



**OFFICIAL REPORT**  
AITHISG OIFIGEIL

# Meeting of the Parliament

**Wednesday 5 June 2019**

**Session 5**



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# Scottish Parliament

Wednesday 5 June 2019

*[The Deputy Presiding Officer opened the meeting at 13:30]*

## Sustainable Aquaculture

**The Deputy Presiding Officer (Christine Grahame):** The first item of business is a statement by Fergus Ewing, on progress in delivering a sustainable aquaculture sector. The cabinet secretary will take questions at the end of his statement, so there should be no interventions or interruptions.

13:30

**The Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy (Fergus Ewing):** I am pleased to set out to Parliament the progress that is being made to deliver a sustainable aquaculture sector in Scotland. Last year, the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee and the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee contributed to the debate on the farmed salmon sector. The committees concluded that in relation to regulatory arrangements for the sector the status quo was not an option. The Scottish Government agreed with that conclusion: today's statement demonstrates our determination to deliver the necessary changes to strengthen the arrangements.

Before I describe those changes, I want to make reference to wild salmonids and the potential impact on them from sea lice in and around fish farms. We are, of course, extremely concerned about the serious declines in wild Atlantic salmon populations right across the north-east Atlantic. The reasons for the declines are multifactorial.

We have identified 12 major groups of pressures that are impacting on wild salmon stocks, and we recognise that aquaculture is one of the pressures. Sea lice are, of course, ubiquitous in the marine environment and have the potential to impact on wild and farmed fish. That is why we established a salmon interactions working group, which is making good progress in collating recommendations for a future approach to managing farmed and wild fish interactions. That group is aided by a technical working group, which is developing practical arrangements for improving regulation in the area. Its work is informed by regulatory regimes elsewhere, including Norway. Discussions are on-going to develop proposals: the group aims to issue those for public consultation this summer.

I have mentioned those developments simply to emphasise that we are serious about delivering a broad programme of reform; the changes that I am announcing today are only the first part of that programme.

The Scottish Government has completed its review of Scotland's farmed fish sea lice policy. Two years have passed since changes to the policy were last introduced. To put that in context, that represents one fish farming cycle in the marine environment. As a result of the review, we will be making the following changes to the current policy.

First, we will in 2020 introduce new legislation that will require all marine fish farms to report a weekly sea lice number to the Scottish Government's fish health inspectorate, one week in arrears. The sector has already recognised that it must become more open and transparent, and has in the past year announced its own sea lice publication plans. However, we will take action to strengthen the statutory basis of our sea lice regime in order to ensure a consistent approach and to deliver confidence in the system.

The introduction of legislation will remove any ambiguity about reporting requirements and will deliver more detailed information about salmon and rainbow trout farms. Crucially, it will provide data to enable monitoring of specific farms and issues as they arise, and to allow for further policy change, if needed. To ensure openness and transparency, every sea lice report will be published.

Secondly, from the next reporting week, we will reduce the current reporting and intervention thresholds from three and eight average adult female lice per fish to two and six, respectively. Those thresholds are an average of adult female lice per fish on the farm, and are calculated by following established counting and recording protocols. That change means that fish farms will now be expected to report at much lower sea lice levels to the Scottish Government's fish health inspectorate, which will allow for earlier intervention and enforcement action being taken. We will publish an updated enforcement information sheet to that effect, which will include a simplified enforcement process.

Thirdly, today I am also committing in the medium term—unless there is compelling evidence to the contrary—to a further reduction of the sea lice reporting and intervention thresholds to two and four average adult female lice per fish. That further reduction will happen, if confirmed by a review of the evidence, 12 months following the implementation of the new statutory reporting regime. I mentioned that the changes to the intervention levels are being introduced following just one fish farming cycle in the marine

environment. It must be recognised that those timescales are actually very short in terms of the fish farming production cycle, and we must ensure that farmers can adapt and make necessary investments.

Finally, I am announcing today that we will explore how to introduce third-party independent checks on fish farms' sea lice counts to ensure the accuracy of the information that is provided to the Scottish Government.

Taken together, the new measures signal a major shift from self-regulation to statutory regulation. They also seek to move to an approach that supports prevention through robust and independent monitoring. The new sea lice management policy will not operate in isolation. All marine salmon producers will continue to follow the code of good practice for Scottish fin-fish aquaculture, which includes points of compliance on sea lice and national treatment standards. Adherence to the code, alongside voluntary monitoring and early intervention by salmon producers, as well as investment in new technologies, has resulted in 2018 having the lowest annual average reported sea lice levels since records started to be made available, which was back in 2013.

The changes that I am announcing will ensure that efforts to control and minimise the prevalence of sea lice will be maintained and, indeed, exceeded in the future. The improvements to date have been supported by investment since 2016 of £13 million of European Union and Scottish Government funding, through the European maritime and fisheries fund, in 48 aquaculture projects, which has unlocked more than £25 million total sector expenditure in innovation and new technologies to address the issue. Hydrolicer, Thermolicer and permaskirt technologies to tackle sea lice have all been supported, in addition to cleaner-fish hatchery projects being supported. At the same time, the sector has invested about £53.5 million over the past three years on lice-removing technologies.

The review of the farmed salmon sea lice policy has been progressed as a key strand of Scotland's 10-year farmed fish health framework. Work is also under way, through the framework, to ensure that we lead on information sharing, that we support and promote innovation in fish health management, and that we deliver on other sea lice actions, such as creating a sea lice modelling and farm connectivity action plan. A wider update on progress on all those strands will be provided to Parliament in due course.

This week, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency published a new fin-fish regulatory framework, which seeks to strengthen protection of Scotland's marine environment and enable

sustainable growth of aquaculture in the right places. The framework will be implemented through improvements to the existing controlled activities regulations—CAR—licensing process. SEPA is now using the best modelling available so that it can better predict and monitor environmental effects. In addition to the introduction and enforcement of a tighter organic waste standard, the improved modelling will mean that risks to local environments will be better understood and can be better managed. That approach will allow assessment of larger-scale impacts, including interactions with other farms, to be carried out.

Tougher regulation will ensure that farms are sited in the most appropriate areas. It will also mean that sites that might have the potential to increase sustainably without threatening sea-bed environmental standards will be able to do so.

Taken together, the measures demonstrate the progress that is being made in changing our approach to regulating the aquaculture sector. They also show our intention to continue to work with the industry and alongside our independent regulator to ensure that appropriate and proportionate action is taken to allow the sector to grow sustainably while protecting our marine environment. Ensuring that growth in Scottish aquaculture is sustainable is key to its future success.

We must continue to apply high health and welfare standards in order to ensure that Scotland can continue to produce a world-class and high-quality product that is one of the most eco-efficient and sustainable forms of healthy protein available to feed the growing global population.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** The cabinet secretary will now take questions on the issues raised in his statement. I intend to allow about 20 minutes for questions.

**Peter Chapman (North East Scotland) (Con):** I thank the cabinet secretary for the prior sight of his statement.

Let me be quite clear: I welcome the statement. The reports on Scottish salmon from the REC Committee and the ECCLR Committee showed that the status quo is unacceptable, and it is positive to hear of the progress that the salmon interactions working group and technical working group are making. It is important to recognise that, if the industry is to grow, it must grow sustainably.

