, respectively, to set targets for increasing the number of worker co-operatives and employee-owned businesses in Scotland. Amendments 4 and 10 are consequential to those amendments.

The work of the economic democracy group, which was a recommendation made in the independent report "Developing Scotland's Economy: Increasing The Role of Inclusive And Democratic Business Models", needs to be allowed to continue in order to address the issue of national targets in this context. I understand that the next meeting of the group is scheduled for 3 March.

Furthermore, I do not think that the sort of target that is set out in amendment 7, which would affect local community wealth building partnerships, should be included in primary legislation without further consultation with local authorities and their partners.

On Sarah Boyack's amendment 34, section 1(3)(f) already obliges the Scottish ministers to include in the community wealth building statement measures

"promoting or supporting the development of",

among other things,

"employee-owned businesses"

and

"co-operatives".

Community wealth building action plans that are prepared by partnerships may also include such measures, as provided for in section 5(5)(g). Under section 4, the Scottish ministers must report on

"the steps they have taken in the reporting period in respect of each measure included in the community wealth building statement"

and on the impact of those measures. As such, the bill already requires ministers to report on what they have done to promote or support the development of co-operatives and employee-owned businesses.

Taking those points into consideration, which are also relevant to the Government's position not to support Richard Leonard's amendments in this group, I think that amendment 34 is unnecessary and would, in part, duplicate provisions elsewhere in the bill.

The Government supports all the other amendments in the group. I thank Murdo Fraser and Daniel Johnson for their productive dialogue with me on matters relating to the monitoring and evaluation of community wealth building action plans, local procurement targets and ensuring that relevant policy areas contribute fully to the advancement of community wealth building in Scotland. We already have a good story to tell in Scotland in relation to public procurement, with some 47 per cent of procurement spend going to small and medium-sized enterprises—more than double the figure for the United Kingdom as a whole. However, the amendments will ensure that we continue to focus on harnessing the power of procurement to support our local economies and communities. I urge all members to support amendments 19, 20 and 28 to 32, because they will improve the bill.

The Presiding Officer: I call Richard Leonard to wind up the debate and to press or withdraw amendment 3.

Richard Leonard: The minister mentioned the report "Developing Scotland's Economy: Increasing The Role of Inclusive And Democratic Business Models", and I would like to quote a couple of extracts from it. First of all, in its opening pages, it says:

"Around the world"

democratic businesses

"are not considered a 'sideline' to the mainstream economy, but a vital, growing and essential part of economic success."

What most of my amendments are attempting to do is to seek to promote and realise the potential of employee ownership in the economy, so that we are much less reliant on foreign direct investment and we are less likely to become more of a branch plant economy, which is the state of affairs that this Government has presided over.

We should own and control more of our economy locally and democratically. That is good for the retention and creation of jobs and good for local and inclusive economic development, and it cultivates long-term thinking.

15:00

Let me finish with another extract from the report to which the minister referred. The foreword was written by Neil McInroy, who chaired the Government review. He said:

"We have a choice. We either presume that we can make this change through continuing as we are with the same blend and proportion of business and enterprise ownership forms, or we start to build a genuinely new economy by boldly advancing community wealth through increasing the number and proportion"

of inclusive and democratic business models in Scotland. Why the Scottish Government is turning its back on its own target beats me.

I press amendment 3.

The Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 3 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
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Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
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Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
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Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Don-Innes, Natalie (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
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Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
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Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
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Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
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Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
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Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
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Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
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Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
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Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
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Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Annabelle Ewing): The result of the division is: For 20, Against 80, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 3 disagreed to.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Group 3 is on reviews. Amendment 15, in the name of Daniel

Johnson, is grouped with amendments 35, 36 and 11.

Daniel Johnson: Much as I did with the amendments in the previous group, I sought at stage 2 to introduce things that I thought would ensure progress towards community wealth building and looked at whether further means needed to be afforded to enable community wealth building to take place. One concern that emerged at stage 1 was that the bill would provide for the creation of reports but would do little to examine whether we had the legislative process and means to improve communities' ability to assume control of assets and to improve community wealth building in their areas.

Amendments 15, 35 and 36 have been lodged in co-operation with the Government, which I again thank for its dialogue and for providing handout amendments. They will require the Government, in reviewing community wealth building, to look at the various elements of legislation and at whether those require improvement or amendment in the light of progress on community wealth building.

I move amendment 15.

Richard Leonard: Amendment 11 calls for the Government to consider business tax reliefs in the year following royal assent.

As well as the small business bonus, there are non-domestic rates exemptions for properties that contribute towards net zero targets, for example, so why not have a tax relief for conversions—a right-to-buy tax relief, as there is for crofting communities, for example?

That was also a recommendation from the Scottish Government review on increasing the size of the inclusive and democratic business models sector, which was published in September 2024. Recommendation 17 of the review was a call for the

"UK and Scottish Government to explore potential tax relief".

Amendment 11 is simply a call for an exploration of potential tax relief.

Lorna Slater: I will comment on Richard Leonard's amendment 11. The Scottish Greens feel that it is right that businesses pay their taxes fairly—that is one reason why we do not support freeports, for example. There are better ways to support businesses that do not undermine our ability to pay for public services, and I am a bit disappointed that Mr Leonard has made his proposal. The Scottish Greens will be voting against amendment 11.

Ivan McKee: The Government will support Daniel Johnson's amendments 15, 35 and 36, which incorporate review activity on the recurring process that is attached to the development of the community wealth building statement. Collectively, those amendments will create a single, coherent review mechanism, rather than retaining multiple overlapping requirements. Taken together, the amendments will streamline and consolidate the review requirements in the bill, enabling procurement and community empowerment considerations to be addressed through a single, integrated process that is directly connected to the development of the community wealth building statement.

We should not lose sight of the significant work that has already been undertaken in Scotland on procurement. The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, for example, was groundbreaking in imposing on contracting authorities a sustainable procurement duty and a duty to consider community benefits. One of the clear views that came through in the consultation on the bill was that the financial thresholds from which the duties in the 2014 act arose should be reviewed. I am pleased to confirm that a consultation on that issue closed a few weeks ago. The responses are being analysed and will inform any possible use of the secondary powers in that act. Amendments 15, 35 and 36 seek to give a focus and structure to a future review of the approach, taking account of developments such as the review that the European Union has started to undertake of its procurement legislation—much of which, of course, Scotland is aligned with.

The Government's position is to resist amendment 11, which would require the Scottish ministers to carry out a review of business tax relief to support community wealth building. Non-domestic rates and land and buildings transaction tax are property-based taxes and are not the best tools to target and influence behaviour in businesses, including supporting employee-owned businesses. Matters relating to devolved taxes should be taken forward in tax-specific legislation, with taxpayer and stakeholder consultation, where appropriate, in line with our framework for tax principles. Without that, we risk significant unintended consequences.

The Scottish Government is committed to reviewing non-domestic rates policy regularly in order to ensure that the rates system effectively supports our businesses and communities. That does not require legislation. We will work with business to examine the impact and configuration of all our reliefs in advance of the next revaluation on 1 April 2029. The Scottish Government is also undertaking a review of LBTT, which covers a broad range of policy areas, to assess whether the arrangements in place continue to work as intended.

Therefore, I oppose amendment 11, but it is important to say that I would be happy to discuss further with Mr Leonard how he believes the business tax system could better support community wealth building by ensuring that non-domestic rates continue to play their important role in funding services that we all rely on, to inform decisions that are taken in budgets by this Government or future Governments.

Richard Leonard: Can I infer from what the minister has said that he does not support recommendation 17 of the review that the Government set up to look at how we can expand inclusive and democratic business models? What does he say to Lorna Slater's argument that we should not use tax relief at all to encourage business development or behaviours such as, for example, the conversion of land holdings to crofts?

Ivan McKee: I do not agree with Lorna Slater's comments. I think that there is an important role for the tax system to play, where appropriate, in seeking to encourage behaviours that we want to encourage. That happens across a range of different parts of the economy.

I am not opposed to Richard Leonard's point about the potential use of the tax system to encourage behaviours that we want to see in this area, as we do in other parts of the economy. I just do not think that the bill is the right way to do that, given the process that we have for taking forward tax policy in the budget process, which we are going through at the moment. As I have indicated, depending on who is in Government after May, if I am involved, I would certainly be very interested in having further conversations on how such measures could be taken forward.

Richard Leonard: I presume that Mr McKee recognises that amendment 11 seeks to ask the Government to carry out a review. It is not asking, through this legislation, to change the tax arrangements. It is saying that they should be the subject of a review over the next 12 months.

Ivan McKee: As I said, I am very happy to have conversations with Mr Leonard and other members, notwithstanding the election coming up in May, to discuss how we might use the tax system to impact and influence behaviour in that regard in a positive way. However, as I said, I do not think that the bill before us is where we would signal intent with regard to the tax system. There are other vehicles for doing that.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I call Daniel Johnson to wind up and to press or withdraw amendment 15.

Daniel Johnson: I have nothing further to add. I press amendment 15.

Amendment 15 agreed to.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Group 4 is on consultation on statements, plans and guidance. Amendment 16, in the name of Murdo Fraser, is grouped with amendments 21 to 27 and 33.

Murdo Fraser: Amendment 16 would add a new requirement for the Scottish ministers, in preparing the ministerial statement, to consult

"persons … they consider representative of the interests of … businesses".

That would add to the existing provision that already requires ministers to consult local authorities, community representatives, social enterprises and any other persons they consider to be appropriate.

Including those who represent the interests of businesses is important in ensuring that the development of the community wealth building statement reflects the perspectives of members of the wider business community, who are key actors in shaping local economies. Their engagement can help to identify practical opportunities for local supply chains, inclusive employment practices and forms of investment that will align with community wealth building principles. Ensuring that their voice is included at a national strategic level would support a balanced and deliverable approach to strengthening the local economy, and I invite members to support those principles.

I move amendment 16.

Lorna Slater: I thank my colleague Stephen Kerr for pointing out that I had been up a bit too late doing my notes. I have already spoken to Murdo Fraser's amendment 16, so I will leave those comments on the record.

My amendment 33 is based on evidence to the Economy and Fair Work Committee that suggested that community development trusts that are already doing work on community wealth building have local knowledge, expertise and contacts and so should be included. Amendment 33 explicitly supports that.

I thank the Scottish Government for proposing amendments 25 to 27, which, together, will bring consistency to the bill. My amendment 34 at stage 2 added social enterprises to the list of people who must be consulted on the statement, and my amendment 26 today also seeks to add them to the list of people who must be consulted on the action plans. That matters because social enterprises play a distinctive and practical role in delivering community wealth building on the ground. They often operate closest to communities, create local employment and reinvest their profits locally. By making their involvement a requirement, we will ensure that policy decisions are informed by organisations that

understand local needs and are already close to the community.

Amendment 21 would be another way—a different approach—to get community development trusts into the legislation. It would also include large local private organisations that might be suitable anchor organisations, because they are significant local employers or landowners, for example, and may have assets and procurement needs that they could contribute. We can imagine a scenario in which a large renewable energy firm could be induced to implement community shares or other community benefits through being included in such a way. A large landowner could be encouraged to contribute to community gardens, to provide access to nature or to co-operate in climate resilience schemes via this measure.

Finally, evidence to the Economy and Fair Work Committee showed concerns that the action plans might not be sufficiently connected to the community. There was a strong feeling that the process should not be done to communities but that communities should be leading the way. The final part of amendment 21 would include

"local democratic bodies such as community councils"

as a way of supporting that aim.

Amendments 22 to 24 are about the same three intentions, but they have been broken out in case members want to consider supporting them individually rather than all together.

15:15

Ivan McKee: I confirm that the Government's position is to support Murdo Fraser's amendment 16 because it seeks to provide for a clear and proportionate strengthening of the consultation requirements for the community wealth building statement. Given the central role of businesses in shaping local economies, including a requirement to consult persons who represent the interests of businesses will ensure that the views of the wider business community can be reflected in the development of the statement.

I appreciate Lorna Slater's strong interest in the bill and the work that she has done on a range of amendments. However, in this group, the Government's position is to resist amendments 21 to 24. I recognise the policy intention behind the amendments and agree on the importance of ensuring that community wealth building partnerships draw on local knowledge and experience. However, the partnerships will need to have the flexibility to identify the most relevant local stakeholders, which will be based on local circumstances, but the amendments would remove such flexibility from the bill.

