



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Official Report

MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENT

Thursday 7 August 2014

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Scottish Parliament

Thursday 7 August 2014

[The Presiding Officer *opened the meeting at 11:40*]

General Question Time

Broadband (Highlands and Islands)

1. Jamie McGrigor (Highlands and Islands) (Con): To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to provide communities in the Highlands and Islands with access to fast and reliable broadband. (S4O-03441)

The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities (Nicola Sturgeon): With our partners, we are investing more than £126 million in the Highlands and Islands digital Scotland superfast broadband programme, which will deliver fibre-based broadband to 84 per cent of premises in the region by 2017-18. Commercial deployment alone would have reached only 21 per cent of premises. Roll-out is on target, with more than 14,000 premises now able to access fibre services in the Highland and Moray regions. The number will rise to more than 45,000 across the Highlands and Islands by the end of this year.

For the hardest-to-reach areas, community broadband Scotland is helping rural communities to develop and deliver innovative broadband solutions. Last month, I announced a three-year extension and additional funding for community broadband Scotland, which takes its total funding to £7.5 million.

Jamie McGrigor: Notwithstanding the Deputy First Minister's reply, what comfort can she offer to constituents in communities such as Whitehouse, in north Kintyre, where there are no immediate plans for an upgrade to the local BT exchange? In communities where conventional broadband is simply not available, constituents are having to pay up to £100 per month for satellite broadband. The cost is prohibitive for constituents who are on low incomes.

Nicola Sturgeon: Part of my answer was intended to indicate to Jamie McGrigor that although the main broadband programme will deliver next-generation broadband to many more households than commercial roll-out would have done, we recognise that there are, given our geography, areas in Scotland that are hard to reach.

That is why we have done two things. First, a £2.5 million innovation fund has been set up to assess technology options once the fibre

backbone has been deployed, and as new and more innovative solutions become available. Secondly, as I said, we established community broadband Scotland, which is working with communities in harder-to-reach areas to look at innovative ways of delivering broadband solutions. As I said, we have just increased the funding that is available to community broadband Scotland.

If there are particular areas about which Jamie McGrigor wants to write to me, I will be more than happy to ensure that we help him and his constituents to look at the options that are available.

National Health Service (Privatisation)

2. Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to privatise NHS services. (S4O-03442)

The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing (Alex Neil): As is set out in "Scotland's Future: Your Guide to an Independent Scotland", the Scottish Government's vision for the NHS in Scotland is for it to remain a publicly owned and publicly funded health service that provides care free at the point of delivery. Unlike the Labour Party, we do not believe in privatisation.

Neil Findlay: The cabinet secretary will be aware that the NHS in Scotland is fully devolved and gets its full share of funding whether services in England are procured publicly or privately, because it is public money that procures those services. We know that procurement in the private sector is usually more expensive. On top of that, the NHS in Scotland can be privatised only if this Parliament votes for that, which is something that we know no party or individual in this Parliament advocates—

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): Can we have a question, Mr Findlay?

Neil Findlay: Given those facts—they are facts—on what credible basis can it be argued that Scotland's NHS will be privatised in the event that Scotland rejects separation?

Alex Neil: I will deal with the facts. The fact is that the UK Government has estimated that the impact of privatisation will be to reduce the health budget in England by £1 billion a year within the next two or three years. If that happens, the knock-on impact on the Barnett consequential, which Mr Findlay clearly does not understand, will be the loss of £100 million a year to the national health service in Scotland. Unlike Mr Findlay, I do not think that we should put the future of the NHS in Scotland in Tory hands in London.

Linda Fabiani (East Kilbride) (SNP): In relation to the change fund, which is accessed by the NHS and local authorities, and homecare,

which is provided by local authorities and the third sector, the cabinet secretary will be aware from his recent visit to Hairmyres hospital that there are discharge delays because homecare packages have not been put in place timeously. Following his visit, has the cabinet secretary had further thoughts on a potential solution to the problem?

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): Ms Fabiani, I think that that question is really quite wide of the mark when we are talking about privatisation, but if the cabinet secretary wishes to answer it briefly, he can do so.

Alex Neil: I will, as always, answer briefly, Presiding Officer. I have announced this morning £5 million to deal with delayed discharges. I am glad to say that the allocation to deal with the issue in South Lanarkshire is £400,000, which will be used to maximum effect to reduce delayed discharges, particularly in Hairmyres hospital.

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Discussions)

3. Angus MacDonald (Falkirk East) (SNP): To ask the Scottish Government what discussions it has had with the newly appointed Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. (S4O-03443)

The Minister for Environment and Climate Change (Paul Wheelhouse): The Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment has written twice to Liz Truss, the new Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs secretary of state, since her appointment: first, to congratulate her on her new post, and secondly to finalise the details for notifying Scotland's voluntary coupled support schemes to the European Commission. In the first letter, he also took the opportunity to ask her to reconsider the appalling convergence allocation decision that was made by her predecessor, which will short-change Scotland's farmers to the tune of around €187 million between 2015 and 2020.

Bearing in mind that Ms Truss will be the fifth DEFRA secretary of state that the cabinet secretary has worked with during his time in office, he suggested an early meeting to discuss the need for Scottish and devolved ministers' involvement in important rural and marine issues. I hope that the new secretary of state will look more favourably on, and show greater respect for, the needs of Scotland's farmers, fishermen and other rural industries than her immediate predecessor did.

Angus MacDonald: I think that it is fair to say that the previous secretary of state, Owen Paterson, has not exactly left a legacy to be proud of: failure to repatriate the red meat levy that is owed to Scotland, failure to repatriate the

convergence uplift funding from the European Union to Scotland's farmers and crofters, and failure to represent Scotland properly at EU level during common agricultural policy negotiations. Does the minister agree that it is imperative that Scotland have a seat at the top table in Europe prior to the next round of CAP negotiations starting in 2017, and that the only way to ensure that is a yes vote on 18 September?

Paul Wheelhouse: Yes, I agree with that assessment. What I will say about the need for us to be at the top table is that we need to have direct representation in the European Union, and we need the ability to negotiate our own priorities and thereby avoid the situation that unfortunately befell Mr Paterson, who forgot to raise the red-line issue that the Scottish Government had raised with him prior to entering the European discussions.

Clearly, we need to achieve more CAP funding from Europe and we need to have the opportunity to use the full fiscal powers of an independent country to encourage farm tenancies and new entrants to farming. We also need to ensure that Scotland's agricultural levy supports Scottish produce. Finally, we need to ensure that we have overseas representation that is dedicated to promoting Scotland's food and drink sector, and we need to avoid the ludicrous situation whereby we have had a challenge in getting beef imports to Japan simply because the United Kingdom Government did not prioritise that in its negotiations with the Japanese Government.

Independence (Taxation)

4. Margaret McDougall (West Scotland) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of taxation in an independent Scotland. (S4O-03444)

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth (John Swinney): In "Scotland's Future—Your Guide to an Independent Scotland" we have set out our plans to build after independence a simpler Scottish tax system that stimulates Scotland's economy, builds social cohesion and sustains our public services. The United Kingdom tax system is complex and inefficient. By designing a simpler tax system based on a clear set of principles with fewer reliefs and exemptions, Scotland could reduce opportunities for avoidance and so generate additional revenues without increasing tax rates. As Scotland's public finances are healthier than those of the UK as a whole, there will be no requirement to raise the general rate of taxation to fund existing levels of spending after independence.

Margaret McDougall: Just before the recess, the First Minister claimed that in an independent Scotland the council tax would be replaced by a

local income tax. The Scottish Parliament information centre calculated that such a move could cost the average family with two earners £550 more a year. Increasingly, it appears that under Scottish National Party proposals in the event of a yes vote, big business will profit while ordinary workers suffer. Why is the white paper so light on taxation? Is not it the case that taxes will have to go up to achieve what is being promised with a yes vote? If not, how exactly will the Scottish Government pay for that?

John Swinney: On Mrs McDougall's last point, the answer is no: taxes will not have to go up to pay for independence. What independence will do is give us the opportunity to change our spending priorities. One of the spending priorities that we will change concerns the ludicrous amount of money that, given yesterday's vote, Mrs McDougall and her colleagues seem to be prepared to spend on weapons of mass destruction. They would spend vast amounts of money on those, rather than on tackling child poverty and the issues that I thought used to matter to the Labour Party in Scotland.

On local taxation, the Scottish Government has a commitment during this session of Parliament to work with others to discuss the future of local taxation and to introduce a system that is based on the ability to pay. That is the Government's commitment and that is what we will fulfil during this session of Parliament.

Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (SNP): The finance secretary will be aware that Opposition parties have failed to agree proposals for devolving further tax powers in the event of a no vote, as is evidenced by their vague declaration earlier this week, and by Alistair Darling's complete inability to detail them on Tuesday night. Does the cabinet secretary agree—[*Interruption.*]

The Presiding Officer: Order. Let us hear Mr Gibson.

Kenneth Gibson: —that the only guaranteed way to see this Parliament gain full taxation powers is to vote yes in next month's referendum?

The Presiding Officer: Cabinet secretary, I hope that you heard the question.

John Swinney: People are entitled to know exactly what proposition will be put forward by the Opposition parties. There was absolutely no clarity on Tuesday at the declaration from the party leaders, nor has there been on any occasion in the past, and there certainly was not any clarity from Alistair Darling in the television debate on Tuesday night.

Let us be absolutely clear: if people want to control their tax in Scotland, they have to vote for independence.

Gavin Brown (Lothian) (Con): The latest Scottish Government mailing says:

"we would increase tax allowances ... in line with the cost of living".

Will that apply to every single tax allowance? If so, what is the approximate cost?

John Swinney: Yes—clearly the commitment extends to the relevant taxes. Of course, all that would be set out in the budget of an independent Scotland, on the issues that would be taken forward by the finance minister at that time. That is what is set out in the Government's document, and that is the commitment that we make to the people of Scotland.

Armed Police

5. Annabel Goldie (West Scotland) (Con): To ask the Scottish Government for what reason the decision to arm police officers on routine duties was regarded as an operational matter and was not scrutinised by the Parliament. (S4O-03445)

The Cabinet Secretary for Justice (Kenny MacAskill): More than 98 per cent of police officers in Scotland are unarmed. We have clearly stated on a number of occasions that decisions on the deployment of police officers, including the small number of armed police officers, are a matter for the chief constable of the Police Service of Scotland.

That freedom from political interference reflects the position of members from all parts of the chamber when we debated the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Bill in Parliament. That legislation ensures that we also have the appropriate checks and balances in place, including scrutiny roles for the Scottish Police Authority, the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner and Her Majesty's inspectorate of constabulary for Scotland.

Furthermore, the Parliament's Justice Sub-Committee on Policing exists to scrutinise all aspects of policing in Scotland.

Annabel Goldie: This whole issue lays bare the Achilles heel of a single police force that has no meaningful public accountability to local areas—a threat about which my party repeatedly warned the cabinet secretary. Does he now concede that the policy regrettably confirms that vital checks and balances have been lost by the rolling out of a uniform police culture across all of Scotland, regardless of need or appropriateness?

Kenny MacAskill: No. I believe that there are now significantly more checks, balances and safeguards than existed under the former regime.

We now have, in particular, a Scottish Police Authority that has greater stature than the

previous individual constabularies' authorities. As I said, in addition to that, we have the parliamentary sub-committee that did not exist before, and three particular provisions relating to armed policing. We have the PIRC, which did not previously exist with the same power and authority. HMICS has a particular enhanced role, which is doubtless because of the single service, and we have the commitment that standing firearms authority be reviewed on a three-monthly basis.

That is a far greater amount of safeguards and checks and balances than ever existed under the old regime.

Antisocial Behaviour (Glasgow Provan)

6. Paul Martin (Glasgow Provan) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Government what steps are being taken to tackle antisocial behaviour in Glasgow Provan. (S4O-03446)

The Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs (Roseanna Cunningham): The Scottish Government is committed to tackling antisocial behaviour. Our 2009 strategy "Promoting Positive Outcomes: Working Together to Prevent Antisocial Behaviour in Scotland" marked a significant shift in policy, recognising that prevention, early intervention and diversion should be at the heart of approaches to tackling antisocial behaviour. The number of reported antisocial behaviour-related crimes in Scotland has fallen by 38 per cent over the period 2009-10 to 2012-13 and, of course, there are now more police in Scotland than there have ever been.

Both Police Scotland and Community Safety Glasgow confirm an overall reduction in antisocial behaviour in the Provan area. Diversionary activities are a key contributor to that, and local partners are working to ensure that there are appropriate activities available for young people in the area. The cashback for communities programme also provides a range of sporting, cultural and youth-work opportunities for young people in Glasgow Provan. The Scottish Government is currently consulting on a number of potential legislative changes to the Antisocial Behaviour etc (Scotland) Act 2004, which will help to improve the response to antisocial behaviour.

Paul Martin: Perhaps the reduction in the reporting of crime has come about for the very reason that members of the public have been charged for calling the 101 service. Will the minister advise me whether there are any plans to ensure that the service is a freephone service, in order to ensure that people are encouraged to report antisocial crime in the first place?

The Presiding Officer: Cabinet secretary. I am sorry. I meant minister.

Roseanna Cunningham: Thank you for the promotion, Presiding Officer.

The introduction of the 101 service was designed to ensure that the 999 service works as efficiently as it can in connection with serious reports of crime. At the moment, I am not aware of any intention to change the proposals in respect of the 101 service, but I am sure that Paul Martin will want to make representations not just here in the chamber, but directly to the justice ministers in that particular regard.

Income Poverty

7. Christina McKelvie (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (SNP): To ask the Scottish Government what action it will take to address income poverty. (S4O-03447)

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth (John Swinney): This Government takes low pay very seriously, and we are leading the way by doing all that we can to ensure that as many people as possible benefit from the living wage. Our commitment to supporting the Scottish living wage for the duration of this Parliament is a decisive long-term commitment to those who are on the lowest incomes.

We want to encourage others to follow the example that we have set. That is why we have funded a pilot for the Poverty Alliance to deliver a living wage accreditation scheme, which aims to increase the number of employers paying the living wage in all sectors in Scotland, to make decent pay the norm in our country.

In "Scotland's Future" we have set out information on our plan to set up a fair work commission, and we guarantee that the minimum wage will rise at least in line with inflation. Over the past five years, that would have improved the annual earnings of some of the lowest-paid Scots by over £600.

Christina McKelvie: I thank the cabinet secretary for that very welcome announcement. He will be aware that over the past decade more and more people have been pushed into poverty pay and reliance on in-work benefits because of United Kingdom pay policy. Does he agree that the only way to ensure that Scotland's workers are lifted out of poverty pay is a yes vote six weeks from today?

John Swinney: When we look at the erosion in the value and significance of the minimum wage because of the failure to increase it in line with the cost of living in every year since 2008, we can see the real effects—the realities—of Westminster Government in Scotland. Independence provides us with the opportunity to ensure that, in line with the commitments that we have set out, the

minimum wage rises at the very least in line with inflation. That is a commitment that the Government gives to the people of Scotland.

Rape Victims (Access to Justice)

8. Roderick Campbell (North East Fife) (SNP): To ask the Scottish Government how it is improving access to justice for rape victims. (S4O-03448)

The Cabinet Secretary for Justice (Kenny MacAskill): Rape and sexual assault are among the most distressing crimes in our society. They are totally unacceptable. The Scottish Government is working with our key partners to ensure that perpetrators are held to account and victims have access to appropriate support.

We have strengthened and continue to strengthen the law in relation to rape and sexual assault. That includes strengthening the law around sexual crime through the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009, giving victims of sexual offences automatic access to measures such as screens and video links when giving evidence, and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service's creation of the specialist national sexual crimes unit to prosecute serious sexual offences.

Roderick Campbell: The cabinet secretary will be aware of a recent BBC survey regarding regional variation in the practice of marking police reports "no crime", covering a four-year period, while Police Scotland has been in existence only since 1 April 2013. How can consistency across Scotland be achieved without compromising operational independence?

Kenny MacAskill: I am grateful for the question. I should make it clear that there are long-standing rules that the police follow in deciding whether to record a report as a "no crime". Those rules apply to all offences for which a crime has originally been recorded, and include situations in which credible information emerges after the recording of a crime that indicates that a crime has not been committed. Those rules pre-date the creation of Police Scotland and nothing has changed since the establishment of the single service. However, the single service has allowed for greater consistency, improved national standards and procedures and, indeed, the establishment of a national unit, as has been referred to.

First Minister's Question Time

12:00

Engagements

1. Johann Lamont (Glasgow Pollok) (Lab): Now that we are getting into the afternoon, I ask the First Minister what engagements he has planned for the rest of the day. (S4F-02232)

The First Minister (Alex Salmond): As this is the first First Minister's questions since the Commonwealth games, I take this opportunity to thank the people of Glasgow, every member of team Scotland, all their support staff and our wonderful Clyde-siders for all their efforts in making the games a magnificent show for the people of Scotland. [*Applause.*]

Measures to take forward the Government's programme for Scotland.

Johann Lamont: As someone who has lived and breathed the Commonwealth games for the last 10 years as both a family member and a citizen of Glasgow, I of course join the First Minister in endorsing everything that he has said about what a wonderful spectacle Glasgow and Scotland put on for the rest of the Commonwealth and the world.

In the increasingly unlikely event that Scotland votes yes and in the likely event that the First Minister is unable to agree a currency union with the rest of the United Kingdom, can the First Minister tell the people of Scotland: what is plan B?

The First Minister: Johann Lamont will find the answer on pages 110 and 111 of the white paper that we have put forward to the people of Scotland. [*Interruption.*]

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): Order.

The First Minister: I say to Johann Lamont that the reason why we are keeping the pound in a currency union and why we are so unambiguous about that is that we are appealing to the greatest authority of all—the sovereign will of the people of Scotland. I am sure that, after a yes vote in the referendum, Johann Lamont will be among those who accept that sovereign will of the people of Scotland. It is Scotland's pound. It does not belong to George Osborne. It does not belong to Ed Balls. It is Scotland's pound, and we are keeping it.

Johann Lamont: I do not know what Nicola Sturgeon made of that answer, but I dare say that I will read what she thought from an unnamed source in tomorrow's papers.

Let me try again—maybe I will have more success than Alistair Darling in this regard. The

First Minister has said on many occasions that he has a plan B, C, D, E and F if there is no currency union. It is clear, then, that he has entertained the possibility that the currency union might not happen, so he claims to have a range of other options. Will he please share with us what plan B is?

The First Minister: The options are on page 110 of the white paper. They are having the euro, which we do not support, or having a fixed or flexible exchange rate policy, which is perfectly viable but not as good as keeping sterling. The white paper also points out that we cannot be stopped from keeping the pound, because it is an internationally tradeable currency.

Now that I have had to inform Johann Lamont of page 110 of the white paper, will she not accept that the reason why the white paper puts forward the view that we should keep sterling in a formal currency union is that that is best for Scotland and best for the rest of the United Kingdom? It is our pound, and we are keeping it. *[Applause.]*

Johann Lamont: That might convince the First Minister's back benchers, but it will not convince anybody who lives in the real world. The First Minister talks about Scotland's sovereign mandate, but the Prime Minister of the rest of the United Kingdom will have a sovereign mandate to say no. It is not—*[Interruption.]*

The Presiding Officer: Order. *[Interruption.]* Let us hear Ms Lamont.

Johann Lamont: It is not for the First Minister, no matter how limitless he thinks his powers are, to determine what is in the national interest of another country. That is not within his gift to decide.

The First Minister has been told by all the relevant UK politicians and by the civil servant running the Treasury that there will not be a currency union. The First Minister has said that he has a range of other options. I hope that the currency is not like the European Union legal advice that he said he had when, in fact, he did not.

Let us take the First Minister at his word when he says that he has a plan B. Can he please just share it with us and tell us what it is?

The First Minister: I just listed the four options that are on page 110 of the white paper. I was interested in Johann Lamont citing the Prime Minister of the nation saying no. Is that not precisely what Gordon Brown, the previous Prime Minister, warned about in the *Daily Record* of 2 June? He said:

"if the only propaganda that comes from the Conservatives is 'Britain says No', it's bound to have a reaction in Scotland. It is bound to make people feel that

people are talking down to us or are not taking us seriously or are trying to bully us."

Perhaps Johann Lamont should take the advice of the previous Prime Minister as opposed to taking advice from the better together and no alliance and citing David Cameron, the Tory Prime Minister.

There are three reasons why what the Prime Minister, George Osborne and Ed Balls say now and what they say the day after a yes vote in the referendum are two entirely different things. First, there is the sovereign will of the Scottish people, and many people will respect the sovereign will of the Scottish people. Secondly, the plan is in the best interests of the people of Scotland, but it is also in the best interests of the rest of the United Kingdom. Businesses in the rest of the United Kingdom will not want to pay £600 million in transaction costs. Thirdly, Osborne, Balls and the Prime Minister are not saying that they can stop us using the pound; they are saying—now—that they want to keep for themselves the asset of the Bank of England, which was nationalised in 1946 and is an asset and a bank that holds some 26 per cent of UK debt. However, if they keep all the assets of the United Kingdom, they end up with all the liabilities of the United Kingdom, which—after the work of George Osborne and Alistair Darling—amount to £1.3 trillion of debt. *[Interruption.]*

The Presiding Officer: Order.

