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Economy and Fair Work Committee

Legacy Report of the Economy and Fair Work Committee, Session 6



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Economy and Fair Work Committee

To consider and report on matters within the responsibility of the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic, with the exception of Gaelic; and on matters relating to just transition.



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Introduction

1. This report is an overview and summary of the Committee's work during Session 6, to assist a successor committee. The report also highlights ongoing and forthcoming issues that, in the view of this Committee, would merit scrutiny in Session 7.

Remit

2. Broadly, the Committee's remit covered matters within the responsibility of the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic (except Gaelic) with the addition of just transition. During the previous Session, the economy committee had energy within its title and remit. During Session 6 however, energy sat with the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee. The Economy and Fair Work Committee gained tourism and broadband connectivity. Throughout scrutiny and inquiry work, the Committee's main areas of focus were action to support business, women's enterprise, and workforce skills development.
3. The public bodies that fell within our remit were Consumer Scotland, Highland and Islands Enterprise, Registers of Scotland, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish National Investment Bank, South of Scotland Enterprise, and VisitScotland. At a minimum, the Committee held annual scrutiny sessions with each body.
4. The National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) is the Scottish Government's ten-year cross-government strategy to deliver a 'step change' in Scotland's economic performance. Delivering a coherent long-term strategy to improve living standards is a key challenge for any government. Throughout our scrutiny work, we had regard to NSET and sought to ensure that developments in other policy areas were consistent with it.
5. This Session, scrutiny of skills policy engaged the remits of both the Economy and Fair Work Committee and the Education, Children and Young People Committee (ECYP). Our interest was from the perspective of Scotland's labour market and how Scottish Government skills policy and delivery aligns with business need and future workforce requirements. The ECYP Committee covered the education system and pathway choices for young people to gain and develop qualifications.
6. Cross-committee responsibility for skills scrutiny created an opportunity for joint work. An approach for joint working was agreed with the ECYP Committee, but due to membership changes and logistical challenges, not progressed. Instead, the two committees co-ordinated their scrutiny.
7. We would encourage successor committees to identify opportunities for cross-committee or joint committee working. Such approaches can minimise duplication, promote collaboration and potentially provide a more rounded perspective, than might otherwise be achieved by single committee scrutiny.
8. The Committee understands the rationale for committee remits being aligned with the remits of cabinet secretaries. Nevertheless, we suggest that the Parliament should consider carefully the remits of subject committees, regardless of cabinet secretary responsibility, to ensure cross-cutting issues are given appropriate scrutiny and committees are not unnecessarily constrained. In particular, we recommend that the remit of a future economy committee must be broader to take account of the drivers of Scotland's economy.

Overview and themes from scrutiny work and inquiries

9. Annexe A sets out our scrutiny work and inquiries. Before highlighting some key points and themes, it is worth stating that the Committee's scrutiny role was enhanced by informal evidence gathering, often co-ordinated or facilitated by the Parliament's Participation and Communities Team. These informal opportunities enabled members to meet people, including young people, in more relaxed settings to listen to their experiences to inform our evidence sessions with public bodies and Government ministers. To be meaningful and worthwhile, informal evidence gathering requires buy-in from members and often an additional time commitment. We would encourage our successor committee to make every effort to supplement formal evidence gathering with informal approaches, including visits and discussion panels in locations beyond the central belt and to make full use of the Parliament's Participation and Communities Team.

Disaggregation and collection of data

10. We have repeatedly asked for gender-disaggregated data on women's business activity and access to, and uptake of, finance and business support. The Scottish Government committed to improving data collection and developing a dashboard of measures. The envisaged disaggregated data is still not publicly available. This is something an incoming committee will wish to follow-up.

Consumer Scotland

11. [Consumer Scotland](#) was established in 2020 as a statutory, independent body to advocate on behalf of consumers and represent consumer interests. The Committee has been interested in Consumer Scotland's efficiency and effectiveness, value for money, how outcomes are measured, public reach, and how it supports small businesses. An independent review of Consumer Scotland's performance is about to conclude. A successor committee will wish to consider the report of that review.
12. We would encourage our successor committee to consider inviting regular written updates from Consumer Scotland on its work and the difference it makes to consumers, including vulnerable consumers. An incoming committee is likely to find it helpful to receive regular information on delivery against Consumer Scotland's statutory objectives and on how it works collaboratively with others in the sector. The Consumer Duty could be a topic for post-legislative scrutiny.