In addition, the bill will already require local authorities to consult

"such persons as it considers likely to be directly affected by the community wealth building action plan"

and other persons who are considered to represent the interests of the community. The bill will enable proportionate and appropriate local engagement without requiring an extensive fixed list of participants. Mandating engagement with named types of voluntary and community organisations could also place an unintended burden on local authorities, especially where capacity varies significantly between areas.

I recognise the intention behind amendment 33, in Lorna Slater's name, and I recognise the important role that community input, including from bodies such as community development trusts, can play in shaping effective community wealth building guidance. However, the wording of the amendment simply restates a discretion that already exists in the bill, because ministers can already include community development trusts in consultation processes, where relevant. Therefore, the Government does not support amendment 33.

We support amendments 25 to 27 in Lorna Slater's name, because they seek to bring the consultation requirements for community wealth building action plans into line with the consultation requirements for the community wealth building statement. Amendment 26 will mean that the Scottish ministers and local authorities must consult social enterprises as part of preparing their respective community wealth building statement and action plans.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I call Murdo Fraser to wind up and to press or withdraw amendment 16.

Murdo Fraser: I have nothing to add. I press amendment 16.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 16 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

The vote is closed.

David Torrance (Kirkcaldy) (SNP): On a point of order, Deputy Presiding Officer. My app would not connect. I would have voted yes.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Thank you, Mr Torrance. Your vote will be recorded.

For

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)

Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Don-Innes, Natalie (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

Against

Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 93, Against 7, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 16 agreed to.

Section 3—Review and revision of statement

Amendment 4 not moved.

Section 5—Community wealth building action plan

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I call Richard Leonard to move or not move amendment 5.

Richard Leonard: In light of the minister's comments, I will not move amendment 5.

Amendments 5 and 6 not moved.

Amendment 17 moved—[Paul Sweeney]—and agreed to.

Amendment 18 moved—[Lorna Slater].

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 18 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

The vote is closed.

David Torrance: On a point of order, Presiding Officer. I still cannot connect my app. I would have voted no.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Thank you, Mr Torrance. Your vote will be recorded.

For

Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Don-Innes, Natalie (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 5, Against 96, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 18 disagreed to.

Amendment 19 moved—[Murdo Fraser]—and agreed to.

Amendment 7 not moved.

Amendment 20 moved—[Daniel Johnson]—and agreed to.

Amendment 21 moved—[Lorna Slater].

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 21 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

The vote is closed.

James Dornan (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP): On a point of order, Presiding Officer. Sorry, but I was unable to connect. I would have voted no.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Thank you, Mr Dornan. Your vote will be recorded.

For

Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)

Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
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Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Don-Innes, Natalie (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 20, Against 82, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 21 disagreed to.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I take the opportunity to remind members that, when participating remotely, one's camera should, of course, be on.

Amendment 22 moved—[Lorna Slater].

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 22 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

The vote is closed.

Fulton MacGregor (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP): On a point of order, Presiding Officer. I was unable to connect. I would have voted no.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Thank you, Mr MacGregor. Your vote will be recorded.

For

Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)

Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
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Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
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Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 21, Against 80, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 22 disagreed to.

Amendment 23 moved—[Lorna Slater].

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 23 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)

Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 21, Against 79, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 23 disagreed to.

Amendment 24 moved—[Lorna Slater].

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 24 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)

Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 21, Against 79, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 24 disagreed to.

Amendment 25 moved—[Lorna Slater]—and agreed to.

Amendment 26 moved—[Lorna Slater].

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 26 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)

Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

Against

Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 75, Against 26, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 26 agreed to.

Amendment 27 moved—[Lorna Slater]—and agreed to.

Amendment 28 moved—[Murdo Fraser]—and agreed to.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Group 5 is on relevant public bodies and specified public bodies. Amendment 8, in the name of Richard Leonard, is grouped with amendments 9 and 12.

Richard Leonard: Amendments 8 and 12 simply seek to insert Co-operative Development Scotland into the bill.

Co-operative Development Scotland remains the national co-operative development agency for Scotland. Now in its 20th year, it has been cut to the bone—it is woefully underresourced. Somebody remarked to me recently that it is more or less disbanded and, when I inquired further, I discovered that it was dissolved as a separately constituted entity in 2022, having been dormant for several years. So, it is virtually abandoned, with a single part-time worker for employee ownership and a single worker for co-ops more generally—this is shameful.

15:30

When I went to look at the Welsh equivalent—the Wales co-operative development centre, Cwmpas—I found that, by contrast, it does not have one and a half staff; it has 80 staff working on co-operative development in Wales. Now, on paper at least, Co-operative Development Scotland is still the enterprise agency's arm for co-operative development. It is still on the Scottish Enterprise website advertising one-to-one sessions with specialist advisers, so it should still be explicitly included in this legislation as a relevant public body.

Moving on, amendment 9 seeks to add local government pension schemes—defined contribution schemes—into the legislation. Strathclyde local government pension scheme alone is worth £31.3 billion. It is the second largest local government pension scheme in the whole of the UK. The total value of local government pension schemes in Scotland by 2022 was at least £60 billion. That is the value of investment and of assets under management—that is the same size as the Scottish Government's annual budget.

Community wealth building is about the principle of place; it is about local and regional focus; it is about keeping wealth local—buying, hiring and investing locally. Pension funds are a huge engine for investment—a sleeping giant, which this Parliament, with this amendment, could help to awake. At stage 2, the minister admitted that there was "huge potential" with local government pension schemes, but he claimed that that does not quite

"fit in with what this bill seeks to do"—[*Official Report, Economy and Fair Work Committee*, 21 January 2026; c 60.]

which rather goes to the heart of it. This bill does lack ambition; it does not push the boundaries; it does not forge progressive options. Policies that are axiomatic to community wealth building are viewed as tangential by the Government, and that is a flaw in its thinking.

I move amendment 8.

Lorna Slater: Unfortunately, I am unable to support any of the amendments from Richard Leonard in this group, although his intentions are absolutely sound. My understanding is that Co-operative Development Scotland is a department of the enterprise agency and therefore cannot be added to the list as a separate organisation, however much we wish that that was the case. Richard Leonard's description of how something that used to be an organisation has been shrunk is

concerning. We should absolutely support the redevelopment of that service for co-operative and employee-owned businesses and organisations, but shoehorning in a sub-department of the enterprise agency will not do that. We clearly need to pick up that issue elsewhere.

On pension schemes, there was insufficient discussion—there was no discussion at all in the Economy and Fair Work Committee, for example—about how pension schemes could be included, how they would be represented or how they might be in a position to change their investments as part of the group that will develop the action plans. Without a clear understanding of how that would work, although I support the intention, I am afraid that I cannot support amendment 9, which is a shame, because I am sure that there are some good opportunities in that space.

Ivan McKee: I have my notes but, to be fair, Lorna Slater has just articulated very clearly the Government's position.

I have already thanked Richard Leonard for his interest in and work on the bill. I see merit in aspects of the suggestions being considered further as policy matters, but I do not think that the bill is the place for those, and the Government will not support any of the amendments in the group.

Amendments 8 and 12 are unnecessary, as Co-operative Development Scotland does not have a legal personality of its own and operates as part of Scottish Enterprise, which is already listed as a relevant body. The work is taken forward as part of the engagement of Scottish Enterprise within the partnerships.

In relation to amendment 9, we all recognise the value of attracting public and private pension scheme investment in our communities. That is why we committed in our programme for government to work with local authority pension funds on co-investment opportunities for projects and businesses in Scotland. We are doing that by engaging and collaborating with local authority pension schemes and seeking to explore opportunities at national and community levels.

Although the Government's position is to oppose amendment 9, which would require pension funds to be included as part of the community wealth building partnerships, we are working with Richard Leonard and other colleagues to identify how best to use our engagement with the sector and UK Government colleagues to support local pension funds to invest in our local economies. The broader work that my colleague, the Deputy First Minister, is taking forward on investment has a significant focus on that area.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I call Richard Leonard to wind up and to press or withdraw amendment 8.

Richard Leonard: Reflecting on Lorna Slater's point, we need to carefully examine Co-operative Development Scotland's role. The time is long overdue for it to be taken out of the shadows of Scottish Enterprise, where it has clearly been allowed to wither, and given a statutory footing in its own right.

Amendment 8 is unashamedly not only about what local agencies do but also about what we, as a national Parliament, do to promote democratic business models and alternatives to extractive capital and foreign direct investment. If the minister had given some comfort about Co-operative Development Scotland's position inside Scottish Enterprise as a relevant public body, that would have been helpful, but he was silent on that, so I will press amendment 8.

I will be moving amendment 9, on local government pension schemes, because that is an area that typifies the lack of ambition in the legislation. The Economy and Fair Work Committee, as well as the Government, should have examined how the work that it does—I understand that the Government's work is led by the Deputy First Minister—can be part and parcel of community development and community wealth building through this legislation. I am afraid that the idea of the legislation, which is that we leave it up to local agencies and do not act strategically and nationally, is a great missed opportunity.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 8 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)

Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 13, Against 86, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 8 disagreed to.

Amendment 9 moved—[Richard Leonard].

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 9 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)

Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 14, Against 85, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 9 disagreed to.

Section 6A—Monitoring and evaluation plan

Amendment 29 moved—[Daniel Johnson]—and agreed to.

Section 7—Review and revision of action plan

Amendment 10 not moved.

Section 7A—Reporting on action plan

Amendment 30 moved—[Murdo Fraser]—and agreed to.

Amendment 31 moved—[Daniel Johnson]—and agreed to.

Section 8A—Reporting on procurement contracts awarded to local economic operators

Amendment 32 moved—[Murdo Fraser]—and agreed to.

Section 9—Guidance about community wealth building

Amendment 33 moved—[Lorna Slater].

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 33 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)

Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 21, Against 77, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 33 disagreed to.

After section 10

Amendment 34 moved—[Paul Sweeney].

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 34 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)

Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
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Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 22, Against 77, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 34 disagreed to.

Section 10A—Review of legislation: community wealth building

Amendment 35 moved—[Daniel Johnson]—and agreed to.

Section 10B—Review of procurement

Amendment 36 moved—[Daniel Johnson]—and agreed to.

15:45

After section 10B

Amendment 11 moved—[Richard Leonard].

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The question is, that amendment 11 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

Members: No.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: There will be a division.

For

Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Clark, Katy (West Scotland) (Lab)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)

Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (Ind)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Golden, Maurice (North East Scotland) (Con)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)

Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Deputy Presiding Officer: The result of the division is: For 15, Against 85, Abstentions 0.

Amendment 11 disagreed to.

Schedule

Amendment 12 not moved.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: That ends consideration of amendments.

As members will be aware, the Presiding Officer is required under standing orders to decide whether, in her view, any provision of the bill relates to a protected subject matter—that is, whether it modifies the electoral system and franchise for Scottish parliamentary elections. In the case of the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill, in the Presiding Officer's view, no provision relates to a protected subject matter. Therefore, the bill does not require a supermajority to be passed at stage 3.

Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Annabelle Ewing): The next item of business is a debate on motion S6M-20717, in the name of Ivan McKee, on the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill at stage 3. I invite those members who wish to speak in the debate to please press their request-to-speak button.

15:46

The Minister for Public Finance (Ivan McKee): I begin by thanking the Economy and Fair Work Committee for its scrutiny of the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill. I also highlight the input from Richard Leonard, Paul Sweeney, Rhoda Grant and others as being particularly helpful.

The committee's stage 1 report stated that community wealth building has the potential to play a vital role in improving the lives of people across Scotland. I think that that is true and, since I became responsible for the bill—I thank Tom Arthur for his earlier work on taking the bill forward—it has been apparent to me how much support there is for community wealth building across the country and internationally. I am aware that many organisations support the legislation and are keen for it to pass.

The bill's main aim is to create a new and consistent platform for local economic development in Scotland—a new format that recognises the economic agency of every pound of public money alongside the necessity for the public sector to partner with businesses and communities in the pursuit of sustainable and inclusive economic growth. We need to encourage the kind of growth that everyone can benefit from. Community wealth building can play a key role in generating, circulating and retaining wealth in our local and regional economies, ensuring prosperity and benefit for all.

