



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 4, No. 2, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 15 May 2024

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 then Justice and Home Affairs were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and a Minister.

2. Stand Up for Teaching: Pam Duncan-Glancy moved S6M-13196—That the Parliament is concerned by reported plans to cut teacher posts in a number of local authorities, including Glasgow City Council, where 172 jobs are at risk in 2024, rising to 450 jobs that are to be cut over the next three years; recognises that teacher numbers have fallen, compared with 2007, and that these cuts will have the greatest impact on pupils in the most deprived communities; notes that the target numbers of student teachers in some subjects have not been met; considers that the increasing precarity of teaching as a profession makes it harder to attract and retain high-quality candidates; understands that local authorities require stability of funding to provide permanent teaching roles and drive up standards in education in Scotland, and calls on the Scottish Government to intervene to prevent job losses and publish a comprehensive plan to address gaps in the teaching and school staff workforce to inform future recruitment and retention.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (Jenny Gilruth) moved amendment S6M-13196.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-13196 in the name of Pam Duncan-Glancy (Stand Up for Teaching), leave out from ", including" to end and insert "; recognises that the Scottish Government is investing in maintaining teaching

numbers with an additional £145.5 million designed to support local authorities to do so; thanks those local authorities in 2022-23 that maintained or increased their teacher numbers; acknowledges that the policy of free tuition means that students in Scotland avoid incurring additional debt of up to £27,750; recognises that the Scottish Government further invests in supporting full postgraduate support, and in funding the salaries associated with the first full year of probation; recognises the challenges of rurality and subject area in certain parts of the country; confirms that action needs to be taken to reduce workload that does not support learning and teaching; recognises that the Scottish Government and the Parliament have a responsibility to promote teaching as a highly rewarding career, and agrees that the Scottish Government should engage with parties across the Parliament to hear views on how best to meet these challenges, further to work with COSLA, as underpinned by the principles of the Verity House Agreement, in a joint collaborative effort to improve the employment opportunities for all of Scotland's teachers, for the benefit of Scotland's young people."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 62, Against 63 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 0 – by casting vote).

Liam Kerr moved amendment S6M-13196.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-13196 in the name of Pam Duncan-Glancy (Stand Up for Teaching), insert at end "; takes on board the recommendations of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party's New Deal for Teachers to support teachers, reduce contact time and properly fund local authorities; believes that enacting these recommendations would help to facilitate the recruitment and retention of teachers, provide the highest standard of education and work to better improve the link between the education system and employers, and calls, in that regard, for the alignment of skills to meet the needs of businesses and employers both for today and into the future, as set out in the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party's Grasping the Thistle economic strategy plan."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 29, Against 95 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 0).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 62 (including 1 proxy vote), Against 61, Abstentions 1).

3. Scotland's Housing Emergency: Mark Griffin moved S6M-13197—That the Parliament believes that Scotland is in a housing emergency.

The Minister for Housing (Paul McLennan) moved amendment S6M-13197.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-13197 in the name of Mark Griffin (Scotland's Housing Emergency), insert at end "and that the housing emergency is more acutely felt in some parts of the country than others; acknowledges that the current situation is due to a combination of factors including those outwith the Scottish Government's powers, including a decade

of UK Government austerity, soaring inflation and an increasing cost of living, labour shortages linked to Brexit, and a freeze to local housing allowance (LHA) rates; calls on the UK Government to reverse the near 9% cut in Scotland's capital funding settlement, commit to ensuring that LHA rates will permanently meet at least the 30th percentile of local rents, and provide adequate support to local authorities impacted by the increase in asylum support cessations; recognises the Scottish Government's record on delivering affordable homes and action taken on rent rises; notes that in 2024-25, despite the UK Government imposing a cut to its capital budget, the Scottish Government will invest nearly £600 million in affordable housing and over £90 million for discretionary housing payments; welcomes the actions in the Housing (Scotland) Bill to tackle rising rent levels and the continued focus on the target of delivering 110,000 high-quality, energy efficient affordable homes, and agrees that the Scottish Government, UK Government and local authorities must work together to deliver a housing system that meets the needs of the people of Scotland."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 69, Against 33, Abstentions 22 (including 1 proxy vote)).

Miles Briggs moved amendment S6M-13197.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-13197 in the name of Mark Griffin (Scotland's Housing Emergency), insert at end "; notes that there are a record number of people in Scotland experiencing homelessness with almost 10,000 children stuck in temporary accommodation and 45 children becoming homeless in Scotland every day; calls on the Scottish Ministers to bring forward an urgent housing emergency action plan to tackle the issues raised by the Scottish Government's own expert Homelessness Prevention Task and Finish Group, including actions that will reduce the number of children stuck in temporary accommodation by the end of this parliamentary session; recognises the need to improve capacity in local government to prevent more local homelessness services falling into systemic failure, and the need to improve delivery for those with specific supported living needs, and calls on the Scottish Ministers to review how national government, local authorities and third sector partners are working together on the shared ambition to end homelessness."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 62 (including 1 proxy vote), Against 61, Abstentions 1).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 95 (including 1 proxy vote), Against 29, Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament believes that Scotland is in a housing emergency and that the housing emergency is more acutely felt in some parts of the country than others; acknowledges that the current situation is due to a combination of factors including those outwith the Scottish Government's powers, including a decade of UK