Enterprise Agencies

13. [Scotland's three enterprise agencies](#) play key roles in delivering the Scottish Government's economic objectives. Budget lines for the enterprise agencies represent the largest area of Scottish Government expenditure scrutinised by this Committee. The Committee's was interested in value for money, how performance is being measured, governance, and effective board oversight.
14. During our 2026-27 pre-budget scrutiny, the Committee was unclear, particularly in the case of Scottish Enterprise, what its impacts had been, what outcomes were

being delivered, and how Scottish Enterprise satisfies itself that its work is additional. On business support provided by the enterprise agencies, although data is available on businesses that receive it, the Committee was interested to know which businesses did not receive support and the reasons for that. The Committee also asked about the role of the Boards and the extent to which there is an appropriate challenge function being exercised. The Committee suggests that these are areas that an incoming committee may wish to give further consideration to.

Registers of Scotland

15. From the start of the Session, members identified particular interest in progress by [Registers of Scotland](#) (RoS) towards clearing the registration backlog and completing the Land Register. The Committee received monthly written updates from the Keeper of the Registers on open casework, turnaround times, and completing the Land Register, as well as regular quarterly updates on RoS's wider performance. The RoS corporate plan has a number of relevant key performance indicators (KPIs), one of which is to ensure that by March 2027, no new registration applications add to the backlog. The Committee suggests that the successor committee, within whose remit RoS falls, should continue the practice of receiving monthly and quarterly written updates.
16. Two new registers associated with the Moveable Transactions (Scotland) Act 2023: the Register of Assignations; and the Register of Statutory Pledges were established in Spring 2025. The Committee suggests that the successor committee will wish to review the operation of these two new registers.

Scottish National Investment Bank

17. The [Scottish National Investment Bank](#) (SNIB) was launched in 2020. It is wholly owned by Scottish Ministers and financed by the Scottish Government. It was established to support economic growth by providing investment finance to businesses and projects. SNIB is reliant on capital received from the Scottish Government. HM Treasury (HMT) rules prevent SNIB from recycling capital, as is the case for other state-owned banks or other investment vehicles. The Committee regards this as sub-optimal as this restricts the capacity for compounded growth. The Parliament's intention was, in due course, for SNIB to have a full range of financing powers and flexibility to function as a perpetual fund. HMT dispensation is required but little progress has been made. The Committee recently wrote to HMT seeking further clarification but is yet to receive a response. The successor committee will wish to follow this up.

VisitScotland

18. [VisitScotland](#) operates in a competitive environment and has experienced budget squeeze. The Committee has been keen to protect VisitScotland's international promotional spend. In 2024, VisitScotland announced a two-year phased closure programme for all visitor information centres, to focus on a "digital first" approach; an approach that the Committee regards as providing a woefully inadequate service. These closures are part of VisitScotland's wider strategic change programme. An incoming committee may wish to evaluate the programme.
19. Tourism and hospitality are important sectors for Scotland's economy because of the economic activity generated and the number of jobs supported. Tourism is

identified as a 'growth sector' by the Scottish Government, with the potential to deliver increased productivity and growth through its comparative advantage. Evidence from industry leaders in hospitality and tourism highlighted concerns in the sectors about rising energy and employment costs and, for some, rising non-domestic rates. A large number of businesses in the tourism and hospitality sectors are SMEs, many of which are struggling to manage rising costs.

Productivity, competitiveness, and regional inequalities

20. One of [NSET](#)'s five programmes of action is "Productive Businesses and Regions". Productivity is a key driver of living standards, influenced by factors such as research and development, innovation, capital investment, public infrastructure, workforce skills, and the regulatory environment. Productivity drives competitiveness. International competitiveness is determined by Scotland's ability to use its human, capital, and natural resources efficiently to create high -value goods and services.
21. The Committee held an evidence session in May 2025 to consider what steps the Scottish Government could take to tackle regional inequalities and improve productivity growth. An incoming committee may wish to continue scrutiny of actions taken to boost national and regional productivity and competitiveness.

Scottish Government investment in private sector companies

22. An early area of interest during this Session was [Scottish Government investments in private sector companies](#). The Committee kept these under review and undertook visits to Ferguson Marine (Port Glasgow) and Glasgow Prestwick Airport. This Committee's interests were complemented by the work of the Public Audit and Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committees. Ongoing scrutiny of these Scottish Government strategic investments is an area a successor committee will wish to consider.