I welcome the announcement that there will be legislation to require salmon farms to publish lice numbers weekly, and I welcome the announcement of a reduction in reporting and intervention thresholds, which follows the advice in the REC Committee report.

It is important that the weekly reports on lice numbers are published. Will the cabinet secretary say when the figures will be published?

I appreciate that the cabinet secretary acknowledged that his planned timescale for the introduction of legislation is short. It is important that fish farmers are able to plan and make the necessary preparations and upgrades to make the new system happen. However, it is also important and correct that the legislation should be introduced early in 2020. Will the cabinet secretary give us a clearer timescale for when new regulations will come into being?

The appropriate technologies are essential to the carrying out of lice checks, especially if that is to be done weekly. What support will be made available to smaller fish farms, which might not have the funds or infrastructure to achieve what is required timeously?

**Fergus Ewing:** I very much welcome the approach that Mr Chapman, speaking on behalf of the Scottish Conservatives, is taking. That is very much appreciated and I think that it reflects the cross-party support for sustainable aquaculture that was expressed in the major debate on the committees' reports.

Mr Chapman asked when the legislation will come into force. The Parliament will be aware that uncertainties around Brexit remain and that there is potential for changes in the legislative timetable. Those are practical aspects, which the First Minister, the Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans and the Cabinet must take into account. Given the uncertainties, it is not possible to be categorical at the current time.

However, I expect that the legislation will come into force in 2020. It might be helpful to Mr Chapman if I say that my officials are considering the reporting requirements of new legislation, and if I confirm that draft legislation will be put to public consultation for full scrutiny—openness, transparency and straightforwardness are what we require.

Mr Chapman asked about support for companies in the farmed salmon sector that are smaller and perhaps less financially resourced than the majors, which are very robust and substantial companies, by and large. We want all possible practical support to be available to all players who operate on such a basis.

I recognise that, across the board, there has been a tremendous desire and tremendous action on the part of all the companies involved to take the necessary steps, including substantial investment, to address problems such as sea lice levels and amoebic gill disease in a robust and comprehensive fashion. I am very pleased that the sea lice levels that the sector reported last year

are the lowest for six years, which I think proves that substantial progress has been made. I am pleased that Mr Chapman welcomed that.

**Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Lab):** I thank the cabinet secretary for the prior sight of his statement.

Aquaculture is extremely important to the economy of rural Scotland, so it is imperative that we get the regulation right and build an excellent reputation for our produce. That is important not just for our economy but for our health, as our diets often lack enough oily fish.

The cabinet secretary states that the technical working group is developing practical arrangements for improving regulation. The Norwegian system, which is more streamlined and crucially also focuses on animal health, is cited by the industry and those expressing concerns as providing the best regulatory regime. Therefore, why is the cabinet secretary delaying the implementation of a system along the same lines?

**Fergus Ewing:** I appreciate Rhoda Grant's support for the sector. I do not think that it is fair to charge us with delaying. As I made clear in my statement, changes must be made to the two-year cycle.

I am often questioned as to why the Norwegian fish farming industry works in a different way. The Scottish Government sea lice compliance policy does not operate in isolation. It acts as a backstop on occasions when things go wrong. The two systems are different. In many ways, the system in Scotland is said to be very robust by stakeholders, but there are areas in which we need to improve. One of them is regulation of sea lice, which is why I have taken the steps today to announce that tighter standards will be introduced.

I am pleased that the industry has worked closely with us in developing the policy, and that industry and stakeholders are working on the various groups of the fish health framework and the various sub-committees, including those relating to wild salmon. It is key that we work together in Scotland and, in particular, listen carefully to practical ways in which we can make progress. Today illustrates that we are taking steps to tighten the regulation on sea lice, and I am pleased that the industry has welcomed the approach that we are taking.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** I have 10 members and 13 minutes, so I ask members to be neat with their questions to let others get in.

**Mark Ruskell (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green):** The cabinet secretary will be aware that there is still a serious concern with large fish farms being granted consent by breaking up into two or more applications, when in fact they are operating

as a single farm. That means that cumulative environmental impacts are not fully considered. SEPA has said that the new modelling—

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** I want your question please, Mr Ruskell.

**Mark Ruskell:** Will the cabinet secretary commit to reviewing existing farms that were granted permission under multiple applications, using the new modelling that SEPA has just announced to give an accurate picture of their impacts.

**Fergus Ewing:** The existing system contains provision for monitoring, as we well know. Today, we are indicating that tighter standards will apply in relation to sea lice. That is one of several aspects. I also covered the measures that SEPA is taking on the use of treatments in my statement—which Mr Ruskell heard.

I am very pleased that the industry has invested substantially in alternatives to treatment—thermalisers, cleaner fish, skirting and other techniques—and substantial progress is being made.

I do not think that I can agree to Mr Ruskell's request. I note that SEPA has suggested a different form of modelling. It will bring that forward and put it into action, and we look forward to working very carefully with it to achieve the shared aim, which I hope we all support, of an increasingly sustainable aquaculture sector in Scotland.

**Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (LD):** The cabinet secretary will be aware that the Norwegian industry is trialling a mechanism to filter fish medicines out of the water that is used to treat fish. Will he immediately ensure that those trials are replicated in Scotland, to the benefit of the marine environment and the industry, and will he reject any further consideration of a fish farm feed limit, given its well-known damaging consequences on fish quality, as Norway again has demonstrated?

**Fergus Ewing:** I welcome Mr Scott's support for the sector, as always. He is a stalwart supporter of the aquaculture sector, and it is extremely important in his constituency. We absolutely welcome the development of Benchmark's CleanTreat system, which has been trialled in Norway. I am delighted that discussions are already taking place with Scottish regulators regarding a Scottish trial. It is not up to me to decide whether that trial should go ahead but, as Mr Scott has indicated, it makes sense that we should be trialling new innovative products and techniques that can help to secure the objective of a sustainable sector that we all share.

I am advised that SEPA is considering whether to move to using a feed limit or to retain a biomass

limit to regulate fish farms. Over the next three months, SEPA will consult with all interested stakeholders on the options. I am pleased that it will engage substantially with the industry, and I am sure that Mr Scott will ensure that the companies that operate in his constituency will play a part in those discussions.

**Gillian Martin:** Salmon is one of our most important food exports. How has the industry performed this year, and what is it doing to improve its environmental sustainability credentials?

**Fergus Ewing:** The industry is performing well. It directly employs more than 2,000 people and contributes around £220 million in gross value added to the economy. The wider impacts across the supply chain are estimated to represent £620 million in GVA and 12,000 jobs. Further, as I have said before in the chamber, those jobs are well remunerated; the average annual salary in the fish farming sector is around £34,000, and many of the jobs are on the periphery of the country, where there are no alternative opportunities of that type. That is extremely important.

Companies have contributed enormously to improving their operations and sustainability. Mowi has invested around £100 million in its Kyleakin feed plant and £26.5 million in its new Inchmore hatchery at Glenmoriston, which I had the privilege of opening; Scottish Sea Farms has invested around £50 million in its new hatchery at Barcaldine; Loch Duart recently announced that it will invest £1.2 million in new feed barges; and substantial investments have been made by the Scottish Salmon Company, Cooke Aquaculture, Gael Force Aquaculture and others. The industry is investing heavily, and those investments are going directly to improve the sustainability of aquaculture.

