



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Published 18 March 2026
SP Paper 1085
15th Report, 2026 (Session 6)

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

Annual report of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee 2025-26



Published in Scotland by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body.

All documents are available on the Scottish
Parliament website at:
<https://www.parliament.scot/documents>

For information on the Scottish Parliament contact
Public Information on:
Telephone: 0131 348 5000
Textphone: 0800 092 7100
Email: info@parliament.scot

Contents

Introduction	1
Membership changes	1
Meetings	2
Legislation	3
Bills	3
Non-surgical Procedures and Functions of Medical Reviewers (Scotland) Bill	3
Right to Addiction Recovery (Scotland) Bill	5
Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill	6
Subordinate legislation	6
LCMs	7
Inquiries/case studies	11
ADHD and autism pathways and support inquiry	11
Budget scrutiny 2026-27	12
Pandemic preparedness	12
Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland	12
The Care Inspectorate	13
Welfare and sustainability in Scottish youth football	13
Children and young people's participation in sport and physical activity	14
Sport and physical activity	14
Public Health Scotland	14
Patient Safety Commissioner for Scotland	15
Food Standards Scotland	15
Joint Committee working	17
Reducing drug deaths in Scotland and tackling problem drug use	17
Draft Climate change plan	17
Proposed National Good Food Nation Plan	18
Equal opportunities	19
Petitions	20

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

To consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care.

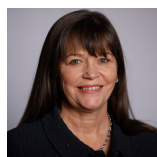


hscs.committee@parliament.scot

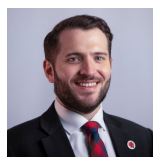


0131 3485979

Committee Membership



Convener
Clare Haughey
Scottish National Party



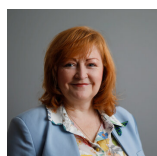
Deputy Convener
Paul Sweeney
Scottish Labour



Joe FitzPatrick
Scottish National Party



Sandesh Gulhane
Scottish Conservative
and Unionist Party



Emma Harper
Scottish National Party



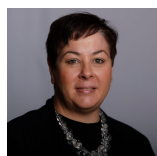
Gillian Mackay
Scottish Green Party



Carol Mochan
Scottish Labour



David Torrance
Scottish National Party



Elena Whitham
Scottish National Party



Brian Whittle
Scottish Conservative
and Unionist Party

Introduction

1. This annual report covers the work of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee over the period from 13 May 2025 to 8 April 2026.
2. The role of the Committee is to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care.

Membership changes

3. There was one temporary membership change in the reporting year:
 - On 21 May 2025, Patrick Harvie replaced Gillian Mackay as a member of the Committee to cover maternity leave.
 - On 17 December 2025, Gillian Mackay replaced Patrick Harvie as a member of the Committee (return from maternity leave).

Meetings

4. The Committee held 33 meetings over this period, one of which was a joint meeting with members of the Criminal Justice Committee and Social Justice and Social Security Committee and the other a joint meeting with members of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee. 2 meetings were held fully in private, 2 fully in public, and 29 were public meetings with private agenda items. Private items were predominantly consideration of evidence, the Committee's work programme and draft reports.
5. 184 witnesses attended the Committee during the reporting year.



Source: Scottish Parliament

Legislation

Bills



Bills scrutinised

Source: Scottish Parliament

Non-surgical Procedures and Functions of Medical Reviewers (Scotland) Bill

6. The Scottish Government introduced the [Non-surgical Procedures and Functions of Medical Reviewers \(Scotland\) Bill](#) on 8 October 2025.
7. The Scottish Government describes the purpose of Part 1 of the Bill as being to make sure that non-surgical procedures are safe, hygienic, and regulated. The Scottish Government also believes that these types of procedure may cause children and young people physical or psychological harm and, for this reason, should only be provided to adults.

The purpose of Part 2 of the Bill is to update the rules around certification of death.