When I assumed responsibility for the bill, I was clear that the legislation must add value to economic policy objectives and work as a public service reform measure. We need only look at what community wealth building is achieving on the ground to see the benefits. It is growing all forms of local business, creating and protecting jobs, extending greater asset ownership and influence to communities and attracting more investment into our local economies.

The bill obliges future Scottish Governments to publish a community wealth building statement that will set out the measures that the Scottish ministers intend to and are taking to advance community wealth building in Scotland across the five pillars of the economic development model, which are spending, fair work, land and property, new business growth and investment. The statement and detailed statutory guidance will assist community wealth building partnerships, which are made up of local authorities and relevant public bodies, to produce their own community wealth building action plans.

I expect that other contributors to the debate will point to things that they wanted to see in the bill in specific discrete policy areas. However, I believe that establishing a strong cross-Scotland focus on community wealth building as an economic development model will ensure a consistent realisation of economic benefits for all areas and regions of Scotland over time. As the policy advances, the policies, budgets and laws that are relevant to its success can be examined with a view to establishing whether change is required in any contributory area that can spark the creation of more jobs, more businesses, further innovation and increased community asset ownership.

In general, the bill has been informed by the desire to enable democratically elected local government to lead a process of active reform and improvement without creating a complex attendant bureaucracy. Local authorities will sit at the centre of a core partnership of those public sector anchor bodies with the highest degree of economic agency in their investment and delivery activities. They will be partnered by our enterprise agencies, health boards, colleges and regional transport partnerships.

Among the many important recommendations in the committee's stage 1 report was the call for clear guidance to help community wealth building partnerships to develop plans and implement actions in concert. An inclusive and collaborative development process with regard to statutory guidance has already started. Clear guidance, informed by successful practice, is key, but too high a level of prescription in practice is not desirable. The majority of our local authorities are already pursuing community wealth building policies and objectives, and I am confident that an approach that is built on collaboration and empowerment has the best chance of success.

The bill sets out a list of specified bodies that must be consulted when community wealth building guidance is being prepared and that

"must have due regard to guidance"

when it is published. Although all those public bodies also have economic agency as employers, asset owners, purchasers or investors, we determined that it was appropriate that they should have a lesser level of leadership expectation with regard to advancing community wealth building in

Scotland.

I expect that local partnerships will want to engage many specified bodies in their discussions, and many of the bodies can demonstrate telling contributions to community wealth building. However, it is appropriate that local, collaborative conversation reflects local context and circumstance.

To reflect the fact that some local authorities will want to work together, the bill makes provision for neighbouring councils to work on a regional basis. That provides flexibility for community wealth building partnerships and, whatever the pattern of uptake in this context, all partnerships would be expected to set out plans that are complementary to community wealth building objectives to strengthen local economies and empower local communities.

It is critical that the voice of local communities is at the core of community wealth building. As an economic policy, I want the power of our communities to be harnessed to help build our local economies. Ideas from communities about growing businesses and creating jobs must be listened to.

The next Scottish Government and subsequent Administrations will be tasked with considering how all relevant Government activities can contribute to community wealth building, whether very directly in areas such as procurement, fair work or skills, or in a wider range of policy areas, where public investment or regulation might flex and change to assist our economy to grow in a way that is successful, sustainable and fair.

Community wealth building is an attractive policy to many, as people want to see and feel change where they live: for example, improved and vibrant high streets, increased job prospects with good terms and conditions, and strengthened, resilient communities.

The bill will not change everything overnight, but it forges a new common purpose for the public sector to work with partners in the private, third and community sectors to focus on growing our economy for the benefit of all.

In moving the motion in my name, I urge members to vote to pass the bill.

I move,

That the Parliament agrees that the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill be passed.

15:52

Murdo Fraser (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): Just to make it clear, the Scottish Conservatives will be supporting the bill at stage 3, in a short time—as, indeed, we did at stage 1, when we backed the bill's general principles.

I start by thanking everybody for the part that they have played: the clerks of the Economy and Fair Work Committee and the Scottish Parliament information centre, who supported us, and all those who gave the committee evidence. I thank my fellow committee members for their very collegiate approach in trying to improve the bill. Indeed, there were some perhaps unusual alliances. Lorna Slater voted for some of my amendments and I voted for some of Lorna Slater's amendments. That demonstrates the value of cross-party co-operation and working. We did not agree on everything; nevertheless, we were able to get the bill improved at stage 2—not always to the delight of the minister. We had very constructive engagement with the minister in any case. Particularly when it came to stage 3, there was a joint endeavour to tidy up some of the bill's imperfect wording that had been agreed at stage 2 to ensure that the bill got to the place that it needed to be at stage 3. We all worked together extremely well, and I am grateful to the minister for his co-operation and support.

I put forward only one basic issue at stage 2, dealing with the question of the percentage of spend that would go into local businesses and local economies through procurement. I felt it important for the community wealth building plans to have a target set in them. I do not think that we should be prescriptive as to what that target is, and I do not think that the Government should be setting that target; it should be set by the local partners. That principle was an important one. I am very pleased that the committee agreed on that and was able to get it into the bill, tweaking the wording at stage 3.

Community wealth building is a good thing—I think that we can all agree on that. It seeks to use the economic impact of anchor organisations—public, private or third sector—to stimulate and retain economic activity in a local area. As we discussed when we considered the bill at stage 1, there are five pillars to community wealth building: maximising the benefits of public procurement, which we have talked about; increasing fair work and skills development opportunities for the workforce; ensuring that land and property are used to benefit communities, SMEs and the environment; inclusive ownership; and finance.

The question of land and property is really interesting. Just yesterday, I met a community group in the Carse of Gowrie that is looking to take over what is, in effect, a derelict orchard and bring it into use for the local community. The group is doing so under legislation that the Parliament previously passed, but it strikes me that that is the sort of initiative that the community wealth building

agenda seeks to support. It is about looking at lands and buildings that are either derelict or not being used to their fullest potential and bringing them back into more productive use—either economic use or, in this particular case, environmental and sustainable use for the benefit of the community.

Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab): I very much agree with Murdo Fraser's point. Does he agree that we must use initiatives such as this to almost tip the balance? All too often, communities feel that they need permission to do things, yet, if it is public land, they should be empowered and enabled to do it. The default should be a yes and not a no. Does he agree that that is what we need to achieve with the bill and future legislation?

Murdo Fraser: That is a very reasonable point. The land that I was talking about was private land and not publicly owned land, but the same principle applies. We have a lot of publicly owned assets in Scotland that are not being used to their fullest potential, and we should seek to promote anything that we can do to bring them back into more productive use where the community has an interest.

Given that we are going to pass the bill at stage 3—I assume that that is the case—the key question is what happens next. It is all very well passing a bill and saying that local authorities and other public bodies have to produce community wealth building action plans, but that in itself will not deliver much. What we have to do is ensure that there is delivery of the objectives of community wealth building, which will come back to the question of resources.

When the committee took evidence, some witnesses said that they have issues with, for example, what is in the financial memorandum and the lack of estimates for the implementation costs of the action plans. There will be a resourcing issue for public bodies and local authorities. When it comes to community wealth building plans, I can entirely see a scenario in which some bodies say, "Oh no, yet another bit of paper that we've got to produce—something else that Johnny in office 52 gets to do." The question is whether we are confident that all those who are tasked with delivering have the resources that are required to implement the bill and ensure that something is delivered. That needs to be the next stage. The resources must be there to ensure that the objectives that everybody in the chamber wants to see can be delivered.

We will support the bill at stage 3, but, if we want community wealth building to be delivered, as I think we all do, passing the bill is only the first step. Much more will need to be done to achieve delivery.

15:58

Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab): I, too, thank the Economy and Fair Work Committee, our clerks and everyone who gave evidence. It is something of a relief not to speak in the debate as the convener of the committee, because now I get to say what I really think. I will, nonetheless, be rounded and balanced.

I would like to reflect on the observation that—

Stephen Kerr (Central Scotland) (Con): Will Daniel Johnson give way on that point?

Daniel Johnson: Well, it depends on which point.

Stephen Kerr: I think that we would like to hear Daniel Johnson speak more often about what he really thinks, particularly in the light of recent events.

Daniel Johnson: I have only five minutes, so I will stay on the topic. In addition, the standing orders say that we must speak to the motion. [*Laughter.*]

I will speak to a point that Murdo Fraser alluded to. An interesting alliance formed at some points during stage 2 when Richard Leonard, Murdo Fraser, Lorna Slater and I were all talking about shared objectives. Questions about how ownership is distributed, whether people are empowered and whether there are opportunities to maximise people's potential are important, regardless of one's political perspective. Whether one views oneself as a socialist, a social democrat, a capitalist or an environmentalist, the distribution of ownership matters, even if what that is called sometimes gets in the way.

I hope that community wealth building action plans will provide some focus, because if assets are not being used effectively and not being maximised, that comes at a cost to our local communities. Murdo Fraser gave one example and I heard another, of a local resident who simply wanted to put planters in a back green. That person was furiously trying to figure out who they needed to get permission from, but I do not think that that permission should be required at all. More than that, where there is common land or a common asset, we must ensure that we absolutely maximise opportunities for local people. That is what community wealth building is about.

When the bill was introduced, lots of people were scratching their heads about what community wealth building is. My concern is that there are probably places where community wealth building is being delivered without people

even knowing, or that there are examples of it that we do not notice because we do not call them that. I would describe municipal ownership of the public bus service in Edinburgh as an example of long-standing community wealth building and one that we should support.

We must not make the mistake of thinking that legislating for community wealth building means that it will be delivered. If we look at the pillars of community wealth building—spending, workforce, land and property, inclusive ownership, and finance—we will see that the bill, at best, influences the first. If we are serious about effecting genuine community wealth building, a lot more must be done.

I am pleased with the improvements and think that the measurement provisions will genuinely improve matters, because having a consistent language of measurement will allow us to ensure that progress is made. Likewise, it is right that we review legislation such as the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, because it is important that we will the means as well as will the motivation towards these things.

However, there is a risk that what we are enacting today will require a semi-regular conversation and the production of reports without necessarily willing the outcomes. There was a concern at the outset that we did not need legislation to do any of this and that having the Scottish Government set a ministerial direction with the right policies and oversight would be just as, if not more, effective. What is more to the point is that, in order to bring about community wealth building, the legislation will absolutely have to provide a focus. If it is simply passed and forgotten about, all this will have been for nothing.

The bill cannot be simply a legislative name check. There must be some serious thought about providing the means to explore things, enabling new legislative capacities—including compulsory sales orders—and looking further at how asset registers can be made more available to the public. We must think about how we can provide more mutualised models for the delivery of public services and how we can more broadly promote employee ownership and co-operatives. If we do not do those things, we will not make progress.

Labour will support the bill at decision time, but there is a huge amount of work to do once it is passed.

16:04

Lorna Slater (Lothian) (Green): For the first time since I became an MSP, my husband came to me and said, “Is this thing on TikTok about you?” He was referring to a video from someone outside Scotland, who had identified our bill as being a groundbreaking world first. Likewise, a former colleague who currently works for the Belgian Government in Brussels contacted me and said, “Community wealth building. Is that you? Are you involved in that? It looks very exciting.” That was a really interesting perspective, given how underwhelmed members of the Economy and Fair Work Committee were when the bill was brought to us. It is interesting that we appear to be at the start of doing something intentional that is thought to be remarkable by other people, even though, as I said, committee members were not overwhelmed with excitement when we first saw the bill.

The bill does only two things: it makes Government ministers of the day provide a statement about community wealth building and it forces local authorities and other named public bodies to get around the table and do likewise for their regions. The bill does not do anything about compulsory sales orders or compulsory purchase orders. It does not do anything to complete the land register. It does not do anything in relation to the common land and assets registers. It does not do anything in relation to procurement reform directly, although, indirectly, thanks to some amendments from Daniel Johnson, it requires the Government to consider that issue.

Therefore, there is unfinished business. The bill is just the start. We can say what we intend the bill to do, but we now have to do the work to make that happen.

I was really pleased with the stage 2 amendments. Various Opposition members proposed various approaches to improved reporting, metrics and targets. That is so important because, if we are not measuring, how can we judge progress?

