



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 3, No. 38, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 25 October 2023

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

The meeting opened at 2.00pm.

- 1. Portfolio Questions:** Questions on Constitution, External Affairs and Culture and then Justice and Home Affairs were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.
- 2. Ministerial Statement:** The Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs (Angela Constance) made a statement and answered questions on Response to Storm Babet.
- 3. Ensuring Scotland's Skills System is Fit for the Future:** Daniel Johnson moved S6M-10922—That the Parliament notes the findings of the independent review of the skills delivery landscape, particularly that skills delivery has lacked clear leadership and direction, and substantial structural change is required to ensure that the skills system is fit for the future; regrets that Modern Apprenticeship starts are lower than in 2015-16 at a time when 70% of businesses are reporting skills shortages; is concerned that the proportion of people in employment who participated in job-related training is lower than it was in 2007; notes that net zero targets will require a step change in workforce skills but that the Scottish Government has only allocated 15% of its Just Transition Fund; considers that it is 21 months on from Audit Scotland's conclusion that urgent action was needed on skills from the Scottish Government and that it is therefore disappointing that no reforms are yet planned; believes that Scotland urgently needs a vision for a flexible and responsive skills delivery system that is fit for the future, and calls, therefore, on the Scottish Government to set out its response to the review of the skills delivery

landscape before the end of 2023 and to bring forward legislation on skills reform, as referenced in its Programme for Government, within the parliamentary year.

The Minister for Higher and Further Education; and Minister for Veterans (Graeme Dey) moved amendment S6M-10922.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-10922 in the name of Daniel Johnson (Ensuring Scotland's Skills System is Fit for the Future), leave out from “particularly” to end and insert “which it accepts set out a clear case for change; agrees that the skills landscape must fit the needs of the people of Scotland to ensure that everyone can fulfil their potential; understands that the Scottish Government will set out a full response to the independent review in the wider context of reform of the education and skills system, as set out in the Programme for Government 2023-24; agrees that it is right that the Scottish Government engages fully with stakeholders before setting out its full response, including education institutions, industry and trade unions; recognises that the Scottish Government's ambitions for a just transition will be supported by the delivery of the Green Industrial Strategy; acknowledges that funding is being provided to support up to 25,500 new Modern Apprenticeship starts in 2023-24; welcomes the many areas of success in the skills landscape at present, such as the proportion of school leavers in a positive destination nine months after the end of the school year standing at its highest level since comparable data was first gathered; recognises that effective utilisation of the skills system will be vital in ensuring that Scotland has the workforce skills to meet its ambitious net zero targets and the wider needs of the future economy; welcomes the Scottish Government's £500 million Just Transition Fund and the £75 million allocated in the Fund's first two years, which includes £11.2 million on a package of skills-focused interventions; acknowledges that this is a 10-year fund, and that the Scottish Government is acting to support workers now, and in the future, with the skills needed to deliver Scotland's just transition towards net zero; expresses deep disappointment that the UK Government has repeatedly refused to match the Scottish Government's Just Transition Fund, and calls, therefore, on all parties in the Scottish Parliament to work to secure a matching commitment from the UK Government.”

Murdo Fraser moved amendment S6M-10922.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-10922 in the name of Daniel Johnson (Ensuring Scotland's Skills System is Fit for the Future), after “skills shortages” insert “; supports the principle of parity of esteem for different learning routes, but regrets that there is considerable unmet demand for apprenticeship places due to the shortage of public funding available; believes that this should be addressed in the Scottish Government's forthcoming Budget for 2024-25”.

After debate, amendment S6M-10922.2 was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 65, Against 52, Abstentions 0). As a result, amendment S6M-10922.1 was pre-empted.