8. Part 1 of the Bill aims to make it illegal to provide certain types of procedures to people under the age of 18. Under the Bill, it would only be legal to provide these services from properties that meet certain requirements.

The procedures covered by the Bill are ones that:

- pierce or penetrate the skin
- are not provided as part of the health service
- are not provided by a health care provider for the purposes of treating illness,

and

- are not regulated under a type of licensing scheme set out in the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.
9. The Bill would also allow the Scottish Government to introduce more restrictions and requirements for these types of procedure in the future. This could include:
- saying who can provide them
 - what sort of training or qualifications are needed to provide them
 - how the rules around them are enforced
10. Part 2 of the Bill would change the Certification of Death (Scotland) Act 2011. If passed, it would:
- change when someone can request a review of a medical certificate of cause of death, and when a request for a review can be rejected
 - remove the need for authorisation of applications for cremation when someone dies outside of Scotland, but in another part of the UK, and is going to be cremated in Scotland
11. Immediately following its introduction, the Committee issued two calls for views about the Bill, which were open for submissions between 10 October 2025 and 14 November 2025:
- A structured call for views for stakeholders and organisations. The [responses](#) have been published on Citizen Space.
 - A digital platform aimed at gathering the views and experiences of individuals who have experience of accessing and receiving, or providing, non-surgical procedures. The [responses](#) have been published on Your Priorities.

The Committee received a combined total of 153 responses to both calls for views.

12. To inform Stage 1 scrutiny of the Bill, the Committee held evidence sessions to hear from the following categories of witnesses:

[2 December 2025](#)

- Consumer and individual practitioners representatives
- Industry representatives

[9 December 2025](#)

- Healthcare representative bodies
- Regulators, enforcers and inspectors

[16 December 2025](#)

- Medical Reviewers and death certification

- Minister for Public Health and Women's Health
13. The Committee published its [Stage 1 Report](#) on the Bill on 27 January 2026. The Minister for Public Health and Women's Health [responded](#) to the report on 3 February 2026. The Stage 1 debate took place in the Chamber on [5 February 2026](#).
 14. The Committee commenced and completed Stage 2 proceedings for the Bill at its meeting on [24 February 2026](#).

Right to Addiction Recovery (Scotland) Bill

15. Douglas Ross MSP introduced the [Right to Addiction Recovery \(Scotland\) Bill](#) on 14 May 2024.
16. The purpose of the Bill is to allow people who have been diagnosed by a health professional as being addicted to either alcohol, or drugs, or both to be provided with a treatment determination, and the treatment that is appropriate for them. Other key provisions in the Bill include:
 - The treatment must be made available to them within three weeks of the treatment determination being made
 - If the health professional thinks that no treatment is appropriate, or that the treatment which the person wants is not appropriate, then the health professional must tell the person in writing why they think this
 - If the person does not agree with the health professional's decision, they can get a second opinion from a different health professional
 - The Scottish Government must report on its progress towards providing treatment to people addicted to either alcohol, or drugs, or both, every year. The report should be given to Parliament and published by the Government
 - The report needs to include certain statistical information for each health board area
 - The Scottish Government must prepare a code of practice to help the bodies which help implement the Bill know what they need to do. These are bodies like health boards and local authorities.
17. As the lead Committee, the Committee began Stage 1 scrutiny of the Bill by running a call for written evidence during the previous reporting year.
18. The Committee agreed a programme of oral evidence on the Bill comprising five meetings. This concluded by taking evidence from the Member in charge of the Bill at the Committee's meeting on 27 May 2025.
19. The Committee published its [Stage 1 Report](#) on the Bill on 23 September 2025. Having concluded its scrutiny of the Bill at Stage 1, the Committee was unable to recommend that the general principles of the Bill be agreed to.
20. A [Stage 1 debate](#) took place on 9 October 2025 to consider and decide on the

general principles of the Bill. At the conclusion of Stage 1, the Parliament voted against the general principles of the Bill, with 52 votes for, 63 against and no abstentions, meaning that the Bill fell.

Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill

21. Liam McArthur MSP introduced the [Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults \(Scotland\) Bill](#) on 27 March 2024.
22. The purpose of the Bill is to allow terminally ill adults in Scotland, who are eligible, to lawfully request, and be provided with, assistance by health professionals to end their own life.

To be eligible to be provided with assistance to end their life, a person must:

- be terminally ill (have an advanced and progressive disease, illness or condition which they cannot recover from, and which is expected to cause their premature death)
- be aged 16 or over
- have been resident in Scotland for at least 12 months be registered with a GP practice in Scotland
- have sufficient capacity to make and understand the decision

Two doctors are required to assess a person as being eligible to be provided with assistance to end their own life. Both doctors also need to be satisfied that a person is acting voluntarily, without being coerced or pressured.

If confirmed as eligible, a terminally ill adult can lawfully be provided with an approved substance by a health professional. They can choose to administer this substance to themselves to end their life. Assisting death outside of what is set out in the Bill would remain unlawful.

23. On 13 May 2025, the Parliament voted in favour of the general principles of the Bill at Stage 1 by 70 votes to 56 with one abstention.
24. The Committee commenced Stage 2 proceedings on the Bill on 4 November 2025. Proceedings continued at the Committee's meetings on 11 and 18 November and concluded at the Committee's meeting on 25 November 2025. [The Bill as amended at Stage 2](#) was published on 26 November 2025.

Subordinate legislation

25. During the reporting year, the Committee considered 31 pieces of subordinate legislation :
 - 20 negative Scottish Statutory Instruments

- 9 affirmative Scottish Statutory Instruments
- 2 laid only Scottish Statutory Instruments



SSIs considered

Source: Scottish Parliament

LCMs

Tobacco and Vapes Bill

26. The Committee considered four UK Parliament Bills in the reporting year.
27. A Tobacco and Vapes Bill was originally introduced in the House of Commons by the Conservative UK Government on 20 March 2024.
28. Following the UK General Election on 4 July 2024, the newly elected UK Labour Government subsequently introduced a [modified version of the Tobacco and Vapes Bill](#) in the House of Commons on 5 November 2024.
29. On 17 February 2026 the UK Government tabled a number of amendments to the Bill which extend to Scotland. This triggered the need for a second supplementary [LCM-S6-51b](#), which was lodged in the Scottish Parliament on 27 February 2026.
30. The Committee took evidence on the further supplementary LCM from the Minister for Public Health and Women's Health at its meeting on 10 March 2026. The Committee published a [report on the supplementary LCM](#) on 18 March 2026 which recommended that the Parliament agree to a legislative consent motion in similar terms to the draft motion included in the supplementary LCM.

Employment Rights Bill

31. The Committee has considered two supplementary LCMs in relation to the [Employment Rights Bill](#) this reporting year:

- [LCM-S6-53a](#)
- [LCM-S6-53b](#)

These were lodged on 3 April 2025 and 14 August 2025.

32. The purpose of the Employment Rights Bill is to deliver the key legislative reforms set out in the UK Government's [Plan to Make Work Pay](#). The Bill's Explanatory Notes state its purpose is to:

” ... update and enhance existing employment rights and make provision for new rights; make provision regarding pay and conditions in particular sectors; and make reforms in relation to trade union matters and industrial action. It further creates a new regime for the enforcement of employment law.

33. The [original LCM](#) was lodged on 11 December 2024 and subsequently considered by the the Economy and Fair Work Committee, which published its [report on the LCM](#) on 16 May 2025.

34. A [supplementary LCM](#) (LCM-S6-53a) was lodged by Neil Gray MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, on 3 April 2025. Due to the subject matter which related to the Social Care Negotiating Bodies provisions of the Bill, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee was designated by the Parliamentary Bureau as lead committee to consider the supplementary LCM.

