



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 1, No. 101, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 20 April 2022

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

- 1. Portfolio Questions:** Questions on Justice and Veterans, and then Finance and the Economy were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.
- 2. Ministerial Statement:** The Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development and Minister with special responsibility for Refugees from Ukraine (Neil Gray) made a statement and answered questions on Displaced People from Ukraine - Update.
- 3. Economy: Cost of Living Crisis:** Alex Cole-Hamilton moved S6M-04050—That the Parliament considers that both the Scottish and UK governments must immediately do much more to tackle the worst cost of living crisis for generations, and that without additional help this will have a devastating impact on household incomes and poverty; believes that every household could benefit from a cost of living rescue package; urges the UK Government to act through a cut to VAT to 17.5%, worth £600 to the average household, the reversal of the National Insurance rise, the doubling and expansion of the Winter Fuel Payment and Warm Home Discount, and a “Robin Hood” tax on the energy companies that are making super profits from the current crisis; urges the Scottish Government to use its wholly devolved powers to reverse the recent 3.8% rail fare hike and, instead, to expand the system of railcards so that everyone is eligible to get the benefit of rail discounts of at least one third off, based on the model that already exists throughout London and the south east of England; further urges the Scottish Government to increase the value of disability benefits, announce protection for households experiencing council tax rises due to the Scottish Government’s cuts to council budgets, and activate an emergency nationwide home insulation

programme with reports provided monthly to Parliament on the impact of its interventions to increase household energy efficiency, and considers that together these steps would help insulate households from the cost of living crisis, where recent government decisions have added to their exposure.

The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government (Shona Robison) moved amendment S6M-04050.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-04050 in the name of Alex Cole-Hamilton (Economy: Cost of Living Crisis), leave out from “considers that both” to end and insert “recognises the increasing pressures facing households during the current cost of living crisis; welcomes the significant actions taken by the Scottish Government to mitigate those pressures within the scope of devolved powers and budgets, and that these include doubling the Scottish Child Payment to £20 per week, with a further increase later in 2022, uprating eight Scottish benefits by 6%, mitigating where possible the impact of the UK Government’s so-called bedroom tax and benefit cap, substantially increasing free childcare, introducing free bus travel for under-22s, committing to a Fair Fares review, including the pricing of public transport and the availability of concessions and discounts, a £1.8 billion programme of heating and home energy efficiency in the current parliamentary session, an extension of eligibility for Warmer Homes Scotland, the expansion of Home Energy Scotland advice services, and increased grants for area-based schemes; recognises that, after these actions, considerable challenges to cost-of-living pressures remain, resulting from a combination of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit and the UK Government’s failures to tackle spiralling energy costs, its removal of the £20 Universal Credit top-up, its failure to uprate benefits and pensions in line with current inflation, and its introduction of increased taxes on working people; calls on the UK Government to use its powers to reverse the National Insurance increase, increase benefits, increase all bands of the minimum wage to at least the real living wage, and tackle energy prices and increase UK-wide energy efficiency schemes, and further calls on the UK Government to put in place a windfall tax on excess profits made by large companies, including fossil fuel producers, to provide immediate financial help for families impacted by the cost of living crisis, or to transfer the powers to do so to the Scottish Parliament so that it can fully address the cost of living crisis and meet the needs of the people of Scotland.”

Liz Smith moved amendment S6M-04050.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-04050 in the name of Alex Cole-Hamilton (Economy: Cost of Living Crisis), leave out from “considers that both” to end and insert “recognises the significant economic challenges being faced by households and businesses as a result of the intense pressures from rising global inflation and increased costs of production; believes that the UK and Scottish governments need to work together to address these challenges, most especially for vulnerable groups and those on lower incomes, and welcomes the emphasis being placed by the UK Government on Levelling Up, Shared Prosperity and Community Renewal funds to assist those areas with weak economic growth, weak investment and lower employment levels.”

After debate, amendment S6M-04050.3 was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 66, Against 51, Abstentions 0). As a result, amendment S6M-04050.1 was pre-empted.

