



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 3, No. 56, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 6 December 2023

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 Ministers.

2. Fiscal Framework Review: The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance (Shona Robison) moved S6M-11546—That the Parliament recognises the limited improvements to the Scottish Fiscal Framework, following a joint review with the UK Government; welcomes the outcome of the review, which provides an increase in the Scottish Government's borrowing and reserve capacity, and also confirms the Indexed Per Capita methodology as the permanent basis for calculating Block Grant Adjustments for devolved tax and security spend; notes that, while the limited progress is welcome, the Framework cannot protect Scotland from the UK Government's austerity-driven budget decisions; understands that the Autumn Statement saw real-terms cuts to frontline spending in NHS England and on justice, and that these cuts have impacts on the finances that are consequently available to Scotland; calls for the UK Government spending plans for 2024-25 to be urgently revisited to invest in services and provide the funding necessary to meet the costs of public sector pay deals, not least in the NHS, and believes that the Scottish Parliament should have all the fiscal levers to prevent Scotland being subject to the austerity policies that harm efforts to reduce poverty, develop a growing wellbeing economy, tackle climate change and invest in public services.

Liz Smith moved amendment S6M-11546.4—

As an amendment to motion S5M-11546 in the name of Shona Robison (Fiscal Framework Review), leave out from "notes" to end and insert "further welcomes the co-operation between the Scottish and UK governments in signing the 2023 fiscal framework agreement to deliver the best outcomes for the Scottish economy, and welcomes the extensive financial benefits that accrue to Scotland on an annual basis in terms of the fiscal transfers provided by the Barnett formula."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 31, Against 89, Abstentions 0).

Michael Marra moved amendment S6M-11546.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-11546 in the name of Shona Robison (Fiscal Framework Review), leave out from ", while" to end and insert "the deal was agreed to by both governments as part of the devolution settlement that has evolved significantly since 1998; regrets the lack of public scrutiny afforded by a rushed final agreement that saw the simultaneous publication of the Independent Report along with the political agreement, thereby preventing full parliamentary discussion and the input of expert bodies; believes that Scotland has been held back by the Scottish National Party administration and the UK Conservative administration, which have built a low-growth, low-wage economy and, as a result, the UK Autumn Statement was delivered in the context of a stagnating economy and the highest overall tax burden since the Second World War; notes the Scottish Fiscal Commission's modelling of a £1.9 billion revenue gap by 2027-28 between the Scottish Government's committed spending and projected available revenues; further notes that this analysis was undertaken prior to the First Minister's further sizeable spending commitments made at the Scottish National Party conference in October 2023, and calls on both of Scotland's governments to prioritise economic growth, to put wages into the pockets of hard-pressed people in Scotland, and to generate the taxes to pay for vital public services, which are currently undermined by the financial and economic incompetence of ministers in Edinburgh and London."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 25, Against 95, Abstentions 0).

Alex Cole-Hamilton moved amendment S6M-11546.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-11546 in the name of Shona Robison (Fiscal Framework Review), leave out from first "limited" to end and insert "improvements to the Scottish Fiscal Framework, following a joint review with the UK Government, and welcomes the outcome, which will protect and enhance devolved powers, providing more flexibility and choice than ever before, continuing to build on the cross-party agreement reached at the Smith Commission in 2014, but condemns the Scottish Government's repeated failure to treat local authorities fairly in setting the Scottish Budget or to establish a new fiscal framework that ensures that local authorities get a fair share of resources, harming their efforts to reduce poverty, grow local

economies, tackle the climate emergency and invest in essential public services, including schools."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 56, Against 64, Abstentions 0).

Ash Regan moved amendment S6M-11546.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-11546 in the name of Shona Robison (Fiscal Framework Review), leave out from "believes" to end and insert "notes that although VAT assignment was recommended by the Smith Commission, several years later, half of VAT raised in Scotland that was to be assigned to the Scottish Budget is still not included in the updated fiscal framework, and believes that only with the full powers of independence will the Scottish Parliament have all the fiscal levers required to reduce poverty, grow the economy, tackle climate change by investing in the future of carbon capture technology in the North Sea, and invest in public services."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 1, Against 119, Abstentions 0).

The motion was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 63, Against 56, Abstentions 1).

3. Business Programme: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-11560—That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Tuesday 12 December 2023

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Ministerial Statement: Literacy and Numeracy

followed by Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee Debate: Asylum Seekers 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 13 December 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 14 December 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 Scottish Government Debate: Application of the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023 in Scotland

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 19 December 2023

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 20 December 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 Stage 3 Proceedings: Trusts and Succession (Scotland) Bill

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 21 December 2023

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

1.10 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

(b) that, for the purposes of Portfolio Questions in the week beginning 11 December 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.

4. Approval of SSI: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-11561—That the Parliament agrees that the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023 (Consequential Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

5. Approval of SSI: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-11562—That the Parliament agrees that the Plant Health (Fees) (Forestry) (Scotland) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

6. Approval of SSI: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-11563—That the Parliament agrees that the Quality Meat Scotland (Amendment) Order 2023 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

7. Designation of Lead Committee: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-11564—That the Parliament agrees that the Education, Children and Young People Committee be

designated as the lead committee in consideration of the Scottish Languages Bill at stage 1.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

8. Designation of Lead Committee: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-11565—That the Parliament agrees that the Economy and Fair Work Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the legislative consent memorandum on the Trade (Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership) Bill.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

9. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 as noted above.

10. Charitable Hospice Care to Meet Future Need: The Parliament debated S6M-11352 in the name of Sue Webber—That the Parliament thanks charitable hospices, across both adult and children’s services, for providing vital palliative and end of life care and bereavement support to an estimated 21,000 people in Scotland in 2022-23; commends the care that they deliver, which reaches out into communities and people’s homes, through services such as hospice care at home, supporting not only patients but also their families and loved ones; understands that demand for palliative care is predicted to increase by 20% by 2040, and that the care that people need will be more complex; further understands that around 8,200 people die in poverty every year in Scotland; considers that people impacted by poverty face barriers in accessing hospice care; believes that everyone should have access to hospice care if they require it; considers that hospice care reduces pressure on NHS services by supporting people to stay at home and avoid unnecessary hospital admissions; notes reports that unscheduled care costs the NHS £190 million per year for those in the last year of life; understands that the use of unscheduled care services by those in the last year of life in the most deprived areas of Scotland is almost double that of those in the least deprived areas; welcomes that charitable hospices work in partnership with colleagues in the NHS and across the health and care sector; understands with concern, however, that the impact of matching the recent NHS pay awards, alongside rising running costs, is expected to leave the hospice care sector £16 million in deficit in 2023-24, meaning that hospices may need to make tough decisions about the services that they can provide to patients and families in the future, and notes the belief, therefore, that a new national funding framework for hospice care is vital to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the sector and to allow charitable hospices to continue to support the NHS and provide high-quality palliative care to people in the Lothian region and across Scotland.

11. Motion Without Notice: Sue Webber moved without notice that, under Rule 8.14.3, the debate be extended by up to 30 minutes.

The meeting closed at 6.13 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
6 December 2023

Appendix

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

Other Documents

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 6 December 2023 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Environmental Standards Scotland Climate Change Improvement Report (ESS/2023/02) laid under section 29 of the UK Withdrawal for the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021

HMICS Thematic Inspection of Organisational Culture in Police Scotland (HMICS/2023/08) laid under section 79(3) of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012

National Museums Scotland Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (SG/2023/303) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

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