The First Minister: So, we are expected to believe that, in the UK general election next year, George Osborne and Ed Balls are going to campaign around England saying, "The people of Scotland want to take their share of that liability, but we want to keep the Bank of England and give the people of Scotland a present of £5 billion a year." That is why the best interests of Scotland—the sovereign will of the Scottish people—will prevail. It is our pound, and we are keeping it.

Johann Lamont: I am not surprised that the First Minister is quoting from the *Daily Record* in June, not the *Daily Record* today.

Three times today, and many times in the past two years, I have asked the First Minister about his plans for the currency. This is a serious matter for the people of Scotland. Each time, I get a response but never an answer to the questions that people are asking.

It is clear that the First Minister has a strategy to get Scotland to leave the United Kingdom, but what is becoming increasingly clear is that he does not have a plan for Scotland. Some of us remember what the First Minister used to say. Once, the pound was a "millstone" around Scotland's neck, then the euro was Scotland's choice. His former deputy Jim Sillars says that we

should have a separate Scottish currency and that the First Minister's plan is "stupidity on stilts".

The First Minister says that he has a range of options and a plan B, C, D, E and F. Do the people of Scotland not deserve to know which one it will be? If he does not tell us, is it not clear that, although he might have a plan to break up the United Kingdom, he does not have a plan for Scotland or the future of families across this country?

The First Minister: I pointed out that the options are contained on page 110 of the white paper. [Interruption.] I answered this question two questions ago. I pointed out that there is the euro option, which we do not support. I pointed out the fixed or flexible exchange rate, which is a perfectly viable option but not as good as keeping sterling in a formal currency union. I pointed out that we cannot be stopped from using our own currency—that is not even the position of the Conservative Party. We cannot be stopped from using sterling. Not only have I said all those things twice today, they are on page 110 of the white paper.

We are appealing to the people of Scotland and their sovereign will in a referendum, which is why we are unambiguous. We think that the best position for Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom is to have a formal currency union. It is our pound and we are keeping it in the interests of the Scottish people.

Prime Minister (Meetings)

2. Ruth Davidson (Glasgow) (Con): I add the heartfelt thanks of myself and my party to those of the First Minister to everyone who helped to put on such a fantastic Commonwealth games in Glasgow. I add to those who have been mentioned all the members of the police and the armed forces who helped to keep Scots and visitors safe throughout the duration of the games.

To ask the First Minister when he will next meet the Prime Minister. (S4F-02229)

The First Minister (Alex Salmond): No plans in the near future.

Ruth Davidson: The First Minister is trying to lead the Scottish public up the garden path. He is trying to pretend to people that he could deliver a currency union with the rest of the United Kingdom if there were to be independence, but he knows that he could not. The First Minister often likes to pretend that he speaks for all of Scotland, but he is now claiming to speak for all of England, all of Wales and all of Northern Ireland, too. Can we all just take a step back? Will he admit to the people of Scotland in this chamber right now that, if there were to be a yes vote, a currency union would not be in his gift to give?

The First Minister: I have just set out the reasons why what is said the day after a yes vote in the referendum is different from what is being said now. I accept that, apparently, George Osborne and the Prime Minister have drawn a line in the sand on the matter. However, as Ruth Davidson well knows, lines in the sand have a habit of being washed away.

I welcomed Ruth Davidson's revelation, quoted on 15 June in the *Sunday Post*, that she will back a currency union in the event of a yes vote

"if that is what is best for Scotland".

I can only assume that Ruth Davidson was responding—as Johann Lamont did not seem to do—that she would accept the sovereign will of the Scottish people. Mind you, that shows less enthusiasm than the deputy leader of the Conservative Party, Jackson Carlaw, who is sitting alongside her. On 21 February, he said that, after a yes vote, he would "man the barricades" for the pound after independence. I say to Ruth Davidson and Jackson Carlaw that I will be there on the barricades with the Conservative Party.

Ruth Davidson: It is a slightly kamikaze approach from the First Minister to quote newspapers today. We can all trade quotes. He is so predictable that I have in front of me the text of the interview in June to which he refers:

"I think we've got to have a look at what is best for Scotland. ... I think the monetary union we have is the best possible option for Scotland, which is why I'm fighting to keep it, as part of the United Kingdom."

That is what I actually said.

The First Minister's answer—[Interruption.]

The Presiding Officer: Order. Settle down.

Ruth Davidson: Thank you, Presiding Officer.

We have had a nonsense-on-stilts argument that a sovereign will will make currency union happen. However, if the First Minister's preferred option was a link with the dollar, a yes vote by Scotland would not mean that Barack Obama would have to submit to the sovereign will to have a currency union.

The First Minister's other argument is that it would be in the rest of the UK's interests to have a currency union, but let us look at that. The vast majority of people in England and Wales said in June that it would not be in their interests. The First Minister of Wales has said that it would not be in their interests. The permanent secretary to the Treasury has said that it would not be in the interests of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The chancellor, the shadow chancellor and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury have said that it would not be in their interests. The markets have said that it would not be in their interests.

I did not ask the First Minister to tell me anything about sovereign will or what is in the best interests of the rest of the UK; I asked him whether a currency union was in his gift. It is not, and all the wishing in the world does not make it so. If the First Minister cannot deliver—and he cannot—we are back where we started: needing not a range of options but a preferred plan B. He must have one, so what is it?

The First Minister: As the record will show, I have twice listed the currency options to Johann Lamont from page 110 of the white paper, but I can certainly do that again.

Talking of records, Ruth Davidson might come to regret reading out only that part of the quote and not what she said a couple of lines down. She was then asked what would happen if Scotland voted yes for independence and she said that she would back a currency union

“if that is what is best for Scotland”.

That is from the *Sunday Post* of 15 June. [Interruption.]

The Presiding Officer: Ms Davidson!

The First Minister: The record is there; the full quotation is there. She knows very well what she said when she was asked what would happen in the event of a yes vote.

I anticipated that that was because Ruth Davidson acknowledged the importance of the Scottish people's sovereign will. I have also said that that is not as enthusiastic as manning the barricades with her deputy leader sitting alongside her; nonetheless, it is quite important.

Ruth Davidson tries to give the impression that the argument that a currency union is best for the rest of the UK is held by me and me alone, despite the very substantial arguments. I noticed a letter in the *Financial Times* from Jim Spowart, the head of Intelligent Finance; Professor David Simpson, a highly distinguished Scottish economist; Angus Tulloch, Michelle Thomson, Professor Sir Donald MacKay, who was, for 25 years, the adviser to the Secretary of State for Scotland; Sir George Mathewson; and James Scott, the former chief executive of Scottish Financial Enterprise. The letter said:

“there is a positive outlook for the sector because ... the likelihood of a currency union is strong. It is not only in the best interests of Scotland and the rest of the UK but of our—

financial sector—

“industry.”

I said that the issue is not whether Scotland could keep the pound. I assume that Ruth Davidson accepts, as Alistair Darling did the other night, that Scotland cannot be prevented from

keeping the pound. We cannot be prevented from keeping an internationally tradable currency.

On the debt, there is now no doubt because the Treasury has accepted full liability for the debt. However, presumably the Conservative Party and the unionist coalition will in reasonableness accept that, if the Westminster Government tries to keep all the UK's assets, such as the Bank of England, it will end up lumbered with the debt. I was making the point that it seems incredible that Ed Balls and George Osborne will go round campaigning in a UK general election telling the people of England that they were offered up to £5 billion-worth of debt interest payments but that they do not want that reasonable proposition, put forward by the people of Scotland, because they want to have exclusive control of the Bank of England. That is why what they say now and what they would say after a yes vote are two entirely different things; that is why it is our pound and we are keeping it.

The Presiding Officer: We have a constituency question from David Stewart.

David Stewart (Highlands and Islands) (Lab):

The First Minister will be well aware that Serco is to close its call centre in Brora, which will make all 21 local workers redundant. That is a devastating blow to a small rural community with a population of only 1,200. Will the First Minister agree to meet me and send a beacon of hope to all the affected families in the north?

The First Minister: I will arrange for that meeting. I saw the announcement. I know that Mr Swinney and his officials have been engaged on the matter but I will meet David Stewart and his constituents.

I agree with David Stewart. Although 21 jobs may sound like a relatively small number, in a small rural community, proportionately, it is a huge number. Such matters have to be a real concern for companies when they make such announcements. We will want to be sure that David Stewart's constituents' views are taken fully into account as we discuss with Serco how we can move forward on the issue.

Cabinet (Meetings)

3. Willie Rennie (Mid Scotland and Fife) (LD):

To ask the First Minister what issues will be discussed at the next meeting of the Cabinet. (S4F-02228)

The First Minister (Alex Salmond): Issues of importance to the people of Scotland.

Willie Rennie: Does the First Minister accept that he is not being fair to people in Scotland? He says he has an alternative currency plan but he cannot bring himself to describe its consequences. After a lifetime of campaigning for independence,

when the big moment of truth came on Tuesday, he could not explain his currency plan in front of 1 million people. Surely he should have another go at an answer now. People in Scotland will not get another go in September, so please can the First Minister describe the consequences for Scotland of his alternative plan?

The First Minister: I have laid out on page 110 of the white paper that we could have the euro, which we do not support although previously the Liberal Democrats and I supported it. We could have a fixed and flexible exchange rate, which is perfectly viable but not as good as the option that is being proposed as plan A in the white paper. We cannot be prevented from using sterling. It is our currency and we cannot be prevented from keeping it.

I have also pointed out that the reason that the white paper puts it in those terms is that we are looking for the sovereign will of the Scottish people to back the plan to keep sterling in that currency union. I know that, as a Liberal Democrat, Willie Rennie will be first, if not to man the barricades, to accept that the sovereign will of the Scottish people should prevail. That is why it is in the white paper. That is why we are backing it. That is why it is our pound and we are keeping it.

Willie Rennie: The First Minister knows the page numbers off by heart, but he cannot answer the question. He often refers to the fiscal commission, but I suspect that most people do not have a copy of the fiscal commission handy at home. The names of its members are not on the leaflets that are sent to every house. People do not know what they recommend. They do not knock on doors; the First Minister does. The ideas are supposed to be his. What are they? Why can he not bring himself to give us a description of the consequences of his alternative? Why can he not give an answer?

The First Minister: I am glad that Willie Rennie mentioned the fiscal commission, which is made up of two Nobel laureates and two highly distinguished economists, but I was not talking about the fiscal commission. I was talking about the white paper and what is presented to the people of Scotland on page 110.

If I remember rightly, Willie Rennie was complaining about the amount that we were spending on promoting the white paper and on giving the information to the people of Scotland. How can he complain about it and then say that that information is not available?

On the consequences of other currency options, when Professor David Bell gave evidence to a committee in the Parliament, he pointed out:

"It is UK debt, not Scottish debt, and the UK has agreed that it will pay back that debt. That is the first thing to

say."—[*Official Report, Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee*, 5 March 2014; c 4129.]

It might be extremely attractive for Scotland to be in a position in which the UK seized the financial assets but was not prepared to accept that that would mean that it had the liabilities as well. It would be extremely attractive for Scotland to be debt-free. We would be in balance of payments and budget surplus. However, that is not a reasonable position to take, which is why in the white paper we articulate that we are offering to pay our fair share and finance our fair share of the massive liabilities that have been built up by the likes of George Osborne. Of course, that is properly dependent upon us having a fair share of the assets.

That is an entirely reasonable and responsible proposition. It is the proposition that is in the white paper. That is why, as part of a formal currency union, it is our pound and we intend to keep it.

English National Health Service (Privatisation)

4. Aileen McLeod (South Scotland) (SNP): To ask the First Minister what impact privatisation of the NHS in England will have on the budget available to the Scottish Government. (S4F-02243)

The First Minister (Alex Salmond): This is extremely serious. As members in the chamber will know, our budget for public services in Scotland is currently allocated as a relative proportion of the spending in England as determined by the Barnett formula. The impact of an austerity and privatisation agenda being forced on the NHS in England will consequently see our budget eroded. For every £10 lost to the NHS in England, Scotland will lose approximately £1 in funding for public services. This is a serious question and a serious issue.

The idea that we can be immune from the privatisation agenda that is being pursued on the national health service by the Government in England is not reasonable considering the way in which Scotland is financed. The way to defend the national health service—our public national health service—is for us to have control of Scotland's finances, so that we are not vulnerable to the privatisation and fragmentation that is being carried out in England.

Aileen McLeod: Does the First Minister therefore agree that the only way that we can protect Scotland's NHS from Westminster's ongoing austerity cuts and privatisation agenda and ensure that it remains true to its founding principle of providing healthcare that is free at the point of need and remains firmly in public hands is by voting yes on 18 September?

The First Minister: Yes, I do. One of Scotland's prominent breast surgeons, Dr Philippa Whitford—someone who, as far as I know, has never previously been involved in politics—has spoken out so articulately on the issue precisely because she can see the danger to the NHS in Scotland, which is the consequence of privatisation south of the border.

We are fortunate that we have policy control of health, which has allowed us to protect our health service from the deeply damaging so-called reforms that Westminster Governments have made to the NHS in England over not just the past two or three years, but the past 15 years. Although devolution allows us to set a different policy, without independence our budget will be beholden to the whims of a privatisation agenda. That is why, to protect Scotland's national public health service, we need independence and control of Scotland's finances.

Jackson Carlaw (West Scotland) (Con): Given that, by its own admission, the Scottish Government has received £1.3 billion in consequential from Westminster specifically for health during this parliamentary session alone, can the First Minister confirm when it was during the summer recess that the Scottish Government's referendum advice became so desperate that ministers felt that their only recourse was to indulge in malicious, unsubstantiated, shameful and shabby scaremongering about the future of Scotland's wholly devolved NHS as a public service, to which every party in this Parliament is profoundly committed?

The First Minister: We seem to have touched the raw nerve of the no campaign. We will take no lectures on scaremongering from a no campaign that is based entirely on scaremongering among the Scottish people.

The position is clear, and Jackson Carlaw of all people—given that he previously believed in fiscal autonomy for Scotland—understands it full well. He knows that every penny piece of consequential for the health service has been passed on to the health service in Scotland. He also knows that the entire purpose of the privatisation agenda in England is to reduce public expenditure on the health service. Therefore, it follows that, if expenditure is reduced in England and we are still part of the Barnett formula, there will be less money available for public services in Scotland.

That is why the threat to Scotland's public health service is real unless we control Scotland's finances in the way that he once believed in, that we believe in and which the people of Scotland will back on 18 September.

First ScotRail (Fines)

5. Mark Griffin (Central Scotland) (Lab): To ask the First Minister what the Scottish Government's response is to First ScotRail being fined more than £2 million since 2011 for running too few coaches in a practice known as "short-forming". (S4F-02240)

The First Minister (Alex Salmond): That is a serious question, but we should remember that, this year, 99.7 per cent of trains ran with the planned capacity. That means that 0.3 per cent of trains did not meet capacity. In anyone's terms, that is a strong performance. It is also a performance that is significantly better than when the previous Administration was in charge. In 2007, for example, the penalties for not meeting capacity that Mark Griffin mentioned totalled more than £830,000. The figure now stands at £574,000, which is a drop of 31 per cent on Labour's record.

I and, I hope, everyone in the chamber would like 100 per cent of trains, rather than 99.7 per cent of them, to run with the planned capacity but, in fairness, Mark Griffin should reflect on the fact that the record this year, about which he is rightly concerned, is significantly better than it was when his party was in office.

Mark Griffin: Does the First Minister agree that a publicly owned rail operator that put the interests of customers and services before profit would be best placed to address issues such as short-forming? Will he support the proposals that were originally outlined by Scottish Labour's devolution commission, which have now been adopted by the UK Labour Party, to allow publicly owned companies to bid for the ScotRail franchise? Does he agree that that is a good example of a progressive Scotland working within the UK leading to more progressive policies across Britain?

The First Minister: It is a pity that Labour did not think of changing the law when it was in government in Scotland. The member will have noted that I have spoken out publicly to say that the public provider of the east coast service should be able to bid publicly for that line.

It should be noted that the Scottish rail network has a 90 per cent satisfaction rating among passengers, in comparison with a figure of 82 per cent for the rest of the UK. There is still a lot more to do not only on the issue that Mark Griffin has examined but on investing in the rail network. Our investment includes £430 million in new rolling stock, which has funded 38 new class 380 trains.

I know and understand Mark Griffin's concerns, but I think that he will agree that there is a substantial and reasonable level of satisfaction

with the progress that is being made, although more progress still needs to be made.

“The Success of Small States”

6. Bob Doris (Glasgow) (SNP): To ask the First Minister what the Scottish Government’s position is on the Credit Suisse research institute report, “The Success of Small States”. (S4F-02244)

The First Minister (Alex Salmond): The Scottish Government welcomes the report by the Credit Suisse research institute, which highlights the very strong performance of small independent countries across a range of social and economic measures. The United Nations human development index is important because it does not look at economic performance alone; it looks across a range of social and economic criteria to evaluate and say how states should be judged.

The report adds to a great chorus of voices that agree that Scotland can be a successful independent nation. For example, Credit Suisse estimates in the report that Scotland would be ranked ahead of the United Kingdom on the UN human development index.

Bob Doris: Is the First Minister aware that two key findings in the report are that economies of scale for larger countries do not necessarily benefit their populations and that funding public services in a small country costs less than it does in a large country? Does he agree that the report directly contradicts the scaremongering of the likes of Alistair Darling, who could not even bring himself to admit that Scotland could be a prosperous and successful independent nation?

The First Minister: The report adds a great deal of strength to the view that there is a substantial body of evidence that small countries in Europe and beyond are extremely successful economically. I think that we are reaching a consensus on such matters, are we not? We are reaching a consensus that Scotland can be a successful independent country. Surely nobody in the chamber disagrees with that. If anybody disagrees, they should speak up now.

Scotland can be a successful independent country. I take the silence as unanimity in the chamber. Let the message go out to the people of Scotland that, now that we have established that we can be, the question that is to be answered on 18 September is whether we should be. I think that the answer will be yes.

The Presiding Officer: That ends First Minister’s question time. Members who are leaving the chamber should do so quickly and quietly; I will allow a few moments to ensure that that happens.

Real Heroes (East Kilbride)

The Deputy Presiding Officer (John Scott):

The next item of business is a members’ business debate on motion S4M-10265, in the name of Linda Fabiani, entitled “East Kilbride has Real Heroes”. The debate will be concluded without any question being put. I again invite members who are leaving to do so quickly and quietly.

Motion debated,

That the Parliament welcomes the publication of the shortlist for STV’s Scotland’s Real Heroes Award, which is sponsored by the Royal Bank of Scotland; congratulates both Miss Jenny Cook of East Kilbride and the East Kilbride Hangout on being recognised; notes that Jenny has raised in excess of £29,000 for Yorkhill Children’s Hospital and the Catherine McEwan Foundation, and considers that Maw’s Mafia (East Kilbride Hangout) offers a wonderful environment for young people with special needs, giving them a range of activities and experiences; understands that the STV series will pay tribute to people from across Scotland whose hard work, ambition and generosity have helped local communities, and thanks them all.

12:34

Linda Fabiani (East Kilbride) (SNP): It gives me great pleasure to hold the debate on the motion entitled “East Kilbride has Real Heroes”, which East Kilbride certainly does. We are having the debate because of STV’s Scotland’s real heroes awards, which are sponsored by the Royal Bank of Scotland.

I would like to say a few words about STV. It should be noted that STV, in my part of the country certainly—I say “in my part of the country” because somebody who represents the Borders would be able to say that there are issues there, although I know that they are being addressed as far as possible—as well as in Glasgow and all the cities, and generally across the country, has become like community television for us. It cares about communities and does a lot of work in them to recognise those who make them so strong.

I found that that was particularly the case in East Kilbride when a wonderful lass called Kayleigh Mcleod from STV worked there. She is still very much missed by the community groups and charities with which she worked and for which she raised awareness of their work.

That is what “Finding Scotland’s Real Heroes” is about. The series celebrates people’s efforts and dedication, with the Scottish public voting for the winners. For reference, it will be on from 15 August, with an episode every Friday thereafter. The series pays tribute to people who work hard in their communities and have ambition and generosity—it is about improving things for other people.

East Kilbride has loads of that—in the 20 years or so in which I have worked there, I have found a very strong sense of that. People from all walks of life and all age groups work very hard to give others a helping hand and improve things in their area.

The series recognises all those things. The awards shortlist includes nominees for entrepreneur of the year, sporting volunteer of the year, hero neighbour of the year, community champion of the year, community project of the year and environmental project of the year. There is the courage award, which I want to talk about in particular, the carer of the year award, the young real hero of the year award and the hero animal of the year award—our own Mr Q should perhaps have been put in for that for putting up with us all and with all the noise in the chamber. As I said, viewers vote for the nominees who they think most deserve to win the real heroes awards.

I congratulate the past winners. There have been some fantastic winners.