**Edward Mountain (Highlands and Islands) (Con):** I refer members to my entry in the register of members' interests.

I welcome the general thrust of the proposals, which, I believe, will help fish farms to become better neighbours to those who share their environment. Is there a plan to increase enforcement once the proposals are brought in? We know that, in the past, enforcement in this sector has been very poor.

**Fergus Ewing:** Obviously, enforcement plays a part. The higher standards are primarily intended to further drive forward improved practice. Although we have tightened up the reporting and intervention thresholds from three and eight adult female lice per fish to two and six, respectively, the actual performance of most of the companies is far higher. I see that Mr Mountain is shaking his head, but the facts that I have seen indicate that



the actual levels of sea lice that are found are much lower.

Enforcement is important and must be dealt with independently by those who are responsible for it. That approach will continue. I am not sure that I accept Mr Mountain's thesis, but I would say that we take enforcement seriously, and that the steps that I have announced today, which involve an aspect of independent audit of the process, will increase transparency, which I hope everyone supports.

**Gail Ross (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP):** On the sea lice numbers, will the cabinet secretary outline why a phased approach is being taken and say how the chosen figures were arrived at?

**Fergus Ewing:** We believe that a phased approach is the correct approach to drive forward best practice while enabling companies to alter and improve their practice in practical terms. We have today indicated that regulation will be tightened up, which I think is something that the companies regard as being welcome in order to demonstrate the good work that is being done to further improve fish health in Scotland.

**Claudia Beamish (South Scotland) (Lab):** I welcome the commitment on compulsory public reporting of sea lice data on a farm-by-farm basis, and other measures, as it reflects an amendment that I lodged during the passage of the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013, but which was rejected by the Scottish Government.

On the welfare of farmed fish, will the cabinet secretary assure the chamber that any plans for closed containment will be fully tested against animal welfare standards? At the other end of the scale, will he assure the chamber that SEPA's shift to encouraging applications for larger fish farms in deeper waters will not simply disperse the fish faeces and medicines more widely in the marine environment, pushing them out of sight and out of mind?

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** That question was at the edge of being too long, but never mind.

**Fergus Ewing:** Yes, I can confirm that impacts on all forms of the marine system, including marine life, will be considered carefully. I assure Claudia Beamish that all aspects of providing a sustainable aquaculture industry in Scotland will be considered in relation to future applications.

**Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (SNP):** Will the cabinet secretary confirm that any proposals that are taken forward will not impact adversely on businesses that work closely with the aquaculture industry, such as W & J Knox in Kilbirnie? Founded in 1778, it employs 130 local

people who clean and repair nets, and it is at the forefront of developing technology to stop lice penetrating fish tanks and to dissuade seals, in non-lethal ways, from eating the fish.

**Fergus Ewing:** If I may say so, that was an excellent question from Mr Gibson. It illustrates the point that not all the jobs are on our coasts and islands; many of the jobs that the industry sustains are inland, in our towns and cities, and throughout Scotland. It is an important Scottish industry, which is not confined solely to the periphery. Companies such as W & J Knox are vital to the success of the industry. Seal management is a priority, and Mr Gibson eloquently pointed out the improved practices that the company in his constituency is contributing towards.

**Jamie Greene (West Scotland) (Con):** The cabinet secretary said:

"tougher regulation will ensure that farms are sited in the most appropriate areas.

However, one of the committee's recommendations was about addressing the issue of the relocation of historically poorly-sited farms. What special assistance will be given to fish farms that want to relocate, but which face regulatory or financial barriers in doing so?

**Fergus Ewing:** The appropriate location of sites is a material factor that is taken into account for all applications. That approach will be followed by the various parties that are involved—as Mr Greene knows, various parties are involved—in the operation of existing sites as well as in the appropriate siting of new sites; those matters will be taken into account. If Mr Greene has any particular concerns, I would be happy to hear from him about them.

**Dr Alasdair Allan (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP):** In light of the cabinet secretary's welcome announcements today, what steps does he intend to take to promote closer working between SEPA, Crown Estate Scotland and other agencies?

**The Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform (Roseanna Cunningham):** That is my job.

**Fergus Ewing:** My colleague Roseanna Cunningham has joined me, and has pointed out that she has responsibility in respect of SEPA.

**Roseanna Cunningham:** And the Crown Estate.

**Fergus Ewing:** And the Crown Estate, she adds.

We all accept in the Scottish Government the duty of all public bodies, Scottish Government agencies and regulators to work together as a team to achieve our different purposes and, in the case of regulators, statutory functions. Of course,

as I am sure is uppermost in the minds of members, all regulators are bound by the terms of the Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, in particular, section 4.

**Maureen Watt (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP):** The key to success in this relatively new industry is innovation. A great example of that is the creation of the international centre for aquaculture research and development at the University of Aberdeen, with its innovative farm-to-fork approach. What other investment is going on in that area in our learning institutions throughout Scotland?

**Fergus Ewing:** As I outlined in my initial statement, substantial investment is going on in respect of research. That investment is seen in bodies such as the Scottish aquaculture innovation centre—SAIC—which is headed up by Heather Jones and which does excellent work.

In addition, the Scottish Government has invested around £13 million in research, which has levered in around £25 million from industry. My colleague Roseanna Cunningham recently enabled the investment of £500,000 in research into how we improve the general issue of interactions between wild salmon and other multifactorial issues. We are investing heavily, because that is extremely important for Scotland and the objectives of both the industry and a clean environment—those go hand in hand.

## Portfolio Question Time

### Finance, Economy and Fair Work

13:59

**The Deputy Presiding Officer (Christine Grahame):** I remind members that questions 2 and 3 and questions 7 and 8 will be grouped together. That means that I will take questions 2 and 3 and members' supplementaries pertaining to them after them. If members want to ask supplementary questions to questions 2 and 3, they should press their buttons, but those questions will be taken after questions 2 and 3.

I hope that I have explained that. If not, I have muddled myself up in the process.

#### Unemployment (Mid Fife and Glenrothes)

**1. Jenny Gilruth (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP):** To ask the Scottish Government how it is tackling unemployment in the Mid Fife and Glenrothes constituency. (S5O-03324)

**The Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills (Jamie Hepburn):** The Scottish Government and its agencies are committed to tackling unemployment by supporting inclusive economic growth across Scotland, including in Mid Fife and Glenrothes. For example, in 2018-19, Scottish Enterprise committed investment of over £1 million in local companies through regional selective assistance and research and development awards.

**Jenny Gilruth:** In 2017-18, Fife had an impressive 7 per cent of the national total of modern apprenticeship starts, and more than 27,000 people took up the qualification. However, the most recent statistics for 2018-19 point to a slight drop in female modern apprenticeship starts compared with those in the same period last year. What practical work is being done by Skills Development Scotland in my constituency to close the gender gap in modern apprenticeships?