The motion, as amended, was then agreed to ((DT) by division: For 65, Against 30, Abstentions 22).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament notes the findings of the independent review of the skills delivery landscape, which it accepts set out a clear case for change; agrees that the skills landscape must fit the needs of the people of Scotland to ensure that everyone can fulfil their potential; understands that the Scottish Government will set out a full response to the independent review in the wider context of reform of the education and skills system, as set out in the Programme for Government 2023-24; agrees that it is right that the Scottish Government engages fully with stakeholders before setting out its full response, including education institutions, industry and trade unions; recognises that the Scottish Government's ambitions for a just transition will be supported by the delivery of the Green Industrial Strategy; acknowledges that funding is being provided to support up to 25,500 new Modern Apprenticeship starts in 2023-24; welcomes the many areas of success in the skills landscape at present, such as the proportion of school leavers in a positive destination nine months after the end of the school year standing at its highest level since comparable data was first gathered; recognises that effective utilisation of the skills system will be vital in ensuring that Scotland has the workforce skills to meet its ambitious net zero targets and the wider needs of the future economy; welcomes the Scottish Government's £500 million Just Transition Fund and the £75 million allocated in the Fund's first two years, which includes £11.2 million on a package of skills-focused interventions; acknowledges that this is a 10-year fund, and that the Scottish Government is acting to support workers now, and in the future, with the skills needed to deliver Scotland's just transition towards net zero; expresses deep disappointment that the UK Government has repeatedly refused to match the Scottish Government's Just Transition Fund, and calls, therefore, on all parties in the Scottish Parliament to work to secure a matching commitment from the UK Government.

4. Supporting Scotland's Culture Sector: Neil Bibby moved S6M-10917— That the Parliament values greatly the enormous contribution of the arts and culture sector to Scotland's national life and economy, noting that the creative industry is estimated to be worth nearly £4.5 billion and 80,000 jobs; recognises what many in the sector have described as a "perfect storm" of crisis in the sector, resulting from years of underfunding as well as the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost of living crisis; condemns the Scottish Government's decision to break its promise to the sector not to cut Creative Scotland's budget by 10%, and notes the furious reaction in response; notes the commitment from the Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture that Creative Scotland's funding will be restored in 2024-25, but recognises with concern that Creative Scotland has stated that up to a third of its regularly funded organisations are at serious risk of insolvency in the short term, and over half are financially weak, which will require redundancies or other cost savings, and therefore considers that there is an urgent need for funding now; further notes the announcement made by the First Minister on 17 October 2023 to more than double arts and culture funding over the next five years, but believes that, in the current context, financial certainty for the sector is crucial; calls, therefore, on the Scottish Government to reverse the 10% budget cut to Creative Scotland with immediate effect; further calls on the Scottish Government to set out full details for its proposed increase in the arts and culture budget, including

timescales for funding increases, and believes that it is essential that this is clarified ahead of the publication of a refreshed Scottish Government Culture Strategy.

The Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture (Angus Robertson) moved amendment S6M-10917.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-10917 in the name of Neil Bibby (Supporting Scotland's Culture Sector), leave out from first “recognises” to end and insert “understands that, in common with other sectors, arts and culture organisations are experiencing significant pressure due to increases in the cost of living as a consequence of Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the actions of the UK Government; welcomes that Creative Scotland has confirmed that it has used its reserves to ensure that funding for regularly funded organisations has been maintained in 2023-24; notes that, over the last five years, the Scottish Government has provided over £33 million to Creative Scotland to compensate for a shortfall in National Lottery funding; supports the Scottish Government’s plan to more than double arts and culture funding by £100 million over the next five years; endorses the Scottish Government’s aim of working with the culture sector to implement the refreshed culture strategy action plan, and believes that the UK Government should match this stated ambition and at least double its investment in arts and culture over the same period.”

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 65, Against 51, Abstentions 0).

Alexander Stewart moved amendment S6M-10917.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-10917 in the name of Neil Bibby (Supporting Scotland's Culture Sector), insert at end “; notes warnings that, if the £6.6 million cut is not restored next year, 2,000 jobs and 26,000 artist opportunities could be at risk, and calls on the Scottish Government to implement a more proactive approach to protecting the arts, music and culture sector in Scotland through, for example, the introduction of an Arts Bill, which would introduce a more sustainable long-term funding model to provide multi-year certainty around existing budgets.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 33, Against 65, Abstentions 19).