Before I get on to East Kilbride, I will speak about the current nominees, who come from all walks of life. They should all be celebrated, and I hope that members will mention them. There are nominees from Glasgow, Inverclyde, Skye, West Lothian, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, Caithness, the Highlands—I hope that I am not missing anybody—and East Ayrshire. There are people on the shortlist from Edinburgh, too, and from Clydebank, Portobello, Argyll and Bute, Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. However, as far as I am concerned, the ones who should win live in East Kilbride, because East Kilbride has real heroes. I will say a few words about the nominees from East Kilbride.

The first has a fantastic name: maw's mafia—that is a fabulous name. Four ladies—Elma Ross, Lynn Morrison, Lesley McGinlay and Connie Smillie—have been nominated for the carer award. They are certainly known locally as maw's mafia, and we are aw quite scared of them. Those ladies do various kinds of voluntary work, but they have fought very hard for their children's rights.

There is a big issue here. Young people with special needs go to school together, form friendships and social relationships, and perhaps go to the youth club together. When they leave school, they carry on going to the youth club, but when they hit 21 and are too old to go to it—they are not allowed to go to it any more—their social network falls apart. All of a sudden, they are isolated. Maw's mafia got together with others and started up a weekly club. It started off in Clarendon parish church and now meets in Calderglen high school every Monday night. It offers social services, trips and activities for 18 to 25-year-olds. Alison Gilmour, whose niece,

Stephanie Kelly, was left wheelchair-bound after an accident, nominated East Kilbride hangout for the award. That is a fantastic service that is growing all the time. I pay tribute to the Bruce hotel in East Kilbride, which has just offered regular discos free of charge in the Skye lounge.

The other person in East Kilbride who has been nominated—for the courage award—is Miss Jenny Cook, whom I am sure many members will have heard of. Aged 11, she is a fantastic young lady. Jenny has ulcerative colitis and, aged just six, she had her diseased large bowel removed, because medication was no longer working. However, even with that, Jenny started fundraising and persuaded her family, teachers and school friends to help out. She was only five when she organised her first fundraiser, which raised £5,000—she is quite a gal. A couple of years later, she met Derek McEwan, who set up the Catherine McEwan foundation in memory of his mum, who died of Crohn's disease. They have been fundraising ever since. Jenny is absolutely astounding. At age 11, she has raised more than £30,000 for the Yorkhill Children's Charity and she has not stopped yet, because her next target is £50,000 by 2016.

Jenny is becoming very well known, because she is a special young girl. She is regularly on Radio Clyde with Robin Galloway, doing the Jenny Cook report, which is on how her charity work is going, and she has become terribly good friends with our First Minister. In fact, she was one of his guests at the recent Commonwealth games opening ceremony. However, I think that the First Minister's nose will be a bit out of joint because, since Jenny was interviewed by Nicholas McDonald for the STV programme, I am afraid that he is uppermost in Jenny's mind. Jenny also does great buddying work with other young people at Yorkhill, which is important, and she runs a huge fundraiser every year called "Tea Jenny", which takes place in September.

I could talk about the nominees for ever, but I am running out of time. It is particularly great that maw's mafia from the hangout and Jenny Cook will meet up soon to give each other support going into the competition, because that is what the community of East Kilbride does and that is what it is like. I close by saying that, yes, East Kilbride has real heroes.

12:42

Margaret McCulloch (Central Scotland)
(Lab): I welcome the opportunity to speak on the motion and I congratulate Linda Fabiani on securing the debate.

This week, the Parliament has confronted issues that divide opinion, from data security and armed police to Gaza and the big decision in

September. In a week in which we have tackled the contentious and the controversial, it is a particular privilege to be able to address a topic that unites us all.

Scotland is a charitable and giving nation. We do not just give money to good causes; we give our time, energy, ideas and creativity. There are real heroes in every community and the debate is our chance to recognise the examples that just some of them have set. I echo Linda Fabiani's remarks and put on record my congratulations to all those who have been shortlisted. I thank the Royal Bank of Scotland for making the awards possible, and STV for telling the stories behind the awards.

I hope that those stories will inspire others to act or will at least foster a greater appreciation of the many acts of selflessness and kindness that happen every day in every community in every part of Scotland. I want to mention my part of Scotland, which is East Kilbride, where I have lived for nearly 40 years and where I brought up my family. I can honestly say that East Kilbride is very much a village in itself.

For people with learning disabilities, the transition to adulthood can be difficult. The transition is difficult not just for the individual person but for the family, who might have to find a new routine and might even have to face new obstacles. As Linda Fabiani said, East Kilbride hangout club addressed a gap in the provision of services in the town, and that gap could not have been plugged without volunteers. I am therefore glad that the club has been nominated for the carer of the year award. Wee Jenny Cook, who has done fundraising work for Crohn's, colitis and Yorkhill and who has even volunteered as a hospital buddy for sick children, is an exemplary candidate for the real heroes courage award.

There are others. The Yooz reuse and recycling social enterprise has previously come to the Parliament to tell us about its work. It recycles building materials and furniture at a profit, which it reinvests in the community. In addition to diverting waste from landfill, it places people—including those with disabilities—in employment and in training programmes.

Margaret Gibb, of the west of Scotland playscheme, has given 30 years of her life to supporting playgroups and playschemes. Members of the driving force group give their time to transport hospital patients in central Scotland. In Coatbridge, the home of so many of our star athletes from the Commonwealth games, two of the town's sport and fitness enthusiasts have been shortlisted for the sporting volunteer of the year award.

Those nominees—those heroes—are the people who make Scotland the great nation that it is. I look forward to seeing them on STV, and I wish them every success in the awards.

12:45

Stuart McMillan (West Scotland) (SNP): East Kilbride does indeed have real heroes, and I commend them all. However, so too does every other part of Scotland. Listening to Linda Fabiani talking about Jenny Cook and the maw's mafia was tremendously inspirational, for which I thank her. I also thank her for bringing this important debate to the chamber. It is important that we recognise the excellent work that takes place every single day throughout our country, and I hope that the debate will add to that recognition.

I put on record my congratulations to all the nominees from all over Scotland. The list reminds us that Scotland is full of outstanding entrepreneurs, talented athletes, conscious citizens and compassionate caretakers. The "Finding Scotland's Real Heroes" programme highlights those who have had a positive impact on the community, and invites the Scottish people to get to know what those heroes have done while encouraging them to support efforts in their own communities and become involved.

I will highlight one of those great nominees: a lady called Vicki McCarthy from Inverclyde. Ms McCarthy is the founder and executive director of REACH for autism. She is a hard-working and proud mother who has a child with autism. She is one of the nominees for the community entrepreneur of the year award.

In the past few years, Vicki has been a great support to many parents. She has worked as a nurse both domestically and abroad, but not long ago she felt that she ought to change direction and focus her efforts on studying autism after her daughter was diagnosed in 2005. She is without doubt passionate about helping people with autism to reach their full potential and to become contributing and valued members of their local community. She would also like to help and support families to better understand and appreciate loved ones with autism.

REACH for autism was founded when Vicki became frustrated with the lack of support and services for people living with autism. She and a group of parents and allies decided to take matters into their own hands and work to provide a long-term sustainable solution, not by replacing or duplicating what is already done but by working to plug any gaps in service delivery. REACH provides a wide range of support and services for people with autism and their loved ones. The organisation states that its primary goal is to

create “connection and community” for all people with autism.

REACH has developed its own method, which is known as the REACH way. It is a simple approach that focuses on relationships, education, action, community and health—or REACH, which is very clever. The method is delivered by a team that includes parents of autistic children, occupational therapists, social workers, families, community supporters and other members of the community. The programme is an excellent way to create community integration and involvement.

Some of the specific programmes that REACH organises include group workshops, educational courses, seminars and stress management programmes. It also produces a newsletter that covers current events and issues in the community relating to autism.

REACH has grown rapidly. Earlier this year, it opened a base in Ratho Street in Greenock, and only this week Michael Matheson MSP, the Scottish Government’s Minister for Public Health, paid it a visit. I know that he was greatly impressed by what he saw, particularly as he had met Vicki and another couple of representatives a few years ago when they had bags of enthusiasm and support but precious little resource.

Vicki is a truly remarkable woman. When I see her next, she will probably chin me for saying this, but she is certainly not scared of asking people for help. Once she actually has someone’s number and email address, they know that she will actually use them, and she does. I do not mind that, however, because I know that Vicki and her team are doing such positive work and getting results.

I wish to express my gratitude to the organisers of the “Finding Scotland’s Real Heroes” programme for their efforts to recognise a few of the many people who are working to make Scotland an incredible place. They have high standards, and it is an honour for anyone to be nominated. I congratulate all who have been nominated for the Scotland’s heroes awards, and I again thank Linda Fabiani for bringing the debate to the Parliament.

12:50

Margaret Mitchell (Central Scotland) (Con): I thank Linda Fabiani for bringing the debate to the chamber.

Given the current culture of an increasing obsession with celebrity and fame, which is often achieved through reality television or an individual’s relentless self-promotion, it is gratifying and entirely appropriate that those who selflessly give up their own time and work within their local communities to make a real difference to people’s

lives have been given the opportunity to be recognised, not only by STV’s real heroes awards but in the chamber.

Nominations for the awards were sought from anyone in the local community who wished to highlight the valuable work of their friends, neighbours or colleagues. I understand that, as Linda Fabiani confirmed earlier, filming of the nominees with the awards presenter Carol Smillie is progressing and that the first episode is due to be screened on Friday 15 August.

This is the second year that STV and the Royal Bank of Scotland have embarked on the search for Scotland’s real heroes. Previous winners from last year include Alf Collington, who set up the Falkirk Foodbank, and Mairi O’Keefe, chief executive officer of Scotland’s only respite centre that specialises in outings for people with multiple sclerosis.

It is very encouraging that two of this year’s 30 nominees are from East Kilbride and almost a quarter are from Central Scotland region.

Linda Fabiani has already spoken about East Kilbride’s Elma Ross, Lynn Morrison, Lesley McGinlay and Connie Smillie, also known as maw’s mafia, and the superb work in which those women have been involved in improving the lives of young adults with special needs. East Kilbride hangout, which those mums run on a Monday night at Calderglen high school, has provided the only local support service that offers activities for 18 to 25-year-olds with disabilities and learning difficulties.

Despite facing huge challenges in her young life, 11-year-old Jenny Cook has been inspiring by raising more than £30,000 for two compelling causes, namely Yorkhill Children’s Charity and the Catherine McEwan foundation. The latter aims to improve the lives of sufferers of Crohn’s disease and colitis, and the money raised goes towards further research into, and training about, inflammatory bowel diseases.

Yorkhill Children’s Charity is based at Yorkhill hospital and helps to improve the experience of being in hospital for countless children who are sadly required to be patients. In the past, the charity has provided millions of pounds towards child-specific medical equipment and support for the families and parents of children for whom visiting hospital has been the predominant experience of their life.

Other nominees from Central Scotland region include Pat Bannan, a 66-year-old from my native Coatbridge, who has been nominated for sporting volunteer of the year. Pat is being recognised for encouraging members of his community to get fit.

Andrew Campbell, also from Coatbridge, has been nominated for the same award for providing low-cost and, sometimes, free tae kwon do lessons for children in the area.

As Margaret McCulloch mentioned, Margaret Gibb from Bellshill has been recognised for the 30 years that she has given to playgroups and play schemes in the area.

Bellshill-based Yooz reuse and recycling has been nominated for environmental project of the year. It procures products from unwanted buildings and sells them on at a reduced rate. Since 2009, the project has saved a staggering 4,000-plus tonnes of supposed waste materials from going to landfill.

I consider myself privileged to represent a region in which so many constituents are giving up their time to set up initiatives and engage creatively in varied and worthwhile projects. STV and RBS, the sponsors, are to be congratulated on introducing the real heroes awards, which offer well-deserved recognition for selfless and public-spirited individuals and groups—and recognise our local animal heroes.

12:55

The Minister for Children and Young People (Aileen Campbell): I thank Linda Fabiani for bringing to our attention the outstanding work of Jenny Cook and the fabulously named maw's mafia: Lynn Morrison, Lesley McGinlay, Elma Ross and Connie Smillie. I congratulate Jenny on her nomination for a Scotland's real heroes courage award and I congratulate maw's mafia on their nomination in the carer of the year category.

As Linda Fabiani and other members did, I commend RBS and STV for running the Scotland's real heroes awards and for the series of programmes that will recognise Scottish people who put others before themselves. As Margaret McCulloch, Stuart McMillan and Margaret Mitchell said, there are heroes in every community and it is great to see them getting the recognition they deserve. How can we possibly choose a winner when we look at the shortlist, which is full of amazing people and inspirational stories? Good luck to everyone on the list, and congratulations to them all.

I congratulate Jenny Cook on being nominated and then shortlisted for the courage award. As we heard, Jenny is a remarkable young girl who, despite on-going health issues, has dedicated her energy and time to raising significant funds to help others. She has pledged to raise £50,000 and has already raised more than £31,000—a phenomenal figure for someone so young to raise. Her fundraising directly benefits the lives of other

children who suffer from inflammatory bowel diseases.

Young people do that kind of thing all the time—they want to put back into the system something that will help people who have similar stories. The funds that Jenny Cook has raised have been used to provide days out for young people and their families and to support research. That vital support is making a difference to the lives of sufferers now and in the future. It is evident from the debate that we have all been impressed by the dedication of Jenny, who at just 11 years old is making such an impact on the lives of others. Her selfless work is truly inspirational to us all. Jenny also has a fan in the First Minister, who was delighted to meet her at Holyrood earlier this year; she was his guest at the Commonwealth games opening ceremony.

Jenny's sterling work has not gone unnoticed. She is a young ambassador for Yorkhill Children's Charity, and she is part of the Yorkhill buddy scheme, helping to support other young people who are frequent patients at the hospital. She is a radio star too, regularly appearing on Radio Clyde's Robin Galloway's Sunday show. "Wee Jenny" now has a high public profile. That has raised the profile of her fundraising activities, which in turn benefits the children who attend Yorkhill children's hospital and their families. I do not know how an 11-year-old manages to find the time to do all those things. She is truly a remarkable lady, and someone whom we should very much celebrate. It is good that we have an opportunity to do that in the Parliament.

What Jenny Cook is doing is, of course, complemented by the work of the Government and my colleague Michael Matheson to try to help sufferers of inflammatory bowel diseases such as Crohn's disease and colitis. We should recognise that work, but of course we are here to celebrate the work that Jenny is doing.

Let me turn to maw's mafia. I congratulate Elma Ross, Lynn Morrison, Lesley McGinlay, Connie Smillie and everyone else who is involved on the commitment, tireless effort and dedication that they have shown in establishing and running maw's mafia. Their hard work is benefiting many young people with disabilities and learning difficulties in East Kilbride, including their own children.

The impact of the project cannot be underestimated. The very fact that the family of Stephanie Kelly, an attendee at the project, has nominated maw's mafia for a real heroes award is testament to how much the project means to the individuals that attend and their families. It should be recognised as an outstanding model of local communities using their assets to deliver a service that meets the community's needs. We should learn from it to address barriers of isolation and

loneliness that other young disabled people may be experiencing in other areas of Scotland. With the legislative changes that we have made as part of our reform of public services—the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014; the recently passed Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, which I took through Parliament; and the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013—we should not lose sight of those young people who need support and who, like every other young person across Scotland, want to have their pals about them and have connections with others.

The need to address isolation and loneliness was highlighted in the 2010 evaluation of the same as you? campaign, which told us that only one in three people interviewed was able to name at least one close friend. That is why the Scottish Government, in partnership with Equal Futures and other relevant organisations, held a friendship event in January this year to help people with learning disabilities to be supported to have more friends. It is our intention to plan for more such events this year. However, we cannot take our foot off the gas on getting transitions right and ensuring that simple things such as solid relationships are valued.

Our current strategies to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities and autism and those of their families and carers—keys to life and the Scottish strategy for autism—are underpinned by human rights and principles that are based upon dignity, choice and realising potential. Young people with learning disabilities should have opportunities in their communities that enable them to socialise and be part of the community. We know that having an active social life and feeling included helps to improve health and wellbeing for people with learning disabilities and autism. That is why I am delighted to commend maw's mafia for giving young people with disabilities and learning difficulties an environment in which they can socialise and enjoy a range of activities and experiences. That work is an embodiment of what we are aiming to achieve.

As well as supporting young people with disabilities and learning difficulties, the Scottish Government is investing in support for carers like Elma, Lynn, Lesley and Connie at maw's mafia to continue to care for their families, friends and neighbours and also to lead a life alongside their caring responsibilities. That is why this Government has committed significant resources of nearly £114 million to supporting carers between 2007 and 2015. We have also invested nearly £14 million in the voluntary sector short breaks fund, which allows carers, young carers and cared-for persons to take a break from their caring responsibilities and gives them an opportunity to relax without feeling stress or guilt.

Over £8 million of that investment has gone into supporting children and young people with disabilities and their carers.

I could not agree more with the speakers today who praised Jenny Cook and maw's mafia so highly. With their help and with the help of others like them, the Scottish Government will continue to work towards its aspiration to make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up. However, that can only ever be achieved if we work in partnership and truly value the work of our army of volunteers across every community in our country.

I wish Jenny Cook, maw's mafia, Pat Bannan, Vicki McCarthy, everyone else who has been mentioned and all those who are on the shortlist all the very best at the Scotland's real heroes awards ceremony in September. I wish Jenny continued success in her fundraising activities and maw's mafia continued success in running the much-valued service in East Kilbride.

Scotland has a hugely talented army of people doing amazing things for people and creating better lives and life chances for so many, and we should value them. It is a great privilege to be able to conclude this debate for the Government. Again, I thank Linda Fabiani for bringing these two wonderful groups to our attention and for allowing us to celebrate them in an appropriate and highly respectful way.

13:03

Meeting suspended.

14:30

On resuming—

Commonwealth Games (Legacy)

The Deputy Presiding Officer (Elaine Smith): Good afternoon. The first item of business this afternoon is a debate on motion S4M-10736, in the name of Shona Robison, on the legacy of the 20th Commonwealth games in Scotland—humanity, equality and destiny.

The Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport (Shona Robison): With the spectacular success of the Commonwealth games and team Scotland's record medal haul fresh in our minds, I am delighted to address members on the legacy of the games. I will reflect on the opportunities that have been brought about by them; touch on the core Commonwealth values of humanity, equality and destiny; and look forward, reflecting on the need to maintain momentum and drive and to build on the strong foundations that are now in place for the benefit of Scotland.

From the outset, the legacy was central to the planning of the games. With more than 50 national legacy programmes in place, people across Scotland and the Commonwealth are benefiting now. We have reaped the rewards of record levels of investment in Commonwealth games sports with team Scotland's highest ever medal haul. It delivered the biggest ever Scottish team, with 310 athletes, and secured a record-breaking 53 medals and four new Commonwealth games records. Such world-class performances, which were supported through a system that was delivered in Scotland, are an inspiration to us all. Scottish Disability Sport and other governing bodies of sport now stand ready for an upsurge in interest and to harness enthusiasm through the unleash your sporty side campaign.

The working group for sport identified that Scotland has world-class sporting facilities to complement the world-class sporting system, and they are being used by performance athletes and communities alike. They include many facilities that were used in the games, such as the Sir Chris Hoy velodrome, the national indoor sports arena and the Commonwealth pool, but also excellent facilities such as the Aberdeen Sports Village, the regional gymnastics facility in Dundee and many others.

In fact, since 2007, more than £100 million has been spent on new and upgraded facilities; £25 million has been committed to support the development of the new national performance centre for sport; a further £20 million has been made available through sportscotland's national and regional sports facilities fund; more than 100

projects have been supported by the £10 million legacy active places fund; and, just prior to the games, I announced a further £50 million for sportscotland's active schools network, which provides pathways between school, club and elite levels. That is not to mention the 133 community sports hubs in development or operational across all 32 local authorities.

I turn to the economic legacy. Games procurement is estimated to have supported as many as 30,000 jobs. The £500 million that has been spent on the athletes village over the past six years has, on average, supported around 1,000 jobs and contributed £52 million to Scotland's economy each year. Through our national legacy programmes, 5,000 events-related training and job opportunities are available across Scotland for those who can most benefit.

We worked hard to ensure that contracts were accessible. Some 69 per cent went to Scottish businesses and almost £1 million was awarded to supported businesses. Next, we will help companies to take that new confidence and capacity to international markets. With a major international business conference and more than 90 business events held at Scotland house, we engaged more than 1,000 national and international business leaders and helped to strengthen international connections.

The conversion of the athletes village to housing will leave behind a well-designed residential area where before there was a 90-acre brownfield site. Major transport projects that were completed ahead of the games are helping to open up the area to further development opportunities.

The legacy is also evident in the events sector, where an additional 37 national and international events worth £14 million have been secured. That bodes well for the sustained use of games infrastructure.

Alongside the sporting action, the cultural programme involved more than 1,500 events and thousands of performers at venues across Scotland. In Glasgow, more than three quarters of a million people visited the games live zones, which cemented our reputation as a truly creative nation.

As well as providing an unprecedented opportunity for tourism, the games attracted Commonwealth heads of Government and state, as well as numerous other international dignitaries. Those individuals have taken away a lasting impression of why Scotland is such an attractive place to do business, invest, work, live, study and visit. I have no doubt that the success of the games will continue to be felt throughout Scotland for many years to come.