Alexander Dennis

23. In summer 2025, following an announcement about possible closure of manufacturing in Scotland, the Committee held evidence sessions with workers' representatives and the management of bus manufacturer [Alexander Dennis](#). The strategic importance of Alexander Dennis to Scotland's economy and potential impact of the loss of its skilled manufacturing jobs in Scotland were highlighted. In September, the Scottish Government announced a six month fund to support the retention of manufacturing jobs at Alexander Dennis in Scotland. A condition of access to the fund was evidence of sufficient orders to sustain operations in Scotland. [In a recent letter](#), the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic stated that officials and Scottish Enterprise remain in regular contact with the business.

Scotland's City and Regional Growth Deals

24. In the report following our inquiry into [Scotland's City and Regional Growth Deals](#), we called for a second phase of growth deals in Scotland. The Scottish Government responded noting that existing deals have closure dates between 2027 and 2035 and that learning from them would be used to consider options for future regional empowerment and delivery.

Artificial Intelligence

25. In the final year of the Session, the Committee held evidence sessions to consider [the economic potential of AI](#). The Scottish Government intends to bring forward a new AI strategy for Scotland and action plan, both to be published in Spring 2026. The Scottish Technology Council has formed a subgroup of industry members to shape the strategy and plan. An incoming committee will wish to consider the new AI strategy for Scotland and action plan and satisfy itself that a robust, responsible and ethical framework is developed and observed.

Just Transition

26. During 2023, the Committee carried out two inquiries on just transition. The first looked at the [Grangemouth area](#), the second the [North East and Moray and the Scottish Government's Just Transition Fund](#). In preparation for this work we spoke with the Just Transition Commission and the UK Climate Change Committee. Just transition considerations are key to the Scottish Government's draft Climate Change Plan.
27. We know that the closure of the oil terminal at Grangemouth was a significant industrial shock. The Scottish and UK Governments announced a joint plan to secure a long-term industrial future for Grangemouth. Nine proposals were identified, including plastics recycling and hydrogen production, with the ambition of creating up to 800 jobs by 2040. Funding has been provided from both governments to support the development of proposals. An incoming committee will wish to scrutinise progress and receive regular updates on developments. This will be a significant test of how just transition principles are embedded in policy.

Tackling climate change

28. Recent industrial shocks, including the closure of the oil terminal at Grangemouth and the ending of production at the Mossmorran chemical works in Fife have implications for industry and jobs. Industry and jobs are key considerations in Scotland's net zero ambitions.
29. In November, the Scottish Government published its draft Climate Change Plan setting out how targets for emissions reductions will be met. Scrutiny of the draft plan was led by the Net Zero, Energy and Transport (NZET) Committee. In our [letter to the NZET Committee](#), we highlighted concerns about the lack of detail on financing, cost allocation and upfront costs. We said more clarity is needed on what will be expected of businesses and organisations and the cumulative impacts on them and consumers.
30. We called for urgent reform of electricity pricing and cost allocation, including a review of levies and charges borne by users. We said until those structural issues were addressed, we would caution against placing additional decarbonisation obligations on industry which could risk further damaging competitiveness and accelerating de-industrialisation. The Committee also sought better integration between Government strategies and policies and said more should be done to embed a direct participative role for the workforce, trade unions and professional bodies in climate change planning, to ensure a just transition.
31. A successor committee will wish to work closely with a renewed Just Transition Commission to keep the risks and opportunities of actions to tackle climate change

under review and ensure the necessary forward planning and engagement with the business sector is effective and meaningful.

32. A successor Committee may wish to discuss with the Scottish Government, what plans it has to undertake a stock-take of assets, particularly those currently underutilised, when considering new projects.