**Jamie Hepburn:** As Ms Gilruth points out, Fife is doing very well in the number of its modern apprenticeships overall. In 2017-18, which is the last full year for which we have figures, there were 1,893 modern apprentices in Fife. We should place on record our thanks to employers across the kingdom of Fife for offering those opportunities.

However, I recognise that more has to be done to diversify participation and improve female participation. Work on that is under way in Fife and across the country. Skills Development Scotland has its apprenticeship equality action plan, and there is the science, technology, engineering and

mathematics strategy to try to tackle gender segregation in subject choice at school, as emphasised in our “A fairer Scotland for women: gender pay gap action plan”.

There is activity in train, but I absolutely recognise that much more remains to be done.

**James Kelly (Glasgow) (Lab):** One of the ways to tackle unemployment in Mid Fife and Glenrothes and other communities in Scotland is to lift people out of poverty. Will the Government take urgent action to investigate the £22 million of European social fund funding to tackle poverty that the European Union has suspended and take immediate action to release that money into Scotland’s communities?

**Jamie Hepburn:** I can assure Mr Kelly that we are aware of that issue and are actively exploring it. However, we should also place on record the fact that a number of the projects that are funded through that source continue to be supported. I can assure Mr Kelly and other members that we are actively exploring a resolution to that issue.

#### **Inclusive Growth (North Ayrshire)**

2. **Neil Bibby (West Scotland) (Lab):** To ask the Scottish Government what steps it is taking to promote inclusive growth in the North Ayrshire economy. (S5O-03325)

**The Minister for Trade, Investment and Innovation (Ivan McKee):** The Scottish Government is committed to achieving inclusive growth in all parts of Scotland, including North Ayrshire. Inclusive growth is assisted by our significant investment in housing, education and skills, transport, health and other areas.

Specifically, the North Ayrshire economy will benefit from the £103 million that the Scottish Government has committed for the Ayrshire growth deal. The heads of terms agreement, which was signed in March, includes significant local investment proposals, including in the great harbour, the i3 project and marine tourism in North Ayrshire, as well as regional initiatives for skills, digital, and community wealth building.

**Neil Bibby:** It is over six months since the Fraser of Allander institute published its “North Ayrshire Economic Review” for North Ayrshire Council. That review highlighted the importance of inclusive growth in tackling regional inequalities. It stated:

“if significant in-roads are to be made in tackling regional challenges this will require major investment and national strategic support.”

Given that North Ayrshire Council’s spending power has been diminished through Scottish Government cuts and that North Ayrshire was passed over as a location for the new social

security agency, despite being identified as the best option for inclusive growth, what will the Scottish Government now do to turn its rhetoric into reality on inclusive growth in North Ayrshire?

**Ivan McKee:** As Neil Bibby should be aware, Scottish Enterprise has approved a funding offer of £10 million towards Peel Ports’s £30 million proposed project to redevelop its Hunterston park site in North Ayrshire; North Ayrshire has been allocated £1.4 million from the town centre regeneration fund for 2019-20; and North Ayrshire projects have received more than £2 million through empowering communities programme funds to date. Scottish Enterprise also continues to deliver support to businesses in North Ayrshire via innovation grants, the Scottish manufacturing advisory service, regional selective assistance and research and development grants.

#### **Job Opportunities (North Ayrshire)**

3. **Jamie Greene (West Scotland) (Con):** To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to bring job opportunities to North Ayrshire. (S5O-03326)

**The Minister for Trade, Investment and Innovation (Ivan McKee):** The Scottish Government and its agencies are committed to achieving inclusive growth in all parts of Scotland, including North Ayrshire. We are working with a range of partners to create high-quality jobs and opportunities in the area. Specifically, North Ayrshire will benefit from the £103 million that the Scottish Government committed for the Ayrshire growth deal. The heads of terms agreement, which was signed in March, includes significant investment proposals from the Scottish Government for projects in North Ayrshire. The Ayrshire regional partners estimate that the deal will result in 7,000 new jobs across the region.

**Jamie Greene:** I am pleased that the minister welcomes the multi-Government investment in North Ayrshire. However, the Scottish Government’s regional employment study highlighted that underemployment in North Ayrshire has risen to 13.5 per cent, whereas underemployment is falling in other local authority areas. What specific action is the Government taking to address underemployment?

**Ivan McKee:** The North Ayrshire inclusive growth diagnostic is a joint piece of work between the office of the chief economic adviser and North Ayrshire Council. The work involves looking at the barriers to growth in the area, a significant one of which is underemployment, as the member identified. Work has been rolled out through North Ayrshire Council’s fair for all strategy in order to tackle inequalities in the area and to influence investment decisions that will deliver long-term

transformational change in the North Ayrshire economy.

**Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (SNP):** The minister will be aware that, if delivered, the proposed economic master plan for Hunterston will bring more than 1,700 jobs to North Ayrshire. The master plan is supported by local Labour and Tory councillors, as well as by me and the local MP. Does the minister agree that it is time that Mr Greene came off the fence on the issue and stops trying to be all things to everyone? Through the Ayrshire growth deal and directly, what support will the Scottish Government provide to successfully deliver the master plan?

**Ivan McKee:** As the member and others are aware, the Scottish Government has committed to providing £103 million for the Ayrshire growth deal over the next 10 years. We and our agencies are committed to working with all partners to secure the future of the Hunterston site and maximise opportunities for inclusive growth, and I encourage all local politicians to work in common purpose on the matter. On direct support, as I said earlier, in November last year, Scottish Enterprise committed to providing £10 million towards the redevelopment. The investment and joint working between Scottish Enterprise, North Ayrshire Council and private sector partners have the potential to deliver significant benefits to the North Ayrshire and wider Ayrshire economies.

#### **TalkTalk Employees (Stornoway)**

**4. Dr Alasdair Allan (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP):** To ask the Scottish Government what progress it has made in assisting the workforce of the TalkTalk call centre in Stornoway. (S5O-03327)

**The Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills (Jamie Hepburn):** The Scottish Government, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and partnership action for continuing employment—PACE—partners are continuing their contact with TalkTalk and with the staff who face redundancy to ensure that all employment opportunities are explored, and that pay support is provided.

**Dr Allan:** TalkTalk has been a significant employer on Lewis, so the loss of jobs will have an impact on the broader economy. Will the Scottish Government commit to examining whether there are opportunities for more public sector jobs to be based on the islands?

**Jamie Hepburn:** I very much recognise the key role that public sector jobs play in the economy of the islands and, indeed, in economies in all parts of Scotland. The Scottish Government is consulting on development of the national islands plan, which will set out a number of objectives,

including on employment, for supporting and promoting our island communities. We will always be willing to look at opportunities that make sense, and at what can be done.

**Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Lab):** I agree that public sector jobs should be dispersed throughout Scotland and should not be centralised. Will the minister consider a staff buy-out of TalkTalk? That would allow staff to bid for call-centre work so that the jobs could be retained in Stornoway.

**Jamie Hepburn:** Thus far, no such proposition has been advanced, but as Rhoda Grant knows from my previous remarks, the Government has high ambitions in respect of employee-owned businesses. If the workforce is interested in making such a bid, I would be delighted to engage with the staff directly.