Community wealth building is not just a warm and fuzzy concept that is nice to have; it is very serious. It is about restructuring the economy and providing transformative change, so that everybody has a stake in how well Scotland is doing. It is about addressing the disconnect that people feel when they see the very wealthy continuing to get richer while they struggle to afford to pay their energy bills or to travel somewhere nice for their kids to experience nature. There is a disconnect when, although people hear that, apparently, the economy is doing well, they do not feel that they are doing well. Community wealth building is about rejoining things by ensuring that everyone has a stake in the economy, so that, when the country does well, every individual also does well and gets what they need from our economy.

More work is still needed to transform how we think about co-operatives, social enterprises and other alternative business models. In too many

cases, the Scottish Government and its enterprise agencies think about only small and worthy businesses when they think about co-operatives, but there is no reason why co-operatives and employee-owned businesses cannot be enormous, ambitious, competitive, highly productive and very innovative. Enterprise agencies should prioritise such businesses, because we know that the additional benefits that they bring to communities are absolutely worth it.

Therefore, there should be a clear instruction to our enterprise agencies to prioritise such businesses, put back together Co-operative Development Scotland and get in-house expertise so that, when any person or small group comes to Business Gateway or one of the enterprise agencies and says, "I want to start a business to do X," they are given the option to become a co-operative or to adopt a social or other employee-owned business model. That will allow us to lock in the benefits of community wealth building.

The Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone): We move to the open debate.

16:08

Jamie Hepburn (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP): Mercifully, Mrs Hepburn has not yet brought to my attention any TikTok videos about my endeavours, but there might be time yet.

At its heart, community wealth building is the simple but powerful proposition that our local economies should work better for the people and communities who live in those areas. When wealth is generated, circulated and retained locally, we create opportunities—there are more good jobs and stronger businesses, and profits are reinvested in the places that produced them in the first place.

Therefore, the bill represents an opportunity to address economic and wealth inequality. It will do so not through some abstract theory but through practical action that supports the generation, circulation and retention of wealth in local and regional economies across Scotland. In that way, we will help to create the circumstances in which communities and people can own, access and more directly benefit from the wealth that our economy creates.

The central aim of the bill is to establish a new and consistent platform for local economic development. It recognises the economic agency of every pound of public money.

Public spending is not neutral. It can shape markets, it shapes supply chains and it can shape opportunity. That is why I welcome the placing of partnership at the bill's core—bringing together the public sector, businesses, the third sector and communities in pursuit of sustainable and inclusive growth.

Through community wealth building, Scotland can create the conditions in which local businesses thrive—in which resilience, innovation and local investment reinforce one another. When investment supports the resilience of local employers, when good work is created close to home and when profits are reinvested in communities, we help to build an economy that delivers prosperity across economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Investment from elsewhere is to be welcomed, but we know that capital can be transient. Making it stay as rooted as possible in local communities should be an objective that the Parliament shares. The bill will ensure that that approach is implemented consistently across Scotland. It places clear duties on Scottish ministers, local authorities and other public bodies to publish and deliver statements, action plans and guidance. It will empower democratically elected local authorities to lead meaningful reform without imposing unnecessary bureaucracy on them—striking the right balance between national consistency and local flexibility.

One of the bill's strengths is its focus on anchor organisations. Whether they are public bodies such as local authorities, the national health service, universities and enterprise agencies, or major private and third sector employers, those institutions have deep roots in their communities and significant economic influence. By leveraging their procurement spend, employment practices, land and property assets and, in some cases, legal powers, anchor organisations can stimulate local economic activity, shorten supply chains, create jobs and strengthen regional resilience.

The bill is grounded in five clear pillars: spending that maximises local benefit; a workforce that is built on fair work principles; land and property that deliver social and ecological value; inclusive ownership through co-operatives and social enterprises; and finance that serves local people, communities and businesses. Together, those pillars form a coherent framework for change.

Ultimately, the bill is about fairness, resilience and shared prosperity. It is about ensuring that the wealth that is created in Scotland better benefits Scotland's people and places. It is about recognising that local partners and communities are best placed to understand their own challenges and opportunities, and giving them the tools and flexibility to act.

Community wealth building is not a passing initiative but a long-term commitment to reshaping our economy so that success is widely shared and locally rooted. I recognise that there might be more

to be done and that the bill might be just the start. However, by passing it today, we will take a decisive step towards an economy that works for people, communities and Scotland.

16:12

Richard Leonard (Central Scotland) (Lab): It is true that the bill is in better shape than it was when it was introduced by the Government, but I cannot help but be reminded of the phrase that Aneurin Bevan once famously used. He said:

"It has taken five years of governmental labour to give birth to that mouse".

Parliament has improved the bill, and the Minister for Public Finance has been listening and co-operating. The promotion of employee ownership, worker co-operatives, social enterprises and supported businesses is now on face of the bill, including their promotion by the enterprise agencies and the Scottish National Investment Bank. Credit unions, mutual banks and building societies and municipal banks are also in the fabric of the bill, which is welcome. The ministerial list of measures is now mandatory, not discretionary. Reporting mechanisms are now much more robust. There will be a review of the Procurement (Scotland) Act 2014 within 12 months of royal assent, including, explicitly, how it can support workers to transition their company into employee ownership. Those are very welcome improvements.

In the passage of the bill, many amendments that I lodged, including some that I lodged for debate this afternoon, have been opposed by an unholy alliance of the Scottish National Party and the Conservatives, with the Conservatives claiming that some of my proposals were, in their words, "extraneous" to the bill and the SNP claiming yet others to be "tangential", when it is my contention that in-sourcing, not outsourcing public services, harnessing the considerable community wealth that already exists inside multibillion-pound local government pension schemes in Scotland or using public procurement progressively are measures that are the very essence of community wealth building—they are axiomatic to community wealth building, not extraneous or tangential.

In the end, the real test of our political principles is whether or not they bring about change. All too often, change is promised but not delivered—a hollow political slogan rather than meaningful political action. I started by quoting Nye Bevan; let me finish by quoting him on something that, over the years, I have tried to apply to my own politics. In his final speech to the Labour Party conference just a few months before his untimely death, he said this:

"Let me give you a personal confession of faith. I have found in my life that the burdens of public life are too great to be borne for trivial ends. The sacrifices are too much, unless we have something serious in mind."

I hope that the low platform provided by the community wealth building act will be something that the next Parliament can build upon; that we can have a Marcora law in Scotland, with statutory rights for workers to become co-operative owners; and that we can make this—the home of Robert Owen and the birthplace of the Fenwick weavers—a Mondragon of the north.

I hope that we can believe that those who follow us really do have, in Bevan's words, "something serious in mind", something that goes way beyond trivial ends: a rejection of the creed that the economy is nothing to do with Parliament and politics and an understanding instead that there is an alternative to an overreliance on foreign direct investment and extractive capitalism and that we can act in the wider community and national interest, rather than simply the narrow shareholder interest—economics as if people mattered, as if communities matter, and as if future generations matter.

The Presiding Officer: Thank you. We now move to closing speeches.

16:17

Lorna Slater: The report that has been referenced by several colleagues, "Developing Scotland's Economy: Increasing the Role of Inclusive and Democratic Business Models", was, to cast our minds back to the distant past, a Bute house agreement requirement, and it is an achievement that I am still really proud of.

Moving the recommendations of that report forward—notwithstanding my disagreement with Richard Leonard about tax breaks—will be a substantial step forward in supporting community wealth building in Scotland. I commend the report to the members in the chamber and to the next Scottish Government, because we are now just weeks out from an election and it will be for the next Scottish Government and the next Scottish Parliament to implement the bill as well as the recommendations in the report.

It behoves us all and all our successors to get out to the community groups and stakeholders in our regions and constituencies and get them making noise about this and pester their local authorities to get their community action plan started and see how they fit into it, because this is going to matter to them. We need to make sure that our stakeholders know how to apply for procurement contracts and that community organisations know how to contribute to their local action plans.

I hope that, through the bill, local authorities and public bodies are encouraged to think in an entrepreneurial way about how their assets and resources can be used to prioritise wellbeing and resilience in their areas—how one organisation's derelict land may be another organisation's community garden. That is exactly the kind of bringing people around the table that can achieve things even without a substantial input of funding. I hope that the power of the bill will be the facilitative effort that happens when people sit around the table and say, "Here's what we need," and "Here's what we have," so that we can co-operate to make the best of everything that we have.

I will give members some examples of how the bill might benefit our constituents. It is not just about community shares in renewable energy schemes, although it is partly about that, and it is not just about lovely community gardens and orchards, although of course it is partly about that. It could be about local energy resilience—if local energy generation is in place in a distributed way and the grid gets taken out by a terrible storm, local people would still have heat, electricity and maybe a safe place to retreat to in the case of terrible cold, wind, flooding or fire. That is the kind of community resilience that could be built because of the work on the bill.

Last week, Liz Smith, Maree Todd, Neil Bibby and I attended a hustings where there was a discussion about the challenges of maintaining swimming pools in our communities. Those could be an interesting example of a community asset. If swimming pools were owned by a community, partners in developing community action plans could come together to figure out how they would heat their local pool. Maybe the local whisky distillery or the local data centre would have excess heat that they could use, or maybe one of the public bodies would have land that they could use to install a pool. That is about how we pool our resources—private enterprise, public bodies and local authorities—with volunteers and organisations to make the best of what we have, and it should be making the best of Scotland. I look forward to working on the implementation of the bill in the next session of Parliament.

16:21

Paul Sweeney (Glasgow) (Lab): The Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill is not just a means of trading a slogan; it represents a recognition that Scotland's wealth is based in the local communities that we live in. It is often forgotten that 1.2 million jobs in Scotland—more than half of all private sector employment—are created and sustained by small and medium-sized enterprises, which are the foundations on which this country's prosperity depends. Combined with the powers of the state, both local and national, they shape our lives, building up wealth in our communities and allowing each next new generation to be richer than the last.

Yet, for far too long, our policy in Scotland has relentlessly focused on a laissez-faire dependence on the initiative and enterprise of foreign corporations, and foreign ownership and investment from multinationals, rather than building up our home-grown talent and enterprise potential. That is how Scotland has become one of the most foreign-owned economies in the world. As a result, it has experienced a net outflow of wealth in every year since records began. That is not a trivial sum. We are talking about more than a quarter of a trillion pounds leaving Scotland between 1998 and the latest figures in 2021. That is the result of decades of people actively choosing the multinational rather than the local.

We can go back to the Toothill report of 1962, which determined that Scotland's heavy industrial base was beyond reform and that, as a nation, we had to depend on external investment, primarily from the United States, into our light industries. We seem not to have shaken that dependence ever since. That has come at tremendous cost to our prosperity. Scotland is one of the most foreign-owned countries in the world and one of only a handful of such countries that are both rich and developed but not microstates or outright tax havens.

Gross national income provides a useful indicator for us. The Government has been undertaking experimental statistics, although I note that it has not done so since 2021. GNI provides a measure of the country's total national income, including all the income earned by its residents and businesses both at home and abroad. It contrasts with gross domestic product—GDP—which measures the income of anyone within a country's boundaries, regardless of who produces it. It is a useful indicator, at a macro level, of community wealth building. GNI tends to be based on ownership, whereas GDP is based simply on location. If we compare GDP with GNI in the latest statistics from 2021, we can see that £36.5 billion was extracted from Scotland in that year, largely in the form of profits and dividends to foreign-owned companies and shareholders, while only £26.4 billion flowed into Scotland, largely as foreign investment income. That represents a net outflow of £10.1 billion. It is important to note that that is 5.5 per cent of GDP, which is greater than the average of any World Bank income group, including the world's least developed and most heavily indebted nations.

Only five polities in the World Bank's GNI database are richer in GNI per capita than

Scotland while having a higher rate of outward economic flow: San Marino, Singapore, Ireland, Luxembourg and the Cayman Islands. We need to address that structural problem and properly interrogate the nature of foreign direct investment. That is why we have pushed the Government through amendments to the bill. The Government does not properly scrutinise the nature of foreign direct investment projects to ensure that they actually add net value to the Scottish economy.