Skills development for the workforce of the future

33. Moving to a resilient, low carbon economy in Scotland must be about protecting livelihoods and providing new opportunities. There are questions about Scotland's workforce of the future, the skills needed and pathways for delivering the skilled future workforce. We know levels of economic inactivity are too high, that jobs are changing, in part due to AI, that more work is needed to close the disability employment gap, and that some sectors are experiencing acute problems in attracting and retaining workers. Economists told this Committee that improving intermediate skills provision (between school leavers and university) is a key area of devolved policy that could improve Scotland's economic performance.
34. Upskilling workers, identifying and filling skills gaps and bringing more people back into the workforce will help drive Scotland's productivity. Delivering a skills system that meets the needs of business, and ensures workers can access that system, is important for Scotland's future prosperity. These are areas a successor committee may wish to focus on, particularly in the context of ongoing reform to the skills delivery landscape. In June, Audit Scotland is expected to publish a report on post-school education and skills reform.
35. In 2022, the Committee looked at the help available for disabled people to get back into the labour market and the support for employers to provide more inclusive recruitment practices and workplaces. In the closing weeks of the Session, the Committee met informally with Sir Charlie Mayfield, author of the Keep Britain Working report. His report, covering the UK, looks at issues surrounding ill-health and disability in the workplace. Ill-health is now a significant driver of economic inactivity in the UK. Sir Charlie is working with Public Health Scotland and the Scottish Government. This is an area that a successor committee will wish to pick up.

Non-domestic rates

36. Following the 2017 Barclay review, revaluations for non-domestic rates moved from a five-yearly to a three-yearly cycle. Towards the end of the Session, this Committee was being made aware of some businesses seeing sharp increases in the rateable value of their premises, with little clarity or transparency from assessors on the methodology used. The Scottish Government sets the policy framework, including relief schemes, but the assessment process is independent of government. The Independent Gill Review of the valuation methodology of licensed hospitality properties is expected to report later this year. Given the potential impact on some businesses, a successor committee may wish to explore the non-domestic rates assessment process.

Legislation and post-legislative scrutiny

37. The work of the Committee during Session 6 was mainly inquiries, however three Scottish Government Bills were scrutinised by the Committee: the Bankruptcy and Diligence (Scotland) Bill, the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill, and the Digital Assets (Scotland) Bill. The Committee also undertook post-legislative scrutiny of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.

Bankruptcy and Diligence (Scotland) Bill

38. The [Bankruptcy and Diligence \(Scotland\) Bill](#) was passed in June 2024 and became an Act in July 2024. The Act implemented recommendations to improve statutory debt solutions and debt enforcement options.
39. A key provision in the Act is the creation of a "mental health moratorium". The Committee noted significant concerns about the lack of detail on how the moratorium would operate; detail that is to follow in regulations. The Scottish Government committed to sharing draft regulations with the Committee before Stage 3 to allow effective Parliamentary scrutiny of how the moratorium would operate in practice. However a public consultation raised more issues and draft regulations were delayed and will now not be brought forward until Session 7. A successor committee will wish to press the Scottish Government for early resolution of the outstanding issues and prioritise scrutiny of draft regulations before they are formally laid.
40. The Scottish Government has still not completed the promised holistic review of statutory debt solutions called for in Session 5. We highlight the Scottish Government undertakings on the implementation of debt and diligence reforms outside the direct scope of this Bill. It was not clear to the Committee why primary legislation appears to have been brought forward in piece-meal fashion. The Committee would encourage its successor committee to ensure debt and diligence are topics for early scrutiny in the new Session to ensure timescales for reform do not slip further.

Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill

41. The [Community Wealth Building \(Scotland\) Bill](#) was passed in February 2026. This Bill fulfilled a Scottish Government commitment to introduce legislation to advance the community wealth building model and ensure consistency in implementation across Scotland. The Committee observed that, although the Bill created a welcome obligation to act, it may not, on its own, enable or necessarily drive implementation. Success will depend on the quality of guidance developed and alignment with other Government policy.
42. Further legislative and policy changes will be essential to fully realise the Bill's aims including reforms to compulsory sale orders, procurement practices, community empowerment and asset transfer.
43. The Committee recommends that a successor committee considers involving the public in post-legislative scrutiny of the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Act 2026. This could involve commissioning a People's Panel, or other public engagement process, to explore implementation of the Act. A suggested theme

could be “What does success look like for Community Wealth Building where people live?” with the question: “Which outcomes and metrics matter most to citizens in judging their local Community Wealth Building action plans—and how should councils and partner bodies report progress?”

44. Public input to consider outcomes, metrics, and reporting across the five community wealth building pillars (spending/procurement, fair work, land and assets, inclusive ownership, and finance) would complement the duties Parliament placed on Ministers and public bodies to prepare action plans and guidance. Such input could provide citizen-validated standards for transparent, comparable reporting.

