



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 2, No. 84, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Thursday 9 March 2023

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

The meeting opened at 11.40 pm.

- 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. Scotland's Forgotten Children:** The Parliament debated S6M-07728 in the name of Roz McCall—That the Parliament notes, with concern, the findings of the Adoption Barometer 2022, published by Adoption UK, which found that more than four out of five children (81%) represented in the survey were reported to need more support in education than their peers, rising to 85% of secondary school-aged children; considers that children who are adopted in Scotland are, under the current arrangements, disadvantaged when it comes to support offered in primary and secondary education, when compared to other children who are care-experienced; recognises what it sees as the challenges of the adoption process and its impact on the ability of education providers to deliver relevant and prompt support for adopted children; understands that care-experienced children in the education system may display signs of attachment issues due to previous trauma; notes the calls on the Scottish Government to increase the level of support that adopted children receive to match the level of support given to fostered children, to ensure that both groups of children receive additional support within the education system; further notes the findings of the Scotland Foster Care Allowances Survey 2021-22, conducted by The Fostering Network, which showed the differences in weekly allowances for children and young people in foster care and those in a continuing care arrangement across

Scotland's 32 local authorities, including those in the Mid Scotland and Fife region; understands that, despite a commitment in the Scottish Government's 2021-2022 Programme for Government to implement a national allowance for foster care and a national review of care allowances in 2017, Scotland remains the only part of the UK to not have a national minimum allowance, and notes the further calls on the Scottish Government to honour the commitment it made to implement the Independent Care Review's The Promise, in which it states that "to provide the care that children require, foster carers must be sufficiently financially maintained".

4. Portfolio Questions: Questions on Net Zero, Energy and Transport were answered by a Cabinet Secretary and a Minister.

5. Reforming the Criminal Law to Address Misogyny: The Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans (Keith Brown) moved S6M-08159—That the Parliament condemns the misogynistic behaviour, harassment, threats and abuse experienced by women and girls; notes that such behaviour is carried out mainly by men and represents a barrier to achieving equality by restricting the ability of women and girls to achieve their full potential in all aspects of everyday life; is concerned at the increase in online spaces being used to perpetrate such misogynistic behaviours, allowing people to hide behind anonymity; agrees that action needs to be taken to address such behaviour; thanks the independent Working Group on Misogyny, which is chaired by Baroness Helena Kennedy, for its considered report on how to reform criminal law to address misogyny; welcomes the publication of a consultation paper on draft legislative provisions to implement the Group's recommendations; notes that the Scottish Government will carefully consider responses to the consultation to ensure that legislation introduced in the Parliament appropriately and effectively criminalises this type of pernicious behaviour, and recognises that legislation alone will not eradicate the centuries-old cultural attitudes that drive such behaviour, and that wider action to address misogyny and promote equality is equally important to change male behaviour and deliver equality for women and girls.

Jamie Greene moved amendment S6M-08159.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-08159 in the name of Keith Brown (Reforming the Criminal Law to Address Misogyny), insert at end “; supports these efforts as part of wider reforms to the criminal justice system, and urges the Scottish Government to consider how its proposed Criminal Justice Reform Bill might also be used to deliver better outcomes for women and girls.”

After debate, the amendment was agreed to (DT).

Pauline McNeill moved amendment S6M-08159.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-08159 in the name of Keith Brown (Reforming the Criminal Law to Address Misogyny), insert at end “; appreciates that this is complicated work that needs scrutiny, but regrets that it has taken so many years only to get to consultation level; recognises how important wider education is, particularly for young people, to generate the

fundamental shift in attitude that is needed, and notes the importance of recognising the toxicity of social media.”

After debate, the amendment was agreed to (DT).

The motion, as amended, was then agreed to (DT).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament condemns the misogynistic behaviour, harassment, threats and abuse experienced by women and girls; notes that such behaviour is carried out mainly by men and represents a barrier to achieving equality by restricting the ability of women and girls to achieve their full potential in all aspects of everyday life; is concerned at the increase in online spaces being used to perpetrate such misogynistic behaviours, allowing people to hide behind anonymity; agrees that action needs to be taken to address such behaviour; thanks the independent Working Group on Misogyny, which is chaired by Baroness Helena Kennedy, for its considered report on how to reform criminal law to address misogyny; welcomes the publication of a consultation paper on draft legislative provisions to implement the Group’s recommendations; notes that the Scottish Government will carefully consider responses to the consultation to ensure that legislation introduced in the Parliament appropriately and effectively criminalises this type of pernicious behaviour; recognises that legislation alone will not eradicate the centuries-old cultural attitudes that drive such behaviour, and that wider action to address misogyny and promote equality is equally important to change male behaviour and deliver equality for women and girls; supports these efforts as part of wider reforms to the criminal justice system; urges the Scottish Government to consider how its proposed Criminal Justice Reform Bill might also be used to deliver better outcomes for women and girls; appreciates that this is complicated work that needs scrutiny, but regrets that it has taken so many years only to get to consultation level; recognises how important wider education is, particularly for young people, to generate the fundamental shift in attitude that is needed, and notes the importance of recognising the toxicity of social media.

6. Motion Without Notice: Neil Bibby, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved without notice that, under Rule 11.2.4, Decision Time be brought forward to 4.53 pm.

7. Decision Time: The Parliament took a decision on item 5 as noted above.

The meeting closed at 4.54 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
9 March 2023

Appendix

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

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