I will reflect briefly on the core values of the Commonwealth games, which are humanity, equality and destiny. From the outset, Glasgow 2014 was a truly inclusive games, with para-sport fully integrated and the highest number of medal events ever. Visitors and athletes alike saw at first hand what it is like to be in a country whose Government is committed to an equal and fair society for everyone and has a progressive approach to human rights. The rainbow flag has been flown in solidarity with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people across the Commonwealth, and Pride house welcomed more than 6,000 visitors through its doors. The Scottish Government launched its one Scotland campaign in the middle of the games, promoting the message that Scotland believes in equality. It is vital that the games are a positive force for inclusion not just in the weeks past but for the decades to come.

Our para-athletes performed fabulously at the games, winning seven para-sport medals, which is why I am delighted to announce £6 million as part of a £9 million investment for the development of a new national para-sports centre. Based in Largs, sportscotland's national centre will nurture and hone future sporting talent in Scotland. The centre will complement our network of world-class facilities and will allow for a future Erraid Davies, who amazed us at Tollcross, or Neil Fachie or Aileen McGlynn, who rode to the podium in the velodrome. The centre will be the first of its kind in the United Kingdom. That is testament to the fact that sport can truly be a powerful catalyst for change.

Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (SNP): I am delighted by that most welcome announcement, as I am sure everybody who is connected with the Inverclyde national sports centre will be. Can the cabinet secretary advise the Parliament on how that will be taken forward to maintain the momentum and drive that she mentioned?

Shona Robison: I should first pay tribute to Kenny Gibson, who has been a real advocate for the Inverclyde centre. He has helped to bring people together to consider the centre's future. Sportscotland will work closely with North Ayrshire Council to plan the development of the new centre. As well as the new national para-sports centre, North Ayrshire is keen for its school estate to be involved. That would be a really good balance of use and would give the Inverclyde centre a new lease of life. I am certainly happy to keep the member informed as discussions begin at a more detailed level.

Looking ahead, I am sure that members will agree that we are well on our way to securing a lasting legacy for Scotland. However, today does

not mark the end of legacy—legacy did not end with the closing ceremony. We have to look ahead to 2018, when the 21st Commonwealth games will take place on the Gold Coast. The eyes of the world will be upon us again, and we will want to show that we have delivered a lasting legacy. I will continue to provide drive and leadership to maximise the benefits of hosting the games, but everyone has a role to play.

Legacy is the responsibility of many parts of Government. Before the games, I wrote to my colleagues to highlight the important role that they will play in sustaining that legacy in the years ahead. Post-games structures are being established to deliver on our long-term commitments, and we are embedding legacy aspirations into existing policy structures. Achievements to date have been made possible by the partnership working of a host of organisations and committed individuals, all working with a common purpose.

National partners have been struck by the benefits of a collective approach to legacy—we achieve more by working together. We will capture the learning from that and use it for legacy and other major events, starting with the year of food and drink next year. Local authorities are an essential link in the chain in spreading the benefits of the games across Scotland. The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers legacy leads group will meet again soon, and I welcome its continued support.

There are clear opportunities to strengthen the legacy in a number of areas. On the sporting legacy, sportscotland will continue to drive forward its world-class sporting system, which has already delivered for us so spectacularly. Let us not forget that sportscotland also delivers for schools, communities and sports clubs on a daily basis. An immediate benefit exists in the form of sports equipment from the games. Items such as rugby balls and table tennis tables will be distributed to clubs, schools and local authorities across Scotland.

A long-term populationwide shift in sports participation and activity levels is not an automatic outcome from hosting a major sporting event. The physical activity implementation plan that was launched earlier this year takes a long-term approach to tackling inactivity, building on the internationally renowned Toronto charter. I look forward to working with partners to ensure that we deliver on our commitment to increase sports participation and physical activity levels, regardless of age or background, as a lasting legacy of the games.

We are in a good place, but we must keep going. I am pleased to confirm today that we are continuing with £2 million of legacy funding next

year to maintain momentum and continue to capitalise on the inspiration that the games have provided.

There can be no doubt that the games have been a strong catalyst for regeneration in the east end of Glasgow and in South Lanarkshire. However, long-term success will be achieved only if communities are at the heart of regeneration and if the support that was put in place to reduce unemployment before the games is continued and strengthened afterwards.

In recognising that, the Scottish Government and its partners Glasgow City Council, South Lanarkshire Council and Clyde Gateway have reaffirmed a collective commitment to the regeneration of the area to ensure an enduring legacy. There are also plans in place to work with Scottish businesses to grow Scotland's role in the global event sector at home and overseas.

Events are one of Scotland's biggest assets, and we must capitalise on the venues and infrastructure and the business, volunteering and skills bases that have been developed. A new national events strategy will be published after the events of 2014 to capitalise on what we have learned.

Our 15,000 Clyde-siders have undoubtedly been central to the success of the games. We are working closely with Volunteer Scotland and others on a new initiative that will harness the enthusiasm of those who were successful and those who were not, matching their interests and skills to other exciting volunteering opportunities beyond the games.

Finally, young people deserve a special mention. They have been at the heart of legacy and are the key to sustaining legacy beyond the games. I, along with 19,000 others, had the pleasure of visiting the youth legacy ambassadors at Glasgow Green, at their flourishing Scotland live site, where seed balls and wishes will form part of a wider regeneration effort to bring stalled spaces back to life.

I am pleased that Young Scot will, in a matter of weeks, offer young people the platform to co-design future legacy activity beyond this year. It will build on the insights of the 150 youth legacy ambassadors and those of the other young people who are involved in a wide range of legacy programmes that focus on youth, and the year of young people in Scotland in 2018 will provide a pathway to build on the legacy from the games.

The opening ceremony marked a first by raising £5 million for UNICEF. As a charitable partner of the games, UNICEF will use those funds to realise its ambition of reaching every child in Scotland over the next four years, as well as helping children across the Commonwealth.

Part of the legacy in Scotland focuses on children's rights. I was delighted to receive a preview, along with pupils from Blackfriars primary school in Glasgow, of the child rights launchpad, which will be provided free to schools, community and sports groups and youth clubs throughout Scotland and will, I believe, make a huge difference to children's lives.

The legacy that has been created by the Scottish Government, Glasgow City Council and partners is sparking interest further afield. The Commonwealth Games Federation has already hailed it as a "blueprint" for the future, which was very complimentary. We are now engaged in learning lessons and transferring knowledge, most directly with our friends in Queensland for the Gold Coast 2018 games, and with the CGF with regard to its plans to build legacy more explicitly into the bid requirements for future games, which we would certainly welcome.

In the years to come, the 2014 Commonwealth games will be remembered not only as the biggest cultural and sporting event that Scotland has ever seen, but for their legacy, which has grown and evolved to provide other countries with a benchmark to show what can be achieved when we put people, and a nation's wellbeing, at the heart of a major international event.

I note the amendments lodged by Patricia Ferguson and Liz Smith, which I am happy to accept in the spirit of co-operation.

I move,

That the Parliament recognises the many ways in which the Scottish Government and partners have capitalised on the opportunities brought about by hosting the XX Commonwealth Games in Glasgow; acknowledges the excellent partnership working of a whole host of organisations, local, national, public, private and third sector, as well as the many committed individuals who continue to work together to secure a legacy fit for Scotland; welcomes the determination of the Scottish Government and partners to continue to build on these strong foundations, driving forward a legacy based on the core values of the Commonwealth Games, humanity, equality and destiny; looks ahead to 2018, when the next Commonwealth Games will be hosted on the Gold Coast, and reflects on the further commitment and drive required to secure a lasting legacy that Scotland can be rightly proud of.

14:44

Patricia Ferguson (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (Lab): I am delighted with the announcement that the cabinet secretary made about the facility in Largs. As she knows, I have had a keen interest in disability sport for a long time. It is entirely fitting that we take that step, building on what happened at the Commonwealth games and recognising that, although para-sport has always been integrated into the games, it has

never been integrated to quite the extent that it was on this occasion.

It seemed to me that, from ScotRail renaming stations such as Springburn the witty and games-appropriate “Sprintburn” to the millions of people who bought tickets for the games or watched them on television, almost everyone was in on the biggest party that Glasgow has ever thrown. It was not only Glaswegians who were involved. There were athletes from around the world, games venues in Edinburgh, Lanarkshire and Angus and volunteers from throughout the United Kingdom and beyond. Perhaps I will say a little more about the volunteers in my closing remarks.

A quick glance at social media in the evenings helped to tell me which of my relatives and friends were in town for the games and which cousins were coming back to Glasgow from around the UK to watch the games. However, the prize for distance travelled in my family goes to a cousin who came from Tasmania to watch his two sports—judo and the triathlon—and could not believe the transformation in the city of his birth. Given that he is the same age as me, I must admit that he put me rather to shame. We can but aspire to do better.

It all began with the baton relay. The relay was always going to be important in my constituency because, alone of all the sectors of the city, the north was the only one that did not really have a games venue. I regret that, but the baton relay was the main opportunity for communities in the north to join in the fun and excitement—and join in they certainly did. People lined the route wherever the baton went, and special praise must go to Depot Arts in Possilpark, which really went to town with a programme of activities second to none. The 8,000 people who turned up at Springburn park to witness the final event of the day’s baton relay also embraced the event with real enthusiasm, and we enjoyed music and sunshine for several hours before the baton arrived.

The opening ceremony was just the kind of event that was needed, with enough—just enough—pomp to mark beginning of the games and plenty of self-mocking and joyous Glasgow humour, which allowed everyone to join in. The sight of dancing tea cakes will stick with me for ever, although I will probably not eat many in the future. I do not have a habit of eating them at the moment, but that is neither here nor there.

Much about that night is memorable. All the performers deserve praise, but the joy on Nicola Benedetti’s face as she played and the marvellous voice of Pumeza singing one of my favourite songs, together with the wonderful dancers from Scottish Ballet, will be remembered for a long time. The volunteers who danced their hearts out for more than two hours were simply great.

I was at the opening ceremony but I was rather far from the field of play, so I missed the fact that John Barrowman had kissed another male performer but, when I heard about it, it just gave me an excuse to watch the ceremony again. Well done to John Barrowman and to whoever came up with the idea of making such an important point without a lecture being delivered or a word uttered. That is truly a part of the legacy of the games.

Scottish Labour’s amendment also makes reference to the UNICEF initiative that raised £5 million from the audience and reminded us during the evening how difficult life can be for some children at home and further afield. I hope that it might become a feature of multisport events, or other sports events, in the future.

Then, of course, the games began. Every last one of our athletes—indeed every one of the athletes who participated—was remarkable, and many of them overcame great adversity in life to participate. The spectators cheered on the home athletes with great gusto and enthusiasm, but they cheered on other countries too, which was a joy to see.

I have a feeling that, if the bid for Glasgow to host the 2018 youth Olympics had been made after the Commonwealth games and not before, the outcome might have been influenced in Glasgow’s favour.

Our medal haul began on day 1 with the amazing Aileen McGlynn and her pilot Louise Haston adding silver to Aileen’s already impressive Olympic and Commonwealth games medal tally, and the Renicks sisters in judo leading a medal rush in their sport. The fantastic achievement of Hannah Miley in the pool began a games that culminated, as we know, in Scotland being placed fourth in the medal table with new records against the names of many of our athletes and our largest ever medal haul at a Commonwealth games.

We witnessed some amazing performances during the games. Time does not allow me to mention them, but they were truly remarkable. Nor does time allow me to mention every Scots athlete who won a medal—actually that is something to be proud of. I simply say, “Well done” to them all and to their coaches and families, who support them throughout the year.

The games began in glorious sunshine, but all too soon the weather deteriorated and we were faced with a downpour of almost monsoon proportions. Still the spectators came, with 120,000 of us lining the streets of Glasgow in the worst of weather to cheer on the people who were brave enough to compete in such conditions.

All too soon, the games were over, and now we must consider their legacy. What will that legacy

be? How do we harness the enthusiasm for sport in our country that is a result of the games? Before the decision to bid was taken, a serious assessment was made of whether it would be possible to secure a legacy from such an event. The result of the study, which took the best part of a year to do, was that there could be a legacy, but it would have to be planned and programmed in from the beginning if it was to be realised. It is important that we remember that that was always part of the plan. Indeed, I think that it was a key factor in the success of Glasgow's bid.

We have witnessed regeneration of infrastructure in the east end of Glasgow. The athletes village will provide new affordable homes as well as houses for rent. The tourism sector in the city has enjoyed a boom and is likely to be able to capitalise on return visits for some time to come. I hope that that will result in more jobs, with decent pay and good working conditions.

Unemployment in the east end of Glasgow remains stubbornly high, as it does in several other parts of the city, including my constituency. There are legacy programmes to try to counter that. I single out the apprenticeship programme that has been operating in Glasgow for some time, at a cost of more than £50 million. I have met a number of young people who have successfully applied to join the scheme. It is no exaggeration to say that it has made a difference to their lives and life opportunities.

A recent survey carried out for Glasgow City Council revealed that some two thirds of the people in the sample cohort in the east end who were out of work reported that they had a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity. How do we improve the health record of Glasgow and Scotland? Can that, too, be a legacy of the games? In my view, encouraging young people to walk or cycle to school, and giving more encouragement to people who walk or cycle regularly, would be a start. We have to start somewhere, so we could start there. Walking and cycling are not activities that require a great deal of infrastructure. People just need encouragement and the get-go.

What of sport itself? That is perhaps the most interesting and challenging aspect of legacy. In an article in *The Herald* this week, Doug Gillon, who I reckon has covered at least 11 Commonwealth games, made the point that there should be a process of debriefing, learning what worked and being honest about what did not work. He said that we should look at how and what we fund in sport, too. He suggested that such analysis should be done independently, to ensure its rigour, rather than by the institute of sport or sportscotland, praiseworthy though they are.

Doug Gillon has a point. We know that Scotland performed particularly well in some sports and perhaps not as well as it might have done in others. We need to look at that and be honest with ourselves and the athletes about why that happened. As we look forward to the games on the Gold Coast, as the minister has urged us to do, we must also consider that the home nations, I think with the exception of Northern Ireland, did better in the games than they have ever done. We have to wonder whether we will be able to achieve such results on the Gold Coast—I hope that we will—and we have to start preparing seriously for those games.

Before much more time passes, we need to harness the enthusiasm that was so evident during the games and to encourage the entire country to become more active, more often. Some kind of event this week or next week to mark the end of the games and encourage momentum might have been a good approach. The athletes parade in Glasgow on 15 August might be a fitting moment to show that the momentum will continue and the impetus is still there. The games might be over, but their legacy must live on.

I move amendment S4M-10736.2, to leave out from “welcomes” to end and insert:

“congratulates all the community groups and organisations that worked so hard to ensure that the baton relay was a source of celebration in their communities and a fitting precursor to the Games themselves; considers that the initiative of UNICEF and the Games partners, which resulted in £5 million being raised to support the children of the Commonwealth, was an ingenious project that will provide benefits for years to come; welcomes the determination of the Scottish Government and partners to continue to build on these strong foundations, driving forward a legacy with immediate effect based on the core values of the Commonwealth Games, humanity, equality and destiny, but which must also emphasise the need to encourage more Scots to be more active more often while continuing to encourage, support and develop the country's athletes; looks ahead to 2018 when the next Commonwealth Games will be hosted by the Gold Coast; reflects on the further commitment and drive required to secure a lasting legacy that Scotland can be rightly proud of, and considers that the volunteers recruited to work at the Games should be a vital part of that legacy.”

14:55

Liz Smith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): I begin by reiterating congratulations to all those who helped to make the Commonwealth games such a successful and, indeed, memorable event. Whether it was our outstanding athletes, the numerous officials and administrators, the volunteers, the UK and Scottish Governments, Glasgow City Council, the police or the armed forces, they all deserve glowing praise for the excellent work that they did.

Over the 11 days we witnessed competition of the very highest order, so we were perhaps not surprised to hear Mike Hooper, chief executive of the Commonwealth Games Federation, tell us that they were

“the stand-out Games in the history of the movement.”

That is a very considerable compliment. In that vein, we have absolutely no problem in supporting the motion and, indeed, the Labour amendment. We also welcome the minister's announcement regarding Largs.

I do not think that anybody could doubt the extent of the challenge that we face when it comes to the delivery of a meaningful and lasting legacy. I say that because I do not think that it is easy to define the parameters of the debate. The word “legacy” itself is not terribly easy to define, particularly in its qualitative sense, and therefore I do not think that it is particularly easy to measure. That has perhaps been why people have moved away from the issue for some games in the past.

A legacy must, by necessity, include some aspects of quantitative measure—for example, increasing the number of people who participate in sport and taking on board the Scottish Government's initiative to try to ensure that more women take up sport; and we can obviously also measure reductions in obesity totals and how much additional money is raised. However, the legacy has to be much more than that, and I think that that is the tougher call. I am not sure that it is the politicians' job to say what that should be, but what I think is our job and what we have to do in line with other stakeholders such as sportscotland, Glasgow 2014, local authorities and so on is to deliver the right circumstances that will help communities to develop the more qualitative aspects of the legacy. Stewart Harris said it is about “building capacity” and he is right.

Thus, it is not enough to provide top-class facilities for sport. At a recent meeting of the cross-party group on sport we heard that 50 per cent of senior schools in Scotland now have excellent sports facilities—we have all seen many of them—but that at times quite a lot of them are still underused. What is important—the cabinet secretary referred to this in the context of Largs—is to change public perception, culture and attitudes to ensure that there is sporting participation and development.

The games revealed some inspirational examples that can facilitate a shift in perspective. There was the extraordinary achievement of England's Steve Way, who said on television that in 2007 he weighed 16 and a half stone and smoked 20 cigarettes a day. However, at Glasgow 2014 he finished tenth in the marathon, breaking the British over-40s record, which had stood since

1979. Way's transformation shows the ability of sport to change lives if sufficient determination is there.

In addition, who can forget the delightful Erraid Davies, the 13-year-old Shetland swimmer who won bronze in the 100m para-breaststroke, which showed how much can be done with even modest means? I am sure that our colleague Tavish Scott, who is here, will say a little bit more about Erraid Davies. However, she trains in Brae in a pool that is about a third of the length of the 50m pool in which she won her medal. She has proved just what can be done without necessarily having world-class facilities in which to train. When she was interviewed, she spoke of her inspiration at primary school. If I may, I will focus on the Conservative amendment, which makes a statement about the crucial role that primary schools will have if we are to deliver the legacy in full.

As I understand it, there has been significant progress in recent months on meeting the physical education target in schools, and sportscotland has worked hard with Education Scotland to support the PE continuous professional development programme, which will ensure that much more is done to tackle the shortfall in the number of primary teachers who are fully qualified in PE and in sport. At a recent session of the Health and Sport Committee, sportscotland made it very clear that the issue is much more about the quality of delivery rather than the amount.

I suggest to the cabinet secretary that we need to do a little more to ensure that local authorities know exactly what is going on in their schools, because a recent freedom of information response suggested that a worrying number of them do not know what the situation is in their schools, how many teachers are fully trained and so on. It would be helpful if the cabinet secretary could provide some information on when she expects to be able to update that data and how we can move forward on that.

The games also proved Scotland's depth of sporting interest and ability—something that was always very dear to the heart of the late Margo MacDonald as she chaired the cross-party group on sport. We may be a football-mad nation from time to time, but the games have proved what else we can do, in the so-called minority sports. We won three golds and a bronze in lawn bowls and a remarkable 13 medals in judo, and I noticed yesterday that squash and netball both shot up in the rankings of spectator sports. There is an issue there about the broadcasting of sport. I give credit to the BBC, which has managed to develop a lot of minority sports to a level that we have not seen before. The lessons about broadcasting are something that we can develop in the future.

I am running out of time. The legacy has to run deep. It involves some difficult concepts, but they are the most important ones if we are to provide what will be a meaningful and lasting legacy.

I move amendment S4M-10736.1, to insert at end:

“, and believes that, in line with recent advice from Scotland’s sporting bodies, the key policies that will deliver a permanent and meaningful legacy are those that focus on the improvement in the qualitative sporting experience for primary school-age children when they first develop their interest in, and enthusiasm for, sporting activity”.

15:01

Sandra White (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP): I am looking forward to an animated debate. I start by giving a big, warm thank you to everyone who took part in the games, from the athletes to the volunteers, the transport workers, the council workers and of course the people of Glasgow and of Scotland, who truly made them the people’s games. I heard throughout the games that they were indeed the people’s games. I believe that they have given that legacy to the rest of the world.

The games are still resonating throughout Glasgow, and I think that we are a bit shell-shocked that they are not still going on. Some people are happy that they can now go on the bus or get their car out, but the vast majority of people are saying, “What’s happened? It was so busy.” We are now looking forward to anything else that comes to Glasgow.

As a member of the executive committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in the Scottish Parliament, I am proud that the organisers of the games took the initiative to raise money through UNICEF for the benefit of the children of the Commonwealth. I am glad that Patricia Ferguson mentions that in her motion. It was a truly unique idea, and it showed the spirit and humanity of Glasgow and the people of Scotland.