#### **Teachers Pay Agreement (Implications for Public Sector Pay Policy)**

**5. Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (LD):** To ask the Scottish Government what the implications are for its public sector pay policy of the agreement reached with the teaching profession. (S5O-03328)

**The Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy (Kate Forbes):** The public sector pay policy sets a framework for pay negotiations, and balances delivery of a fair deal for employees with affordability and investment in high-quality public services. The policy acts as a benchmark against which employers have the flexibility to deliver pay awards that meet local circumstances.

The pay award for teachers includes an element that is targeted at addressing recruitment and retention issues, as well as a wider package of measures to address workload issues and support the empowering schools agenda.

**Tavish Scott:** As the minister will be aware, exactly the same circumstances apply to Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd with regard to the pending air traffic controllers strike, which has been suspended for next Wednesday but is still threatened for the future. Will she bring the same flexibility to those pay negotiations? Of course, ministers directly intervened in the teachers' strike. We could do with some intervention in the ATC strike, too, because lifeline air services depend on those people.

**Kate Forbes:** As Tavish Scott does, I recognise that it has, with the disruption, been a difficult time for travellers. I welcome the suspension of the industrial action that had been scheduled for 12 June, and I encourage HIAL's air traffic controllers to consider carefully HIAL's latest offer of a new retention allowance.

I also go back to my earlier answer and reiterate that the pay policy is a guide and benchmark. In that sense, delivering a pay package is a matter for negotiation between employers and employees.

**Murdo Fraser (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con):** Does the Scottish Government still have a public sector pay policy that is worth the paper that it is printed on? From the latest deals that have been struck, it does not sound as though it does.

**Kate Forbes:** We do, indeed, have a pay policy that ensures affordability of and investment in high-quality public services. However, as I have said, the policy acts as a benchmark against which employers have the flexibility to deliver pay awards that meet their local circumstances. We reflect on the impact of all sectoral awards in developing pay policies, and we will do so again in time for next year's pay policy, in the context of the pending review.

**Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Lab):** I commend the Educational Institute of Scotland for securing a deal for its members, but I note that when the Scottish Government gave some prison officers a pay upgrade while leaving others floundering, it was taken to court by the Public and Commercial Services Union and caved in. In the same vein, the Government is treating some council workers one way and others another way. What has happened to the pay policy, and what is happening to fairness?

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** For a moment, I thought that we were drifting away from the subject of teaching, but the question is about the public sector pay policy.

**Kate Forbes:** Again, I reiterate that the pay policy does not apply directly to all workforces. Instead, it acts as a benchmark for pay awards in other sectors, and sets the tone for the wider public sector to increase labour participation and productivity, which will ensure that work pays for the individual and the Scottish economy. Key sectors including local government, the health service, the police and the fire service have all delivered arrangements that are broadly in line with our public sector pay policy.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** Question 6 has been withdrawn, and questions 7 and 8 have been grouped together.

### Real Living Wage Employers

**7. Clare Adamson (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP):** To ask the Scottish Government how many accredited real living wage employers there are in Scotland. (S5O-03330)

**The Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills (Jamie Hepburn):** Scotland has 1,473

living wage accredited employers, which, proportionately, is over five times more than the rest of the United Kingdom.

**Clare Adamson:** According to living wage Scotland, more than 3,000 workers across Lanarkshire have received a pay increase to the real living wage of £9 per hour. However, low pay is still one of the main drivers of in-work poverty. What action is the Scottish Government taking to encourage more employers to pay, as I do, the real living wage not only in Motherwell and Wishaw but across Scotland?

**Jamie Hepburn:** I hope that people will view the figures that I have given on accreditation as positive, although, of course, much more needs to be done. Through our work with the Poverty Alliance, we are aiming over the course of this parliamentary session for an uplift of 25,000 in the number of workers who are paid at least or more than the real living wage as a result of accreditation. Of course, we are also taking forward our fair work first agenda to ensure that, under all job-related grants that are made by our agencies, the living wage is paid, and we are undertaking activity in the social care and early learning and childcare settings to ensure that workforces there are paid the living wage, too.

Clare Adamson made a salient point when she mentioned that she is a living wage employer. That shows that members, too, can show leadership, and should be encouraging all employers in our areas and communities to become accredited and to pay at least the real living wage.

### Living Wage

**8. Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Lab):** To ask the Scottish Government how many people in Scotland earn less than the living wage. (S5O-03331)

**The Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills (Jamie Hepburn):** The living wage initiative is an important part of the Scottish Government's fair work agenda. In 2018, there were 470,000 workers earning less than the real living wage in Scotland. However, since 2015, the number of workers in Scotland earning the real living wage or more has increased, meaning that, in total, 80.6 per cent of all workers in Scotland now receive the real living wage, which is the highest proportion of all the United Kingdom countries.

**Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Lab):** In West Lothian, 16,000 people in 2012 received a wage that was lower than the living wage; that figure is now 17,500. We could make an impact on that figure if there was the political will to do so. Why—this is a very straightforward question—does the Government not insist in its public procurement

policy that contractors pay the living wage, and that companies that receive Government direct assistance must pay the living wage?

**Jamie Hepburn:** I have already pointed to our fair work agenda, which I think will lead to improvements.

The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 took every opportunity to address the real living wage through procurement. The legislation requires that public bodies' procurement strategies include a statement on their general policy of paying the living wage to people who will be involved in delivering contracts.

In October 2015, we published statutory guidance addressing fair work practices, including the living wage and the procurement practices that public bodies should be following.

The Government has carried out a recent tawl, which shows that 96 per cent of all suppliers who were awarded a Scottish Government collaborative agreement during the period January 2017 to March 2018 made a commitment to pay the real living wage. That significant progress is encouraging, but we continue to strive towards 100 per cent.

## Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform

### Single-use Plastic Usage

1. **Bruce Crawford (Stirling) (SNP):** To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on the action that it is taking to reduce single-use plastic usage. (S50-03332)

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** You took that very slowly—I think that that was to allow the minister to get into place. Are you ready, minister?

**The Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment (Mairi Gougeon):** Yes.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** You are. I call Mairi Gougeon.

**Mairi Gougeon:** Thank you, Presiding Officer. We are absolutely committed to tackling Scotland's throwaway culture and to matching the pace that was envisaged by the European Union single-use plastics directive. We are already taking very ambitious action: we are the first country in the United Kingdom to announce our design for a deposit return scheme; we have taken action on plastic cotton buds and microbeads; our expert panel is considering measures to reduce the use of difficult-to-recycle items, such as single-use beverage cups; we have committed to increasing the single-use carrier bag charge to 10p; and we are part of a UK-wide consultation on the reform of packaging producer responsibility arrangements.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** You can speed up your delivery now, if you like, Mr Crawford.

**Bruce Crawford:** Forgive me, Presiding Officer. I was trying to allow time for the cabinet secretary to get ready to answer—I had not realised that the minister would be responding.

Is the minister aware that a recent centre for international law report found that the proliferation of single-use plastics around the world is accelerating global greenhouse gas emissions and climate change? The UK Committee on Climate Change was clear on the need for action in order for Scotland to reach its net zero ambitions. Given the importance of reserved UK policy levers, will the cabinet secretary outline any areas on which action is required by the UK Government?

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** You have been promoted, minister.