The motion, as amended, was then agreed to ((DT) by division: For 65, Against 52, Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament values greatly the enormous contribution of the arts and culture sector to Scotland’s national life and economy, noting that the creative industry is estimated to be worth nearly £4.5 billion and 80,000 jobs; understands that, in common with other sectors, arts and culture organisations are experiencing significant pressure due to increases in the cost of living as a consequence of Brexit,

the COVID-19 pandemic, and the actions of the UK Government; welcomes that Creative Scotland has confirmed that it has used its reserves to ensure that funding for regularly funded organisations has been maintained in 2023-24; notes that, over the last five years, the Scottish Government has provided over £33 million to Creative Scotland to compensate for a shortfall in National Lottery funding; supports the Scottish Government's plan to more than double arts and culture funding by £100 million over the next five years; endorses the Scottish Government's aim of working with the culture sector to implement the refreshed culture strategy action plan, and believes that the UK Government should match this stated ambition and at least double its investment in arts and culture over the same period.

5. Business Programme: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-10950—That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Tuesday 31 October 2023

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Scottish Government Debate: Rural and Islands Housing Action Plan

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 1 November 2023

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy; Finance and Parliamentary Business

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 2 November 2023

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, Net Zero and Just Transition

followed by Ministerial Statement: The Edinburgh Tram Inquiry Report

followed by Scottish Government Debate: Early Childhood Development

Transformational Change Programme

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 7 November 2023

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee Debate: A Modern and

Sustainable Ferry Service for Scotland

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 8 November 2023

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 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 9 November 2023

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 30 October 2023, 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.

6. Approval of SSI: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-10951—That the Parliament agrees that the Carer's Assistance (Carer Support Payment) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

7. Approval of SSI: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-10952—That the Parliament agrees that the Deposit and Return Scheme for Scotland (Miscellaneous Amendment) Regulations 2023 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

8. Approval of SSI: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-10953—That the Parliament agrees that the Legal Aid and Advice and Assistance (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) (No. 4) Regulations 2023 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

9. Designation of Lead Committee: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-10954—That the Parliament agrees that the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the Abortion Services (Safe Access Zones) (Scotland) Bill at stage 1.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

10. Suspension of Standing Orders: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-10960—That

the Parliament agrees that, for the purposes of consideration of the second supplementary legislative consent memorandum on the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill, Rule 9B.3.5 of Standing Orders is suspended.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

11. Approval of SSI: The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice (Shirley-Anne Somerville) moved S6M-10913—That the Parliament agrees that the Social Security (Residence and Presence Requirements) (Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and Lebanon) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

12. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 as noted above.

13. Climate Justice and Support for a Global Loss and Damage Fund: The Parliament debated S6M-10793 in the name of Maggie Chapman—That the Parliament recognises what it sees as the severe impact that human-caused climate change is having on the planet; believes that communities across Scotland, including in the North East Scotland region, as well as globally, are already being negatively affected by the climate emergency; considers that, disproportionately, those most acutely affected by these impacts are those who have contributed the least to the climate crisis; believes that this is a fundamental and grave injustice, compounded by histories of colonialism and oppression; welcomes the decision at the 27th UN climate conference (COP27) to establish an international solidarity fund for climate-related loss and damage; recognises and welcomes that Scotland reportedly played a key role in breaking a 30-year logjam on loss and damage after COP26 in Glasgow; notes and welcomes the reported support of parliamentarians across the world for the loss and damage pledge, including supporters in the Scottish Parliament, and notes the calls on the UK Government, as a party to the 28th UN climate conference (COP28), to support the operationalisation of the fund, to ensure that the money attributed is new and additional to the climate finance commitments already made, and not taken from existing official development assistance budgets, and to commit to providing loss and damage finance in the form of grants, not loans.

The meeting closed at 6.42 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
25 October 2023

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

Committee Reports

The following report was published on 25 October 2023—

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 60th Report, 2023 (Session 6): Subordinate Legislation considered by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee on 3 October 2023 (SP Paper 454)

Other Documents

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 25 October 2023 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration Annual Report 2022-23 (SG/2023/252) laid under paragraph 21 of schedule 3 of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration Annual Report and Accounts 2022-23 (SG/2023/251) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

The Scottish Government's workforce challenges : A report prepared for the Auditor General for Scotland (AGS/2023/9) laid under the Public Accountability and Finance (Scotland) Act 2000

Scottish Legal Aid Board Annual Report and Accounts For the year ended 31 March 2023 (SG/2023/184) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Accountability and Finance (Scotland) Act 2000

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Annual Report and Financial Statements 2022-23 (SG/2023/261) laid under section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

Scottish Sentencing Council Annual Report 2022-23 (SG/2023/248) laid under section 13(5) of the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010

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