



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 5, No. 56, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 3 December 2025

Note: (DT) signifies a decision taken at Decision Time.

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

1. Portfolio Questions: Questions on Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, and Parliamentary Business and then Justice and Home Affairs were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.

2. Crisis in Social Care: Jackie Baillie moved S6M-19977—That the Parliament believes that the Scottish Government's failure to prioritise social care has fuelled a crisis, harming some of Scotland's most vulnerable people, and calls on the Scottish Ministers to work to close the funding gap facing health and social care partnerships and value Scotland's care workforce.

The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care (Neil Gray) moved amendment S6M-19977.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-19977 in the name of Jackie Baillie (Crisis in Social Care), leave out from "Scottish Government's" to end and insert "UK Government must reverse its hostile and damaging migration policies, which have led to a 77% drop in the number of Health and Social Care visas granted, which in turn is having a devastating impact on the social care sector across Scotland; welcomes the valuable contribution that international workers make to Scotland's care sector, communities and economy, and notes that the Scottish social care sector has called for the reversal of these harmful policies; reiterates that Scotland is a welcoming nation and that the Scottish Government must continue to ensure that those who have chosen to make Scotland their home can continue to do so; calls for a reversal of the increase in employer national

insurance contributions, which has placed an additional £84 million pressure on the sector; recognises that the 2025-26 Budget includes over £15 billion for the local government settlement, including almost £2.2 billion for social care integration, but agrees that the Scottish Government must continue to work closely with partners across the sector, including funding local government and the third sector, to continue making improvements for the social care workforce, and all of those who they support."

Sandesh Gulhane moved amendment S6M-19977.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-19977 in the name of Jackie Baillie (Crisis in Social Care), leave out from ", and calls" to end and insert "; recognises the significant impact that delays to social care packages and inadequate community-based social care provision have on the NHS, including longer avoidable stays in hospital; condemns the waste of £30 million for developing the now abandoned plans for a National Care Service; urges the Scottish Government to address record levels of delayed discharge and rising waiting times for social care assessments, and calls on the Scottish Ministers to close the funding gaps faced by health and social care partnerships by ensuring councils are appropriately funded, establish a proper workforce plan for social care to improve recruitment and retention of staff, and make sure that the value of Scotland's care workforce is properly recognised."

After debate, amendment S6M-19977.1 was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 68 (including 2 proxy votes), Against 55, Abstentions 0). As a result, amendment S6M-19977.2 was pre-empted.

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 67 (including 2 proxy votes), Against 51, Abstentions 5).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament believes that the UK Government must reverse its hostile and damaging migration policies, which have led to a 77% drop in the number of Health and Social Care visas granted, which in turn is having a devastating impact on the social care sector across Scotland; welcomes the valuable contribution that international workers make to Scotland's care sector, communities and economy, and notes that the Scottish social care sector has called for the reversal of these harmful policies; reiterates that Scotland is a welcoming nation and that the Scottish Government must continue to ensure that those who have chosen to make Scotland their home can continue to do so; calls for a reversal of the increase in employer national insurance contributions, which has placed an additional £84 million pressure on the sector; recognises that the 2025-26 Budget includes over £15 billion for the local government settlement, including almost £2.2 billion for social care integration, but agrees that the Scottish Government must continue to work closely with partners across the sector, including funding local government and the third sector, to continue making improvements for the social care workforce, and all of those who they support.

3. Transparency in Tackling Group-based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: Pauline McNeill moved S6M-19980—That the Parliament believes that there

should be independent oversight of the Police Scotland review into group-based sexual exploitation of children, and calls on the Scottish Government to urgently clarify whether it will conduct an inquiry into grooming gangs in Scotland.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (Jenny Gilruth) moved amendment S6M-19980.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-19980 in the name of Pauline McNeill (Transparency in Tackling Group-based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse), insert at end ", and, in doing so, to give consideration to the continuing work of the statutory Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, which is considering the abuse of children in care in Scotland, the effects of that abuse and if changes to the law, policies or procedures are needed; recognises the independence of Police Scotland and that the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 stipulates that the Chief Constable is responsible for the policing of Scotland, and is accountable to the Scottish Police Authority, and acknowledges that the information and data being gathered by members of the National Child Abuse and Exploitation Strategic Group is necessary to ensure that informed evidence-based decisions are taken on the need for further independent inquiries or reviews."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 67 (including 2 proxy votes), Against 55, Abstentions 1).