I admit that, like many of my Labour colleagues, I was sceptical about the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill as introduced—it was a mouse of a bill, as Richard Leonard referred to it. I was worried that it would create lots of paperwork for underresourced local authorities, that it would be about just an empty slogan and that the opportunity to meaningfully create community wealth building would be lost. We are perhaps still sceptical in some respects, but I am pleased that we have been able to work constructively with the Government and colleagues from across the chamber to fashion a stronger bill that will genuinely support community wealth building activities—to give the mouse some teeth, I suppose.

We have worked to achieve the inclusion of community-owned financial institutions such as credit unions in the Government's community wealth building strategic statement and as an option in the action plans. The Scottish Government has committed to procurement reform and community empowerment reviews—both of which are sorely needed—in the next session of the Parliament.

I would have liked there to be more measures supporting co-operatives and for there to be greater scope in the organisations that will be included under the action plans. I note the concerns that have been raised about the surreptitious rundown of Co-operative Development Scotland, and I was disappointed that the Government resisted the amendments in the name of my colleague Richard Leonard. However, we recognise that the bill is a useful starting point, and it will be up to the next Parliament to ensure that its promise truly comes to fruition.

We need to ensure that councils and public bodies are properly resourced so that community wealth building plans turn into real community wealth building activity. We must also ensure that, when procurement processes are reviewed in relation to how they keep to community wealth building goals, we then act accordingly and make the changes that will be required to use public purchasing power to drive wealth building in Scotland.

The prize of a Scotland in which wealth-generating activities circulate within our communities is one that is worth striving towards. I hope that we will be able to consider the bill as the beginning, not the end, of our community wealth building journey.

16:27

Stephen Kerr (Central Scotland) (Con): Yesterday, I went to see my 92-year-old aunt. She is a remarkable woman: independent, sharp minded and proud of standing on her own two feet. She still lives on her own, and she is rightly determined to do so for as long as she can. However, she gets meals on wheels, and she pays her contribution towards that.

When I arrived yesterday, it was around lunch time and my aunt said, "Would you like some soup?" So, she put some soup on, and we sat down and had lunch together. As we were eating, the doorbell rang and it was the meals on wheels service—my aunt had forgotten that she had ordered it. The meal that arrived was sausage and gravy with mashed potato and vegetables, which was perfectly respectable fare. Where did it come from? Here is my point: it came from Trowbridge, Wiltshire. It had travelled all the way from Wiltshire to reach a 92-year-old woman who lives in a part of Scotland that contains some of the most productive agricultural land in the country and has some of the best livestock farming that can be found anywhere. It is a place that produces world-class food. I have nothing against Wiltshire—for heaven's sake, I am a unionist; I believe in the United Kingdom. However, it is deeply ironic that, while we have spent hours in committee and in the chamber talking about community wealth building, local procurement and keeping money circulating locally—

The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic (Kate Forbes): Will the member take an intervention?

Stephen Kerr: In a second. It is ironic that, while we have been talking about those things, a local authority in Scotland is procuring food for meals on wheels from hundreds of miles away.

Kate Forbes: Yesterday, I formally opened the new Inverness Castle Experience, which has a cafe with a menu that has a detailed description of where all the food comes from. Does Stephen Kerr welcome the fact that the vast majority of the food is local?

Stephen Kerr: Hallelujah!

Finlay Carson (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con): That is the good food nation for you.

Stephen Kerr: Yes, the good food nation and all that stuff—excellent.

However, my point is about the gap between rhetoric—in which we specialise—and reality. Such a gap is the danger with virtue-signalling legislation. If community wealth building does not change decisions such as the one in my example, if it does not alter procurement behaviour, and if it does not make it easier and more attractive for local businesses to supply local services, what exactly will we have achieved?

We now have freedoms that we did not have before: freedoms to shape procurement rules in ways that support local enterprise; freedoms to encourage small businesses to start up and scale up; and freedoms to ensure that public money raised in taxes is recycled back into local economies wherever possible. If we are not using those freedoms, passing another bill and declaring success is, to be frank, meaningless. My fear is that, unless the Government changes its attitude, the bill will simply become another beautiful bureaucratic exercise—it will just be like other strategies, plans and reports that sit unread and make no tangible difference to the lives of the people whom we represent.

As this Parliament completes stage 3 of the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill, we should step back and ask a simple but important question: what do we think we are doing when we pass acts of Parliament in this place? Legislation is not theatre, it is not virtue signalling and it is not box ticking. The laws that we pass are meant to mean something—they are meant to change behaviour, shape incentives and improve outcomes for the people whom we represent. When they do not, we exist largely to allow ministers to say, "Job done." That is not a harmless failure but a serious one. It wastes parliamentary time, costs taxpayers money and corrodes trust in the whole legislative process.

In recent years, there has been a tendency towards introducing what I can only describe as performative legislation. We see symbolic action—we have announcements that sound good, bills that photograph well and strategies that generate press releases—followed by a general shrug when little changes on the ground. We have seen all that before. We saw it in the debate about becoming a so-called good food nation, as was mentioned earlier. Those are fine words and worthy aspirations, but there is little evidence that procurement, production or outcomes have shifted in any meaningful way.

That brings me to community wealth building. Let me be absolutely clear: I am not opposed to the idea—quite the opposite. The Scottish Conservatives believe deeply in wealth creation. We believe in local enterprise, local jobs and strong communities. We believe in businesses of all kinds being able to start up, scale up and succeed. We believe in the money that is raised through taxation being used intelligently and being reinvested in the communities from which it comes.

I see that I am out of time. [*Interruption*.] Oh—am I not out of time, Presiding Officer?

Members: Aw!

Edward Mountain (Highlands and Islands) (Con): Keep going.

Stephen Kerr: Listen, there is not going to be a division on that, okay? [*Laughter*.]

Believing in those things means being serious about delivery. It means asking whether legislation changes decisions or whether it simply generates another plan, report and document that are quietly filed away somewhere in the cloud.

We need seriousness. We need a Government that is genuinely committed to backing local businesses, organisations and community groups. We need a Government that understands that wealth is created not by frameworks but by people who take risks, create value and employ others. We also need a Parliament that is willing to say that good intentions are not enough.

As the bill completes its passage, my challenge to ministers is simple: let us get beyond virtue signalling. Let us get into the practical work and make the legislation mean something. If we do not do so, we will have passed another bill that looks impressive on paper but changes absolutely nothing in practice. The people whom we represent deserve better than that.

16:34

Ivan McKee: I would like to thank all members for what has been, by and large, a constructive debate. I think that it is true to say that there is consensus that community wealth building is an approach to economic development that can help to deliver sustainable growth and foster resilience in our local economies. Legislating for community wealth building means that there will be consistent implementation across Scotland of an economic development model that benefits communities by creating and protecting jobs, supporting business growth and extending influence over how assets are owned and used.

In line with the principles that underpin our public sector reform aims, the bill as introduced was designed to deliver impact while being lean and focused. Murdo Fraser talked about resources, and I welcome his support, at stages 2 and 3, for ensuring that the bill remained lean and focused.

Our objective is to deliver in an efficient way within the public sector. Keeping the bill focused on the ability to deliver in as lean a way as possible is absolutely core to our mission.

Through the process of scrutiny that was led by the Economy and Fair Work Committee, the bill acquired some additions that add value. The final provisions in the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill empower our public sector bodies rather than dictate to them. The statements that it requires future Scottish Governments to make, allied to the statutory guidance that will be published, will help local partnerships to produce tailored and practical action plans.

On Murdo Fraser's point about what is next, it is clear that significant work must be done on pulling the guidance together. Officials are already working on that and will continue to bring it forward. I am sure that any future Government will be keen to engage widely across the chamber on the guidance to ensure that it is effective in delivering on the agenda.

I will turn to some of the contributions from members. Murdo Fraser and Daniel Johnson made a point about moving assets into local ownership and use and making that as straightforward and easy as possible. In my application of the existing asset transfer legislation, the principle that I adopt—as does the Government more widely—is the presumption that the transfer will add value to local communities and that such transfers should be supported wherever possible.

At one interesting point in the debate, Daniel Johnson said that whether someone was a capitalist, a socialist, an environmentalist or a social democrat, they should support the bill, and Stephen Kerr asked him which of those things he was. I think that we now know the answer to that question. Based on his incitement of community groups not to wait for permission but just to take over land, be it private or public, we can say that Daniel Johnson is by nature an anarchist, which is an interesting reflection. [*Laughter*.] Meanwhile, Lorna Slater self-identified as an entrepreneur. There has been some interesting crossover of perspectives in this discussion, which I think has added to the strength of the bill.

Lorna Slater made some really good points about the potential for alternative business models to grow to scale, and I think that that is absolutely key. There is no reason why supported businesses, whether co-operatives or employee-owned businesses, cannot grow to scale and be significant engines in the economy. Richard Leonard shares that perspective and articulates it very well. Lorna Slater's call for communities to take advantage of the legislation and to power it forward to the next phase was very welcome.

There were calls for wider work in that regard. It is worth reflecting on some of those calls, because the bill is not the beginning or the end—it is very much a part of the journey. It builds on some of the great work that has already happened, including work on asset transfer legislation, work that we are taking forward on compulsory sales orders and reforming the compulsory purchase order regime, and work that the Registers of Scotland is focused on delivering around the land register. All of that work continues.

I want to make special mention of the procurement achievements of previous Governments since the 2014 act was passed. It is nice and very useful to know that Stephen Kerr is not, in principle, opposed to Wiltshire. [*Laughter*.] On his point about procurement, however, it is easy to say that we need to do more. We absolutely need to do more, but it is also important, if we are serious about making progress, to recognise what has been achieved. As I outlined in my opening speech, in Scotland, 47 per cent of our £16.5 billion public sector procurement spend is with SMEs, which is more than double the rate of the UK as a whole, and we should be proud of that. In fact, SMEs' share of public sector procurement is larger than SMEs' share of the total economy. Although we want to continue to do more in that regard, it is important to recognise the significant progress that has been made in the platform that we are building on.

Richard Leonard's comments are always worth listening to, whether or not members agree with all of them. His point about the level of ambition is absolutely important and something to be taken on board. He is absolutely right about the need to have something serious in mind. The Government is genuine in engaging with the issues. His amendments were not agreed to for various reasons, but, on the intent and principle behind them, we will take forward work in that regard where we can. When he started talking about Nye Bevan and used a quote about mice, I was not sure whether he was going to pivot to Nye Bevan's other famous quote about vermin. Thankfully, Richard Leonard did not go there, because that would have destroyed the consensual atmosphere that we have had in the discussion.

I will close by thanking all the people and organisations who are already making community wealth building a reality across Scotland. There has been a great deal of interest in the passage of the legislation in Scotland and, indeed, beyond. Lorna Slater's comment about the worldwide fame that the bill has achieved through the mechanism of TikTok is worth reflecting on. Scotland can claim many firsts, and I urge members to vote for the bill,

which will make it the first national community wealth building legislation in the world.

Parliamentary Bureau Motion

16:40

The Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone): The next item of business is consideration of Parliamentary Bureau motion S6M-20747, on a committee substitute. I ask Graeme Dey, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, to move the motion.

Motion moved,

That the Parliament agrees that Jamie Greene be appointed to replace Alex Cole-Hamilton as the Scottish Liberal Democrats substitute on the Education, Children and Young People Committee.—[*Graeme Dey*]

The Presiding Officer: The question on the motion will be put at decision time.

Motion without Notice

16:41

The Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone): I am minded to accept a motion without notice, under rule 11.2.4 of standing orders, that decision time be brought forward to now. I invite the Minister for Parliamentary Business to move such a motion.

Motion moved,

That, under Rule 11.2.4, Decision Time be brought forward to 4.41 pm.—[*Graeme Dey*]

Motion agreed to.

Decision Time

16:41

The Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone): There are two questions to be put as a result of today's business. The first question is, that motion S6M-20717, in the name of Ivan McKee, on the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill at stage 3, be agreed to. As this is a motion to pass a bill, the question must be decided by division. There will be a brief suspension, to allow members to access the digital voting system.

16:42

Meeting suspended.

16:43

On resuming—

The Presiding Officer: We will proceed with the division on motion S6M-20717, in the name of Ivan McKee, on the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill at stage 3.