I echo Lord Smith of Kelvin, chair of Glasgow 2014, who said:

“Glasgow’s connections with the Commonwealth are centuries old and they run deep. They tell a story of industry and enterprise on a global scale. These connections have been strengthened. And whilst the Games may leave Glasgow, Glasgow will never forget the Commonwealth Games. It has made its mark on our city. It has won a place in our hearts.

This is a city that dares to dream. A city defined by its people. A city which looks out for each other. A welcoming city”.

That is very true, and I will come back to some of the personal experiences that I had during the games. We will continue our connections with the Commonwealth after 18 September.

I am also proud of the minister’s announcement—I thank her for it—about the para-sports centre to be based in Largs, which will be the first in the UK. That is great news and it fits in with the legacy of humanity, equality and destiny.

I congratulate the City of Glasgow College, which had six graduates in team Scotland, including Kimberley Renicks, who won the first gold medal of the games, and Liam Davie, whose team claimed the first medal for team gymnastics. That surely bodes well for our colleges and what they can achieve, and also for the future of our gymnasts and athletes in our colleges. We must remember that.

I want to share some of my fantastic personal experiences of the games, starting with the transport workers. Obviously, we were still working during the games and, living in the Merchant City, I could not get the car out, so I would walk or jump on the bus.

I must admit that everyone was so happy. We had to stand going to the city centre and coming out from the city centre, but it was an absolutely happy atmosphere. The drivers on the First bus really took the games to their hearts. They would get off the bus to take people off with prams or wheelchairs. I was saying earlier to the cabinet secretary that one particular driver—I am sure that he will know who he is if he reads this—was so enthusiastic. When people got on from Kelvingrove with their passes saying that they were going to the wrestling or the judo—and they were over 50 years of age, put it that way—the driver would remark, “Surely to goodness you’re not going to go wrestling or anything,” and everybody took it in absolutely fantastic spirit. That was the way it was throughout the games.

I also thank the Glasgow City Council workers who kept the city absolutely spotlessly clean. They worked 24 hours a day; they worked constantly. It was great to see them come out in the closing ceremony as Deacon Blue was singing “Dignity”. I thought that was a really nice touch, because they had worked so hard. Living in the Merchant City and travelling throughout Glasgow Kelvin—there were lots of things going on in my constituency—I know that the city was spotlessly clean; the workers kept the whole thing going.

There are so many people to mention, including the volunteers and the police. I saw a couple of policemen joining in and doing a dance in Argyle Street—we had a 1920s and 1940s event one afternoon—and they were having a great time. I am sure that everyone else probably saw it—it was on YouTube. I thought the police did a great job.

The everyday people in Glasgow were absolutely fantastic. They helped people; they

gave them directions—even if they did not want to go. In Glasgow we are pretty famous for telling people, “If you want to go there, we’ll take you. You maybe don’t want to go for another hour, but we’ll take you just now anyway.” They gave people a history of Glasgow. I was with a couple of Australians up at the necropolis and people were giving them a history of the necropolis.

The great thing was that every single one of the visitors said that they had never visited Glasgow or other parts of Scotland—perhaps they had visited the Highlands but not a city centre—and they were definitely going to come back. There was so much going on and people were so enthused that they wanted to come back.

We have to thank the staff who ran the hotels, the pubs, the clubs and the restaurants. They ran those places absolutely fantastically. I hope that they got the salaries that they deserved, because they worked very hard, round the clock, with a smile on their face. All in all, the legacy that has been left to the rest of the Scotland and the world is that Glasgow is a great place and people are always welcome to come and visit.

15:07

Drew Smith (Glasgow) (Lab): It is a pleasure to take part in this debate and to follow the enthusiasm of Sandra White. I echo the thanks to the minister. I could not have thought of a better highlight of the last weekend than the one that she was able to enjoy on all our behalf by presenting the medals after the men’s cycling road race at Glasgow Green. I thank the city council, all the partners, the organising committee and all the various officials and organisations and the media. I do not know whether our parliamentary link, Kenny Stewart, is in the gallery, but I think we will all miss his e-mail invitations to pose with a giant inflatable shoe or high-five Clyde or put our hard hats on for a venue tour.

I thank the volunteers, including Patricia Ferguson and John Mason. I think it says a lot about Patricia Ferguson that she volunteered her time in the back rooms at Glasgow after being part of the successful bid and presenting medals herself in Melbourne. Our amendment refers to the thousands of ordinary people who gave up their time to do the same. I agree that we need to think about how we follow up their superb contribution. Those I met came from all over Scotland and all over the UK and many of them had been volunteers at Manchester and London. It is clear that there is a momentum there that will keep going.

There are too many people to mention, although Sandra White gave it a good shot. I would mention the bus drivers who took us to and from the

venues; the bus marshals who lost their voices trying to get us on the buses; the train and taxi drivers; the police; the men and women who brought their Scottie dogs to the opening ceremony; the woman in the George Square ticket office who helped me on the morning of the opening ceremony to get my tickets; and the city parks department, which made sure that the city looked its best and that every public space in the centre of Glasgow was decked with flowers.

Of course, the event was about athletes, and our biggest thanks must go to them and their supporting teams for putting on such a show. We should thank those who came from all over the Commonwealth, the home nations and, indeed, team Scotland, who did us proud with, as the cabinet secretary has pointed out, a record haul of medals.

The success of the games was measured against our expectations and the preparations that were made for them. I do not think that I ever doubted that Glasgow would deliver, and was therefore not surprised when it did. I am certainly not overawed by the fact that it had the best games ever; Glaswegians knew that our city would shine, whether in the sun or in the rain, and the people of Glasgow, gallus and generous as they are, made these games. Regardless of which party we belong to, those of us who have the privilege of representing the city have rightly been proud to do so this summer.

The relationship between politics and sport is a curious one, and it is right that we sought to protect the competitors from being asked for their views on the referendum at every turn. However, the games happened because political leaders got behind sporting visionaries to bring them to Glasgow, and the kind of lasting legacy that is often talked about in relation to major sporting events but which is rarely delivered will come only if we politicians back up the volunteers in our sports clubs and support our least active citizens in making their own way to healthier lives. The back-up—and, frankly, the money—comes only because of political decisions.

In short, the games might not have been about politics, but their legacy is all about politics. My constituents in the east end and across Glasgow who feared that the games would be something that happened to other people are now looking to not only the Scottish Government but all of us to deliver on the promises that were made. Those of us who supported the games and had thought through the planning knew about the cynics out there who were unconvinced that this would be money well spent or that it would be worth the disruption, and it was the vision of the legacy as much as the success of the sporting event itself that ensured such a high level of public support

when the games opened. We really have a responsibility now not to let those people down. I welcome every announcement that the cabinet secretary has made and every programme that she is supporting, but the political determination to change lives and raise our eyes must be sustained beyond the athletes parade. I have no doubt that the cabinet secretary herself shares that view.

Physical activity is Scotland's biggest public health challenge, and a huge part of the solution is to encourage participation in sport from the youngest age. Children must have the opportunity to try—and to like or dislike—as many sports as possible until they find something that might be part of their lives for ever. In that respect, physical literacy is key; skills such as running, jumping, swimming, throwing and catching are not just for games and sports but for living a fuller life. Having confidence in those basic skills will enable us to return to such activities at any time in our lives, regardless of our fitness levels or our commitment to competitive sport.

In the days following the games, I was pleased to see Scottish Swimming promoting its every child can swim campaign, which is something that I feel very strongly about. Swimming is too often missed when we talk about physical literacy; in fact, as some of the team Scotland medallists have been making clear in an online video that was released this week, it is a life skill. For a start, we live on an island, but the fact is that too many children in this country are still being seriously injured or drowned as a result of accidents in open waterways. In that respect, a fitting legacy of the games would be a long-term commitment to teaching all of our children to swim not only for enjoyment, fitness and sport but because it could get them out of danger. Like riding a bike, the ability to swim, once learned, never leaves us, and it is the perfect activity to turn to as we get older and our ability to exercise vigorously decreases.

As Patricia Ferguson has made clear, walking is also being promoted as an activity for those who are least active and who wish to improve their mobility, fitness or health—indeed, it has been described as the best prescription for a healthier life—and I hope and expect that the cabinet secretary will continue to encourage such activity in a way that promotes lifelong activity. Giving children these skills at the youngest age allows them to return to such activities later on, but we also need to provide entry-level activities that can be gateways for people who take up such activity only later in life.

I do not really have time to go into the whole issue of facilities. All I will say is that they are fantastic. Notwithstanding what Liz Smith has said about swimming pools—and I absolutely agree with her that amazing things can be achieved

without facilities—there is no doubt that the increased availability of 50m pools across the country has helped the success of Scottish swimming at Tollcross.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I am afraid that you need to close now, Mr Smith.

Drew Smith: Finally, I have a suggestion that I hope that the cabinet secretary will consider. Perhaps we can return to this debate annually in the remaining years of the Parliament so that we can all continue to play a part in the legacy of these games.

15:14

John Mason (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP): I want to add my voice to those who have said that they consider the games to have been a huge success. I do not know whether it is because of my personal make-up, but I did not share Drew Smith's confidence that everything would work. I wondered whether we could fill the venues for some of the minor sports, what the weather would be like, whether an external event would disrupt the games and whether it was wise to have the thanksgiving service in the cathedral before the games had happened. However, I am glad to say that all those concerns were unfounded and that things clearly went extremely well.

I could list a range of things that could have gone better—I will mention one or two of them as I go—but I think that we have to keep any such comments in perspective. The games were enormously successful, and hiccups or blips are always going to happen along the way. However, we have to remember that they are just that: pretty minor issues in the scheme of things.

On legacy, one of the biggest issues has to be that we have the ability, the experience and, now, the confidence to run such large events in Glasgow and the rest of Scotland. That is linked to the image of Glasgow and Scotland in the wider world. That process has been going on for quite some time. We had the city of culture, we had the garden festival and we had the champions league final. We want that process to continue, now that we have shown what we can do.

Would we do things differently in the future? Of course. We always want to be learning and doing things better. For example, was the £90 million for security a bit over the top? We had a lot of police, a lot of military and a lot of private security personnel. Were there too many?

I guess that that is a question to which there can never be a right answer. A lot of high-profile individuals, some of them potentially unpopular, attended the games and something could have gone wrong. I am extremely grateful that nothing

did. For example, I was working at the gymnastics in the Hydro when members of the royal family came in and watched the sport. That seemed to be handled in an appropriate, low-key and relaxed way, although I am sure that more was going on behind the scenes.

Patricia Ferguson and I volunteered at the games. I do not know whether we were representatives of the Parliament, but I like to think that we were. I enjoyed the experience. My duties included things such as checking people's tickets, guiding folk around the Hydro and using a megaphone and a large green foam hand in Finnieston Street to direct visitors to the events. That gave me a certain feeling of power, which let me understand the power that you have, Presiding Officer.

Bob Doris (Glasgow) (SNP): I thank the member for high-fiving me with that large green foam hand at Finnieston, while I was on my way to the women's weightlifting finals. I think that Mr Mason did an excellent job.

John Mason: I thank Mr Doris for that compliment.

There were trickier tasks along the way. For example, with the one-way system at the SECC, people had to leave over the Bell's bridge, and not everybody was happy about that. By contrast, one of the most pleasant experiences that I had was last Saturday, when I was given the job of telling some of the boxing fans that they were getting their tickets upgraded. It was absolutely magic to see people's faces when I told them that they were getting a better ticket.

On the Clyde-siders, it will be interesting to see in due course an analysis of those who took part. Were they a cross-section of the whole of society? I was in spectator services at the SECC, which is only one part of the team, although it was quite a large part. A lot of the other members were young, which is, perhaps, not surprising, especially given the physical nature of a lot of the work. I think that Patricia Ferguson and I found our ages a challenge when it came to some of the work. *[Laughter.]* Oops.

Patricia Ferguson: I assure the member that, although on occasion I might have been a little tired after a nine-hour shift, I did not feel that the work was too difficult or too hard. Then again, I did not have the responsibility of the foam finger.

John Mason: I thank the member for that intervention.

The advantage of having a lot of young people was the level of enthusiasm and energy that was evident. It was good to see some of the younger folk who were team leaders, and some of the temporary paid staff, who were also quite young,

obviously gaining valuable experience and decision-making and leadership skills. However, the volunteers in the team that I was in seemed to be very white and very female. I wonder, too, whether the volunteers were mainly folk from better-off backgrounds. One Clyde-sider from down south told me that taking part had cost him £2,000. Obviously, however, for local folk, there was virtually no cost in doing so.

It was good to have volunteers from different parts of the UK and beyond, although some of them suffered from a lack of local knowledge. One evening, the train stopped running to Exhibition Centre station and we were asked to explain to people how they could get home. That could have been challenging for folk who did not know where the city centre is or where people could catch a number 2 bus. Maybe we need to think about the local knowledge of volunteers in the future.

I have mentioned the legacy of our ability to run such events and the volunteering legacy, which I hope can continue. The third and final legacy that I want to touch on—I am sure that other members will talk about other issues—is the physical local legacy. My constituents and I have something very real and physical from the games. We have the games village becoming 700 new homes, including social rented properties, owned properties and a care home. We have the Emirates arena and velodrome for a range of major and minor sports. We have the improved Tollcross pool for both serious and leisure swimmers. We have the Scottish hockey centre, although I hope that that sport can be spread out among many more young people in schools. We also have great new infrastructure in roads and the Clyde gateway, which have helped regeneration by bringing business and jobs into the area.

On behalf of my Glasgow Shettleston constituency, I say that we are very grateful for all the investment that there has been. Sure, both residents and businesses have been disrupted, in some cases severely, but the long-term benefit is hard to argue against. There is more to be done, but we have been given a superb lift up in order to get on with the job.

15:21

John Pentland (Motherwell and Wishaw) (Lab): Like others, I think that it is important to recognise that the organisational and sporting successes of the Commonwealth games have been the product of the efforts of many people working together enthusiastically and inclusively.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: Mr Pentland, can you turn your microphone towards you slightly? Thank you.

John Pentland: Maximising the benefits that are delivered as a result of the games will also depend on harnessing that energy and the spirit of commitment and co-operation. Like me, everybody will know somebody who knows someone from somewhere who made the games “pure dead brilliant” and the best ever.

There is not enough time to thank all the sportspeople, parliamentarians, councillors and officials who were involved in the bid, which was instigated in 2006, or everyone who was involved in the planning and development of the games, including Glasgow City Council, which was an excellent host; North Lanarkshire Council, which hosted the triathlon at Strathclyde park, which was immaculate and fantastic as well as the place where the first medal of the games was awarded; and North Lanarkshire Leisure, which provided the training facilities at Ravenscraig’s regional sports centre.

I congratulate all our competitors and medal winners, who deserve all the praise that has been heaped on them for their dedication and for making the games compulsive viewing, especially for a couch potato such as me—I assure members that that is about to change. What a delight it was to see the gold medal won by Wishaw postman and lightweight boxer Charlie Flynn. Like many others, I shared the surprise when the judges decided that Motherwell’s Reece McFadden, who should have been on his way to gold, would have to settle for a bronze medal.

Last, but definitely not least, I thank the volunteers, who all did such a magnificent job, and everyone who worked with the national teams or at events and who was out and about helping the public to make the most of the games.

Of course, we hope that all the success, added to the experience of those who visited and those who watched around the world, will have a lasting legacy. As the minister said, there are good reasons to hope that that will be the case, not least of which is the way in which the Commonwealth games took advantage of the Olympic games in London that preceded them. That helped with the development of facilities and the performance of sportspeople throughout the UK. North Lanarkshire’s facilities will, I hope, bring the British transplant games here in 2017. I am sure that the Parliament will join me in wishing the council every success in its bid.

Many sports are supported at a UK level, with UK-wide facilities. There is also tremendous UK co-operation and camaraderie in all sports. The Olympics provided the template and the platform for the games and both were utilised in the planning of Glasgow 2014; it also encouraged the growth of public interest in a wide range of sports.

These really were the friendly games, as all competitors were given great support and all visitors warmly welcomed. That was often especially true for the supposed auld enemy, with English athletes being rousing cheered to victory. We now have to take the combined achievements of the UK and its nations, competing together and in friendly rivalry, and build on that to take Scottish and UK sport to the next level.

The Commonwealth games legacy for Scotland exists at many levels. There are the obvious and often highlighted economic aspects, such as regeneration, tourism and international trade, as well as the benefits for sport and the consequences of that for better health. Some of the benefits are not so obvious, such as boosting social capital. That is one part of the legacy that has to be harnessed—not tomorrow, next week or after the referendum but immediately.

Some of the volunteers will be involved in various forms of activity; for others I heard talking about the games, it was an invigorating new experience. I welcome the Scotland’s best initiative being opened up to young Clyde-siders, but we also need to channel the tremendous energy and commitment of the Clyde-siders into other areas, into their communities, into the voluntary sector and into civic activity. Those benefits will not just happen—or, at least, they will not be maximised—without a concerted effort to promote and sustain them.

The national lottery is spending £15 million on games-related funding, but the opportunities to access that funding are coming to an end, so what will be done to match the volunteers with further opportunities?

The next few months will be a crucial time during which we can build on the success of the Commonwealth games. The Scottish Government has the power to do that and it needs to use that power. I hope that the result of the referendum will allow us to concentrate on developing the benefits of working together within Scottish and UK sport, and within our communities, to further the spirit of the games.

15:27

James Dornan (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP): I join Drew Smith in welcoming Kenny Stewart to the chamber. I have a feeling that Kenny, like many of us, has a Commonwealth games hangover and is here for a wee cure. It is nice to see him and I thank him for his help.

I am in the extremely lucky position of having Hampden Park on my doorstep, which meant that, for the duration of the games, it was buzzing outside my office in Mount Florida with people

excited at the first-class sport that they were on their way to witness or had just witnessed in the arena.

No one who was there or who was watching on television will forget the travails of Eilidh Child, Hannah Miley, Ross Murdoch, Lynsey Sharp, Libby Clegg and so many others.

The games' sporting highlight was the incredible 13-year-old Erraid Davies whom I am sure Tavish Scott will want to speak about in more detail. Her smile after winning the bronze medal was, without a doubt, one of the great moments of the games.

For the 11 days of the games, the area that I represent, like so many others, was transformed not only by the sporting endeavours around it but by the countless local community groups that arranged numerous events to get into the Commonwealth games spirit.

On the Monday prior to the start of the games, I attended a lane party held by the Gateway Residents Association in Battlefield, which was attended by members of the Barbados Commonwealth team after the association had adopted that team as its Commonwealth games team. It was a great day, with a massive turnout from a local community keen to welcome the games to their area. I know that the event was appreciated by the Barbados team, as was their presence by the locals. I thank the athletes who came straight from their training that day to make sure that the games were seen to be a part of the community and not just the arenas

The local Clincarthill parish church hosted a coffee shop over the course of the games, which kept those involved extremely busy, and the visitors to the games well fed with the delicious selection of home baking on offer, and the parents, teachers and pupils of Mount Florida primary school did a magnificent job of decorating the triangle grassed area just outside their school and across the road from Hampden. I was driving past one day and I saw people putting knitted blankets around the trees. I had to stop to see whether anyone was vandalising the trees but it turned out to be the school pupils' way, along with their parents and their teachers, of welcoming people to the area.

The communities of Croftfoot and Castlemilk decorated the streets on the way to Cathkin Braes with banners and flags, and thousands turned out to watch the mountain biking at the purpose-built mountain biking centre. The local community is rallying round to ensure that one of the lasting legacies of the games is an increase in the facilities at the mountain biking track so that it can become an urban centre of mountain biking excellence.

Castlemilk also turned out in force to see the baton relay reach its community where it was carried for part of the way by Teresa Sadler, who was one of those nominated to carry the baton by members of her community, and who is another excellent example of a local champion in the area who is involved in a number of local groups and campaigns in the community over and above the fantastic work that she does as chair of Cassiltoun Housing Association.

The baton relay was just another example of the community spirit across the Commonwealth that the games fostered. The Queen's baton travelled more than 198,000km across all parts of the Commonwealth and was warmly welcomed wherever it went.

Another of the local people who carried the baton on its journey to Celtic Park was Carol Paterson, who runs the magnificent Saturday club and Ozzy's based at Cathcart old parish church. It will come as no surprise to the people in the chamber who know the Rev Neil Galbraith that his church was jam-packed with events as part of his celebration city festival. Glasgow the Caring City has worked in more than 55 of the 71 Commonwealth countries that had teams competing in the games.

I hosted one of those events, which was a night of Celtic rock with Eric Faulkner of Bay City Rollers fame, and an up-and-coming Glasgow band called the Chaplins—named after the comedian and not the Rev Neil—with lead singer Jill Jackson. It was a great evening with more than a few ladies of a certain age a bit excited to meet a Bay City Roller. It is amazing how quickly some can revert to their screaming teenager phase. That was just one of a number of events that took place but undoubtedly the highlight, outwith my night of course, was "Bravehearts the Musical", starring the kids from the aforementioned Saturday club and Ozzy's.