Digital Assets (Scotland) Bill

45. The [Digital Assets \(Scotland\) Bill](#) was introduced late in the Session. The purpose of the bill was narrow: to ensure legal recognition of certain digital assets as property in Scots law. It was acknowledged that further legislation will be needed, given the pace of change in the digital landscape. Scottish Government action on the additional reforms needed to support the treatment of digital assets in Scots law, could be the subject of scrutiny for a successor committee.

Moveable Transactions (Scotland) Bill

46. Although this Committee was not involved in scrutiny of the [Moveable Transactions \(Scotland\) Bill](#), it considered subsequent regulations to establish the two registers required by the Act. These are referred to earlier in this report under Registers of Scotland. There were uncertainties about how the legislation, particularly the new registers, would operate in practice. This could be a subject for post-legislative scrutiny for a successor committee, around the mid-point of the next Session.

Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014

47. The Committee undertook a [post-legislative review](#) to consider the effectiveness of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014. The Committee welcomed the improved transparency and accessibility to public procurement opportunities. The Committee was keen that the Scottish Government, and contracting authorities, continue to build on progress to support Scottish supply chains with action to address implementation challenges and continuing barriers.
48. The Committee made a number of recommendations, including delivery of an improved and updated Public Contracts Scotland website. The Committee asked the Scottish Government to engage directly with businesses to explore and agree a way forward on a single portal and to minimise bureaucracy. A successor committee may wish to review progress on this.
49. In addition to Scottish Government legislation, the Committee considered a significant number of legislative consent memorandums and supplementaries in respect of UK Government bills. Annex B lists the UK bills for which legislative consent memorandums were considered. The Scottish and UK Governments continue to discuss how transparency in relation to the interface between devolved matters and UK legislation can be improved.
50. In the final month of this Session, the Committee considered and reported on a legislative consent memorandum for the Cyber Security and Resilience (Network and Information Systems) Bill. At the time of writing, this UK Bill is still progressing

through the UK Parliament and a supplementary LCM is expected.

Business in the Parliament and the witness diversity programme

Business in the Parliament Conference

51. Over the last 22 years, the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government have jointly organised the Business in the Parliament Conference (BIPC), with the aim of facilitating engagement between businesses and elected members. Two BIPCs were held during Session 6. The focus of the February 2023 BIPC was "Sustainable Recovery". The focus of the April 2025 BIPC was "Workforce for the Future". Both were well attended; with 210 delegates in 2023, and 225 in 2025.
52. The Committee believes that the current format of the Business in the Parliament Conference is now past its sell-by date, not good value for money, and does not represent the best use of resources. The Committee emphasises the importance of meaningful engagement between businesses and elected members with measurable outcomes. We believe there are better ways of achieving this, beyond a conference-style event in the Parliament building.

Witness Diversity Programme

53. In 2022, the Committee was approached by the Institute of Directors (IoD) and Women's Enterprise Scotland (WES) to support an initiative to encourage more women to become actively involved in the work of the Scottish Parliament; a witness diversity programme. The aim was to enable different voices to be heard and to widen responses to calls for written evidence and the pool from which committees select witnesses to give evidence in person.
54. The Committee hosted two events in 2023 and 2024 with 40 women. Participants heard presentations from experienced committee witnesses and took part in activities designed to make the Scottish Parliament a more familiar and accessible environment. Participants spent time with members of the Economy and Fair Work Committee and the Presiding Officer.
55. Subsequently, an organisation that had participated in the programme gave evidence for the first time as part of the Committee's scrutiny of the New Deal for Business. Others contributed to the Committee's scrutiny of skills delivery. The Committee commends the witness diversity programme to all incoming committees. To encourage witnesses from a more diverse range of backgrounds to become actively involved in the work of the Scottish Parliament and contribute views, the Conveners Group may wish to consider how a similar programme could be delivered to enhance the work of all committees.