For

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)
Adam, Karen (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)
Balfour, Jeremy (Lothian) (Ind)
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)
Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)
Brown, Siobhian (Ayr) (SNP)
Burgess, Ariane (Highlands and Islands) (Green)
Burnett, Alexander (Aberdeenshire West) (Con)
Callaghan, Stephanie (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)
Chapman, Maggie (North East Scotland) (Green)
Choudhury, Foysol (Lothian) (Ind)
Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)
Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)
Don-Innes, Natalie (Renfrewshire North and West) (SNP)
Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)
Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)
Dowey, Sharon (South Scotland) (Con)
Dunbar, Jackie (Aberdeen Donside) (SNP)
Duncan-Glancy, Pam (Glasgow) (Lab)
Eagle, Tim (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)
Fairlie, Jim (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)
FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)
Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)
Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Gallacher, Meghan (Central Scotland) (Con)
Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)
Gosal, Pam (West Scotland) (Con)
Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)
Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)
Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)
Gray, Neil (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)

Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (LD)
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)
Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Gulhane, Sandesh (Glasgow) (Con)
Hamilton, Rachael (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)
Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)
Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)
Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)
Hoy, Craig (South Scotland) (Con)
Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)
Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)
Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)
Kerr, Stephen (Central Scotland) (Con)
Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)
Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)
Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)
Lumsden, Douglas (North East Scotland) (Con)
MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)
MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)
Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)
Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)
Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)
Marra, Michael (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)
Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (Ind)
Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)
McAllan, Màiri (Clydesdale) (SNP)
McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)
McLennan, Paul (East Lothian) (SNP)
McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
McNair, Marie (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)
McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow) (Lab)
Minto, Jenni (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)
Mochan, Carol (South Scotland) (Lab)
Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)
Robertson, Angus (Edinburgh Central) (SNP)
Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)
Roddick, Emma (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)
Ross, Douglas (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)
Russell, Davy (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (Lab)
Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Reform)
Slater, Lorna (Lothian) (Green)
Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stevenson, Collette (East Kilbride) (SNP)
Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)
Stewart, Kaukab (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)
Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)
Sturgeon, Nicola (Glasgow Southside) (SNP)
Sweeney, Paul (Glasgow) (Lab)
Thomson, Michelle (Falkirk East) (SNP)
Todd, Maree (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)
Torrance, David (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)
Tweed, Evelyn (Stirling) (SNP)
Villalba, Mercedes (North East Scotland) (Lab)
Webber, Sue (Lothian) (Con)
Wells, Annie (Glasgow) (Con)
White, Tess (North East Scotland) (Con)
Whitfield, Martin (South Scotland) (Lab)
Whitham, Elena (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)
Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)
Yousaf, Humza (Glasgow Pollok) (SNP)

The Presiding Officer: The result of the division on motion S6M-20717, in the name of Ivan McKee, on the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill at stage 3, is: For 103, Against 0, Abstentions 0.

Motion agreed to,

That the Parliament agrees that the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill be passed.

The Presiding Officer: The Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill is therefore passed. [*Applause*.]

The final question is, that motion S6M-20747, in the name of Graeme Dey, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, on a committee substitute, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to,

That the Parliament agrees that Jamie Greene be appointed to replace Alex Cole-Hamilton as the Scottish Liberal Democrats substitute on the Education, Children and Young People Committee.

The Presiding Officer: That concludes decision time.

Renewable Energy Infrastructure

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Annabelle Ewing): The final item of business is a members' business debate on motion S6M-20100, in the name of Finlay Carson, on the essential role of renewable energy in meeting net zero targets. The debate will be concluded without any question being put.

Motion debated,

That the Parliament recognises what it sees as the essential role of renewable energy in meeting Scotland's net zero targets; acknowledges what it considers is the significant growth of onshore wind farms, transmission infrastructure and energy storage developments across rural Scotland, including in Dumfries and Galloway; notes the reported concerns raised by local communities regarding the cumulative impact of large-scale developments on landscapes, biodiversity and rural economies; understands that many of these developments are advanced through planning mechanisms that limit local authority capacity and community input, including applications under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989; notes the belief that a balanced approach is needed that supports Scotland's climate ambitions while ensuring that rural communities are active partners in shaping the future of their regions; further notes the calls on the Scottish Government to publish a clear and inclusive national energy strategy that provides guidance on cumulative impact, community benefit and transmission infrastructure, and notes the calls for reform of the planning system to strengthen transparency, local engagement and democratic accountability in energy infrastructure decisions, which ensures that all parts of Scotland benefit fairly and sustainably from the transition to net zero.

16:46

Finlay Carson (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con): I welcome the opportunity to bring the debate to the chamber, and I thank colleagues from across the political divide for supporting my motion.

At its heart, this debate asks whether the voices of rural Scotland still matter in the national decisions that shape our landscapes, livelihoods and future. Across rural Scotland, from the Highlands to the south of Scotland, communities face growing uncertainty. Yet another wave of energy infrastructure has arrived at a pace and scale that was never properly planned, clearly explained or meaningfully discussed with those who are expected to live beside it for generations. That is the consequence of a Government pursuing energy expansion without building the democratic foundations that are required to support it.

The Scottish Conservatives, like our rural constituents, recognise that Scotland needs energy infrastructure. They are not anti-development or anti-renewables; they are pro-fairness, pro-transparency and pro-democracy, but they see a system that is currently failing on all three counts.

Nowhere is that clearer than in Galloway. My constituency has hosted extensive energy infrastructure for decades. We have Windy Standard, Scotland's first consented onshore wind farm; Robin Rigg, Scotland's first offshore wind farm; and the Galloway hydro scheme, which was the country's first major integrated hydro scheme and one of the world's earliest all-river systems, and which is still producing power nearly a century later.

Galloway has powered Scotland for generations, but recent years have brought something entirely different: not strategic modernisation but a disjointed surge of proposals arriving simultaneously, and assessed in isolation. Residents now face multiple wind farm applications, large-scale battery storage compounds, solar farms, new substations, construction and traffic disruption causing damage to our roads, and miles of monster pylons and cables. That is not abstract—it reshapes the places where people live, work and raise families, yet communities feel that they have had little meaningful say.

A clear example is the Kendoon to Tongland power line upgrade. Initially presented as a straightforward modernisation, it evolved through several iterations in which the scale, route and justification were changed. SP Energy Networks rejected undergrounding in the most visually sensitive areas and, although the independent reporter recommended refusal, the Scottish Government approved the upgrade regardless. For some, the process became so opaque that they sought judicial review simply in order to have their voices heard. That should be a warning. When ordinary citizens feel that their only remaining avenue is the courts, it reveals not just planning failure but democratic failure.

Galloway is not alone. In the Highlands, the community council convention of the Highland Council area has brought together community councils, representing tens of thousands of people who feel overwhelmed by cumulative impacts and ignored by the planning system. They unite around a simple message: rural communities are being treated as passive observers, not active partners.

Inspired by that movement, a south of Scotland convention is now emerging, too. Community councils across the Borders—and, shortly, in Dumfries and Galloway, too—have joined forces. Those communities are calling, respectfully and democratically, for a moratorium on new large-scale energy infrastructure until a strategy is published, and I join them in that call. It is not about being obstructive or about nimbyism—it is

responsible citizenship. People are saying, “We will engage. We will play our part. But we cannot support limitless development with no clear end point, no assurances of fairness, and no understanding of where the burden will fall next.”

However, the Government continues to rely on a planning framework that many find inaccessible and unbalanced. Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 is repeatedly cited as a barrier to genuine local influence. It centralises decision making, reduces the weight of local authority views and creates the perception that, once a project has reached a certain size, addressing community sentiment becomes a procedural tick-box exercise. In addition, the Scottish Government is now blocking constituents from objecting by email.

Local authorities are overwhelmed by numerous complex applications. They lack the staff, the specialist expertise and the time that is required for rigorous scrutiny. Communities face thousands of pages of environmental assessments and technical documents, often with only weeks to respond. Many residents feel that consultations are not genuine exercises in listening but performances that are carried out because the rules require it. When people are spoken at, rather than spoken with, trust collapses. Trust matters—it is the foundation of any major national transition. If we want communities to host infrastructure, they must be treated from the outset as partners, not as obstacles. That is part and parcel of a just transition.

Scotland urgently needs a clear national energy strategy, not another brochure for high-level ambitions. We need a real plan with maps, limits, sequencing and transparent reasoning—a plan that answers the questions that rural communities have been asking for years. How much infrastructure does Scotland actually need? Where should that go and where should it not go? What protections will prevent overconcentration in particular regions? How will cumulative impacts be honestly assessed? How will benefits be fairly distributed? Until those questions are answered, calls for a moratorium are entirely justified.

Groups in Galloway such as Hands Off Our Hills, Galloway Without Pylons and the Glengap Community Group, along with dedicated individuals such as Paul Swift and Elaine and Trevor Proctor, have shown remarkable leadership and professionalism. They have informed neighbours, analysed proposals and built constructive, evidence-based campaigns. Their voices should be valued, not sidelined.

This debate is ultimately about democracy. It is about whether rural Scotland’s voice carries the same weight as urban Scotland’s interests. It is about whether Government sees rural communities as partners or simply as places where decisions can be imposed because the population is dispersed and the political cost is low. We can have a strong energy future and expand infrastructure responsibly, but we cannot do so credibly unless the people who host that infrastructure are respected, included and empowered right from the start.

Let me be clear: the people in Galloway are not standing in the way of Scotland’s future—they are standing up for their own. They are demanding fairness and a proportionate and fair planning system that recognises the cumulative burden that they already carry. They are asking for balance, not endless expansion, and for partnership, not imposition. I say this to those in Galloway who feel unheard, overlooked or simply exhausted by the constant onslaught of proposals: your concerns are legitimate; you are right to demand clarity and limits; and you are absolutely right to insist that your voices be heard on future development in our region.

Galloway has already powered Scotland for nearly a century; no one can accuse Galloway of not doing its bit. We will continue to play our part in Scotland’s energy future, but we will no longer accept being treated to Scotland’s energy dumping ground. Scotland’s new Government must bring an end to the era of limitless uncoordinated development. Until then, rural Scotland will keep pushing back, and rightly so. The people of Galloway and the rest of rural Scotland deserve fairness, respect and the right to shape the future of a place that they call home, and I will continue to stand with them and speak for them every step of the way.

16:54

Emma Harper (South Scotland) (SNP): I welcome the opening of Finlay Carson’s motion, which recognises

“the essential role of renewables”.

As Mr Carson has described, Galloway has a long history of onshore, offshore and hydroelectric renewables. I know many people who are in the groups that Mr Carson mentioned, and they have had a fair amount of contact with me and my team over the past nine years.

In recent years, after decades of underinvestment in innovation and underappreciation of the climate emergency, we have seen Scotland blaze a trail in the move to net zero. We are innovating and developing at pace, even in agriculture; it is nothing short of a national transformation across our society. The cabinet secretary probably expects me to mention this, but we are seeing the deployment of commercial-scale and micro anaerobic digestion on our dairy

farms and across the wider rural economy to help decarbonise the grid and support economic investment and new jobs, especially in the south-west of Scotland.

Renewables have to be part of the future. Remember that they are not only turbines; they include solar, biomass, geothermal, hydroelectric and, now, battery storage. We have seen that nuclear generation is simply a bottomless pit of public money with no end in sight and no limit to its costs for today's citizens and for generations to come. Hinkley Point C had its nuclear site licence granted in 2012. It was first budgeted at £18 billion in construction costs; today, that figure tops £48 billion and will, no doubt, rise.

Liam Kerr (North East Scotland) (Con): Does the member concede that no one is proposing to build Hinkley C in Scotland? Small modular reactors are absolutely the future right here, in Scotland.

Emma Harper: The last time that I checked, small modular reactors were still more than 20 years away. I am talking about what we need to do now in order to challenge the climate emergency and support biodiversity.

One of the issues with nuclear is the challenge of high-level nuclear waste, which is a radioactive by-product that cannot be destroyed and which requires secure, long-term isolation. High-level waste remains hazardous for thousands of years. I am deputy convener of the cross-party group on the civil nuclear industry, at which we have seen presentations on the complexity of high-level nuclear waste storage in Scotland, the process of conditioning to make it stable and the requirements of design, monitoring and long-term storage, which are required for decades.