Russell Findlay moved amendment S6M-19980.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-19980 in the name of Pauline McNeill (Transparency in Tackling Group-based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse), leave out from "clarify" to end and insert "establish an inquiry into grooming gangs in Scotland."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 50, Against 73 (including 2 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 95 (including 2 proxy votes), Against 27, Abstentions 1).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament believes that there should be independent oversight of the Police Scotland review into group-based sexual exploitation of children and calls on the Scottish Government to urgently clarify whether it will conduct an inquiry into grooming gangs in Scotland, and, in doing so, to give consideration to the continuing work of the statutory Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, which is considering the abuse of children in care in Scotland, the effects of that abuse and if changes to the law, policies or procedures are needed; recognises the independence of Police Scotland and that the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 stipulates that the Chief Constable is responsible for the policing of Scotland, and is accountable to the Scottish Police Authority, and acknowledges that the information and data being gathered by members of the National Child Abuse and Exploitation Strategic Group is necessary

to ensure that informed evidence-based decisions are taken on the need for further independent inquiries or reviews.

4. Business Programme: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Graeme Dey), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-19992—That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Tuesday 9 December 2025

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions

followed by Public Audit Committee Debate: The 2023/24 Audit of Ferguson Marine (Port Glasgow) Holdings Limited

followed by Scottish Government Debate: Support for the Veterans and Armed Forces Community in Scotland

followed by Motion on Legislative Consent: Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill - UK Legislation

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.30 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 10 December 2025

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Deputy First Minister Responsibilities, Economy and Gaelic; Finance and Local Government

followed by Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Business

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.10 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 11 December 2025

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

followed by Members' Business

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Climate Action and Energy, and Transport

followed by Ministerial Statement: Progressing a Just Transition at Grangemouth

followed by Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee Debate: British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 Inquiry

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 16 December 2025

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions

followed by Stage 3 Proceedings: Dog Theft (Scotland) Bill

followed by Stage 3 Proceedings: Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

6.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 17 December 2025

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands; Health and Social Care

followed by Committee Business

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 18 December 2025

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

12.45 pm Portfolio Questions: Social Justice and Housing

followed by Stage 1 Debate: Contract (Formation and Remedies) (Scotland) Bill

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.40 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

(b) that, for the purposes of Portfolio Questions in the week beginning 8 December 2025, in rule 13.7.3, after the word "except" the words "to the extent to which the Presiding Officer considers that the questions are on the same or similar subject matter or" are inserted.

The motion was agreed to.

5. Approval of SSI: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Graeme Dey), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-19993—That the Parliament agrees that the Energy Performance of Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2025 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

6. Approval of SSI: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Graeme Dey), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-19994—That the Parliament agrees that the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Notification Requirements) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2025 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

7. Committee Meeting Times: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Graeme Dey), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-19995—That the Parliament agrees that, under Rule 12.3.3B of Standing Orders, the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee can meet, if necessary, at the same time as a meeting of the Parliament during Members' Business on Wednesday 3 December 2025.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

8. Committee Membership: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Graeme Dey), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-19996—That the Parliament agrees that Paul O'Kane be appointed to replace Rhoda Grant as a member of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

9. Motion Without Notice: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Graeme Dey), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved a motion without notice that, under Rule 11.2.4, Decision Time be brought forward to 5.08 pm.

The motion was agreed to.

10. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 as noted above.

11. Bereavement Support and Awareness: The Parliament debated S6M-18847 in the name of Elena Whitham—That the Parliament recognises that everyone in Scotland, including those in Carrick, Cumnock, and Doon Valley, will experience a bereavement, and notes the view that good bereavement support is needed to guide people through what can be a difficult time; understands that frameworks have been put in place by the Scottish and UK governments that set out guidance on how proper bereavement care should be offered across society; notes the 2022 report from the UK Commission on Bereavement, Bereavement is everyone's business, which provided policy recommendations for the Scottish and UK governments to adopt; understands that a stigma exists surrounding bereavement and its discussion; notes research from Sue Ryder, which suggests that bereavement costs the UK economy an estimated £23 billion each year in lost Gross Value Added, and the UK Treasury an estimated £8 billion in reduced tax revenues; acknowledges the view that this could be improved with better support and care, and notes the belief that a better understanding of grief and bereavement is required by all, particularly among young people.

The meeting closed at 5.53 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
3 December 2025

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

Committee Reports

The following report was published on 3 December 2025—

Rural Affairs and Islands Committee, 10th Report, 2025 (Session 6):
Subordinate legislation considered by the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee
on 26 November 2025 (SP Paper 917)

Subordinate Legislation

Affirmative Instruments

The following instruments were laid before the Parliament on 3 December 2025 and are subject to the affirmative procedure—

Hydrolysis (Scotland) (No. 1) Regulations 2026 [draft]
laid under section 106(2) and (3) of the Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act
2016

Hydrolysis (Scotland) (No. 2) Regulations 2026 [draft]
laid under section 106(2) of the Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016

Other Documents

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 3 December 2025 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

The King's Printer for Scotland Report covering the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 (SG/2025/323) laid at the request of a member of the Scottish Government and not under any laying power

The Sea Fish Industry Authority Annual Report & Accounts 2024/25 (SG/2025/306) laid under Section 11(8) of the Fisheries Act 1981

NHS in Scotland 2025: A report prepared for the Auditor General for Scotland (AGS/2025/11) laid under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

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