35. The Committee took oral evidence from stakeholder organisations regarding LCM-S6-53a on [20 May 2025](#). The Committee then took evidence from the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport, and supporting officials, on [27 May 2025](#).

The Committee then published its report on the supplementary LCM on [10 June 2025](#), recommending that the Parliament agree to a legislative consent motion in similar terms to the draft motion included in the supplementary LCM.

36. A [further supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum \(LCM-S6-53b\)](#) was lodged in the Scottish Parliament on 14 August 2025 by Tom Arthur MSP, Minister for Social Care and Mental Wellbeing. Since this further supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum again related to the Social Care Negotiating Bodies provisions of the Bill, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee was designated as lead committee to consider the further supplementary LCM.

37. Ahead of oral evidence, the Committee sought written views on the further supplementary LCM from selected stakeholders.

The Committee then took oral evidence from Tom Arthur MSP, Minister for Social Care and Wellbeing, at its meeting on 2 September 2025.

38. The Committee published its report on the further [supplementary LCM on 3 September 2025](#) recommending that the Parliament agree to a legislative consent motion in similar terms to the draft motion included in the further supplementary LCM.

Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill

39. At its meeting on [23 September 2025](#), the Committee considered the [Legislative Consent Memorandum](#) lodged by the Scottish Government in respect of the [Terminally Ill Adults \(End of Life\) Bill](#).
40. The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill was introduced by Kim Leadbeater MP as a Private Member's Bill in the House of Commons on 10 October 2024. During the House of Commons' report stage, which took place from 16 May to 20 June 2025, several amendments were agreed, including amendment 77, which extends the scope of some of the provisions of the Bill to Scotland.
41. The purpose of the Bill is to make provision for a terminally ill person living in England or Wales, aged 18 and above, with capacity, who has been ordinarily resident in England or Wales for 12 months, and who is registered with a GP practice in England or Wales, to be given - on request - assistance to end their own life
42. Under the Sewel Convention, the UK Parliament does not normally legislate on devolved matters, or to alter the legislative competence of the Parliament or the executive competence of the Scottish Government, without the consent of the Scottish Parliament. Consent is given by means of a resolution of the Parliament.

As such, legislative consent memorandum LCM-S6-62 was lodged on 27 August 2025 by Neil Gray MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, and referred to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee for scrutiny.

43. The LCM states that Clause 43 makes provision requiring the Secretary of State to make regulations prohibiting the publication, printing, distribution or designing (anywhere) of advertisements whose purpose or effect is to promote a voluntary assisted dying (VAD) service, and prohibiting causing the publication, printing, distribution or designing of such advertisements. There is scope for exemptions. For example, these can relate to the provision of information to users or providers of these services. Clause 43 also provides that regulations made under this section may make any provision that could be made by an Act of Parliament.

Clause 54(3) of the Bill provides that regulations under clause 43 can only be made if a draft has been laid before and approved by a resolution of each of the House of Commons and House of Lords. Clause 43 also provides that any regulations may not amend this Act and must provide that any offence created by the regulation is punishable with a fine. A VAD service, for the purposes of this clause, means the service as set out in accordance with the Act (i.e. VAD services in England and Wales).

44. In preparation for scrutiny of the LCM, clerks to the Committee wrote to selected stakeholders to request their written views on the LCM.
45. The Committee took oral evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Neil Gray MSP, and supporting officials, at its meeting on [23 September 2025](#).
46. [In its report](#), the Committee recommended that the Parliament agree to a legislative consent motion in similar terms to the draft motion included in the draft LCM-S6-62.