Government austerity, soaring inflation and an increasing cost of living, labour shortages linked to Brexit, and a freeze to local housing allowance (LHA) rates; calls on the UK Government to reverse the near 9% cut in Scotland's capital funding settlement, commit to ensuring that LHA rates will permanently meet at least the 30th percentile of local rents, and provide adequate support to local authorities impacted by the increase in asylum support cessations; recognises the Scottish Government's record on delivering affordable homes and action taken on rent rises; notes that in 2024-25, despite the UK Government imposing a cut to its capital budget, the Scottish Government will invest nearly £600 million in affordable housing and over £90 million for discretionary housing payments; welcomes the actions in the Housing (Scotland) Bill to tackle rising rent levels and the continued focus on the target of delivering 110,000 high-quality, energy efficient affordable homes; agrees that the Scottish Government, UK Government and local authorities must work together to deliver a housing system that meets the needs of the people of Scotland; notes that there are a record number of people in Scotland experiencing homelessness with almost 10,000 children stuck in temporary accommodation and 45 children becoming homeless in Scotland every day; calls on the Scottish Ministers to bring forward an urgent housing emergency action plan to tackle the issues raised by the Scottish Government's own expert Homelessness Prevention Task and Finish Group, including actions that will reduce the number of children stuck in temporary accommodation by the end of this parliamentary session; recognises the need to improve capacity in local government to prevent more local homelessness services falling into systemic failure, and the need to improve delivery for those with specific supported living needs, and calls on the Scottish Ministers to review how national government, local authorities and third sector partners are working together on the shared ambition to end homelessness.

4. Post Office (Horizon System) Offences (Scotland) Bill: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn) moved S6M-13230—That the Parliament agrees that the Post Office (Horizon System) Offences (Scotland) Bill be treated as an Emergency Bill.

The motion was agreed to.

5. Post Office (Horizon System) Offences (Scotland) Bill: Timetable and Procedures for Consideration: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-13218—That, subject to the Parliament's agreement that the Post Office (Horizon System) Offences (Scotland) Bill be treated as an Emergency Bill, the Parliament agrees to consider the Post Office (Horizon System) Offences (Scotland) Bill as follows—

Stage 1 on Tuesday 21 May 2024; and

Stage 2 on Thursday 23 May 2024.

The motion was agreed to.

6. Business Programme: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-13217—That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Tuesday 21 May 2024

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Stage 1 Debate: Post Office (Horizon System) Offences (Scotland) Bill

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 22 May 2024

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy; Finance, Deputy First Minister Responsibilities and Parliamentary Business

followed by Public Audit Committee Debate: Audit Scotland Report, Adult Mental Health

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Approval of SSIs (if required)

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 23 May 2024

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

followed by Members' Business

2.30 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.30 pm Portfolio Questions: Transport

followed by Committee of the Whole Parliament —Stage 2 Proceedings: Post Office (Horizon System) Offences (Scotland) Bill

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 28 May 2024

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Stage 3 Proceedings: Visitor Levy (Scotland) Bill

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.30 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 29 May 2024

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

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

followed by Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Business

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Approval of SSIs (if required)

5.10 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 30 May 2024

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

followed by Members' Business

2.30 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.30 pm Portfolio Questions: Social Justice

followed by Scottish Government Business

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

(b) that, for the purposes of Portfolio Questions in the week beginning 20 May 2024, 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.

7. Stage 1 Extension: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-13219—That the Parliament agrees that consideration of the Social Security (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill at stage 1 be extended to 7 June 2024.

The motion was agreed to.

8. Committee Meeting Times: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-13220—That the Parliament agrees that, under Rule 12.3.3B of Standing Orders, the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee can meet, if necessary, at the same time as a meeting of the Parliament after Portfolio Questions on Thursday 16 May 2024.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

9. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 2, 3 and 8 as noted above.

10. No Falls Week 2024: The Parliament debated S6M-12524 in the name of Clare Adamson—That the Parliament recognises that 13 to 17 May 2024 marks No Falls Week; considers that this week is an opportunity to recognise the powerful campaign dedicated to promoting safe working at height, providing an opportunity for organisations in all sectors to focus on working at height safety; notes that the latest figures from the Health and Safety Executive show that 40 people lost their lives due to a fall from height in Great Britain in 2022-23, that falls from height were responsible for 30% of all workplace deaths, and that, it understands, every year thousands of non-fatal falls take place, estimated at as many as 100 every day; understands that the No Falls Foundation has produced a toolkit with resources and guidelines to assist organisations in planning and implementing activities during No Falls Week, and notes the calls encouraging employers not only to contribute to the broader safety narrative, but also to demonstrate their dedication to the wellbeing of their employees.

The meeting closed at 6.16 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
15 May 2024

Appendix

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

Committee Reports

The following report was published on 15 May 2024—

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 36th Report, 2024 (Session 6): Subordinate Legislation considered by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee on 14 May 2024 (SP Paper 584)

Published by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body

All documents are available on
the Scottish Parliament website at:

www.parliament.scot/documents

For information on the Scottish Parliament contact
Public Information on:

Telephone: 0131 348 5000 or 0800 092 7500

Email: sp.info@parliament.scot

Live chat on parliament.scot

You can write to us in any language or contact us
using the Text Relay service or in British Sign
Language through contactScotland-BSL.

© Parliamentary copyright. Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body

The Scottish Parliament's copyright policy can be found on the website -
www.parliament.scot or by contacting Public Information.