For those who do not know, the Saturday club and Ozzy's are clubs for children who have disabilities of varying kinds, and to see them put in the effort and put on such a performance was extremely touching as well as entertaining. I also have to give a message to all those dedicated ladies—and they were all ladies, which is why I say it—who worked so hard to make sure that the tea rooms were open for everybody who attended during the 11 days.

That is just a small flavour of the more than 120 events that were put on over the course of the celebration city festival. The whole area was a cacophony of sights and sounds and it is clear that there is a want for the games to leave a lasting legacy.

We are here to talk of legacy and for me it will come in many different guises. As a board member of Scottish Women in Sport, I was particularly delighted to see that Scottish women had their best games ever. We need to keep that momentum going and do all we can to ensure that a lasting legacy of the games is getting more women of all ages involved and engaged in sport.

I suspect that the greatest legacy for my great city will be the reawakening of community spirit that took place before and during the games. We talk about part of the legacy being about humanity and I have seen no greater examples of humanity than I saw during the two weeks of the Commonwealth games, when people from all over the world worked together, enjoyed each other's company and made sure that the games were the friendly games. Of course, they would be, because Glasgow is without a doubt the friendly city.

15:33

Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (LD): I start by joining with James Dornan and colleagues across the chamber in the collective love-in for all those who made Glasgow 2014 work. It was, without question, a great achievement and, in judging the legacy, I suspect that much good will come of them in sporting and economic terms.

As a Shetlander, I would find it difficult not to start not just with Erraid Davies but with all three Shetland girls who made team Scotland. For Erraid to win a bronze medal in a para-swimming discipline was a fantastic success. It was so unexpected. In all the assessments that I saw, including when I asked those at the top of Scottish Swimming what they expected to happen, at no time did I see that her success was expected. That is why it is a triumph for her personally and also for her coach and family, and for all Shetland. We are all very proud of her.

We have to be equally proud of Andrea Strachan, who made the 50m final in the breaststroke. She is one of the eight fastest girls in the 50m in the Commonwealth, and that is one heck of an achievement for her, and for her coaches at the University of Edinburgh, where she is on the swim team.

I did two good things during the 10 days of the Commonwealth games. First, I spent a lot of money in the bars of Glasgow, so I did my bit to help Mr Dornan's city's economy, although I would rather that did not get home to Shetland.

The second good thing that I did was in response to a text message that I took from Andrea Strachan's dad while she was swimming in the semi-final, in which he asked whether there was any chance that I could get some tickets for the final, because the family had run out. I would

like to thank the people who helped to make that happen—I will not mention them all—because I was very proud to see Andrea swim in the final, but I felt even better, as a Shetlander, knowing that her whole family was there, including her grandfather and a bunch of her wider family. To see someone whom you have known for a long time swim in a final of the Commonwealth games takes a bit of beating.

Lynda Flaws was in team Scotland's table tennis team. She is doing exams at the moment—poor soul—to get back into university in a few weeks' time, because some time ago she went to Tokyo to compete in an international table tennis event in order to make the grade and qualify for team Scotland. That worked, and we hope that her university markers look favourably on the work that she is now doing to ensure that she continues her glittering academic career. I should say that Lynda was skinning my son on a football field at the age of 10, so she is very talented at every sport, and I am sure that she will continue to be so.

The games gave us many great memories. One of my most abiding memories will be of the great support for all the home nations. I confess that I did not know so many Scots knew the words to "Jerusalem". The night that Hannah Miley and Ross Murdoch won and Andrea Strachan qualified for the final of the 50m breaststroke, it was quite noticeable that when the English lad won an event—I forget the discipline—the place erupted in the same way. That was the experience that I had at all the events that I went to. Of course the roof came off when team Scotland won, but the support for athletes from all the home nations was astronomical. It made me very proud to be a Scot and to be part of those proceedings.

Another great memory is of the Malaysian rugby sevens team doing a lap of honour at Ibrox—I have not seen many laps of honour at Ibrox recently—at the end of the Sunday morning proceedings to say thanks to the fans, who had cheered them through defeat after defeat. The Malaysian rugby sevens players probably did more for Malaysian diplomacy than anything else that is going on at the moment. I was proud to see everyone in the stadium rise to applaud them. Selfies were taken and fun was had by lots of kids, who rushed down to the front to have their photographs taken with the hulking great rugby players. Over the two days of the competition, 170,000 people came to Ibrox, which was a world record crowd for rugby. If that competition has a legacy, it is probably that rugby sevens has come to Scotland; I should really say "come home", because, after all, the sport started in Melrose. That was a tremendous achievement.

At Hampden, two days before I saw David Rudisha lose to the astonishing Botswanan athlete Nijel Amos in the 800m—I never thought that I would see Rudisha lose a race after he won the Olympics—I saw a Nigerian discuss thrower in the para discipline walk into the throwing ring, throw down both his crutches and, on one leg, throw the discuss 45m and come second—he won the silver medal. He did a lap of honour and, believe me, Hampden stood for that. His was an unbelievable achievement.

The decision to integrate the events for able-bodied athletes with those for competitors with disabilities was a brilliant one. Across the sports, that integration worked fantastically.

There is one legacy that I want to mention in addition to the legacies that Liz Smith rightly mentioned to do with schools and leadership, such as walking to school and participation in sport, and all the other legacies that other colleagues have rightly mentioned—a levelling of the playing field so that, regardless of where in Scotland they live, as well as being able to compete at an elite level, people can simply take part in sport. I am talking about sports clubs in my part of the world having the ability to compete against other sports clubs from across the country in their disciplines. I know that the minister is seized of the importance of that, and I thank her for her very positive response, not just on Tuesday but on other occasions. I recognise her commitment to that. For me, it would be a great legacy to ensure that, regardless of where they live in Scotland, an Erraid Davies, an Andrea Strachan, a Lynda Flaws or the Shetland rugby team can take part in competitive sport. If we can do that, we will be making real progress.

15:39

Bob Doris (Glasgow) (SNP): It has been a good debate. We had the revelation from John Mason that he is too old to be responsibly left in charge of a foam finger and Sandra White has confirmed that Glasgow people are great at telling people where to go. Both those things are true.

This excellent debate has not only paid tribute to the wonderful success of our Commonwealth games athletes but, just as significant, covered how the success of the games can be consolidated, sustained and built on. I am proud that these have been Glasgow's games, but they have also very much been Scotland's games, as we have heard. Such has been the success that most communities feel that they have some connection to a successful sportsman or woman.

I know how excited my nieces, who are both keen swimmers, were when Ross Murdoch won his gold medal, as he is a Vale of Leven lad. He

trained at the swimming pool where Beth and Emily, my two young nieces, swim with the local club. As a Vale boy originally, I felt a little civic pride. I started my swimming experience at the Vale baths at the age of six, although I should put it on the record that I did not learn to swim until I was 16, in the Brock baths in Dumbarton—I was a late bloomer.

We should not underestimate the boost that such success will give young sportspeople across Scotland and the civic pride that will be fostered across Scotland's towns, cities and villages by not just the medal-winning sportsmen and women but all those who participated. Tavish Scott made that point well.

I pay tribute to the partnership work between the Scottish Government, local councils and sportscotland to develop about 150 community sport hubs. That is already a lasting legacy. The hubs bring together sports clubs, community assets and volunteers from clubs to work together and get a greater outcome for young people who are involved in sport. That is already showing some wonderful successes.

To build on that, I commend the Scottish Government's Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill as an opportunity for community assets such as community centres and sports facilities, which do not always appear to have a long-term strategy or use in communities, to provide community-owned, community-developed and community-led sports initiatives. That could be a significant success in a number of places in Glasgow; it could improve the quality of facilities, which could be enhanced, and they could be used more. I am sure that the Scottish Government, sportscotland, Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Life would be very much on board with that. That approach is in keeping with the bill's aspirations across society.

It is only right to mention the fantastic job that Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Life and all the civic partners in the city that I represent did in contributing to a wonderfully successful games. I merely comment on where opportunities to build further on that sit.

With national governing bodies of sport, the Scottish Government and sportscotland have invested greatly in developing club sports to boost grass-roots participation and—just as important—to ensure that our most talented sportsmen and women excel. How wonderful that programme has been—it was greatly successful. We had 19 gold medals and 53 medals in total.

Just as significant is the fact that Scotland had the largest team ever. Having the opportunity to compete at such a level is vital for the confidence

of our sportsmen and women and for society in general. Scotland has never seen anything like it.

In the time that is left, I will talk a little about sporting pathways. A similar point was made about volunteers. As with anything in society, those from more middle-class backgrounds who have a little more money find it easier to access, identify and progress on pathways in life. Sport is not necessarily any different.

In my intervention on John Mason, I mentioned that I was going to the women's weightlifting at the Commonwealth games when he, as a volunteer, directed me so ably to the venue. I am following weightlifting more and more because of my association with the Gladiator Programme in Easterhouse. It is already having wonderful success with young boys and girls going to Europe and winning gold medals for Scotland at the ages of 12, 13 and 14. The hope is that, in August 2015, participants will be at the under-15 European championships to represent Britain. There is the potentiality of an athlete pathway award to enable them to go there. I also note that, in Samoa in September of the same year, there will be another event in which they will have the opportunity to represent Scotland.

I raise that for a specific reason. Will the minister look at where the sporting pathways are for those young boys and girls from Easterhouse and beyond to progress to the next level in weightlifting, as the volunteers do a wonderful job? They have had support, but it is about that extra push and nudge to support them to go to the next level. I am sure that there are stories across the country, and I know that money has to be spent in the wisest possible way, but that is an area that I am passionate about.

In conclusion, the Commonwealth games were clearly a wonderful success, but they will have a true legacy only if we work at it. The real hard work starts now. It is wonderful to cheer people over the finishing line and to win medals, but the tough bit is developing things from here on in.

It has been a pleasure to take part in the debate.

15:45

Elaine Murray (Dumfriesshire) (Lab): Many years ago, in the first session of Parliament, I had the good fortune to have the post of Deputy Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport. It is fairly obvious from that title that I had some pretty good gigs. There was the Cannes film festival, the Edinburgh film festival, Scottish Opera and various other things, but I probably enjoyed most of all being involved with the Scotland team in Manchester in 2002.

I had known Manchester a bit because, back in the 1980s, I was involved in a research project with a scientist at the Christie hospital and I had worked there from time to time. At that time, Manchester was a city with great cultural, industrial and political traditions, but it had fallen on hard times to a certain extent. When I went back to Manchester in 2002, I barely recognised the city, as it had changed so much. The changes in its appearance, atmosphere and confidence were very marked.

Two events were credited with that change. Obviously, one was terrible: the Provisional IRA bombing in 1996. The other event that was associated with the regeneration was the Commonwealth games. To many of us who attended with the Scottish team at that time, the parallel with Glasgow was striking, and the seed was planted to bring the games to Glasgow in 2014.

When I was watching the games on television, I was particularly pleased to see Louise Martin presenting some of the prizes, as she was a mainstay of the Scottish team and the Commonwealth games, and she was crucial to bringing them to Glasgow. She has to take a great deal of the credit for the success of the games this year. I also congratulate everybody else: all the politicians and everybody else who worked hard to bring the games here and all the people who made them such a tremendous success.

Some of the legacy of the games is already in place, of course. It gives me some amusement to remember that, when I was in Manchester, I was lobbied by one Chris Hoy on the need for a competition-standard velodrome in Scotland. We now have a state-of-the-art velodrome in Scotland, and it is named after him. From what I knew of Chris Hoy, I am sure that he was far too modest to imagine that it would ever be named after him.

The games were, of course, a tremendously wonderful experience. This time last week, I was on the bus from Eurocentral to Hampden to see Eilidh Child powering to her silver medal, David Weir, who is an extraordinary sportsman, being cheered on to his success in the T54 1,500m by Scots as much as by English people, and Amos beating Rudisha. I was also there on Saturday. I do not know whether I saw Usain Bolt, as he went so fast that he was a blur, but I saw him afterwards. Whether I caught him racing is another thing. That was a marvellous experience.

The overall success of the games in years to come will be judged by what changes for the better they effected in Glasgow and the rest of Scotland. Over the years, as we saw with Manchester, memories of the games will eventually fade, even though they are great memories for all of us who were involved. Games

will be held in other nations, and their games will be talked about.

I have no doubt that the games will inspire more young people to take up sport and become involved in sports that they would otherwise not have considered. Talented young athletes will be able to train in top-class facilities in Scotland, although some of that training will still go on in other parts of the United Kingdom. In some parts of Scotland, members of the public will also have access to the tremendous venues. A new generation of elite athletes will have gained inspiration from what they have seen during the past couple of weeks in Glasgow.

I want to return to what I touched on in a question earlier this week. What about most of us who do not possess any great talent for sport? Will we become more active and sustain that activity over future years? I do not think that we should expect elite sport to deliver that. Apart from anything else, the physiques and performances of elite athletes are so different from those of most of us that, although we love watching them, we do not identify with them, because we know that we will never be like that.

Getting more people more active more often has been an aspiration since the review of the sport 21 strategy in 2003, which I took part in, and I am sure that it probably was an aspiration before that. That aspiration has been difficult to achieve over the years. I wonder whether that is in part because achieving it is presumed to be a side effect of success in elite sport. Unfortunately, getting ordinary people more active more often cannot be delivered in a top-down way. Even if we delivered first-class facilities across the country, we could not ensure that people who do not take part in physical activity will take it up.

I think that the vast majority of ordinary people will be encouraged to be more physically active if they see people like them taking part in physical activities that they enjoy. That is where friends, colleagues and family members can help one another to improve their physical fitness. Most people who have a degree of physical capability will be able to find some form of exercise that they enjoy, whether it is swimming, cycling, jogging or walking, and they can set themselves personal goals to go a bit faster or further or to carry on a bit longer.

It is not always easy to maintain physical activity once started. People who have a busy lifestyle need something that fits in. For me, one of the attractions of walking is that I can fit it in with my job, although I have to say that I would not power walk up to anybody's door and demand to know how they voted. In Scotland, outdoor activity is great at this time of the year, but less so when the sun does not rise until almost 9 and sets again

before 4. Therefore, there needs to be long-term motivation once the novelty wears off.

There are three aspects to that. First, there needs to be more publicity about individuals improving their fitness through normal physical activity. We hear a lot about people on diets and we see lots of programmes about people losing weight, but we do not hear a lot about people becoming more physically active. We need to have more concentration on that. The second part is encouragement and support from others and taking part in the community. Finally, there is the personal motivation to improve. It is not only elite athletes who achieve personal bests—any one of us, whatever our age and build and if we have some degree of physical capability, can choose an activity and be the best that we can be.

15:51

Marco Biagi (Edinburgh Central) (SNP):

When it comes to major sporting events, legacy is one of the issues that we debate hotly, not least the equality strand of the trifecta that has been mentioned. However, if there is one thing that I can say with absolute surety about the 2014 Commonwealth games, it is that they have changed the definition of the Glasgow kiss for ever. I have marched in the name of pride many times and I know the feeling very well. I felt pride with every act that demonstrated not just the success of the games—for which we all owe so many people thanks—but our values of respect and diversity.

During the games, the rainbow flag flew from the Scottish Government's headquarters, and the one Scotland campaign was launched with billboards everywhere. The Pride house flourished—not a last-minute, hastily permitted Pride house as at London 2012, but a centre that was a real focal point for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex participants and guests and for discussion, hosting more than 6,000 visitors. The hub received financial support from the Scottish Government, but what matters much more are the political support that was received and the legacy that it will leave.

At the opening night for Pride house, Shona Robison, the cabinet secretary, was there on behalf of the Scottish Government, and so too was David Grevemberg, the games chief executive. This was not an unauthorised sideshow sitting on the fringes; it was an integral part of the games. During the games, the First Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and Ed Miliband all visited, too. There were selfies for everyone and, fortunately, no bacon rolls. On 29 July, Peter Tatchell, a man more noted for attempting citizen's arrests of Robert Mugabe than being gushing, was fulsome in his praise for the Scottish Government. An

activist who is used to mealy-mouthed statements and disappointment came to Scotland and found the real deal of commitment to equality.

At that opening night, we heard important voices from beyond Scotland and the west, such as those of Dr Frank Mugisha from Uganda, Monica Tabengwa from Botswana and Pallav Patankar from India. They were part of a series of links made by campaigners in Scotland, with the aim of forging lasting links between campaigners here and those in countries where legal equality on LGBTI rights seems a far-off dream. Scotland's campaigners recognise the importance of having their work led by those on the ground in those countries and using the Commonwealth games and the shared experience and history as an opportunity to empower others.

Each day, in the run-up to the games, the Equality Network highlighted a Commonwealth country and the equivalent organisation there. That matters, because 80 per cent of Commonwealth nations have some form of legal persecution of people who are homosexual, bisexual, transsexual and so on. Millions risk their liberty or their lives if they just turn to their loved one and express their feelings. That happens today in the Commonwealth.

It is a sad fact that those anti-gay laws are, in the main, a legacy of colonialism and imperialism. That troubled history of domination and conversion has left many nations scarred, and sensitive to what could be viewed—understandably so—as an attempt to repeat that history through further lectures or domination.

Uganda's LGBTI laws have been a rallying point for activists around the world, but although the country's laws are the most severe, it is by no means alone. Calls to exclude Uganda from the games came from an understandable sense of hurt, but there are many nations in the Commonwealth—such as Singapore, an authoritarian dictatorship—whose records on human rights raise very serious questions.

The best way to address the issue was to do what we did: continue with our approach of inspiration rather than domination. Scotland has achieved a level of diversity that is vastly different from the situation during the first 11 Commonwealth games, when being gay was still a crime here.

We want to demonstrate the kind of Scotland that we are, that we want to be and that we are increasingly becoming. Although the law now respects all, attitudes do not always do likewise. Sporting grounds are one of those fields in which reports of homophobia are still strongest and most frequent. If we are to get all of Scotland physically

active and participating, the LGBTI group must be understood and those barriers must be overcome.

I hope that one legacy will be the links that have been built between organisations in Scotland. In particular, I hope that the Scottish Government will do what it can to encourage the continuation of Pride house as a centre for the promotion of LGBTI rights, in sport and more widely.

The games will be remembered as the people's games, as the friendly games and as a successful games—and as a progressive games, too. I am sorry that Paul Wheelhouse has left the chamber, because I was going to rib him, as a Belfast boy, about the fact that team Northern Ireland came one place below the hypothetical team gay in the medals league table.

An important record was set by team gay at the games. It was the first time ever that two openly gay athletes—Matthew Mitcham and Tom Daley—took both gold and silver, and stood on the same podium. That moment is, for me, made all the sweeter when I remember that it happened at the beautiful, refurbished Commonwealth pool in my constituency in the great city of Edinburgh.

15:58

Colin Keir (Edinburgh Western) (SNP): As Liz Smith pointed out, the legacy from the most successful Commonwealth games ever is not easily defined. Every single person will have a view of what that legacy is, and I suspect that nobody will be wrong.

These Commonwealth games were a showcase for Glasgow and Scotland, and they certainly did not let us down. There were the Clyde-siders, and the personal hardship stories from the likes of Lynsey Sharp and Libby Clegg. Eilidh Child handled the pressure of being the poster girl of the games, and who will forget the wonderful smile and look of sheer happiness shown by 13-year-old swimmer Erraid Davies?

Those are some of the stories that made the games, which were simply magnificent. I add my congratulations to everyone who was involved. Of course, there was much more to the games than just competition, and the question is, what do we do now that they are finished?

As we know, the Scottish Government produced a games legacy document, which focused on building an active, connected, sustainable and flourishing Scotland, and covered every aspect of life.

Glasgow produced a games that was so enlightened that the world could not help but see that, in the 21st century, our nation stands tall. As a result of the actions that were taken by those participating in the whole event, this country did

not need its politicians to stand up and inform the Commonwealth about what we as a nation feel about issues of community, equality and diversity. That alone would be a tremendous legacy for our latest Commonwealth games, but we can do more. We have issues with health, particularly in our cities, which could be helped if we could encourage people to rediscover exercise.

I am sure the irony of someone who is as overweight as I am lecturing on the dangers of obesity and diabetes is not lost on members. Perhaps it looks a tad hypocritical. However, if someone like me, who was privileged to receive international honours in his younger days, can let themselves go physically, how much easier it is for someone who has grown up with a bad diet and difficult circumstances to follow the wrong direction?

I commend initiatives such as the physical activity implementation plan in that respect, but the big issue will always be how to change people's attitudes to exercise and health. Once we start to change attitudes, will we be able to get away from the perception that some people have that they need a pair of £100 trainers to take part, or from the difficulties of taking part in sport without having to pay substantial amounts of money to use facilities? Sport and general exercise should not be out of bounds to anyone in our society.

On the legacy for elite sport, we should be delighted that the Scotland team achieved so much success. For many of the athletes, a medal or a personal best performance will be seen as a stepping stone to further success.

The sportscotland institute of sport is obviously starting to reap rewards, and I heartily commend the director of high performance, Mike Whittingham, and his team for the job that they are doing. I hope that there is constant review of what happens at the institute. Even the much-lauded and successful Australian institute of sport came under fire as the rest of the world caught up with Australia and elite performance levels were perceived to have dropped.