Medical Training (Prioritisation) Bill

47. At its meeting on 10 February 2026, the Committee considered [Legislative Consent Memorandum LCM-S6-72](#) introduced by the Scottish Government in respect of the [Medical Training \(Prioritisation\) Bill](#).
48. The Bill is intended to introduce a system that gives graduates from UK medical schools (and certain other groups) priority for training places to become doctors. The Bill has been subject to an expedited timescale to allow prioritisation to be implemented for training programme recruitment rounds that are currently live, and would affect those receiving offers for training posts starting in August 2026.
49. The Scottish Government LCM recommended that the Scottish Parliament consent to clauses 1 to 8 of the Bill.
50. Ahead of consideration of the LCM and to help further inform its scrutiny, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee wrote to a number of stakeholder organisations seeking their written views on the Bill and LCM.
51. The Committee then took oral evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Neil Gray MSP, and supporting officials, at its meeting on 10 February 2026.
52. The Committee published its report on [11 February 2026](#) in which it recommended that Parliament agree to the LCM.

Inquiries/case studies

ADHD and autism pathways and support inquiry

53. In April 2025, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee agreed to undertake an inquiry into Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and autism pathways and support.
54. The inquiry considered the following in relation to neurodevelopmental pathways for ADHD and autism:
 - referral pathways
 - assessment, criteria and treatment thresholds
 - waiting times
 - "waiting well" and support pre-diagnosis
 - transitions between services
 - funding
 - workforce
 - the impact on individuals of receiving a diagnosis or waiting for a diagnosis.
55. In March 2025, the Committee wrote to each of the fourteen NHS territorial boards requesting information on neurodevelopmental pathways and waiting times. SPICe used the data received to produce a briefing on [Neurodevelopmental Pathways and Waiting Times in Scotland](#).
56. The Committee issued two calls for views which were open for submissions between 23 June 2025 and 18 August 2025:
 - A structured call for views for stakeholders and organisations. This received 86 responses, which have been published on [Citizen Space](#).
 - A digital platform aimed at gathering the views and experiences of individuals, families and support workers. This received 1158 responses, which have been published on [Your Priorities](#).
57. Committee Members held two informal engagement sessions on 25 September 2025 to hear directly from people with ADHD and/or autism.
58. The Committee took oral evidence as part of the inquiry at the following meetings:
 - [30 September 2025](#) - Evidence from third sector organisations
 - [7 October 2025](#) - Evidence from healthcare professionals and health boards
 - [28 October 2025](#) - Evidence from Minister for Social Care and Mental Wellbeing, Scottish Government

59. The Committee published its concluding [report](#) on the inquiry on 20 January 2026.

Budget scrutiny 2026-27

60. The Committee decided to focus its pre-budget scrutiny for 2026-27 on Project Budgeting and Marginal Analysis (PMBR) approaches, specifically in the context of the mental health budget.
61. To inform its pre-budget scrutiny for 2026-27, the Committee issued a survey to Scotland's 31 integration authorities which sought to establish how much is currently being spent on mental health services, and on what type of services, including identified spend on preventative mental health services. The survey also sought to understand how decisions on spending on mental health services are taken.
62. The Committee also issued a [call for views](#) which ran from 26 June to 15 August 2025 and received 54 published responses.
63. The Committee took oral evidence from two panels of stakeholders at its meetings on [9 September 2025](#) and [16 September 2025](#) respectively.
64. The Committee published its [pre-budget scrutiny 2026-27 report](#) on 31 October 2025.
65. The Committee received a response to its report from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care on [16 January 2026](#).
66. The Committee concluded its budget scrutiny exercise by taking evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care on the Scottish Government's Budget for 2026-27 at its meeting on [27 January 2026](#).

Pandemic preparedness

67. [At its meeting on 3 June 2025](#), the Committee took oral evidence from the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, the Deputy Director of the Population Health Resilience and Protection Division in Scottish Government and the Interim Director of Clinical and Protecting Health on the subject of pandemic preparedness.
68. The purpose of the session was to explore what lessons have been learned from the response to the Covid-19 pandemic and what structures and governance have been put in place to deal with potential future pandemics.

Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland

69. [At its meeting on 3 June 2025](#), the Committee took oral evidence from a panel of witnesses from the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland. The Mental Welfare Commission is an independent organisation originally established in [1960 under the](#)

Mental Health Act.

70. The session explored a range of issues including:
- The suitability of the Mental Welfare Commission's current inspection regime and complaints procedure (particularly in light of recent media coverage of concerns relating to the treatment of young people admitted to the Skye House adolescent in-patient unit in Glasgow);
 - Implications of related recommendations from the independent Scottish Mental Health Law Review;
 - Ongoing issues around long-term detainment and delayed discharge of individuals with learning disabilities and complex needs; and
 - Key challenges to mental health services.

The Care Inspectorate

71. [At its meeting on 10 June 2025](#), the Committee took oral evidence from a panel of witnesses from the Care Inspectorate.
72. The session explored a range of issues including:
- Care Inspectorate governance and Corporate Plan 2022 - 2025
 - Approach to inspections
 - Handling of complaints and data collection
 - Monitoring and evaluation of social care quality improvement
 - Use of digital technology and innovation
 - Lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Welfare and sustainability in Scottish youth football

73. In December 2024, the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland (the Commissioner) and campaign group RealGrassroots (RG) [filed complaints](#) with the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) concerning rules governing young players in Scotland.
74. The complaints argued that the Scottish Football Association (SFA) and Scottish Professional Football League (SPFL) rules restricted youth players' freedom to move between club academies, violating UK competition law, and potentially constituting economic exploitation of children, in breach of human rights.
75. It is important to note that, though working in tandem, two distinct complaints were made to the CMA – one from RealGrassroots and one from the Commissioner.

RealGrassroots argued that the rules prioritise the commercial interests of football clubs (who make up membership of the SFA and SPFL) over the interests of youth players. They further argue that the rules limit competition for young footballers in Scotland, violate competition law and restrict children's rights.

The Commissioner complaint raises concerns around the rights of children and over the harm it sees being inflicted upon children. The complaint makes the case that, without intervention, the SFA, SPFL and their member clubs will continue current practices and to breach the rights of children.

76. The Committee held an evidence session with complainers RealGrassroots and the Commissioner, as well as RealGrassroots' legal representatives from GunnerCooke, at its meeting on [17 June 2025](#).
77. The Committee then held an evidence session with SPFL Chief Executive, Neil Doncaster, and SFA Chief Executive, Ian Maxwell, at its meeting on [23 September 2025](#).

Children and young people's participation in sport and physical activity

78. At its meeting on [24 June 2025](#), the Committee took evidence from selected stakeholders to investigate trends and potential barriers to participation of children and young people in sport and physical activity.
79. Immediately before the evidence session, the Committee also received a private briefing from Academics and SPICe fellows whose research related to participation of children and young people in physical activity.

Sport and physical activity

80. At its meeting on [3 March 2026](#), the Committee held an evidence session regarding key issues and future priorities for sport and physical activity in Scotland. The Committee also discussed the forthcoming 2026 Commonwealth Games - including delivery and its potential impact in encouraging people across Scotland to be physically active.

Public Health Scotland

81. At its meeting on [10 March 2026](#), the Committee undertook periodic scrutiny of the work of Public Health Scotland.
82. Key themes explored during the session included:
 - Progress towards addressing the public health priorities published in 2018;

- Key factors behind stalling life expectancy and widening health inequalities in Scotland and actions likely to have the biggest impact in addressing these;
- Embedding a preventative approach to public health and prioritising preventative spending;
- Progress towards tackling social determinants of health;
- Recommended actions for the next Scottish Parliament to improve public health;
- Action to improve the food environment and encourage healthy weight.

