



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 2, No. 39, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Thursday 3 November 2022

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

The meeting opened at 11.40 am.

- 1. General Questions:** Questions were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.
- 2. First Minister's Questions:** Questions were answered by the First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon).
- 3. Cancer Card:** The Parliament debated S6M-04821 in the name of Miles Briggs—That the Parliament acknowledges what it sees as the tremendous work by Jen Hardy in establishing Cancer Card in Scotland, which is an initiative that provides people with access to vital cancer support services and information regarding their diagnosis in one place; understands that, after her own incurable breast cancer diagnosis in 2017, Jen was struck by the realisation that there was no single place for her to obtain useful information related to her illness, which motivated her to establish Cancer Card; further understands that this community can help people diagnosed with cancer, including people in the Lothian region, to find the support that they require, minimising stress during an already highly stressful time; recognises that Cancer Card attained charity status in 2021; considers that it can play an integral role in securing relief and comfort to cancer patients, and welcomes the appointment of Ian Pirrie as Cancer Card's first CEO.
- 4. Portfolio Questions:** Questions on Net Zero, Energy and Transport were answered by a Cabinet Secretary and Ministers.

5. Revision to Business Programme: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-06596—That the Parliament agrees to the following revisions to the programme of business for Thursday 3 November 2022—

after

2.30 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

insert

followed by Appointment of Junior Scottish Minister

delete

2.30 pm Portfolio Questions: Net Zero, Energy and Transport

insert

followed by Portfolio Questions: Net Zero, Energy and Transport

The motion was agreed to.

6. Appointment of Junior Scottish Minister: The First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon) moved S6M-06595—That the Parliament agrees that Elena Whitham be appointed as a junior Scottish Minister.

The motion was agreed to.

7. Progress on the Automation and Take-up of Scottish Social Security Benefits: The Minister for Social Security and Local Government (Ben Macpherson) moved S6M-06572—That the Parliament welcomes the positive impact that existing automation of Scottish social security payments is having, including ensuring that most eligible people receive the Child Winter Heating Assistance and Carer's Allowance Supplement without needing to apply; further welcomes the proposal to automate the Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment and Best Start Grant School Age Payment for eligible families in receipt of Scottish Child Payment by the end of November 2022; notes the Scottish Government's intention to continue exploring opportunities for further automation; believes that these changes will mean that more people get the benefits that they are entitled to, which is especially important at a time of increasing economic uncertainty; recognises the progress made in promoting Scottish benefit take-up since the publication of the second benefit take-up strategy in 2021, including the launch of an independent advocacy service and funding welfare rights advisors in up to 180 GP practices in Scotland's most deprived areas, as well as remote and rural areas; acknowledges that there is still work to do regarding both automation and take-up, and agrees, therefore, that all governments should ensure that people are aware of, and enabled to access, the financial support that they are eligible for and entitled to.

Jeremy Balfour moved amendment S6M-06572.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-06572 in the name of Ben Macpherson (Progress on the Automation and Take-up of Scottish Social Security Benefits),

insert at end “; is encouraged by the joint work of the UK and Scottish governments to help all people in Scotland; welcomes the work done by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to ensure that people are getting their benefits; welcomes the extra funds provided by the UK Government in Barnett consequentials to support struggling families, and expresses disappointment in the delay of the Scottish Welfare Fund review, and in the lack of collection of data by Social Security Scotland.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 28, Against 83, Abstentions 0).

Pam Duncan-Glancy moved amendment S6M-06572.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-06572 in the name of Ben Macpherson (Progress on the Automation and Take-up of Scottish Social Security Benefits), leave out from “welcomes the positive” to end and insert “notes the impact that existing automation of Scottish social security payments is having, including ensuring that most eligible people receive the Child Winter Heating Assistance and Carer’s Allowance Supplement without needing to apply; believes that the opportunity to automate other aspects of the social security system should have been taken before now; regrets that the Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment and the Best Start Grant School Age Payment for eligible families in receipt of Scottish Child Payment are not yet automated; notes that uptake for Scottish social security payments is not yet maximised and that the Scottish Government has chosen to allow the Department for Work and Pension (DWP) to continue to administrate several devolved benefits; believes that opportunities for further automation must be expedited so that more people get the benefits that they are entitled to, which is especially important at a time of increasing economic uncertainty; understands that direct referral mechanisms between public agencies and other organisations in Scotland have not been developed, and urges the Scottish Government to prioritise this to ensure that the “no wrong door approach” can be delivered fully, and that those who are entitled to social security payments are enabled to access the financial support that they are eligible for.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 48, Against 62, Abstentions 0).

The motion was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 65, Against 46, Abstentions 0).

8. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on item 7 as noted above.

9. Allied Health Professions Day 2022: Helping People Live Their Best Lives: The Parliament debated S6M-05922 in the name of Carol Mochan—That the Parliament notes that Allied Health Professions Day 2022 will be marked on 14 October; recognises what it sees as the important contribution that Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) make to the provision of health and social care in Scotland; understands that AHPs make up the third largest workforce in the NHS; commends these health professionals for their dedication at all times but particularly during the

COVID-19 pandemic; understands that AHPs play an integral role in prehabilitation, early intervention, prevention and rehabilitation strategies to meet the needs of the South Scotland and wider Scottish population, and notes the view that further resource for AHPs is needed to fulfil their potential and meet the need for collaboration and diversity of skills in health and social care.

The meeting closed at 6.00 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
3 November 2022

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

Committee Reports

The following report was published on 3 November 2022—

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 55th Report, 2022 (Session 6): Legislative Consent Memorandum: delegated powers relevant to Scotland in the UK Northern Ireland Protocol Bill (SP Paper 251)

Subordinate Legislation

Negative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 3 November 2022 and is subject to the negative procedure—

Electricity (Applications for Consent and Variation of Consent) (Fees) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2022 (SSI 2022/310)
laid under sections 106(2) and (3) of the Electricity Act 1989

Other Documents

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 3 November 2022 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Health and Care Professions Council Annual and Accounts 2021-22 (SG/2022/205) laid under Articles 44(2) and 46(7) of the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001

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