**Mairi Gougeon:** We very much welcome that report, and we have already taken steps to address the recommendations on single-use plastics.

On the CCC advice and the need for UK Government action in reserved areas, the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform has written twice to the UK minister of state, Claire Perry, requesting an urgent meeting to discuss action to accelerate the deployment of fully operational carbon capture and storage facilities and the decarbonisation of the gas grid; redesign vehicle and tax incentives; commit to adhering to future EU emissions standards; reduce VAT on energy efficiency improvement in homes; and ensure continued support for the renewables industry. Those areas are reserved, and if we are to meet our ambitious targets, we need the UK Government to take action to address them. That is imperative.

There is a whole host of other areas where action could be taken but where a contrary approach has been adopted, which has disincentivised renewable technologies, for example.

**Claudia Beamish (South Scotland) (Lab):** Plastic pollution is, indeed, a systemic problem that is dangerous and causes damage to our environment. Will the Government commit to a system-wide arrangement for measures to tackle the issue? For example, will it have a range of targets to reduce the different types of plastics, and will it ban those plastics that cannot be recycled?

**Mairi Gougeon:** We are doing a whole power of work when it comes to single-use plastics, both on land, by reducing, reusing and recycling plastics, and when they end up in our marine environment. The cabinet secretary or I would be happy to have

a further conversation with Claudia Beamish about her proposals.

**Gail Ross (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP):** Does the minister agree that education is one of our strongest tools in tackling single-use plastics, and that groups such as the Ullapool sea savers are great examples that could be replicated across the country?

**Mairi Gougeon:** It will probably not surprise Gail Ross to hear me say that I absolutely agree with her. The Ullapool sea savers, in particular, have really led the way on the issue.

Members across the chamber will be aware from their visits to primary schools—this is certainly the case whenever I visit primary schools in my constituency—that the issue of marine litter and plastics and what we are doing about it is raised every time. It is only right that our young people continue to push us to strive to do more. We should be proud of the fact that young people in this country take such an interest in the issue. We are listening, and we are doing what we can.

#### **Climate Emergency (Remote and Rural Areas)**

**2. Gillian Martin (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP):** To ask the Scottish Government how it will assist people in remote and rural areas in dealing with the climate emergency. (S5O-03333)

**The Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform (Roseanna Cunningham):** Delivering the transformative change that is required to tackle the global climate emergency must be a shared national endeavour. The Scottish Government is now looking across our range of responsibilities to make sure that we continue with the policies that are working and that we increase action where necessary.

Over the summer, the Scottish Government will engage the public, communities, businesses, industry and the public sector, including in remote and rural areas, in a discussion about what more can be done and how we can work together.

**Gillian Martin:** Many of the measures that have been outlined that will reduce an area's carbon emissions require transformative action at local authority level. How will the particular challenge of decarbonising transport in areas such as mine in Aberdeenshire, which has one of the highest road mileages and a high proportion of off-gas and hard-to-heat homes, be addressed? Will tailored assistance be provided? How will an administration be held to account for its decisions in our national endeavour to deal with the climate emergency?

**Roseanna Cunningham:** The Scottish Government supports the Energy Saving Trust, which provides bespoke advice to home owners

on insulation and energy storage, which is particularly useful for those with off-grid and hard-to-heat homes. We have provided almost £10 million to local authorities across Scotland to ensure that electric vehicle charging points are installed across the country and are encouraging local authorities to focus on solutions for remote and rural communities.

The Scottish Government will keep exploring the use of hydrogen as a zero-carbon substitute fuel. As the member is probably aware, Aberdeen has been a leader in that—there are already 10 hydrogen buses running on two routes in Aberdeen, and a further 10 will come into service later this year.

Scotland is the only country to have statutory annual climate targets, which ensure that progress is regularly scrutinised in Parliament, and there will be annual reporting on a sector-by-sector basis on progress in delivering the climate change plan. However, as I have said previously, the Scottish Government cannot do this work on its own—it will be a widespread endeavour in which local authorities will be involved. They will be expected to step up and, in that regard, I welcome the announcements by Glasgow City Council and the City of Edinburgh Council in respect of their climate targets.

**John Scott (Ayr) (Con):** With the deposit return scheme now being rolled out as part of the response to the climate emergency and rural shopkeepers starting to think about the likely cost to them, can the cabinet secretary tell Parliament what the expected cost of installing a machine to recycle plastic will be to each rural shopkeeper? Will the Government help to defray that cost?

**Roseanna Cunningham:** As the member is probably aware, we are involving organisations that represent shopkeepers the length and breadth of the country, including the very small ones, in discussions. We have indicated that there will be a variety of different options available for return, which may—or may not—include return vending machines. That conversation will be had with those organisations.

I should point out that there will be a handling fee. It is expected that, in the end, the measure will be cost neutral for all the shopkeepers who are involved.

**Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Lab):** What can be done to support people in less conventional housing tenures in rural areas, such as those that involve agricultural holdings or tied cottages, to allow them to increase energy efficiency and reduce household emissions, and to tackle fuel poverty?

**Roseanna Cunningham:** There are a lot of things in play. I know that the member will be

aware of the widespread work that the Government is doing on energy efficiency, which will continue.

I am aware that the tenure of homes can sometimes create an issue but, of course, it is not the only issue. Sometimes, there are other concerns. Unusual scenarios are among the harder ones to look at.

If the member has specific examples in mind in asking her question, it would be helpful if she could come to me, and we can discuss them in more detail. I am aware that different tenures, and tied housing in particular, can create some real barriers for people.

### **Mossmorran Petrochemical Plant**

**3. Annabelle Ewing (Cowdenbeath) (SNP):** To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to Fife Council's call for an independent inquiry into the Mossmorran petrochemical plant. (S5O-03334)

**The Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform (Roseanna Cunningham):** We are aware of the motion that Fife Council passed on 2 May. We have not received any formal request from Fife Council regarding Mossmorran since then.

The Mossmorran complex is subject to regulation by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency as an independent environmental regulator. On 25 April, SEPA announced a formal investigation at the site. Calling for a further inquiry at this time could prejudice any potential enforcement action that SEPA may take. *[Interruption.]*

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** Switch off recording, please. *[Interruption.]*

I have forgotten where I was. Was I calling you, Ms Ewing?

**Annabelle Ewing:** You were, Presiding Officer.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** That was a senior moment from me. I call Annabelle Ewing.

**Annabelle Ewing:** Thank you, Presiding Officer.

I thank the cabinet secretary for her answer. It is perhaps a wee bit disappointing to know that Fife Council has not yet managed to forward to the Scottish Government its motion, which calls on the Scottish Government to commit to an independent inquiry.

However, I am sure that the cabinet secretary will be aware that one of the strands of Fife Council's motion—and an issue that constituents raise with me—is the need to have empirical data as regards health impacts. Can the cabinet

secretary clarify whether any work is on-going with regard to that matter?

**Roseanna Cunningham:** I have seen the motion, although there has been no formal approach from Fife Council. I understand that SEPA is sharing information with NHS Fife where possible while carrying out its on-going regulatory investigation. Once NHS Fife has assessed that data, an attempt will be made to address the most common health concerns in the local community in the most appropriate way.