Conclusions and recommendations

56. **We would encourage successor committees to identify opportunities for cross-committee or joint committee working. Such approaches can minimise duplication, promote collaboration and potentially provide a more rounded perspective than might otherwise be achieved by single committee scrutiny.**
57. **Delivering a coherent long-term strategy to improve living standards is a key challenge for any government. There is a wider question about the extent of policy and strategy coherence across all of Scottish Government. The delineation of committee remits can make scrutiny of this challenging.**
58. **We would encourage our successor committee to make every effort to supplement formal evidence gathering with more informal approaches, including visits and discussion panels in locations beyond Edinburgh and the central belt, and to make full use of the Parliament's Participation and Communities Team.**
59. **The Scottish Government has committed to improving gender-disaggregated data collection and developing measures to evidence how women in business are supported. This is something an incoming committee will wish to follow-up.**
60. **We would encourage our successor committee to consider inviting regular written updates from Consumer Scotland on its work and the difference being made to consumers, including vulnerable consumers. An incoming committee is likely to find it helpful to receive regular information on delivery against Consumer Scotland's statutory objectives and how it works collaboratively with others in the sector. The Consumer Duty could be a topic for post-legislative scrutiny and there could be value in some inquiry work, following publication of the report of the independent review.**
61. **The Committee suggests that the governance of the enterprise agencies, particularly the role of the Boards, and the extent to which there is clarity on roles to enable an appropriate challenge function to be exercised, are areas that an incoming Committee may wish to consider.**
62. **The Committee suggests that the successor committee, within whose remit Registers of Scotland falls, continue the practice of receiving monthly and quarterly written updates and may wish to review, in due course, the operation of the Register of Assignations and the Register of Statutory Pledges.**
63. **Parliament's intention was, in due course, for SNIB to have a full range of financing powers and flexibility to function as a perpetual fund. HM Treasury dispensation is required but little progress has been made. The successor committee will wish to follow this up.**
64. **An incoming committee may wish to evaluate VisitScotland's strategic**

change programme.

65. **An incoming committee may wish to continue scrutiny of actions to boost national and regional productivity and competitiveness.**
66. **Ongoing scrutiny of Scottish Government stakes in private sector companies is an area a successor committee may wish to consider.**
67. **An incoming committee will wish to consider the new AI strategy for Scotland and action plan and satisfy itself that a robust, responsible, and ethical framework is developed and observed.**
68. **A successor committee will want to work closely with a renewed Just Transition Commission to keep the risks and opportunities of actions to tackle climate change under review and ensure that the necessary forward planning and engagement with the business sector is effective and meaningful.**
69. **Delivering a skills system that meets the needs of business, and ensuring workers can access that system, are important for Scotland's future prosperity. These are areas a successor committee may wish to focus on, particularly in the context of ongoing reform to the skills delivery landscape.**
70. **Ill-health is now a significant driver of economic inactivity in the UK. This is an area that a successor committee will wish to pick up.**
71. **Given the potential impact on some businesses and specific sectors such as tourism and hospitality, a successor committee may wish to explore the non-domestic rates assessment process.**
72. **Bridging the gap between start-up and scale-up is a key challenge for Scotland's business base and an issue that a successor committee may wish to explore.**
73. **There are still challenges in becoming a leading fair work nation for example in youth unemployment, non-permanent work, and the disability employment gap. These are areas a successor committee will wish to consider.**
74. **A successor committee will wish to press the Scottish Government for early resolution of the outstanding issues in the areas of bankruptcy and diligence and prioritise scrutiny of the draft mental health moratorium regulations.**
75. **Scottish Government action on the additional reforms needed to support the treatment of digital assets in Scots law could be the subject of scrutiny for a successor committee.**
76. **The Committee recognises the potential of Community Wealth Building and that informed public input will strengthen scrutiny of implementation and**

outcomes.

77. **The Committee recommends that its successor considers involving the public in post-legislative scrutiny of the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill. This could involve commissioning a People's Panel, or other public engagement process, to explore scrutiny for implementation.**
78. **During Session 6, lead responsibility for civil contingency and civil emergency preparedness and resilience sat with the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs. The Committee highlights the important of civil contingency planning across all areas of Scottish Government responsibility. The Committee recommends that account is taken of the need for cross-committee scrutiny of civil contingency planning when considering Session 7 remits.**
79. **The Committee believes that the current format of the Business in the Parliament Conference is now past its sell-by date, not good value for money, and does not represent the best use of resources. The Committee emphasises the importance of meaningful engagement between businesses and elected members with measurable outcomes. We believe there are better ways of achieving this, beyond a conference-style event in the Parliament building.**
80. **The Committee commends the witness diversity programme to all incoming committees. To encourage witnesses from a more diverse range of backgrounds to become actively involved in the work of the Scottish Parliament and contribute views, the Conveners Group may wish to consider how a similar programme could be delivered to enhance the work of all committees.**

Annexe A - Scrutiny work and inquiries

2021/22

- **Scotland's supply chains** - an inquiry that considered how to build resilience into Scotland's supply chains against a backdrop of UK and global shortages of materials and some foodstuffs, extended delivery times, higher prices and labour and skill shortages across key sectors and peaks in demand.
- **Scotland's tourism and hospitality sectors** - an evidence session with stakeholders and VisitScotland to assess how the tourism and hospitality sectors were emerging from pandemic restrictions.
- **Scottish National Investment Bank** - an evidence session with the Chair of the Board of SNIB, following the resignation of the Scottish National Investment Bank's Chief Executive.
- **Transition to Net Zero for SMEs** - an evidence session from SMEs at different stages of the journey towards net zero focussing on what SMEs would like to see from COP26 and challenges in accessing support.