Patient Safety Commissioner for Scotland

83. [At its meeting on 3 February 2026](#), the Committee took evidence from Scotland's first Patient Safety Commissioner (PSC). This followed the Committee leading the Parliament's scrutiny of the Patient Safety Commissioner for Scotland Bill earlier in the session, and the subsequent appointment of Karen Titchener to the role in September 2025.
84. During the session, the Committee explored a range of themes with Karen Titchener, including:
- Demonstrating independence and how to establish public confidence in the role
 - Ensuring meaningful participation of individuals with lived experience and those from marginalised groups
 - The PSC's initial priorities and strategic plan
 - Avoiding duplication and managing expectations in a 'cluttered' scrutiny landscape
 - Taking a preventative approach and building capacity in data analysis and intelligence gathering
 - The PSC's role in implementation of public inquiries and reviews relevant to patient safety
 - Tackling cultural barriers to improving patient safety in Scotland.

Food Standards Scotland

85. During this reporting year, the Committee undertook periodic scrutiny of the work of Food Standards Scotland on two separate occasions, at its meetings on [10 June 2025](#) and [17 February 2026](#).
86. At its meeting on 10 June 2025, key themes discussed included:

- Key achievements since Food Standards Scotland was established in April 2015 and key challenges and opportunities for the future
- Performance against Food Standards Scotland's strategy for 2021-2026 and key priorities for its new strategy for 2026-31
- Ultra-processed foods
- The Good Food Nation Plan and the Scottish Food Commission
- Fortification of food and the findings of the Dietary Intake in Scotland's Children (DISH) report
- Impact on food standards and consumer protection of the UK Internal Market Act (2020)
- Financial sustainability of Food Standards Scotland.

87. At its meeting on 17 February 2026, representatives of Food Standards Scotland were joined by Professor Mary Brennan, principal investigator and lab director at the Living Good Food Nation Lab and appointed member of the Scottish Food Commission. Key themes discussed during this session included:

- Food Standards Scotland's 2026-31 strategy
- The finalised national Good Food Nation Plan and role of the Scottish Food Commission
- A prevention-focused food system and the Population Health Framework
- Interaction between the Good Food Nation Plan and the Climate Change Plan
- Food processing, food safety and food crime.

Joint Committee working

Reducing drug deaths in Scotland and tackling problem drug use

88. Throughout this session, members of the Criminal Justice, Health, Social Care and Sport, and Social Justice and Social Security committees have been undertaking periodic joint scrutiny of Scottish Government policy on reducing drug deaths and tackling problem drug use in Scotland.
89. As part of this ongoing work, on [2 October 2025](#), Members of the Criminal Justice, Health, Social Care and Sport, and Social Justice and Social Security committees held a joint evidence session with selected stakeholders about the operation of a Safer Drug Consumption Facility ("The Thistle Centre") in Glasgow, followed by an evidence session with the Minister for Drugs and Alcohol Policy and Sport and supporting officials. On [12 February 2026](#), Members of the Health, Social Care and Sport, and Social Justice and Social Security committees met to consider a draft Legacy Report on their joint scrutiny of Scottish Government policy on reducing drug deaths and tackling problem drug use in Scotland, undertaken over the course of Session 6.

Draft Climate change plan

90. A [draft Climate Change Plan \(CCP\) for 2026-2040](#) was laid in the Scottish Parliament on 6 November 2025. Once laid, the draft CCP was subject to parliamentary scrutiny for a period of 120 days, ending on 5 March 2026.
91. The Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee led cross-committee scrutiny of the draft CCP. Aside from the Net-Zero, Energy and Transport and Health, Social Care and Sport Committees, the following other committees also contributed to cross-committee scrutiny of the draft CCP:
- Economy and Fair Work Committee
 - Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee
 - Rural Affairs and Islands Committee
 - Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
 - Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee
 - Criminal Justice Committee
 - Public Audit Committee.
92. The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee's scrutiny was focused on those aspects of the draft CCP that directly engaged the Committee's remit.