Moving to net zero means being serious about renewables and the infrastructure and investment that are needed to get there. The transformation of the former Chapelcross nuclear power station site in Annan into a renewable energy hub demonstrates the impact of investment as it leads the way in research, development and deployment. That transformation is bringing quality, skilled jobs and employment to the south, which is only one example of how the just transition delivers real economic benefits across our country.

However, the benefits cannot come at the expense of local communities and their right to be heard when decisions are made about where that investment goes and what it delivers. I want to see international best practice, which means not only consulting communities but involving them in the planning process from the very beginning.

As I said earlier, Mr Carson mentioned many groups and people who have contacted me, and it is something that we really—

Finlay Carson: Will the member take an intervention?

Emma Harper: I do not think that I have time.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: You can take a very brief intervention.

Emma Harper: Okay, I will take a brief intervention.

Finlay Carson: It is a simple question: does Galloway have enough wind turbines?

Emma Harper: I recently compared the number of turbines in Galloway versus other parts of Scotland. It was quite interesting to see what is out there. We need to consider the cumulative impact of the turbines, which a lot of people have contacted me about. They are worried about Galloway being the place where all the turbines are put up. We need to consider that, but we absolutely need to ensure that our communities in the south are at the core of our renewables future. I look forward to the Scottish Government continuing that action, but we definitely need to ensure that the development proposals mean that all communities are involved, engaged with, listened to and included at the beginning of any development.

16:59

Tim Eagle (Highlands and Islands) (Con): First, I congratulate Finlay Carson on securing what I think is a very important debate. The first two speakers have been from the south of Scotland, I am here representing the Highlands, and we have members from the north-east and from central Scotland, too. All of us will have received very much the same feedback from our communities.

I wish to touch on three areas, the first of which is the Moray FLOW-Park. It will not be a surprise to members that I mention it, as I am actively campaigning on the issue as hard as I possibly can, for good reason. I will go into the subject in more detail in a members' business debate next week. Last Thursday, I asked the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy a question about it, and she seemed slightly annoyed with me about what I was saying. I want to expand on that—I will make this point again next week. In responding to me about the Moray FLOW-Park, the Government has consistently said that there is no application in yet. That is the excuse; the reason for the Government not saying anything else is because there is no application in. However, community is clearly telling me that we

do not want an application to go in. Some £1.83 million of public money is being spent on a project that the community clearly does not feel is in the right place, and the community, councils and various other businesses are saying, "Work with us. We are not saying no, but come and talk to us, and perhaps we can find other locations around the Highlands where you can do this."

The Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy (Gillian Martin): First, I try never to show any annoyance, and I do not remember being annoyed with Tim Eagle at all. If it came across that way, that was certainly not my intention.

On the developer, Mr Eagle is saying that there has not been consultation at all. That is interesting, because developers are encouraged to have engagement before applications go in.

Tim Eagle: I accept that point. I am delighted that the cabinet secretary was not annoyed with me because of the point that I kept making—that is fine. However, the developer did not engage. I will talk about this story next week, but the first thing that we knew came in a message that went to fishermen—it was literally two rectangles on a map of the sea. Nobody knew anything before that. That was why, over two venues, 600 people turned up—a level of scrutiny that is unheard of post-Covid.

I want to get this point across. I do not think that it is right that we, in the Parliament, say that we have to wait for an application, because, by the time we get to the application stage, a huge amount of money, energy and time has already been spent. There should be a process before that, when the Government can listen to communities and come to the conclusion that a project is not actually in the right location and can go to the developers and say "Stop"—or "We urge you to stop", as we cannot prevent them from putting in an application. We can urge the developer to stop and we can then carry on. That is the point that I am really trying to make. One day I might get an answer to the question—perhaps next week, during the Moray FLOW-Park debate.

Emma Harper has talked about cumulative impact. Interestingly, she said a few times that that is something that we need to think about. We are well beyond the stage of needing to think about it; we should have been actively working on it. We should now have in place plans to ensure that communities are thinking about the effect of cumulative impact. Cumulative impact is happening not just in the south of Scotland; the Highlands has experienced it to a massive level. We are now well beyond that stage.

The Government should have application support for communities in place—and finance needs to come along with that from the companies that are applying. More importantly, there should be a regional energy strategy, so that we do not have widespread community impact.

Emma Harper: When I said, in responding to an intervention, that cumulative impact is something that we need to think about, I probably should have said that we are already considering cumulative impact. Perhaps I did not think fast enough on my feet.

Tim Eagle: That is fair enough, and I thank the member for that intervention.

My gut feeling is that this is going to be a big, serious issue. It is not a political one, but I think that it will come up for all of us on the doorsteps in the upcoming election campaign. It is a big concern across Scotland.

I see that I have run out of time already. We have significant pressures across Speyside, in Moray and in the sea and offshore. I have not even mentioned the fishing sector and the spatial squeeze that it is feeling. We hosted the Scottish Fishermen's Federation in the Parliament last week. I do not know which members were there, but I found, in circuiting the room and speaking with those who attended, that they were talking about that spatial squeeze and the pressures offshore.

It is great that Finlay Carson has secured this debate. The point that I really wanted to get across today is that local voice is important. If we are truly saying, in everything that we do, that local voice is important, we cannot ignore that voice just because we have a net zero aim. We need to start listening to communities.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I call Carol Mochan, who joins us remotely.

17:04

Carol Mochan (South Scotland) (Lab): I, too, thank Finlay Carson for securing the debate. It is really important that we discuss these issues, particularly, as other members have said and as is stated clearly in the motion, when constituents raise such issues with us.

Rural communities understand how important the move to net zero is and, in my experience, they want to be part of the solution. As with many other changes, though, there are times when people feel that changes fall on their shoulders alone. However, I have also seen very good examples of people, communities, Governments and companies working together, and that must be the way in which we move forward.

We know that there are plans to substantially upgrade the existing electricity transmission network in Great Britain—other members have

mentioned that—with companies planning to invest more than £10 billion in their networks in Scotland in the coming years. By some estimates, there are plans to build five times more transmission networks in the next 12 years than have been built in the past 30 years, so it is understandable that communities are considering and thinking about that—and are worried.

The building of the infrastructure and the changes that it will bring raise many issues that we must consider. Who are the companies? What are we doing to engage communities? How do we seek to ensure that community wealth building comes with that investment? How do we ensure that local communities see benefit from the often intrusive nature of infrastructure change?

Like other members, I am sure that our communities understand the complexities, and they spend a lot of time trying to understand the systems. However, although they really want to get involved in shaping the future, the current legislation and systems can be quite confusing. Communities care about the environment around them, and, without involving them in decisions, it is difficult to see how we will meet the targets that have been set out, which we all agree must be met.

While I have the opportunity, I want to mention a group in the South Scotland region that has been working closely with communities to bring people together and to develop outcomes, including community payback schemes, which are helpful for people. The 9CC Group in Ayrshire is a charitable organisation formed by nine local community councils to manage, administer and distribute community benefit funds that have been generated by wind farms across the Cumnock and Doon Valley area. The community councils have come together so that they can look at the management of funds and the strategic investment around infrastructure building, and consider how to support and empower communities.

I understand that that group is looking at one part of wind farms, but, as different infrastructure programmes go forward, some of the structures around them might be helpful for how we work with our communities. As the cabinet secretary said in her intervention on Tim Eagle, it is desirable that many of those projects work with their local communities, but we probably need to be more robust about the way in which we engage with communities.

I see that I am coming to the end of my time, so I again thank Finlay Carson for giving us the opportunity to talk about the issue and about how we get the legislation to a point at which communities find it easy to navigate and can be fully involved in every part of infrastructure planning and meeting the net zero targets, with community wealth building in place around them.

17:08

Christine Grahame (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP): As a Borders MSP, I thank Finlay Carson for this debate. We all agree that it is essential to meet our net zero targets and deter further global warming, which has affected the Borders with increased flood risk, and that we need alternative sources of energy, with turbines and pylons taking that green energy to the grid—mainly to meet the demands for energy from England. That said, I certainly agree that, as a result of significant growth in wind farms, battery storage projects and new electricity transmission infrastructure, there are real concerns in the Borders about overdevelopment.

Communities are concerned about the scale and pace of development. They want fairness and meaningful local benefit, and they feel that decisions can seem remote. I have raised their concerns about the cumulative impact of wind farms, battery storage and pylons in the Borders at First Minister's question time. This was the exchange, which I have truncated in the interest of time.

I asked,

"whether the Scottish Government has carried out an assessment of the potential cumulative impact on the wildlife and the landscape, in light of the importance of tourism to the area."

The First Minister replied:

"I appreciate the point that Christine Grahame makes on cumulative impact, and—

I emphasise—

"I have asked that work is taken forward to consider what further steps we can take as part of our strategic spatial energy plan. Through the plan, we will work to balance the need to deliver net zero with the need to protect our natural environment, tourism and rural communities."

I pursued the issue further:

"I hope that there is progress …I understand that there are 30 sites in the Borders operating more than 440 turbines, with three more being built and others being applied for"

and

"the SP Energy Networks project—the cross-border connection—will require … 400 pylons"—

or thereabouts—

"to take Borders-generated energy"

south.

"That application … seems to me to be taking segmented parts of the impact in isolation, and not considering the cumulative impact. That cannot be fair when communities are certainly left getting absolutely nothing out of this but an

industrialised landscape."

The First Minister answered:

"Issues of cumulative impact are a legitimate consideration in the planning process … Indeed, there will have been examples of developments that have not been able to proceed because of the concerns about cumulative impact."

He hoped that

"the consideration that we are giving to the implications for the strategic spatial energy plan will assist in addressing the point that she has raised with me."—[*Official Report*, 22 January 2026; c 16-17.]

That is as it should be, together with improving statutory benefits to communities from developments, which currently arise mainly through agreement with the developers, and consideration of regional electricity pricing, albeit that I understand that that is a reserved matter.

Not all applications are agreed. CWP Energy wanted to build 60 turbines of up to 250m—820 feet—in height at Scoop Hill, a few miles south-east of Moffat. Dumfries and Galloway Council objected to the scheme on the grounds of its visual and landscape impact. The Scottish Government has concluded that it is

"not the right development in the right place"

and has refused permission for it to go ahead. We can look at that in the balance of the Government's taking forward the real issues that people have—

Finlay Carson: Will the member give way?

Christine Grahame: Yes.

Finlay Carson: I appreciate your taking part in the debate and your giving way. However, your example is an exception to the rule. We hear over and again of local authorities objecting, matters going to appeal and the Government overturning decisions on appeal. In recent years, 13 applications have been turned down by the local authority in Dumfries and Galloway but nine of those decisions have, on appeal, been overturned by the Scottish Government. Your example is an exception to the rule; it is not what normally happens.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Always speak through the chair.

Christine Grahame: I gave it merely as an example; I did not claim that it was the standard reply.

The key is to have meaningful consultation with groups throughout the south of Scotland and the Borders. They may not always get the answer that they wish for—as happens in many consultations—but, at the moment, we definitely need more serious consultation, particularly on the cumulative impact of turbines and pylons.

17:12

Brian Whittle (South Scotland) (Con): I thank my friend and colleague Finlay Carson for bringing the debate to the chamber. It is a very good debate and could easily have been taken, at any time, as a main debate in the chamber.

Last week, members may have heard my colleague Douglas Lumsden ask the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy about the decision of the energy consents unit to move from receiving public representation by email to receiving it through an online portal. In response, she talked about regulation on energy transition being reserved to the United Kingdom Government and the need for developers to engage with communities. That was all very interesting but was not even close to answering the question. It was a bit like asking somebody the time and getting the reply, "Norway".

To me, that sums up everything that has gone wrong with how we seek to maximise the benefits of Scotland's renewable energy potential. Far too often, it has become a debate in which those who have competing viewpoints talk past, not to, each other. On one side, we have those who are determined to achieve clean power by 2030 and net zero by 2045 whatever the cost. On the other, we have campaigners who believe that the agenda will do so much damage to their communities that the proposed developments are an existential threat to rural Scotland. That is not where the debate on renewable energy should have ended up, because, fundamentally, most people are somewhere in the middle.

Renewable energy is the future. Oil and gas are a valuable national resource, and we should make the most of them.