2022/23

- **Town Centres and retail in Scotland** - an inquiry looking at the new realities of retail and e-commerce in Scotland and the resulting impact on town centres; the subsequent policy response needed to create living and resilient towns, innovative approaches to keep town centres alive and how to support communities to regenerate their town centres.
- **A just transition for the Grangemouth area** - an inquiry that looked at how to support, incentivise and de-risk the transition to benefit companies and individuals. This included consideration of what planning and engagement had started and skills needed over the next two decades.
- **Closing the disability gap in Scotland** - an inquiry looking at the help available for disabled people to get back into the labour market, the available support for employers to provide more inclusive recruitment practices and workplaces, specific barriers faced by people with learning disabilities and neurodivergent people; and the employment support systems for disabled people.
- **Broadband connectivity** - an evidence session status on the R100 programme roll-out, the associated voucher process and access to digital infrastructure.
- **Royal Mail service change** - an evidence session to consider Royal Mail's proposed service changes and the impact of recent associated industrial action on businesses and communities in Scotland.
- **The outlook for business investment** - three evidence sessions that included a focus on the life sciences and renewables sectors.

2023/24

- **Petroineos Grangemouth** - evidence sessions with Petroineos Grangemouth, the

Scottish Government and the UK Minister for Energy Security and Net Zero, following the announcement that the oil refinery at Grangemouth would transition to a fuels import terminal.

- **A just transition for the North East and Moray** - an inquiry to consider how to support, incentivise, and de-risk a just transition for the North East and Moray in a way that benefits people, communities, and businesses by looking at the operation of the Scottish Government's Just Transition Fund, the support needed to maximise the benefits of the transition for the community, the outlook for jobs and skills and how innovation could be supported to maintain Scotland's place as a leader in the energy sector.
- **Glasgow Prestwick Airport** - an evidence session to discuss Glasgow Prestwick Airport's operational strategy and progress towards achieving its stated strategic purpose of being returned to private ownership.

2024/25

- **Scotland's City and Regional Growth Deals** - an inquiry to consider the implementation and effectiveness of deals.
- **New Deal for Business** - a series of evidence sessions to consider progress in re-setting the Scottish Government relationship with Scottish business.
- **Skills delivery** - a series of evidence sessions to consider how Scotland's skills system was working and to identify actions needed to support businesses and improve the skills supply chain, including green skills.
- **Ferguson Marine Port Glasgow** - a site visit to the shipyard to meet with trade union representatives and apprentices.

2025/26

- **Grangemouth's industrial future** - evidence sessions with INEOS Grangemouth and Petroineos Manufacturing Scotland Ltd, workers' representatives and the Scottish and UK Governments to consider the options for the future industry.
- **Regional inequalities and productivity** - an evidence session with the economists to consider data and research on regional inequalities and productivity
- **Alexander Dennis** - scrutiny sessions with workers' representatives and management of Alexander Dennis following the announcement of a consultation on consolidating manufacturing operations into a single site in Scarborough.
- **Scotland's tourism industry** - an evidence session with industry leaders in Scotland's tourism and hospitality sectors, given the sectors' vital role in the place-based economy.
- **The economic potential of Artificial Intelligence** - evidence sessions with business leaders, innovators, and academics on AI.
- **Draft Climate Change Plan** - scrutiny of the business and industry chapter and just transition principles.

Annexe B - Legislative consent memorandums considered

Professional Qualifications Bill

Subsidy Control Bill

UK Infrastructure Bank Bill

Procurement Bill

Trade (Australia and New Zealand) Bill

Electronic Trade Documents Bill

Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill

Data Protection and Digital Information Bill

Trade (Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership) Bill

Product Regulation and Metrology Bill

Data (Use and Access) Bill

Employment Rights Bill

Cyber Security and Resilience (Network and Information Systems) Bill

