



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 4, No. 49, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Tuesday 19 November 2024

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

The meeting opened at 2.17 pm.

- 1. Time for Reflection:** William More, Head of Operations in Scotland, Aid to the Church in Need (UK), led Time for Reflection.
- 2. Topical Questions:** Questions were answered by a Cabinet Secretary.
- 3. The Impact of the UK Government's Budget on Scotland's Rural Economy:** The Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands (Mairi Gougeon) moved S6M-15508—That the Parliament is disappointed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer chose not to work with the Scottish Government before her Budget on 30 October 2024, nor to consult with farmers, crofters and other rural stakeholders about the Budget's effects on Scotland's rural economy, including breaking the vital link between funding for Scotland's farmers and its land mass, and the changes to agricultural property relief, which will affect succession planning in farms throughout Scotland; is concerned at the apparent failure of the UK Government to fully assess the impacts of those budget changes on Scotland's rural economy or to publish any such assessments, and calls on the UK Government to urgently do so.

Jamie Halcro Johnston moved amendment S6M-15508.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-15508 in the name of Mairi Gougeon (The Impact of the UK Government's Budget on Scotland's Rural Economy), insert at end “; recognises that ring-fenced agriculture funding has been delivered by previous UK administrations for over 50 years; urges both the UK and Scottish

governments to work together to ensure certainty for Scotland's farmers, crofters and rural stakeholders by delivering multi-year ring-fenced funding for agriculture, and calls on the Scottish Government to ensure that all agriculture funding is allocated to the sector and not diverted for use in other portfolio areas."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 33, Against 85 (including 4 proxy votes), Abstentions 1).

Colin Smyth moved amendment S6M-15508.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-15508 in the name of Mairi Gougeon (The Impact of the UK Government's Budget on Scotland's Rural Economy), leave out from "is disappointed" to end and insert "welcomes the increase to the Scottish devolved budget of £1.5 billion in 2024-25 and £3.4 billion next year, which will deliver the highest ever devolved budget settlement of £47.7 billion in 2025-26 as a result of the UK Government's Budget; agrees that the Scottish Government should use the record devolved settlement in the forthcoming Scottish Budget to ensure fair funding to Scotland's farmers and crofters to support food security, sustainable farming and environmental restoration, and to invest in Scotland's public services and infrastructure, recognising the long-term challenges facing rural and island communities in housing, public transport, including ferries, education, health and social care, poverty and depopulation, and further agrees that restoring public finances is vital to provide certainty and security of funding for Scotland's farmers and crofters and to support Scotland's rural and island communities."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 20 (including 1 proxy vote), Against 101 (including 3 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

The motion was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 94 (including 3 proxy votes), Against 27 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 0).

4. Revision to Business Programme: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-15539 — That the Parliament agrees to the following revisions to the programme of business for—

(a) Wednesday 20 November 2024—

after

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Deputy First Minister Responsibilities, Economy and Gaelic; Finance and Local Government

insert

followed by Ministerial Statement: Improving Transitions for Young Disabled People

delete

5.15 pm Decision Time

and insert

5.30 pm Decision Time

(b) Thursday 21 November 2024—

delete

2.30 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.30 pm Portfolio Questions: Net Zero and Energy, and Transport
and insert

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Net Zero and Energy, and Transport
followed by Ministerial Statement: National Care Service

The motion was agreed to.

5. Decision Time: The Parliament took a decision on item 3 as noted above.

6. Celebrating the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership: The Parliament debated S6M-13967 in the name of Gordon MacDonald— That the Parliament celebrates the work of the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership (SEHP) and its reported success in bringing almost 11,000 long-term empty properties back into use since its establishment in 2010; understands that 1,875 long-term empty homes were brought back into use in 2023-24 alone, a record annual figure for the partnership; recognises the role of the SEHP in facilitating collaborative work between Shelter Scotland, local authorities and the Scottish Government, which it understands has invested over £3.7 million in the partnership to date; notes the view that joint efforts to bring long-term empty properties back into use must continue, with over 46,000 properties reportedly still identified as empty or void across Scotland, including 7,200 in the City of Edinburgh Council area; further notes the belief that initiatives such as a reduction in VAT by the UK Government for repairs and improvements could facilitate the investment required to support households into a further 46,000 short-term unoccupied and vacant homes, whether council home voids, housing association stock awaiting repairs, or private properties lying empty; believes that SEHP's recent milestone is a vital step towards achieving the Scottish Government's ambition to tackle the housing emergency and provide a further 110,000 affordable homes by 2032; understands that over 131,000 social and affordable homes have been provided by Scottish National Party administrations since 2007 and that this is the highest figure per head of population in the UK; further understands that more than 21,000 homes have already been delivered against the 2032 target; highlights that over £600 million is reportedly being committed to the Affordable Housing Supply Programme in 2024-25, despite what it sees as unprecedented pressure on Scotland's public finances as a result of rising costs and the budgetary decisions of the UK Government, and notes the calls on the UK Government to use its upcoming Budget to reverse what it sees as harmful cuts to Scotland's capital funding allocation, to enable the Scottish Government to invest further in the provision of warm, affordable housing for all.

The meeting closed at 5.46 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
19 November 2024

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

Committee Reports

The following reports were published on 15 November 2024—

Finance and Public Administration Committee, 10th Report, 2024 (Session 6): Report on the National Performance Framework: Review of National Outcomes (SP Paper 685)

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 66th Report, 2024 (Session 6): Delegated powers in the Social Security (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill (as amended at Stage 2) (SP Paper 688)

Subordinate Legislation

Affirmative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 18 November 2024 and is subject to the affirmative procedure—

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exclusions and Exceptions) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2025 [draft]
laid under section 10(2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Other Documents

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 15 November 2024 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

UHI Inverness College Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2023 (SG/2024/69) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

UHI Moray College Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2023 (SG/2024/63) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

UHI Perth College Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2023 (SG/2024/66) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 18 November 2024 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman: Spotlight on the impact of Scottish Welfare Fund High Most Compelling priority rating (SPSO/2024/HMC) laid under section 17(4) of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 19 November 2024 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority Annual Report and Accounts 2023/24 (SG/2024/272) laid under section 26 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000

Police Investigations and Review Commissioner Annual Report & Accounts 2023/2024 (SG/2024/257) laid under Section 43(5) of the Police Public Order and Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2006

Scottish Funding Council Annual Report and Accounts for 2023-24 (SG/2024/280) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

Statement on the Effectiveness of Environmental Governance Arrangements (SG/2024/279) laid under Section 41 (6) of the UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021

Published by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body

All documents are available on
the Scottish Parliament website at:

www.parliament.scot/documents

For information on the Scottish Parliament contact
Public Information on:

Telephone: 0131 348 5000 or 0800 092 7500

Email: sp.info@parliament.scot

Live chat on parliament.scot

You can write to us in any language or contact us
using the Text Relay service or in British Sign
Language through contactScotland-BSL.

© Parliamentary copyright. Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body

The Scottish Parliament's copyright policy can be found on the website -
www.parliament.scot or by contacting Public Information.