



# The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 2, No. 30, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Thursday 29 September 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 a Minister.
- 2. First Minister's Questions:** Questions were answered by the First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon).
- 3. Mesh Treatment Clarity:** The Parliament debated S6M-05086 in the name of Daniel Johnson—That the Parliament understands the difficulties and desperation that women can experience as a result of transvaginal mesh implant surgery, both in terms of their physical wellbeing and their mental health; notes the view that there is a need for urgent reform so that women have the necessary treatment available; notes the calls for greater clarity and preparedness in dealing with mesh cases, so that more women, including in Edinburgh Southern constituency, can be supported with the clinical support they need, and further notes calls on the Scottish Government to do all it can to engage with mesh survivors.
- 4. Portfolio Questions:** Questions on Net Zero, Energy and Transport were answered by a Cabinet Secretary and Ministers.
- 5. Excellence in Scottish Education:** The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (Shirley-Anne Somerville) moved S6M-06102—That the Parliament recognises that there is much to be proud of and to celebrate in Scottish education; commends the hard work of all staff and teaching professionals in Scotland's schools, colleges, universities and early learning and childcare centres to support children and young

people throughout this period of recovery post-COVID-19-pandemic; pays tribute to all the young people who achieved qualifications, broader achievements and skills in summer 2022, as well as those who have moved onto employment, started new apprenticeships, or courses in colleges and universities, having overcome the challenges they faced; recognises that, despite those challenges, this was one of the strongest ever sets of results for any exam year, given that pass rates were up on the last time that formal exams were held in 2019; welcomes that the attainment gap has closed over the last 10 years and that there has been a record high number of full-time first degree entrants to university coming from the most deprived areas in Scotland, but acknowledges that significant progress is still required; welcomes, therefore, the Scottish Government's commitment to ensuring that all children and young people receive a first-class education in their local school through significant investment in teacher employment, with the highest spending per pupil, and more teachers per pupil, than any other UK nation, as well as increased digital inclusion, action to address the costs associated with the school day, and a £1 billion investment over the course of the parliamentary session to close the poverty-related attainment gap; commends teachers, schools and local authorities across Scotland for their commitment to build a continuously improving system, which raises attainment for all, closes the attainment gap, and enables all children and young people to fulfil their potential, and encourages everyone - children, young people, families and teachers - to give their views on the future of education by taking part in the National Discussion.

Stephen Kerr moved amendment S6M-06102.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-06102 in the name of Shirley-Anne Somerville (Excellence in Scottish Education), leave out from "recognises that, despite" to end and insert "expresses concern that the Scottish Government remains complacent about education in Scotland with fewer teachers, larger class sizes, a growing attainment gap, lower levels of numeracy and literacy and a lack of school inspections demonstrating its neglect of Scottish education; notes that the Scottish Government has broken its promises on class sizes and failed to support teachers and pupils in the classroom, and further notes that the withdrawal from international comparisons and a lack of decent measurement of outcomes has shielded the Scottish Government from proper scrutiny while its reforms to Education Scotland and the Scottish Qualifications Authority appear set to amount to nothing more than cosmetic changes."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 29, Against 64, Abstentions 23).

Michael Marra moved amendment S6M-06102.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-06102 in the name of Shirley-Anne Somerville (Excellence in Scottish Education), leave out from "recognises that, despite" to end and insert "regrets that the poverty-related attainment gap has widened for pupils sitting National 5, Higher, and Advanced Higher exams in summer 2022 compared to results in 2021, and remains unacceptably wide; understands that the assessment model used had over

double the impact on the poorest pupils, with the Higher pass rates among pupils from the 20% most deprived areas falling by 13%, compared to a 5.9% decrease in the 20% least deprived areas; notes with concern that the Scottish Government's recent reform of the Scottish Attainment Challenge funding resulted in money being taken from Scotland's most deprived communities, and amounts to pupils in the most deprived areas paying for extra investment in areas of less deprivation; believes that Scottish Attainment Challenge funding should be available to pupils in every local authority; considers that the Scottish Government has failed to grasp or sufficiently respond to the scale of lost learning during the pandemic; welcomes the Scottish Government's launching of the National Discussion and the opportunity for everyone in Scotland to give their views on the future of education; believes that the views of all stakeholders including children, teachers, families, employers and business will be of particular value in informing the direction of education reform in Scotland, and ensuring the education system is enabling the country to reach its potential; believes that this process must address the issues that teachers, parents and experts have highlighted in recent years, in addition to considering the long-term resourcing of education and skills; acknowledges the need to deliver genuine reform in the education system; regrets the length of time being taken to enact reform, and calls on the Scottish Government to accelerate the process to ensure that the maximum number of young people can benefit from a reformed and high performing education system."

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

The motion was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 65, Against 50, Abstentions 0).

**6. Approval of SSI:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-06089—That the Parliament agrees that the Scottish Landfill Tax (Prescribed Landfill Site Activities) Amendment Order 2022 (SSI 2022/233) 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-06090—That the Parliament agrees that the Advice and Assistance (Summary Criminal Proceedings) (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) Regulations 2022 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

**8. Decision Time:** The Parliament, under Standing Orders Rule 11.2.5, took decisions on items 2 and 3 debated on 28 September 2022, and then took decisions on items 5, 6 and 7 as noted above.

The meeting closed at 5.27 pm.

**David McGill**

Clerk of the Parliament  
29 September 2022

## **Appendix**

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

### **Committee Reports**

The following report was published on 29 September 2022—

Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee, 9th Report, 2022  
(Session 6): Report on Scottish Social Housing Charter: November 2022 (SP  
Paper 232)

### **Subordinate Legislation**

#### **Negative Instruments**

The following instruments were laid before the Parliament on 29 September 2022 and are subject to the negative procedure—

Town and Country Planning (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) Regulations 2022 (SSI 2022/286)

laid under section 275 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and section 39 of the Planning (Hazardous Substances) (Scotland) Act 1997

Feed Additives (Authorisations) (Scotland) Regulations 2022 (SSI 2022/288)

laid under Article 18A(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003

#### **Laid Only Instruments**

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 29 September 2022 and is not subject to any parliamentary procedure—

Act of Sederunt (Ordinary Cause Rules 1993 Amendment) (Case Management of Defended Family and Civil Partnership Actions) 2022 (SSI 2022/289)

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 29 September 2022 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

#### **Environmental Standards Scotland Air Quality Improvement Report**

**(ESS/2022/02)** laid under Section 29 of the UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021

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