Pam Duncan-Glancy moved amendment S6M-04050.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-04050 in the name of Alex Cole-Hamilton (Economy: Cost of Living Crisis), insert at end “; further calls for the Scottish Government to support households struggling to pay their bills with a targeted fuel costs payment and a top up to the Welfare Fund; believes that the cash surplus stored up by Scottish Water should be utilised to give every household a £100 rebate on their water charges, and calls on the Scottish Government to cut ScotRail fares for three months to help address the cost of living crisis.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 23, Against 93, Abstentions 0).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 65, Against 51, Abstentions 1).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament recognises the increasing pressures facing households during the current cost of living crisis; welcomes the significant actions taken by the Scottish Government to mitigate those pressures within the scope of devolved powers and budgets, and that these include doubling the Scottish Child Payment to £20 per week, with a further increase later in 2022, uprating eight Scottish benefits by 6%, mitigating where possible the impact of the UK Government’s so-called bedroom tax and benefit cap, substantially increasing free childcare, introducing free bus travel for under-22s, committing to a Fair Fares review, including the pricing of public transport and the availability of concessions and discounts, a £1.8 billion programme of heating and home energy efficiency in the current parliamentary session, an extension of eligibility for Warmer Homes Scotland, the expansion of Home Energy Scotland advice services, and increased grants for area-based schemes; recognises that, after these actions, considerable challenges to cost-of-living pressures remain, resulting from a combination of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit and the UK Government’s failures to tackle spiralling energy costs, its removal of the £20 Universal Credit top-up, its failure to uprate benefits and pensions in line with current inflation, and its introduction of increased taxes on working people; calls on the UK Government to use its powers to reverse the National Insurance increase, increase benefits, increase all bands of the minimum wage to at least the real living wage, and tackle energy prices and increase UK-wide energy efficiency schemes, and further calls on the UK Government to put in place a windfall tax on excess profits made by large companies, including fossil fuel producers, to provide immediate financial help for families impacted by the cost of living crisis, or to transfer the powers to do so to the Scottish Parliament so that it can fully address the cost of living crisis and meet the needs of the people of Scotland.

4. Economy: Ferries: Alex Cole-Hamilton moved S6M-04051—That the Parliament condemns the severe delays to the production of vessels 801 and 802 contracted by Scottish Government-owned Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited

(CMAL), paid for by the Scottish Government, built originally by a company celebrated by the Scottish Government and, since 2019, by the nationalised Scottish Government-owned company; believes that these delays have left islanders and communities without reliable services that are critical to island life; notes that the Scottish Government's Open Government Action Plan 2021-25 states that "an open government gives the public information about the decisions it makes, supports people to understand and influence those decisions, and values and encourages accountability (responsibility for those decisions)"; considers that the Scottish Government has breached each of its own tests of open government, to the cost of taxpayers and the islanders waiting year after year for the ferries that they need; notes the impact on their local economies and the impact of the cost overrun on the spending available for other public service priorities; expresses regret that no Scottish minister has either resigned nor considered resigning despite all of these events, and believes that if vessels 801 and 802 are not completed within the revised timescale and cost, as provided to Parliament on 23 March 2022, the latest in a string of revisions, then the ministers responsible deserve to finally be held to account in the form of resignations, and calls on the Scottish Government to give this assurance.

The Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise (Ivan McKee) moved amendment S6M-04051.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-04051 in the name of Alex Cole-Hamilton (Economy: Ferries), leave out from "condemns" to end and insert "supports the Scottish Government's decision to deliver vessels 801 and 802 to serve island communities; recognises that saving Ferguson Marine from closure preserved over 300 skilled jobs and maintained commercial shipbuilding on the Clyde; notes with regret the delays to the completion of 801 and 802, but acknowledges recent progress with the updated schedule; further notes the continued significant investment that the Scottish Government is making to ferry services to support lifeline services and remote communities, including the completion of the procurement of two new vessels to serve Islay; notes that the Scottish Government has made available to the Parliament and published significant information, in line with the commitment to open government, to allow the public to understand and contribute to the debate, with the proactive release of 210 documents, and recognises that much of the recent debate relates to information that has been in the public domain for two years."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 66, Against 51, Abstentions 0).

Graham Simpson moved amendment S6M-04051.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-04051 in the name of Alex Cole-Hamilton (Economy: Ferries), insert at end "; further calls on the Scottish Government to set out why it ignored the advice of CMAL to award the contract for vessels 801 and 802 to Ferguson Marine Engineering Limited and to say which ministers were involved in that decision, and calls on the Scottish Government to publish Ernst and Young's Project Neptune report immediately."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 51, Against 66, Abstentions 0).

Neil Bibby moved amendment S6M-04051.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-04051 in the name of Alex Cole-Hamilton (Economy: Ferries), insert at end “; further calls on the First Minister to lead government efforts to secure the completion of vessels 801 and 802 by taking ministerial responsibility for government investments in Ferguson Marine; notes that the associated costs to the taxpayer include almost £2 million paid to a turnaround director of the yard; considers that, given the ongoing delays to the vessels, this cannot be considered value for money; notes that there remain unanswered questions with regards to the awarding of the contract for vessels 801 and 802, and calls on the Scottish Government to confirm whether a ministerial direction was issued and to publish a copy of any such direction.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 51, Against 66, Abstentions 0).