93. A wide range of organisations submitted responses to a [call for views](#) on what should be in the draft CCP, which closed in September 2025, and the Net Zero Committee conducted further engagement through the Your Priorities platform which ran until [25 January 2026](#).
94. The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee took oral evidence on the draft CCP at its meetings on [13 January 2026](#), [20 January 2026](#), and [10 February 2026](#).
95. The Committee published [a report on its scrutiny of the draft CCP](#) on 4 March 2026.

Proposed National Good Food Nation Plan

96. A [proposed national Good Food Nation Plan](#) was published by the Scottish Government along with a number of supplementary documents on 27 June 2025.
97. According to the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022, before finalising it, the Scottish Government is required to lay a proposed national Good Food Nation Plan “before the Scottish Parliament for a period of 60 days, of which no fewer than 30 days must be days on which the Parliament is neither dissolved nor in recess”.
98. In the limited time available, the Committee worked closely with the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee and the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee to co-ordinate effective scrutiny of the Proposed National Good Food Nation Plan.
99. In collaboration with the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee, a [call for views](#) was issued on 30 June 2025 which ran until 15 August 2025 and received [65 responses](#).
100. The Committee took oral evidence on the proposed national Good Food Nation Plan at its meeting on [2 September 2025](#), hearing from selected stakeholders before taking evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, Mairi Gougeon MSP, and supporting officials.
101. The Committee published a report on its scrutiny of the proposed national Good Food Nation Plan on [30 September 2025](#).

Equal opportunities

102. During the inquiry into ADHD and autism pathways and support, the Committee engaged with many autistic people and people with ADHD through its call for views, an informal online engagement session and formal oral evidence sessions. An Easy Read, Gaelic and British Sign Language (BSL) version of the call for views was made available.
103. The Committee took several steps to ensure witnesses felt supported to give oral evidence by:
- meeting with them before the session and showing them the committee room
 - providing them with the expected questions in advance
 - arranging a quiet room for witnesses to use during the session
 - sending witnesses a link to the Accessibility Guide
 - asking if any other adjustments would be needed.
104. As part of its ongoing scrutiny of the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill at Stage 2, the Committee wanted to seek the views of young people regarding the age limit aspect of the Bill. To this end, it worked with the Scottish Youth Parliament to host a workshop on this subject with a group of Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament in September 2025. The Scottish Youth Parliament then produced a [report summarising discussions at the workshop](#) which it submitted to the Committee as correspondence.
105. Also related to the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill, to support improved accessibility of the legislative process, following the conclusion of Stage 2 proceedings, in January 2026, SPICe worked with Public Information to produce a summary of the outcome of Stage 2 in [BSL](#), [Easy Read](#) and [Gaelic](#) language formats.

Petitions



2 Petitions considered

Source: Scottish Parliament

106. The Committee considered two petitions referred to us during the course of this reporting year. PE2156 was referred in the context of the Committee’s inquiry into ADHD and autism pathways and support and subsequently closed when the inquiry was concluded. The Committee agreed that PE1924 should remain open as further consideration of the issues raised would be beneficial.

Petitions formally referred to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee and considered during 2025-26

Petition number and title	Current status	Date referred	Date closed
PE1924: Complete an emergency in-depth review of Women's Health services in Caithness & Sutherland	Under consideration	15 June 2022	N/A
PE2156: Improve access to ADHD diagnosis and treatment across Scotland	Closed	18 June 2025	10 February 2026

107. Although not formally referred, during this reporting year, the Committee also considered the issues raised in [PE2137: Fair regulation for non-medical aesthetic injectors](#) as part of its scrutiny of the Non-surgical Procedures and Functions of Medical Reviewers (Scotland) Bill.
108. The Committee also considered a [Session 5 Public Petitions Committee report on the petition PE1319: Improving youth football in Scotland](#), originally lodged in 2010, as part of its scrutiny of welfare and sustainability in Scottish youth football during June and September 2025.