NHS Fife has not been contacted by any local general practitioners specifically regarding the Mossmorran complex. However, it is reviewing published health data with a view to engaging with local representatives and making information accessible for communities.

**Mark Ruskell (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green):** At a recent public meeting in Lochgelly, we heard powerful testimonies from hundreds of local residents, including families coping with autism, whose lives have been made a misery by the noise, light and vibration from the plant. Is the cabinet secretary aware of any equality impact assessments that SEPA has carried out in relation to the operation of the plant? How will the Government support those families?

**Roseanna Cunningham:** I do not have detail on the specific meeting that the member mentioned. He raised some very specific issues, which obviously have some health impacts. I do not know that it would have been within SEPA's purview to have looked at the kinds of impacts that the member talked about, but I will go back and ask whether or not that is part and parcel of, for example, some of the work that NHS Fife might be considering, and I will ensure that the member is kept aware of that.

On-going work is being done by SEPA. It is monitoring and looking at the situation within the regulatory set-up that it is required to consider, and we will estimate whether there are other things that need to be done by other public bodies, perhaps once that work is done.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** I call Alexander Stewart. Please be brief, Mr Stewart.

**Alexander Stewart (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con):** Given the recent difficulties at the plant regarding environmental health and social impacts, can the cabinet secretary indicate what further assistance can be given to ensure that local residents have confidence and trust in the operation of the site?

**Roseanna Cunningham:** As I indicated, SEPA continues to provide updates on its dedicated Mossmorran hub and on-going monitoring will inform its investigation. So far, air quality



monitoring information continues to show no cause for concern. However, other activities are being taken forward—following previous enforcement action, both operators have submitted to SEPA assessments of the best available techniques for carrying out their activities, which are currently being reviewed and, on 23 May, SEPA served further permit variations.

Work is constantly on-going and, as I indicated in my response to Annabelle Ewing, NHS Fife is also looking at the specific aspects that are more properly for it to consider. The information will all be brought together at an appropriate moment.

### Low-carbon Infrastructure and Homes

#### 4. Alex Rowley (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab):

To ask the Scottish Government, in light of the climate emergency, what action it is taking to act on the recommendations of the Committee on Climate Change to deliver low-carbon infrastructure and homes. (S5O-03335)

**The Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform (Roseanna Cunningham):** The Scottish Government has acted immediately in response to the committee's advice, with amendments to our Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill to set a net zero emissions target for 2045 and to increase the targets for 2030 and 2040.

We are now looking across our whole range of responsibilities, including infrastructure and homes, to make sure that we continue with the policies that are working and increase action where necessary. Our high ambition will be matched by on-the-ground delivery and we will update the climate change plan within six months of the bill receiving royal assent.

**Alex Rowley:** There are tens of thousands of houses across Scotland that are described as being too expensive to insulate. If not in the Fuel Poverty (Target, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Bill or in the climate change bill, when will the cabinet secretary legislate to address the state of Scotland's existing homes, the poor state of which is one of the key drivers of both fuel poverty and climate change? Does the cabinet secretary agree that doing so would be a win-win on both issues and that the sooner that we get those houses insulated, the better?

**Roseanna Cunningham:** The Government is doing an enormous amount of work on energy efficiency and a huge amount of finance work is on-going, which I think will be well over £1 billion by the time we get to 2021. That work is very much part of the answer to Mr Rowley's question.

There are some very significant issues when it comes to retrofitting housing, which I think the member is probably well aware of. "Energy

Efficient Scotland", which was published last year, is our route map to making all our buildings warmer, greener and more efficient, by ensuring that homes meet energy performance certificate band C by 2040. We are already consulting on the impact of bringing forward that date, if possible, and we are also consulting on how to decarbonise the heat supply in buildings that are off the gas grid. A review of energy standards in building regulations is under way, to consider further opportunities to reduce emissions from new homes, and there is continuing work on energy efficiency.

If Mr Rowley is asking when I will introduce housing legislation, I am sure that he is absolutely aware that doing so would not be for my portfolio, but I will make sure that his request is relayed to the housing minister.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** If we have brief questions and answers, I can get the last three members' questions in.

### Deposit Return Scheme

5. Gil Paterson (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP): To ask the Scottish Government what impact it believes the proposed deposit return scheme will have in tackling climate change. (S5O-03336)

**The Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform (Roseanna Cunningham):** There is a global climate emergency, and the Scottish Government is acting accordingly. Our first step has been to immediately lodge amendments to the targets in our Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill, in line with the independent, expert advice of the Committee on Climate Change.

By enabling more, higher-value recycling, Scotland's deposit return scheme will contribute to those efforts by reducing emissions by around 4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent over 25 years. That is an average of 160,000 tonnes each year, which is the equivalent of taking 85,000 cars off the road.

**Gil Paterson:** Will the cabinet secretary confirm that groups such as St Eunan's primary school in Clydebank, whose students are on a mission to reduce plastic use in all primary schools throughout West Dunbartonshire, will have an opportunity to become involved in the deposit return scheme?

**Roseanna Cunningham:** I thank the pupils of St Eunan's for their efforts in this important area and echo the comments that Mairi Gougeon made earlier about primary school children being very exercised about such issues at the moment.

We recognise the potentially significant role that schools and other community services can play in making the DRS a success, which is why we intend to allow for those facilities to act as voluntary return points for containers that are captured through the scheme. I also encourage all school pupils to consider the benefit to their schools of encouraging the donation of deposits to their schools, for instance, or litter picking to claim deposits.

### Air Quality (Urban Areas)

**6. Fulton MacGregor (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP):** To ask the Scottish Government what it is doing to improve air quality in densely populated urban areas, such as Coatbridge. (S50-03337)

**The Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment (Mairi Gougeon):** The Scottish Government's cleaner air for Scotland strategy sets out a series of actions for Government, Transport Scotland, local authorities and others to further reduce air pollution across Scotland. An independent review of the strategy is currently under way, which will identify priorities for any additional action.

The Scottish Government works closely with North Lanarkshire Council to provide practical and financial assistance to monitor air quality, support the delivery of measures and implement its air quality action plan to improve local air quality.

**Fulton MacGregor:** It is great to hear the assistance that is being provided to make my constituency and the wider area a cleaner and healthier place to live and grow up. The minister will be aware of a controversial and long-running proposal to build an incinerator between Carnbroe and Shawhead next to the busy M8/A8 in Coatbridge. I do not expect her to comment on the application, which is subject to appeal, but she may be aware that that particular area—

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** No. I need a question.

**Fulton MacGregor:** That particular area is one of the most polluted areas in the country and number 1 in North Lanarkshire. Has the Government any data about the impact of incinerators on air quality in areas where pollution is already known to be high?

**Mairi Gougeon:** The responsibility for air quality monitoring and data lies with individual local authorities, but I am not aware of any local authority having identified as a result of that work any significant impact from incinerators on local air quality.

On general air quality in North Lanarkshire, the latest data shows that air quality there continues to

improve year on year in most locations. A few hot spots of poorer air quality remain, as they do in many other Scottish towns and cities, but we are absolutely determined to tackle those remaining hot spots as soon as we possibly can. North Lanarkshire Council has produced an air quality action plan that covers the authority's three traffic-related air quality management areas. The plan contains a comprehensive range of measures and the council is working closely with the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and other partners on its implementation.