However, in a world where fossil fuels are finite, their prices are increasingly volatile and energy security is a growing concern, we must be prepared for what comes after them. Scotland is in the fortunate position of being well placed to capitalise on the shift to renewables. Our engineering talent has only grown thanks to oil and gas, and now we have the opportunity to apply that talent to offshore renewables on our coasts and, I hope, around the world.

I cannot stress enough how big an opportunity renewable energy can be for Scotland if we get it right. Today, we are not getting it right. Instead, there is a piecemeal approach to the development of renewable generation, which, in no small part, is being driven by the lack of a clear plan for our future energy needs and has left more and more communities finding themselves facing an ever-growing number of renewable developments.

Although the developments are often relatively small, the cumulative impact of a few small

turbines here, a few bigger ones there and a solar farm somewhere else ends up with residents in some part of the country feeling surrounded and overwhelmed, with their views treated as an afterthought.

The voices of communities should be heard in the process—they should feel that their opinions matter and that they have been thought about seriously before a planning decision is taken. Right now, all too often, that is not the case. Without that confidence in the process, every time that a decision is taken that does not acknowledge community concerns or the Scottish Government overrules a local refusal, as my colleague Finlay Carson said, the public's trust erodes a little more. That does not help anyone, and it means that the planning process for every renewable project on important modernisations and upgrades to our electricity grid ends up becoming far more contentious than it should be. That means economic opportunities lost, infrastructure holding back growth, jobs going overseas and energy costs remaining tied to a volatile fossil fuel market for even longer.

Scotland needs renewables in the right place. In saying that, I know that there will be those who believe that the right place is somewhere else, but, as with any issue with competing points of view, that is where compromise and pragmatism are supposed to enter the equation. It should be where a proper and effective community benefits system offers real and lasting gain to communities, but that system is not ready. It should be where a smooth and transparent planning process offers developers and the public confidence that their respective views are recognised before offering a considered decision, but instead we have a black hole: the energy consents unit. It should be where a majority of people who do not mind renewable energy, who recognise the need to strengthen our grid for energy security and economic growth and who want to see that delivered with the minimum disruption to their lives are comfortable that that is what they will get.

Scotland should be all those things, but right now it is none of them, which is of no help to anyone. It seems to me that the situation that we find ourselves in today is a consequence of declaring our destination and arrival time without taking the time to draw the map first. Yes, we need to know where we are going, but, before charging off, we should have spent more time planning our route. However, as we did not, everyone—developers, energy companies, network operators, Governments, politicians and communities—is scrambling to find the right direction. We need to get it right, because if we waste this opportunity, we will never get it back.

17:18

Douglas Lumsden (North East Scotland) (Con): I thank my good friend and colleague Finlay Carson for securing this important debate. It really is a shame that the issue is never debated in Government time—it is always down to members to seek to debate it during members' business debates or for it to be covered in Opposition debates.

This key issue fills my inbox, surgeries and doorstep conversations. Communities throughout our beautiful north-east are telling me, time and time again, that the overindustrialisation of our countryside is not welcome. The cabinet secretary might hear that if she spent any time meeting those constituents who are concerned about the issues—but, no, she is too busy meeting the companies that are intent on destroying our countryside, riding roughshod over our communities and carpet bombing our countryside with monster pylons to line the pockets of energy transmission companies that use every greenwashing tactic in the book to hide the fact that this is all about increasing their share price at the expense of our communities.

Time and time again, this Scottish National Party Government has shafted the people of rural Scotland—whether we are talking about help with storm damage, wood-burning stoves, ferry links or pylons, it seems to be tone deaf when it comes to rural communities.

The Government does not understand the anger, because it is unwilling to listen to it. We heard an example of that from Brian Whittle. The energy consents unit launched a new online portal and, at the same time, it removed the ability for residents to email in an objection. People must fill in a web form or send a letter by post instead.

Gillian Martin: The new system allows for the submission of 6,000 words, which equates to 20 pages per representation. With regard to the ability to put forward views or objections, what capacity is the member asking for that exceeds that amount? Indeed, an email address is still available to people—it is the official email address. What does he think has been taken away?

Douglas Lumsden: If there is an email address, that is fantastic, but the letter that we were sent by Ivan McKee is quite clear: objections have to be made by filling in a web form or sending them in by post.

We have to make it easy for people to lodge an objection, but it seems that everything that the ECU has done over the past month has been an attempt to make it harder for people. I think that that is an outrage to democracy.

The Government has been trying to shut up rural communities, because it does not want to listen. We know that the recent proposals for the Tealing to Kintore and Peterhead to Beauly power lines generated more than 10,000 objections—most of them by email, I would think. The Government wants to shut up those communities and railroad all that infrastructure through.

There is a reason for that. We currently have 4.5GW of operational capacity in offshore wind, but the Government's target is to increase that to 11GW by 2030, and then to a staggering 40GW by 2040. If you think that there are a lot of substations and battery storage, you ain't seen nothing yet, because things will get a lot worse in order to support that intermittent energy source.

Let us burst the cheap energy bubble right now: offshore wind is not cheap. The amount of floating offshore wind that is planned is horrendously expensive, and when we add to that the storage, network and stability costs, we can see why our bills are going through the roof.

How good it would be if the Government had an energy strategy so that we could actually see what it was trying to do. I suspect, however, that we do not have an energy strategy because the Government does not want us to see what it wants to do. It does not want to show people how much more of that infrastructure they will have to put up with, and it does not want workers in the oil and gas industry to know that it does not want to see the industry continue.

Communities in North East Scotland are fed up with being ignored. They have had enough—they are fed up with being the ones who suffer in our headlong dash for net zero without any view to the real-life consequences of energy transmission projects. Most of all, those communities are fed up with being ignored by the out-of-touch, out-of-sight, out-of-ideas SNP Government. Communities such as Kintore, Tealing, the Mearns, Peterhead and New Deer are all fed up. The Government should stop shutting them down, stop building monster pylons in our back gardens, stop being cloth-eared, and start listening to the communities throughout Scotland that are saying no to monster pylons.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I call the cabinet secretary, Gillian Martin, to respond to the debate.

17:23

The Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy (Gillian Martin): I thank Finlay Carson for lodging the motion. His motion is right to say that the renewable energy sector plays an essential part in meeting our net zero targets, but it will also be extremely important for UK energy security.

Scotland has a chance to grasp the opportunities that renewables offer for economic growth and job creation, but we must ensure that everyone benefits. Mr Carson, in his opening speech, highlighted concerns that some communities have about engagement with developers, and I was interested to hear Tim Eagle say, with regard to the proposed development that he is concerned about, that developers have not engaged with those communities. For any developers, it is in their interests to ensure that communities come along with them. I find it disheartening to hear of any situation in which the developer involved in a planning application, whether in energy or anywhere else, does not take that aspect seriously, because they are actually causing themselves an awful lot more bother in the long term.

Tim Eagle: On that point, I simply ask: where such engagement has not happened—the Moray FLOW-Park is a clear case of where engagement did not happen beforehand—should the Government step in and say to the developer, "Go back to the drawing board and don't persist with this, because you have not consulted at that point"?

Gillian Martin: The engagement that is undertaken by any developer must be evidenced in their application, and it is expected that they will have that evidence. However, the planning laws are the planning laws—I am not proposing to stand up and say that I will make any changes to planning laws on the hoof. I do not think that anyone would thank me for that.

I will go through some of the points on strategic energy planning that the First Minister referred to at FMQs, as Christine Grahame mentioned in her speech. The Scottish Government and the UK Government—I am not sure about the other devolved Governments; I would need to check that—have jointly commissioned the National Energy System Operator to produce the first strategic spatial energy plan—

Christine Grahame: Will the cabinet secretary take an intervention?

Gillian Martin: Yes, I will—in a second.

The intention is to plan the transition to clean, affordable, secure energy across the whole of Great Britain by providing greater clarity on the shape of a future reformed energy system.

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and the National Energy System Operator have recently taken the decision to rerun that process because fresh data was published last October. The hope is that that will ensure that the modelling and subsequent pathway options are

based on the most credible and current information.

I will take the intervention from Christine Grahame.

Christine Grahame: I keep on pressing the wrong button to speak instead of making an intervention. The wrong one has come on, but it is nothing to do with me.

I think that the Welsh Government is also involved in spatial planning, so it is a UK-wide issue, and I am sure that the same issues will arise in the Welsh countryside as in the Scottish countryside.

Gillian Martin: Yes—there are similar issues throughout the UK. A great deal of transmission infrastructure is planned for the north of England and, I believe, in the Norfolk area.

Very similar issues are coming up around engagement, too. On community engagement, Christine Grahame rightly made the point that a lot of the ability to mandate or compel developers to have any degree of community engagement in any kind of development lies in reserved policy and reserved legislation. I think that there should be a compulsion in that regard, and there are good practice principles around engaging with communities.

A number of members have mentioned community benefits. I want community benefits to be made mandatory, and the current UK Government has brought forward legislation in that space that will allow the mandating of community benefits. I have been calling for that for a very long time, but I would like us to go further—

Finlay Carson: Will the cabinet secretary give way?

Gillian Martin: I will—in a second.

As Tim Eagle set out, if community benefits are voluntary and not mandatory, and the guidance is not associated with mandatory compulsion to engage with communities, some developers may not do that in a way that brings communities with them and allows those communities to have their say.

I will take the intervention from Finlay Carson.

Finlay Carson: Does the cabinet secretary appreciate that it is not just about community benefits? Some communities simply do not want the developments at any cost, with any community benefits. Some communities are fighting application after application, with big companies putting in new applications when previous ones have been turned down, and people's whole lives are spent fighting those. No matter how much community benefit there is, a community should have the right to simply say no.

Gillian Martin: I cannot talk about particular applications and particular instances in that regard, but I note that there are some areas in which critical national infrastructure might be proposed.

One type of development that has been long overdue, for a good 20 or 30 years, involves the infrastructure that takes electricity around the whole UK. That is happening not just because there is onshore and offshore wind but because the infrastructure is very old and can be quite unreliable. Communities' views have to be taken into account, and, given that we want to improve communication in Scotland, we have published guidance on effective community engagement in local development planning, which we would expect developers and operators to use. However, we cannot compel them to use it.

The ECU has also published guidance on how to deliver consistent and meaningful pre-application consultation and engagement, which transmission operators are expected to follow for transmission projects that require an environmental impact assessment. Again, however, we cannot mandate them to follow that.

The passage of the UK Planning and Infrastructure Act has been helpful with regard to the community benefits, but I believe that we need to go further. At a UK level, we need to be able to see that communities' concerns are taken seriously, and the issues around that need to be mandated.

I will end on that point.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Thank you, cabinet secretary—

Douglas Lumsden: On a point of order, Deputy Presiding Officer.

During the debate, the cabinet secretary seemed to suggest that people could still raise an objection by sending an email to the ECU. The letter that members received from Ivan McKee on 15 January says:

> "Previously, representations could be submitted by email or post. Under the new system, online representations must now be submitted through the ECU Portal during defined consultation windows. Postal submissions will remain available for those who cannot access the portal."

It seems that the cabinet secretary has misled Parliament, Deputy Presiding Officer. Can you advise how the record could be updated to correct that?

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I thank Mr Lumsden for his point of order. I would advise, of course, that the chair is not responsible for the

substantive contributions of any member, including ministers. However, all members are expected to make their contributions in accordance with accurate information.

Gillian Martin: On a point of order, Deputy Presiding Officer—

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I am responding to Mr Lumsden—thank you.

Accuracy is important, and if it is felt that there is a need to correct the record, members—including Government ministers in particular—are encouraged to do that as soon as is practical.

I call the cabinet secretary for a point of order.

Gillian Martin: On a point of order, Deputy Presiding Officer. I have misspoken.

This is directly from the ECU:

"Members of the public remain free to use any tools or resources to help formulate their views but they must submit representations directly using their own verified email address."

I have misspoken, but the portal is available and there is a 6,000-character—sorry, 6,000-word—limit. I should have checked this, but I reiterate that people

"must submit representations directly using their own verified email address."

That is what I meant to say.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I thank the cabinet secretary, although that was not a point of order. Anyway, the cabinet secretary has put the matter on the record.

Meeting closed at 17:32.

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