We also should identify young talent to help it through into elite competition. Although youngsters may find a sport and enjoy it at around the age of nine or 10 years, it is important to offer other options. Not only might they find something new that they like, but I would like to think that there may be a talent-spotting method to encourage youngsters who may be physically more suited to another sport, perhaps in their teens, to move to a discipline in which they may achieve elite success. I believe that that was done in United Kingdom rowing a few years ago on a larger scale and is common practice in countries such as Australia.

There is one other thing: team Scotland achieved remarkable results at the Commonwealth games, but that is the top level at which our country can compete. In most sports—athletics is the perfect example—our athletes must challenge for places in a Great Britain team to compete at the highest level: the world and European championships and the Olympics. That usually means that fewer athletes are able to compete at the top level.

Is it a coincidence that we have had less international success in long-distance running since Scotland stopped sending a team to the world cross-country championships 30 years ago, for instance? The biggest legacy at elite level will be to see our Scottish teams compete at the highest level, but I am afraid to say that—to bring a little bit of politics into the matter—the only chance that that can ever happen is with a yes vote on 18 September.

16:03

George Adam (Paisley) (SNP): I thank Glasgow for the friendly games and the biggest party ever but, 7 miles down the road in Paisley, I got no invite. There was no invite for George and there were no tickets for George to go to any of the events. All I had was the antisocial behaviour from the fireworks that went off in Parkhead. I had to put the sound down to ask Stacey whether she had heard them.

To be serious, Glasgow airport was the gateway to the games. Most of the athletes came through our area and there was quite an effect on the Paisley economy. When the Queen's baton relay came to Paisley, my friend and colleague Brian McGuire was one of the community activists who ran through Paisley High Street with the baton. He does paisley.org, which is a community-based website, and he got to carry the baton because of everything that he has done for the community. That was one of the great things about the baton relay, and we had a fantastic day in Paisley. I should say that Brian is a great photographer. I recommend him—he has made even me look good in some of the pictures that he has done for me.

Patricia Ferguson said that we should look at the sports at which we were not successful. Professor Craig Mahoney, who is professor of sports psychology and principal of the University of the West of Scotland, says that we should do what the Australians do and specialise in what we are good at. We should find out which sports we are good at and excel in them. Now, I like football, but I said on Twitter during the games that I am giving up this football malarkey and it's the bowling for me from now on, if we can win so many medals. I ask John Mason: who can doubt that if

Scotland is winning something the Scots will fill any arena to ensure that we are there to celebrate? We have to remember that.

Glasgow brought the Commonwealth games and the world to Scotland in the opening ceremony. Marco Biagi has stolen my line about John Barrowman and the Glasgow kiss—thanks, Marco. From the beginning of the games, Glasgow set out its stall and showed exactly what it is all about. Glasgow was just being Glasgow—the Glasgow that we all know. For people in Paisley, Glasgow is our next-door neighbour and there is a bit of banter between us, but we all know that Glasgow is a friendly city—not as good as Paisley, but very friendly.

At the closing ceremony, we heard Deacon Blue, Kylie and Lulu—I never thought that I would say those three names in the same sentence. It took me back to the big gigs of my teenage years in the 1980s.

The world watched as a small northern European nation of 5 million people competed at a level at which it probably would not have been expected to compete. That shows the commitment of the Scottish Government and Glasgow City Council, which worked together, and it shows what we in Scotland can achieve if we put our minds to it.

There were so many high points. Erraid Davies is obviously number 1, because when she got her bronze medal her smile lit up the whole games. Libby Clegg was the first to win a gold medal, in Hampden, in the T12 100m. Many people think that Hampden is a better athletics stadium than it is a football stadium and that the roar was better—I would not know; I was not there, not having got any tickets.

Patricia Ferguson: I am really starting to feel sorry for George Adam, given that he did not have any tickets for the games, but did he apply?

George Adam: He did indeed, numerous times.

I remember “Sweet Caroline” being sung by 40,000 fans at the rugby sevens, at Ibrox of all places. Who would have thought that they would see that in their lifetime?

My wife Stacey managed to get some tickets for the judo. I was working, so she went along with some friends. Now she is an expert on the judo—I had to sit and watch while she explained the whole thing to me non-stop. She is an expert, after three days of watching the judo.

Marco Biagi: Is the member now doing more housework than previously?

George Adam: I will plead the fifth on that, if the member does not mind.

I did finally get tickets to see the boxing on the Saturday, at the Hydro. I enjoyed that—it was a great event. Part of the legacy is the fantastic facilities in Glasgow.

This was the first time that the para-sports were worked into a major games. I think that that is a true legacy of the games. It made a difference, because some great stories came out of the para-sports. What team Scotland did was just inspirational.

Glasgow made sure that its state-of-the-art facilities were enjoyed by athletes and tourists. I went to George Square to see for myself, when Stacey had to go to hospital for an MRI scan, and £100 later I had a nice team Scotland hoodie—at 45 I am the oldest hoodie that members have ever seen. The atmosphere was fantastic. It shows what we can do.

The cabinet secretary is aware that in Paisley we are working with Kelburne Hockey Club and St Mirren Football Club to try to get a sports hub in the town. Let us hope that the legacy will be projects such as that—projects that make a difference and ensure that children from places such as Ferguslie Park in Paisley can have access to sports and aspire to be as good as the athletes in team Scotland.

16:09

Alison Johnstone (Lothian) (Green): I begin my contribution to the debate by saying, “Thank you, Glasgow.” I thank all those who were involved in the games, which were a success because of those who bid, those who organised, those who volunteered—the host city volunteers and the Clyde-siders—the coaches and the hundreds of thousands who came to support the athletes.

The games were a success because of the athletes who came from all round the globe to compete here in Scotland. They were a success because of our fascination with those who dedicate time, blood, sweat, tears and—often—cash to being the best that they can be in their chosen sports.

I know that we will all have our own personal memories and stories from the games. As someone who has been involved in sport since her earliest years, I attended a few events, which really were very special. George Adam may be slightly disturbed to learn that I was one of the very lucky ones in the ballot who was fortunate to be able to attend several events. If I had been organised, I might have stayed in the city, but I would have had to book accommodation before it was all booked up. However, if I had stayed in the city, I would have missed some of the memorable travel moments that Sandra White touched on.

Steve Montgomery, who is the managing director of ScotRail, could regularly be found mingling with the Glasgow Central rail queue—it was quite a queue at times, but a really well-managed and good-tempered one—offering advice on the most sensible way to get back to Edinburgh on a given evening. I did not see him there only once or twice. Taking his advice, I chose Glasgow Central rather than Queen Street station as a departure point, which meant that I enjoyed the deadpan delivery of the cross-country train guard who solemnly announced, as a prelude to other catering news, “There is no rooftop garden on this train.” There was also the Mount Florida station announcer who updated the hundreds returning from Hampden Park on the latest medal tally and his take on national characteristics. I do not think that I can share that with members, but he could certainly give a few Edinburgh fringe stars a lesson in timing and delivery.

Glasgow embraced the games and, as the days passed, the feeling of pride and enjoyment in what the city and its people added to the spectacle simply grew. I was privileged to attend hockey, netball, track cycling and athletics. The warmth, humour and desire to help visitors and spectators get to where they needed to be were palpable. Those who delivered the games had clearly learned much from the London blueprint; the games there were a huge success, as were Glasgow’s.

Glasgow 2014 brought together people from around the globe in a way that only sport can. Spectators cheered on their own countryfolk, but the applause from the crowd for each and every athlete and their endeavour is testament to the generous and knowledgeable audience that Glasgow attracted. The crowd defied definition. From babes in arms to our oldest citizens, folks of all shapes, sizes, nationalities and walks of life cheered every individual, regardless of outcome or level of celebrity.

I was really chuffed by Eilidh Child’s silver; Mark Dry’s bronze; Lynsey Sharp’s determination to achieve; Guy Learmonth’s personal best in the 800m final, which was a real highlight; Eilish McColgan’s gutsy run; Beth Potter’s 10,000m personal best; and Emily Dudgeon, who narrowly missed out on the 800m final after a fantastic performance. There were far too many great performances to mention them all. However, medals and records aside, it is the endeavour of those who performed that matters, including those who may have to wait until next time and those who will have to go back to the drawing board. That is what makes the games what they are, and what makes them so special.

I have no doubt that many people, young and old, will be inspired to follow in the footsteps of those they cheered on; there were sports for all ages and inclinations on show. Jo Pavey’s 5,000m bronze medal in her fifth decade, and months after giving birth will spur on many a middle-aged runner, and seeing bowls being played by rising youngsters will have an impact, too.

There are questions posed by the games, however. How can our part-time netball and hockey players compete with full-time professional athletes? Which sports should receive more funding? We need to look even more closely at formal links between our top coaches and our earliest educators in schools. Physical education and games are not the same thing, and we need to invest in physical literacy for our young people, because that will pay dividends in terms of their long-term health and wellbeing, self-confidence and enjoyment of sport.

The challenge now is to deliver a truly meaningful legacy. Part of that legacy is visible: it is the velodrome, the rest of the Emirates arena and the housing, with its district heating scheme.

However, it is not just about facilities in Glasgow: this is a nationwide issue. Let us ensure that the facilities are properly maintained, that we proudly take care of them and that we learn lessons from what happened at Meadowbank in Edinburgh. Bob Doris was right to highlight community sports delivery as an important model. The other part of the challenge is to ensure that those who would like to use the facilities have access to them, that they are affordable, that we have enough coaches in place and that no one is priced out of a more active lifestyle. Let us look at good practice, such as Scottish Athletics’ club together programme, which is about partnership and building a meaningful legacy from the grass roots up.

The games do not take place in a vacuum. The world watched, and Scotland’s message of equality was clear and heartfelt. The inclusion of para-sport made the games even better. Pride house played an important role, and I was proud to be a patron. The impact of Pride house, which was in a central location, cannot be overstated and I thank and congratulate the board, the volunteers and all those who supported this public sign of our support for the lesbian, gay and bisexual community. There is recognition by many prominent campaigners and academics that the games have helped to elevate the issue of public support for gay equality.

The Deputy Presiding Officer (John Scott):
Are you drawing to a close?

Alison Johnstone: Indeed I am, Presiding Officer.

The great platform that the games gave us was used by UNICEF, and the fundraising campaign was innovative, appropriate and welcome. Jubilee Scotland also got involved, highlighting unfair national debts. The Seychelles have an astounding £13,000 of debt for each citizen, so there are barriers that prevent many people in the Commonwealth from taking part.

The Deputy Presiding Officer: I would be grateful if you would draw to a close.

Alison Johnstone: I am sure that we will continue to challenge such things as we seek to deliver a meaningful legacy.

16:16

Richard Lyle (Central Scotland) (SNP): First, I say to George Adam that if I had known that he was looking for free tickets I would have given him my two boxing tickets, which I had unfortunately to forgo.

George Adam: I was not wanting free tickets; I was willing to pay for them.

Richard Lyle: I thought that I would get George Adam back.

I add my congratulations to everyone who played a part in delivering such a successful Commonwealth games. We proved to the world without a shadow of a doubt that Scotland is more than capable of hosting major events such as the games on time and on budget. That will be demonstrated again when Scotland hosts the golfing world for the 2014 Ryder cup.

The 2014 Commonwealth games were a resounding success. However, the games were about more than just 11 days of sport, and I am sure that there will be a long-term and lasting legacy from the games. As we have seen from other major sporting events, a legacy does not come about automatically. Manchester's hosting of the Commonwealth games in 2002 can be held up as a good example of a successful legacy because it accelerated regeneration in the city. I can testify to that; I worked for the Royal Bank of Scotland and regularly visited our office in Manchester. The city changed dramatically, as Elaine Murray said.

The legacy for Glasgow 2014 was a major focus throughout the planning stages of the games. In order for Scotland to benefit from the games, the legacy has focused on boosting participation in sport, increasing physical activity, maximising economic benefit, promoting business growth and increasing employability and skills, urban regeneration and sustainable development, and promoting Glasgow and Scotland's image internationally.

Roughly 70 per cent of the games venues were already in place, but they have been joined by world-class sporting facilities such as the Emirates arena, including the Sir Chris Hoy velodrome. I remember visiting the building with members of the Health and Sport Committee, and we also visited the athletes village, which contains homes for the 21st century. Alongside the new venues, some existing venues have been upgraded, including Strathclyde Park in my region, which hosted the triathlon events. Some £1.2 million was spent on the park to upgrade the facilities for the event, and local residents are delighted, because now that the games have finished, the upgrades are benefiting the whole community. I take this opportunity to thank North Lanarkshire Council for working closely with the games organisers and the Scottish Government to ensure that the enhancements to the park were carried out for the benefit for all.

With Strathclyde Park being a satellite venue, transport to and from the venue was critical. In that regard, the games have seen a lasting improvement to our rail network, which has shown itself to be capable of coping with the large crowds that were seen at the games. In preparation for the games, more than £2 million was spent on upgrading key stations in order to enhance the experience of visitors to the games. It is clear that railway transport is a significant asset to Scotland that can contribute to the economic legacy of the Commonwealth games.

As has already been said, Scotland had its most successful games ever, with 53 medals. However, the true success of the games will be the legacy that is felt from them. In order to ensure a viable and long-term legacy, more than 50 legacy 2014 national programmes are in place across Scotland. Those programmes are generating jobs and training opportunities, and are investing in new or upgraded community facilities, which are in turn helping people to become more active.

Holding a major sporting event brings with it responsibilities in promoting human rights. In this case, I was pleased to note that the Scottish Government is working to strengthen and empower communities across the Commonwealth, including in South Africa, Uganda and Malawi, which has a special place in our hearts and where Scottish Government funding is providing improved infrastructure and sanitation for more than 100,000 people.

As Bob Doris said, independence for Scotland would mean that more Scottish sportsmen and sportswomen will have the opportunity to compete at the highest levels against the best competition in the world, with a view to an independent Scotland having a Scottish Olympic and Paralympic team in Rio in 2016.

The values of the Commonwealth games of humanity, equality and destiny are cherished in Scotland and have been right at the heart of our games and I am sure that that will continue in our legacy vision for the future. I pay tribute to the work that was done by the cabinet secretary, by sportscotland, and by all the people who were associated with the games, especially the people of Glasgow, the workers in Glasgow, North and South Lanarkshire, and not forgetting Edinburgh City Council, and all the officials who worked tirelessly to make the games such a resounding success.

I am sure that Scotland will benefit and has shown the world that we can be independent and that we can run a tremendous games. As my friend Colin Keir said, if we vote yes on 18 September, we will show the world that Scotland is a country to be proud of.

16:22

Hanzala Malik (Glasgow) (Lab): I welcome the opportunity to talk about the legacy of the 20th Commonwealth games in Glasgow. I think everyone here will agree that the games have been a tremendous success.

I thank the minister for her announcement with regard to facilities for para-sports and the additional money. She will be a bit disappointed that I am not criticising her today, but this is a special day.

As someone who has had the privilege of watching and playing a part in the long journey from the original bid to the closing ceremony, I have a few observations to make.

One of the things that struck me most was the spirit of working together by all, which made me very proud. That was shown once again, as it always is, in the hospitality and friendship that the people of Glasgow offered people from right across Scotland and around the world.

From the start of bidding for the games, Glasgow City Council was given a substantial amount of support from a broad network of embassies, the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the British Council, as well as friends all over the world. That was not only unique, but made the games inclusive. It was very clear that by coming together and working as a team we could make the games a success, as we have demonstrated.

In this day and age, every time there is an international sporting event the hosts are often challenged by resources and in terms of co-operation from others. We have been extremely lucky in that regard. We have not had an

opportunity to thank some of the agencies that worked internationally for us, for their hard work.

Another important aspect was the role that was played by Glasgow City Council and, indeed, by councillors, officials and businesspeople—not only in Glasgow, but across Scotland and in other parts of the UK, as well as by the previous First Minister, Jack McConnell, whose vision and leadership ensured that all the relevant funds were in place, regardless of which Government would be in power when the games happened. I want to thank him personally for what he did. I know that people including him, Patricia Ferguson, Archie Graham, council leaders and the council itself put in a lot of work; I think that we sometimes underestimate the value of the contribution that is made by people behind closed doors, and I pay tribute to them this afternoon.

While watching the gymnastics, I was not only impressed by the excellent performance of the athletes, but was struck by the friendship between the gymnasts of the home countries and the support that they were giving each other. After all, many of the young men had trained together in team GB. I certainly would not want to undervalue the support that team GB gave our athletes; in fact, I welcome it, and I hope that we will continue to receive it.

The efforts of the people of Glasgow in general and the volunteers in particular were amazing in welcoming visitors and other volunteers from around the UK. I particularly want to thank the athletes' parents.

Parents make a huge personal effort and contribution that we cannot pay for or even comprehend. They get up day in, day out, seven days a week, to give their young people every opportunity to be successful, and they incur great expense in paying for travel, clothing, fees and the other costs that are associated with clubs. What they do is tremendous, and I take my hat off to them. I also want to thank the schools and colleges for their role in supporting the athletes' success.

There was a very positive mood to the games that not even the rain could wash away. It was fantastic. I have to say that we were very lucky that God also gave us some good weather so that everyone could appreciate that it does not only rain in Scotland and that we sometimes get the sun.

If we are to secure a lasting legacy for the games, we need to harness that positive strength and not waste it waiting for whatever else might come along. The skills that Glasgow has learned should allow it to bid for other national and international events, such as the European football championship.

We must be proud of our athletes' fantastic achievement in the Commonwealth games. The home countries won 20 per cent of the medals, while Australia managed to win only 10 per cent, but the challenge that faces us when we go to Australia is at least to match, if not enhance, our medal tally. I am happy to wish Australia every success—I hope that I am invited to some of the events—but I have to say that my wish is only that it has a successful games, not that it wins more medals. I want our own teams to win.

I thank Parliament for the opportunity to speak, the cabinet secretary for her announcement and Patricia Ferguson, in particular, for the huge role that she played historically in the games.

16:28

Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (SNP): It is clear that every member in the chamber is of the opinion that the 2014 Commonwealth games in Glasgow was nothing short of a massive success of which both Glasgow and Scotland can be rightly proud. The games truly brought out the best in our largest city, the best in our friendly and welcoming citizens and the best in our incredible athletes. Scotland took to the world stage and from start to finish it did not disappoint those who were watching. Many competitors will have been inspired to victory by a supportive crowd that cheered all but roared on Scotland's own, and finishing fourth in the medal table among nations with much larger populations than our own was a hugely impressive achievement by team Scotland.

Of course, the organisers of the event—Glasgow 2014, Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government—plus everyone else involved in the games from the voluntary sector and the private sector to the volunteers must take tremendous credit for helping to co-ordinate the biggest sporting and cultural event that Scotland has hosted seamlessly and without issue. For example, it was great to see the dancing lollipop ladies and a parade of Glasgow City Council's workforce going round the track at the closing ceremony. When *The Telegraph's* Alan Cochrane headlines an article,

"I'll admit it, the SNP deserve a medal for pulling this off",

we know that something has gone exceptionally well.

Cabinet secretary Shona Robison deserves special praise for her 24/7 leadership, hard work and commitment.

The Commonwealth games is unique in many ways. Anyone who watched the opening and closing ceremonies will attest to its spirit, which is one of family and of friendly sporting rivalry. The

games also provided an opportunity for the host nation to evoke its culture and promote its values—sometimes in a very tongue-in-cheek way. I was proud that Scotland chose to demonstrate that we are a nation that is tolerant and inclusive, regardless of people's faith, race, gender or sexuality. In the year in which Scotland passed same-sex marriage legislation, and in the knowledge that many competing nations still criminalise homosexuality, I believe that it was important that Scotland sent a message that we are a tolerant and inclusive society. My colleague Marco Biagi expanded on that tremendously in his excellent speech, which focused on that particular aspect.

I believe that we have seen in the Commonwealth games a welcome expansion of para-sports events, and that the medals that were won reflect the ethos of the games and their legacy—sporting inclusion and equality in and through sport. It is vital that we use the success of the games to build on that achievement and ensure that people of all abilities and backgrounds can access sport, thereby enhancing the chances of even greater success for team Scotland at future events.

Of course, funding and planning are essential to ensure that people across the country of varying abilities and in different disciplines can benefit from access to the appropriate facilities. I am pleased that the legacy 2014 active places fund will help to make that a reality in the months and years ahead.

Sportscotland's Inverclyde national centre in Largs, in my constituency, needs funding to demolish its 1950s accommodation block and build 60 new state-of-the-art, fully disability accessible twin rooms. The national centre is internationally renowned—José Mourinho gained his coaching badge there, for example—and is home to enviable facilities for golf, football, hockey, squash, tennis and gymnastics, with recent enhancements through generous donations, not least from the Largs lottery winners, Colin and Christine Weir. However, the accommodation block is no longer fit for purpose, with only a small number of rooms that are suitable for those with accessibility issues.

I am, therefore, delighted that the cabinet secretary announced today that the Scottish Government will provide £6 million, on top of funding from sportscotland, to transform the accommodation at Largs and help to ensure that the facility is unique in the United Kingdom.