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

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament supports the Scottish Government’s decision to deliver vessels 801 and 802 to serve island communities; recognises that saving Ferguson Marine from closure preserved over 300 skilled jobs and maintained commercial shipbuilding on the Clyde; notes with regret the delays to the completion of 801 and 802, but acknowledges recent progress with the updated schedule; further notes the continued significant investment that the Scottish Government is making to ferry services to support lifeline services and remote communities, including the completion of the procurement of two new vessels to serve Islay; notes that the Scottish Government has made available to the Parliament and published significant information, in line with the commitment to open government, to allow the public to understand and contribute to the debate, with the proactive release of 210 documents, and recognises that much of the recent debate relates to information that has been in the public domain for two years.

5. Business Programme: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-04077—That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Tuesday 26 April 2022

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Scottish Government Debate: Reducing the Cost of the School Day for Low Income Families

followed by Legislative Consent Motion: British Sign Language Bill - UK Legislation

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 27 April 2022

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Covid Recovery and Parliamentary Business; Net Zero, Energy and Transport

followed by Scottish Government Debate: UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Implications for Scotland

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 28 April 2022

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: Rural Affairs and Islands

followed by Stage 1 Debate: Non-Domestic Rates (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Bill

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 3 May 2022

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Scottish Government Business

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 4 May 2022

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm General Questions

2.20 pm First Minister's Questions

3.05 pm Portfolio Questions: Health and Social Care; Social Justice, Housing and Local Government; Constitution, External Affairs and Culture

followed by Ministerial Statement

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Approval of SSIs (if required)

4.50 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

(b) that, for the purposes of Portfolio Questions in the week beginning 25 April 2022, 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. Stage 2 Timetable: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-04078—That the Parliament agrees that consideration of the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Bill at stage 2 be completed by 20 May 2022.

The motion was agreed to.

7. Stage 2 Timetable: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-04079—That the Parliament agrees that consideration of the Scottish Local Government Elections (Candidacy Rights of Foreign Nationals) Bill at stage 2 be completed by 20 May 2022.

The motion was agreed to.

8. Approval of SSI: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-04080—That the Parliament agrees that the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2022 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

9. Approval of SSI: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-04081—That the Parliament agrees that the Prohibition of Smoking Outside Hospital Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2022 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

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

11. Sexism in Football: The Parliament debated S6M-03367 in the name of Joe FitzPatrick—That the Parliament condemns the findings of a recent investigation, undertaken by the *Courier and Press & Journal*, which, it believes, shows the scale of sexist abuse facing those involved in women’s football in Scotland; notes with concern that the investigation found that 60% of female respondents had experienced sexism in football, and that sexism was the most commonly encountered form of abuse experienced by female players; highlights that, according to the investigation, just 8% of respondents believe that the football industry does enough to reduce discriminatory behaviour towards women; notes that 86% of respondents think that increasing media coverage of women’s football could attract more people to the sport; welcomes increased participation in women’s football in Scotland, including in Dundee; understands that the number of registered female players in Scotland increased by 21% during 2019; notes the physical and mental health benefits of participation in sport; commends the work of HerGameToo which, it understands, strives to support, empower and progress women’s football; strongly believes that discrimination of any kind has no place in sport; applauds journalists Sophie Goodwin and Stephen Stewart for conducting this important work, and notes the calls for action to be taken now to stamp out what it sees as the culture of misogyny in football.

The meeting closed at 6.52 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
20 April 2022

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

Committee Reports

The following reports were published on 20 April 2022—

Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee, 5th Report, 2022
(Session 6): Report on the Coronavirus (Recovery and Reform) (Scotland) Bill
(SP Paper 156)

Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee, 6th Report, 2022
(Session 6): Stage 1 Report on Non-Domestic Rates (Coronavirus) (Scotland)
Bill (SP Paper 157)

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee, 6th Report, 2022 (Session 6):
Additional supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum to the Health and
Care Bill (SP Paper 158)

Subordinate Legislation

Laid Only Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 20 April 2022 and is not subject to any parliamentary procedure—

Act of Sederunt (Rules of the Court of Session 1994 and Sheriff Appeal Court Rules Amendment) (Miscellaneous) 2022 (SSI 2022/135)
laid under section 30(2) of the Interpretation and Legislative Reform
(Scotland) Act 2010

Other Documents

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 20 April 2022 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman: Compendium Report of Discontinued Investigations: Compendium of Case Reports for April 2022 SPSO/2022/04 laid under Sections 15(1) and 15(1A) of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002

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