



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 5, No. 5, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 21 May 2025

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

- 1. Portfolio Questions:** Questions on Deputy First Minister Responsibilities, Economy and Gaelic, and then on Finance and Local Government were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.
- 2. Ministerial Statement:** The Acting Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy (Gillian Martin) made a statement and answered questions on Proposed Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme.
- 3. Empowering Scotland's Island Communities:** The Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands (Mairi Gougeon) moved S6M-17598—That the Parliament recognises Scotland's islands' invaluable contribution to Scotland's economy, culture and identity; welcomes the investments that have accompanied Scotland's first ever national islands plan; recognises the positive impact that the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 has had, but notes the need for further action to tackle island challenges; welcomes the extensive community engagement to develop the new national islands plan, and notes that measures to address depopulation and create community wealth should be key themes of the new plan; further welcomes the positive progress and impact of the Carbon Neutral Islands project, and agrees that the Scottish Government should continue to work towards prosperous and sustainable island communities.

Jamie Halcro Johnston moved amendment S6M-17598.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-17598 in the name of Mairi Gougeon (Empowering Scotland's Island Communities), leave out from first "welcomes" to end and insert "raises significant concerns about the lack of reliable ferry services for many island communities and the challenges that this creates for islanders and businesses, as well as the absence of a long-term plan to provide solutions and funding for a much-improved ferry network; draws attention to the Scottish Human Rights Commission, which found that Scotland's islanders face a number of human rights challenges; emphasises the acute difficulties that islanders face, including in relation to the increased cost of living for households and businesses, access to health and social care, housing, fisheries, farming and island education; notes the widespread concern about depopulation and considers that not enough has been done to tackle it; highlights criticism raised about the national islands plan in terms of a lack of benefits and progress; appreciates the valuable role that the islands play in Scotland's tourist industry; raises concern about the potential impact of the Scottish Government's visitor levy on tourism; recognises the benefits brought by the energy sector on Scotland's islands, but notes that this sometimes comes into conflict with communities, and urges the Scottish Government to take clear action to tackle all challenges."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 31, Against 78 (including 2 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

Rhoda Grant moved amendment S6M-17598.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-17598 in the name of Mairi Gougeon (Empowering Scotland's Island Communities), leave out from first "welcomes" to end and insert "notes the first ever national islands plan; believes that much more needs to be done to support island communities; recognises that depopulation is a major issue impacting the islands and that not enough work has been undertaken to counteract this; notes that the Scottish Government has not used the powers available to it to 'island proof' policy, resulting in the need to shelve policies such as Highly Protected Marine Areas, the ban on wood burning stoves, and the island bonds plans; believes that the Scottish Government-caused ferry fiasco has had a disastrous effect on the economy, wellbeing and future of many islands; further believes that a new procurement plan that ensures the timely replacement of all ferries is vital; recognises that islanders are best placed to make the decisions affecting their communities, and calls, therefore, on the Scottish Government to empower island communities and ensure that there is proper local representation on ferry boards for CalMac and CMAL."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 46, Against 64 (including 2 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

The motion was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 63 (including 2 proxy votes), Against 40, Abstentions 7).

4. Business Programme: Martin Whitfield, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-17607—That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Tuesday 27 May 2025

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Scottish Government Debate: Growing Community Owned Energy in Scotland

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 28 May 2025

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

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

followed by Scottish Liberal Democrats 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 29 May 2025

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 Ministerial Statement: Galloway and Ayrshire National Park Proposal

followed by Ministerial Statement: NHS Grampian

followed by Ministerial Statement: Responding to RAAC in the Public Sector Across Scotland

followed by Legislative Consent Motion: Tobacco and Vapes Bill - UK Legislation

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

4.50 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 3 June 2025

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee Debate: Public Participation Inquiry

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 4 June 2025

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, and Parliamentary Business; Justice and Home Affairs; Education and Skills

followed by Scottish Government Business

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 5 June 2025

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

12.45 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

(b) that, for the purposes of Portfolio Questions in the week beginning 26 May 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. Stage 2 Timetable: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-17608—That the Parliament agrees that consideration of the Criminal Justice Modernisation and Abusive Domestic Behaviour Reviews (Scotland) Bill at stage 2 be completed by 20 June 2025.

The motion was agreed to.

6. Stage 2 Timetable: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-17609—That the Parliament agrees that consideration of the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill at stage 2 be completed by 27 June 2025.

The motion was agreed to.

7. Committee Membership: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-17610—That the Parliament agrees that Patrick Harvie be appointed to replace Gillian Mackay as a member of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee.

The motion was agreed to (DT)

8. Substitution on Committees: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-17611—That the Parliament agrees that Mark Ruskell be appointed to replace Gillian Mackay as the Scottish Green Party substitute on the Education, Children and Young People Committee.

The motion was agreed to (DT)

9. Designation of Lead Committee: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-17612—That the Parliament agrees that the Criminal Justice Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the Prevention of Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Bill at stage 1.

The motion was agreed to (DT)

10. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 3, 7, 8 and 9 as noted above.

The meeting closed at 5.48 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
21 May 2025

Appendix

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

Committee Reports

The following reports were published on 21 May 2025—

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee, 1st Report, 2025 (Session 6): A blueprint for participation - embedding deliberative democracy in the work of the Scottish Parliament (SP Paper 789)

Economy and Fair Work Committee, 7th Report, 2025 (Session 6): Annual Report of the Economy and Fair Work Committee 2024-25 (SP Paper 792)

Other Documents

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 21 May 2025 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Forth Valley College of Further and Higher Education Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2023 (SG/2025/2) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman: Compendium of Case Reports for May 2025 (SPSO/2025/05) laid under Sections 15(1) and 15(1A) of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002

The 2022/23 audit of Forth Valley College (SG/2025/13) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

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