Scottish Disability Sport's annual summer camp will be held at the national centre this year. Although it will not benefit from the new facility this summer, I believe that in the years to come Inverclyde will become the para-sports centre not

only for Scotland but for the rest of the UK. That will be a truly great Commonwealth games legacy for the national sports centre, the people of Largs and of the surrounding communities, and Scotland and beyond.

Of course, away from the sporting fields, the legacy of the games has already been realised. Many of the volunteers have discovered new talents and gained experience—I do not want to comment further on the experiences of John Mason or Patricia Ferguson. It is of huge significance to those who have previously not been in employment that they now have the confidence and skills that they need to find work.

The UNICEF partnership that was launched by Ewan McGregor on opening night raised a fantastic £5 million, which will allow work to take place on children's rights in all Commonwealth countries.

Of course, we know of the 700 new mixed-tenure homes in the east end of Glasgow.

The hundreds of thousands of visitors who descended on Glasgow experienced a carnival atmosphere, took in the sights and sounds and, as Hanzala Malik pointed out, were even treated to nice weather, most of the time. It is beyond comprehension to think that a large number of those people will not be back as tourists in the near future. I am not only convinced that they will come back, I know that they will.

There is, of course, one legacy that perhaps cannot be measured: the pride and self-confidence that is felt by the people of Glasgow and Scotland, who have undoubtedly just hosted the best games ever.

16:33

Jackson Carlaw (West Scotland) (Con): I speak, first and foremost, as a Glaswegian—as someone who was born, educated and raised there, who was employed for most of my life there and who invested in and around the city of Glasgow. What a joyous three weeks it has been for every Glaswegian.

Even as the bunting still flew and the cheers died, I could not help but reflect that the Commonwealth returned to Glasgow to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the commencement of the first world war. Let us not forget that Glasgow and Scotland contributed disproportionately to the British effort in that war and to the sacrifice that was endured. How apposite was it that, 100 years later, instead of our finest leaving Glasgow and Scotland to fight on the battlefields of France, they were competing on the sporting battlefields of our home city—the second city of that now long-forgotten empire.

As I watched the lawn bowls at Kelvingrove, I also thought that behind that sporting arena there stood the legacy of a previous international exhibition in Glasgow, in 1901, which was itself paid for by the international exhibition of 1888, to which 5.8 million people came. In 1938, Glasgow hosted the empire exhibition, to which 12.5 million people came over that year. I remember, as a schoolboy, looking at the pictures of that exhibition, which was meant to be a celebration of empire but instead was a celebration of technological advance, with pavilions that reminded me then of Walter Pigeon, the movie "Forbidden Planet" and the Dan Dare comics. I only wished that I had been able to attend that exhibition. Its hopes were, of course, cruelly dashed within months as we went to war.

I recall vividly the garden festival in Glasgow that took place 50 years later, to which 4.3 million people came—40 per cent more than were anticipated. I remember the Coca-Cola ride, the Clydesdale Bank tower—which worked rather more efficiently than its successor—the Bell's bridge, the Mactaggart & Mickel milk bar and the rotundas that were brought back into the life of the city at that time.

I also remember the year of culture in 1990, with 10,000 performances to which some 9 million visitors came. I sang along to "Nessun dorma" with Pavarotti and crooned along to songs with Frank Sinatra at Ibrox. I remember saying, as the band left the stage, that Mr Sinatra did not do encores. However, that was one of the very few occasions in his career when he came back and did one, such had been the welcome that he had received from Glasgow. He sang "Summer Wind" in a dinner suit that was soaked because of the Glasgow summer rains.

I mention all of that both to point to Glasgow's ability, throughout its long history, to rise to the occasion, whatever its difficulties—we still have terrible public health difficulties in Glasgow—whenever one of these big events is presented to it and to dwell on the concept of legacy. Given the success of those great exhibitions and other events, why was it ever in doubt that Glasgow could host the Commonwealth games? I do not know. It is interesting that those other exhibitions and events were directed foremost to the rest of the United Kingdom whereas what was unique about this event is that Glasgow sold itself to the rest of the world—and the rest of the world came. What did they find? They found that they had family, friends and neighbours who were already living in the city of Glasgow. For my money, it is the most harmonious, integrated and multicultural city in the United Kingdom. Glasgow has a tremendous track record of welcoming people not as strangers but as family when they come to the city to participate in and enjoy these great events.

There is talk of our bidding for the Euro football championships at a future date—I hope that we do and that we have the same success.

The legacy is not to be measured in bricks and mortar. Of the old exhibition, only the Kelvin Hall and the Glasgow museum remain. I once went looking for the buildings of the 1938 empire exhibition and, when I found one, I tried to read what the sign said. My wife was bewildered because when I read it out, I said “LACE O FART”. She pointed out to me that, if the missing letters were restored, it would say “PALACE OF ART”. It took me some time to work that out. The legacy of the Commonwealth games will be measured not in bricks and mortar but in the confidence and stride of the city—in the energy, passion, commitment and goodwill that we bring to ensuring that the legacy of the games is in tackling the public health record of the city of Glasgow. I came back to the games from Switzerland, where I had patted myself on the back for going up in a cable car, enjoying a very nice lunch and walking down the hill only to find Swiss families and their children walking up the hill, passing me on the way. Too often, we take the easy option, whether it is the lift in the Parliament building or the soft rather than the physically unattractive route. We must try to encourage a different attitude in the primary school children to whom Liz Smith’s amendment refers.

I hope that there is a legacy for Clyde, Beth Gilmour’s wonderful creation. I am not a big fan of mascots, but Clyde certainly captured the heart of the city and I hope that he can continue to play a part in it. I also thank the 10 people who hosted the Clyde costume, including Brian Borland, who, I was delighted to see, was given a UK points of light award for his efforts by the Prime Minister. Of course, the legacy exists in the medals for individuals, families and communities that are too numerous to name, as well as in the golden cone on top of the Wellington statue that Glasgow has instead of golden postboxes. Surely, that represents an award for the people of Glasgow—all the volunteers, the organisers, the public services and the armed forces.

I thank three politicians: Jack McConnell, for his inspiration in bringing the games to the city; Sir John Major, whom I was delighted to see at the gymnastics event, who instituted the national lottery, which gave a generation of young athletes the consistency of sustained funding in their sports—the reward for that must have given him great pride; and the cabinet secretary. She has had to wait many years for the success to unfold. Like Tessa Jowell, who earned the affection and the respect of the whole of the United Kingdom for her contribution to the London Olympics, I hope that she—rightly—feels proud of the job that she did because I know that we all do.

On politicians and sport, it was great to see the banner, “Tattie Marshall for First Minister”. Is there an MSP here who would not like to have not just Charlie Flynn’s boxing skills, but his ability to coin all those bon mots?

As a Glaswegian, I have always known that I come from a city without a castle; rather, I come from a city with a heart bigger than any other. What a heart; what a city; what a games; what a people; what a team, Kenny Stewart; what a country. Is there anyone here who does not stand taller and prouder of our city this summer? Let that be the legacy, and the commitment and drive that we bring to ensuring that that legacy produces a success.

16:40

Patricia Ferguson: Follow that, if you will. Jackson Carlaw’s comments about the experience of Glasgow and about Glasgow being an inclusive city are right. He is also right to say that we need to begin the sporting experience in our primary schools. I go further than that and suggest that we need to begin that in our homes and in our nursery schools in order to ensure that our young people are physically literate and that we are able to develop that skill for them.

For those of us of a certain age, in case we feel left out, my father, who is 90, won a bronze and a silver medal in the Erskine homes Commonwealth games. He proudly told me that he is aiming for gold in four years’ time. There is hope for us all yet.

I was struck by one of Elaine Murray’s comments because she reminded me of something that I had been thinking about last night: in effect, this year’s games are a legacy of the 2002 games. Those games gave Jack McConnell and Elaine Murray, who was then the sports minister, the inspiration to think that the games were something that Scotland and one its cities could do. At that point, it had not been decided where the games would be held; members will recall that there was a competition between Edinburgh and Glasgow for that honour. However, a direct legacy of the 2002 Manchester games was not only that the games were held in Glasgow, but that the Commonwealth endowment fund was established.

At the 2002 games, Jack McConnell was impressed by our athletes and their hard work and dedication. When he discussed with them the biggest challenges that they faced, they mentioned their facilities, coaching and other issues, but the issue that they all identified was that there was no money to help them to get to and from a games and that there was no set-up to allow them to be properly kitted out for their

events. He thought that that was wrong, so he established an endowment fund that has continued to accrue over the years. Indeed, it still provides the money that helps our athletes to get to the games and enables them to compete to the best of their abilities.

That legacy may not often be talked about, but it is important and it continues to this day. It also helps us to take to events the size of the team that we do. It is easier for us to have a big team when it is a home games, but it will be a bit more challenging for us to take a team of the same size to the Gold Coast in four years' time. Let us aim for that and see whether we can meet that aim.

Liz Smith is right to say that it is difficult to define what the legacy should be and to query whether politicians should be part of that. The idea that primary schools should be the place where skills and interests are nurtured is absolutely right.

I was also taken by Liz Smith's point about the broadcasting of sport. The Commonwealth games allowed sports that are not on our television daily to be broadcast into homes across the Commonwealth, which will no doubt do those sports a service. However, the effect goes further than that because many of those were sports in which women participate. Some of the sports were women only; others were for women and men. As we know, young women do not tend to pursue their interest in sporting activity beyond puberty as often as their male counterparts, which is an important element.

We talk a lot about football being the fastest-growing sport for women in Scotland, but it is still not regularly broadcast except on BBC Alba. I am very grateful for that, because it allows me to catch up with Glasgow City Women who, by the way, are usually the only Scottish team competing in Europe at that point. Long may that continue.

In that sense, the broadcasting of the games around the Commonwealth has been a great success.

I admit that I did not share John Mason's scepticism about whether Glasgow should, could, or would be able to pull it off. Drew Smith was right to never be in any doubt about that. We saw that at a very early stage with the number of people who went online and backed the bid and the number of people from Glasgow, Scotland and beyond who signed up to say that they wanted the games to come to Glasgow because they thought that it was Glasgow's time and that Glasgow could deliver. That was then followed up by the 50,000-odd people who applied to be volunteers.

During my volunteer journey, I met people from around the world. It took me aback that people from America and Slovenia came to volunteer in our games. In the team that I worked in there were

people who had volunteered at Manchester and London. Interestingly, some of them are now on a Facebook page because they are going to volunteer to go to the Gold Coast, too. They might get more consistently good weather on the Gold Coast, but I doubt whether they will get as much of a welcome as they did in Glasgow.

John Mason was right to say that we have to think about the demographic of the volunteers, but we also have to recognise that if people are travelling a distance to be a volunteer, as many did, the likelihood is that they will be from a particular bracket of people who can afford to take on that kind of enterprise. From some of the information that the volunteers were given, I noticed that one person travelled every day from Lancaster. I cannot imagine doing that. In my team was a young man who had come up from down south without accommodation and had no accommodation for two days. He slept on sofas, when he could find one, until one of the other volunteers asked him to come and stay with them and he did that for the rest of the games. People were making real sacrifices and doing things that perhaps they should not have been required to do.

I wonder whether the free travel that came with the uniform and accreditation that was afforded to those of us who were travelling in and around the city would have been welcome if it had been extended beyond Glasgow to those who were travelling from Ayrshire and Edinburgh, for example. I realise that that is a difficult ask but it might just be something that could be looked at if we do anything like this again. The idea of providing that kind of incentive was a good one.

One of the things that has always struck me about the Commonwealth games, besides the fact that they also integrate para-sport with able-bodied sport, is that they are careful not to include events that require the host nation and athletes to make a great outlay of money to be able to participate in sport. They do not require custom-made kayaking, for example. They do not require countries to have that level of infrastructure and expertise. They include the kind of events in which countries are more or less able to participate with a relatively small amount of facilities. That is absolutely right and it is what we should be doing.

Colin Keir hit the nail on the head when he talked about £100 trainers. That was really the point that I wanted to make. The barriers that are sometimes set up are ones that we should not allow to be there.

Drew Smith had a point. Today's debate has been one in which we all want to give praise and thanks to people for their efforts, and so we should. Perhaps we should have regular, although not necessarily frequent, debates about the legacy of the games in the future. Jackson Carlaw

mentioned that Glasgow used to be the second city of the empire. After those games, I think that we can safely say that it is now the first city of the Commonwealth.

16:49

Shona Robison: It has been great to have complete agreement across the chamber on the success of the games. I thank members for their kind words—they are very much appreciated.

I want to respond to as many of the points that have been made as possible, and I will begin by touching on one or two of the points that Patricia Ferguson made.

Patricia Ferguson was right to say that the community endowment fund has been extremely important in helping athletes to compete. I also agree with her comment that, in the bigger picture of multisport events, the games were probably more affordable than recent comparators. That is important, because if we want countries that have not previously hosted the games to make bids to do so, the costs must be reasonable and the legacy of hosting the games must be visible. As the most recent host, we are keen to tell that story. Although a significant amount of public money has been spent on the games and the infrastructure for them, it has been a good story to tell from the point of view of value of money and the return.

I point to what we did with Hampden. We did not think that there was a business case for a brand new all-singing, all-dancing athletics stadium, and the engineering solution of converting a football stadium into an athletics stadium was highly cost effective. The fact that that engineering solution is now on the market for other cities to use is extremely important, because in the present difficult financial situation, not just here but across the world, such solutions will be necessary for the future of the games.

On the issue of volunteers, we provided support for less well-off volunteers, although I recognise that, despite that, a number of people who wanted to take part in the games made many personal sacrifices. John Mason asked about the profile of the volunteers. I can tell him that the Glasgow Centre for Population Health is doing research on the demographic of games volunteers, which will be published in due course.

Liz Smith talked about the need to make better use of the school estate. We are working hard on that, as I am sure that she is aware. She also mentioned the quality of PE provision, as opposed to just the quantity of it. That is the focus of our most recent investment in PE.

Another point that Liz Smith made is worth reiterating. We should pay tribute to the BBC,

because its presentation of sport was excellent. I am talking about not just its coverage of what happened on the field of play but the wraparound programmes, which made the games accessible. Some of the minority sports that do not often get a high profile had a tremendous opportunity to raise the profile of and sell their sport. I know that the clubs in those sports have been working hard to build capacity in anticipation of an increased level of interest among people of all ages in trying out and taking up those sports.

Sandra White rightly paid tribute to the other people who made the games a success, such as the bus drivers and the workers in the hotels, the pubs and the clubs, all of whom worked hard to create a friendly atmosphere, which counted for a lot and helped people to enjoy themselves.

Drew Smith rightly said that we will all miss Kenny Stewart's emails—we will—and that Glasgow had been gallus and generous in putting on a good show. That is absolutely right. He asked about the prospect of further debates on the legacy of the games. I am happy to give a commitment to hold further debates to monitor the progress that is made, as it is right and proper that we do that.

John Pentland asked about the social capital of the volunteers. In my statement on Tuesday, I spoke about the sharing of data. We asked the people who applied to be volunteers whether they would be prepared to have their data shared with Volunteer Scotland, regardless of whether they were successful in becoming Clyde-siders. Happily, most of them said that they would be. Volunteer Scotland will now work to signpost those people into local volunteering opportunities in their community. I am sure that we will get a huge boost, not just in sport but in other areas of life, as those volunteers continue the journey that they embarked on at the games.

James Dornan mentioned the celebration city festival. The community events that went on around the games were important in creating a buzz and reaching out to people who might not be touched by the games in the traditional sense of going along as a spectator or being a volunteer. The work at Cathcart old parish church by the Rev Neil Galbraith was a great example of that. I had the pleasure of visiting the Saturday club there, where the way in which the young people—some of whom have profound disabilities—were engaged in trying sports was remarkable and fantastic to witness.

Tavish Scott was right to mention other Shetlanders—Lynda Flaws and Andrea Strachan—who made their mark, as well as Erraid Davies. That shows that we are producing fantastic athletes throughout Scotland. We must ensure that that continues, and we will do that.

Bob Doris mentioned the opportunities for sport from the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill. I should mention the £1 million legacy 2014 sustainable sport for communities fund, which aims to support communities to realise their ambitions of owning and running their own sports facilities. One of the national legacy projects that we hope to see is sports facilities taking on a new lease of life locally.

Elaine Murray was right to pay tribute to Louise Martin, as I did in my statement on Tuesday. Louise was instrumental in bringing the games to Scotland. Visionary people such as her saw the potential for Glasgow and Scotland and for sport from hosting the event.

Marco Biagi talked about the success of Pride house, which gave a voice and a platform to people whose voices are not always heard. The city very much embraced that and a huge number of people visited Pride house. The John Barrowman kiss added to the clear message—although there was no lecturing—about where we are coming from on equality. We now have opportunities going forward. Sportscotland will support and promote the LGBT sports charter. We are continuing to work with LEAP Sports Scotland to remove barriers to participation in sport, whatever those barriers are.

Colin Keir was right to pay tribute to Mike Whittingham from the sportscotland institute of sport. No one could argue anything but that the high-performance model—sport is technical and scientific these days—has been a tremendous success. The analysis of performance for future funding plans will be undertaken in an equally scientific and proper manner.

As we would expect, George Adam talked about Paisley, but he mentioned the important sport hub at St Mirren. That is a great example of people embracing the opportunity to come together and make sport more accessible.

Richard Lyle reminded us that we have more to come. We will have the Ryder cup at the end of September, when we can once again bask in the glory of hosting a huge event—[*Interruption.*] As Roseanna Cunningham has just reminded me, it will take place in her constituency. That will present an important opportunity to promote Scotland on the world stage. As with the images of Glasgow and Scotland over the past two weeks, we will have an opportunity to promote fantastic and iconic images of Gleneagles and Scotland to the rest of the world. We will not miss that huge opportunity.

Hanzala Malik was right to pay tribute to parents. Every elite athlete starts their career by being taken to clubs and competitions. The huge sacrifice by parents and families to see someone

through from an interest in sport to elite performance cannot be overestimated. It is right and proper to remember the role of parents.

I will end on Kenny Gibson's comments about the para-sports centre. There is a great opportunity for us to add to the fantastic array of national centres and state-of-the-art facilities that we now have in Scotland by adding to it a para-sports centre.

Let us look at the network of the local 150-plus community sports hubs that will be delivered, the opening up of the school estate and the regional facilities that are providing communities and athletes with really good facilities right through to the state-of-the-art national facilities. If we think back to 10 years ago, we will see that there was very little of that infrastructure then. We now have a picture of sporting infrastructure that is there with the best. What we make of that is important. It is important that we keep using it and ensure that we get the best out of those assets. I, for one, will lead on that to ensure that we do.

I thank everybody who has taken part in this very constructive and good debate.

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): Thank you, cabinet secretary.

In concluding the debate on the legacy of the 20th Commonwealth games in Scotland, I remind members that they are all invited to join me and the First Minister along with representatives of all the organisations that were involved with the Commonwealth games in the garden lobby from 6 to 8 o'clock on Wednesday 13 August. That will give us an opportunity as a Parliament to celebrate the games and to thank those who worked so hard to make them the best ever.

Decision Time

17:01

The Presiding Officer (Tricia Marwick): There are three questions to be put as a result of today's business.

The first question is, that amendment S4M-10736.2, in the name of Patricia Ferguson, which seeks to amend motion S4M-10736, in the name of Shona Robison, on the legacy of the 20th Commonwealth games, be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

The Presiding Officer: The next question is, that amendment S4M-10736.1, in the name of Liz Smith, which seeks to amend motion S4M-10736, in the name of Shona Robison, on the legacy of the 20th Commonwealth games, be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

The Presiding Officer: The next question is, that motion S4M-10736, in the name of Shona Robison, on the legacy of the 20th Commonwealth games, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion, as amended, agreed to,

That the Parliament recognises the many ways in which the Scottish Government and partners have capitalised on the opportunities brought about by hosting the XX Commonwealth Games in Glasgow; acknowledges the excellent partnership working of a whole host of organisations, local, national, public, private and third sector, as well as the many committed individuals who continue to work together to secure a legacy fit for Scotland; congratulates all the community groups and organisations that worked so hard to ensure that the baton relay was a source of celebration in their communities and a fitting precursor to the Games themselves; considers that the initiative of UNICEF and the Games partners, which resulted in £5 million being raised to support the children of the Commonwealth, was an ingenious project that will provide benefits for years to come; welcomes the determination of the Scottish Government and partners to continue to build on these strong foundations, driving forward a legacy with immediate effect based on the core values of the Commonwealth Games, humanity, equality and destiny, but which must also emphasise the need to encourage more Scots to be more active more often while continuing to encourage, support and develop the country's athletes; looks ahead to 2018 when the next Commonwealth Games will be hosted by the Gold Coast; reflects on the further commitment and drive required to secure a lasting legacy that Scotland can be rightly proud of; considers that the volunteers recruited to work at the Games should be a vital part of that legacy, and believes that, in line with recent advice from Scotland's sporting bodies, the key policies that will deliver a permanent and meaningful legacy are those that focus on the improvement in the qualitative sporting experience for primary school-age children when they first develop their interest in, and enthusiasm for, sporting activity.

Meeting closed at 17:02.

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