### Climate Change Plan (Glasgow)

**8. Adam Tomkins (Glasgow) (Con):** To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on Glasgow's progress in meeting the policy outcomes in its climate change plan. (S50-03339)

**The Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform (Roseanna Cunningham):** Progress in meeting the policy outcomes in Scotland's climate change plan is monitored nationally. The Scottish Government acknowledges the ambitious approach that Glasgow has taken to establishing its low-emission zone and the recent announcement by Scottish Power in support of the city's ambition to become the first in the UK to achieve net zero emissions. Those are positive steps for the whole of Scotland.

**Adam Tomkins:** The Scottish Government's climate change plan states that its

"ambition is to reduce emissions from transport in ways that promote sustainable environmental and socio-economic wellbeing."

How will active travel contribute to realising that ambition and how, in particular, will the cabinet secretary ensure that active travel will be available not only in the less deprived areas of cities such as Glasgow but in the more deprived areas?

**Roseanna Cunningham:** That issue is fundamental to what my colleague Michael Matheson is promoting with active travel and, indeed, the whole of the Government is promoting. The active travel budget was doubled recently, so a great deal of money is going into it. We are very cognisant of the need to consider active travel in terms of not just recreation but actual access for local people, particularly in the circumstances that Adam Tomkins has raised. I will be meeting Glasgow City Council next week to discuss its proposals for being a net zero city by 2030, and I undertake to specifically raise active travel with them when I do.

**Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Green):** Point 1 on Glasgow City Council's climate emergency

working group terms of reference emphasises renewable heat. Does the cabinet secretary agree that, over the next few years, we will need to take very large numbers of residential and non-residential properties off the gas grid and give them access to heat networks, and that that will happen only with a much more ambitious approach from the Scottish Government as well as local government?

**Roseanna Cunningham:** That will indeed be required, but I note that Patrick Harvie missed out the other Government that will be necessary to achieve that, which is the Westminster Government. Without decarbonisation of the gas grid, the logistical issues of doing what is required for domestic heating in Scotland would be very considerable. I hope that he will join me in calling on the Westminster Government to get a move on and do its part of what is required to be done if all of us in the United Kingdom are going to achieve our climate change ambitions.

## Business Motion

14:41

**The Presiding Officer (Ken Macintosh):** The next item of business is consideration of business motion S5M-17555, in the name of Graeme Dey, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, setting out a timetable for the stage 3 consideration of the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill.

*Motion moved,*

That the Parliament agrees that, during stage 3 of the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill, debate on groups of amendments shall, subject to Rule 9.8.4A, be brought to a conclusion by the time limits indicated, those time limits being calculated from when the stage begins and excluding any periods when other business is under consideration or when a meeting of the Parliament is suspended (other than a suspension following the first division in the stage being called) or otherwise not in progress:

Groups 1 to 4: 1 hour

Groups 5 to 8: 1 hour 35 minutes.—[*Graeme Dey*]

*Motion agreed to.*

## South of Scotland Enterprise Bill: Stage 3

14:41

**The Presiding Officer (Ken Macintosh):** The next item of business is stage 3 proceedings on the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill. In dealing with the amendments, members should have the bill as amended at stage 2, the marshalled list and the groupings of amendments. The division bell will sound and proceedings will be suspended for five minutes for the first division of the afternoon. The period of voting for the first division will be 30 seconds. Thereafter, I will allow a voting period of one minute for the first division after a debate.

Members who wish to speak in the debate on any group of amendments should press their request-to-speak button as soon as possible after I call the group. Members should now refer to the marshalled list.

### Section 5—Aims

**The Presiding Officer:** Group 1 is on aims. Amendment 9, in the name of Colin Smyth, is grouped with amendments 2, 3 and 10 to 12.

**Colin Smyth (South Scotland) (Lab):** Amendment 9 amends the agency's aims so that it is clear that it should further "sustainable" social and economic development rather than simply social and economic development. At stage 2, the bill was amended to call for sustainable economic growth, which was a welcome addition. However, amendment 9 makes clear that, when it comes to the implementation of the agency's aims, the principle of sustainability should inform decisions across the board, not only those that are expected to secure economic growth. For example, that includes environmental sustainability and support on the sustainability of communities or the sustainability of vital but not necessarily profitable services, if that furthers the aims of the agency. Therefore, sustainability should be a key priority for the agency. Amendment 9 will ensure that the legislation reflects that.

By adding reference to it in the agency's aims, amendment 2 clarifies the importance of

"supporting rural businesses, enterprises and communities".

It reflects the fact that large parts of the region are rural and, as a result, those communities have specific challenges and opportunities. That support can take several forms, such as recognising the importance to the region of rural-based industries, such as forestry, aquaculture and agriculture, or recognising that creating a handful of jobs in a small rural community by

supporting many small and micro businesses could be as important to the sustainability of that community as creating 100 jobs in a large town. Amendment 2 makes clear that a one-size-fits-all approach will not work in the south of Scotland and ensures that we learn from the difficulty that the current Scottish Enterprise model has had in properly responding to the unique needs of different parts of the area that it covers. It is essential to ensure that the agency delivers for our rural communities and recognises that that will require a different approach. Amendment 2 emphasises that aspect by placing it on the face of the bill.

The cabinet secretary's amendment 3 tidies up the language used in my amendment that was agreed to at stage 2, which ensures that supporting "social enterprises and co-operatives" is a key aim of the agency. I am more than happy to support that amendment.

14:45

My amendment 10 adds the need to promote "the development of affordable housing"

to the agency's aims. At stage 2, amendments relating to promoting digital connectivity and transport infrastructure were added to the agency's aims on the basis that those are key challenges in the region that the agency will have a role to play in tackling. I believe that the shortage of affordable housing is the other major issue of that kind, so there is again a role to be played by the new agency. As with transport and digital connectivity, I am not suggesting that the agency should be the only body to deliver on such an aim. In relation to social housing, for example, the main role will be played by the local authority and social housing landlords, but amendment 10 calls for the agency to promote

"the development of affordable housing"

in order to reflect the leadership role that it should have in tackling problems in the area that are having an impact on things such as economic growth.

This week, I met the largest social housing provider in the region. It highlighted the skills shortage facing the area in various trades and the need for the new agency to work with it and the local colleges to support and grow a programme for tradespeople. The role of the agency in fulfilling the aim in amendment 10 would be to work with stakeholders to develop solutions to the challenges that the region faces with regard to affordable housing. Making it an aim of the agency stresses the importance of the issue to the south of Scotland.

Joan McAlpine's amendment 11 adds a reference to "cultural heritage" to the agency's aims, calling on the agency to maintain, protect and enhance that heritage. Members will not be surprised that I fully support that addition to the bill, having lodged the same amendment. The region has a rich cultural heritage and it is one of our key social and economic assets. It is right, therefore, that maintaining, protecting and enhancing our cultural heritage as well as our natural heritage is reflected in the agency's aims.

Finally, Emma Harper's amendment 12 clarifies the language of my stage 2 amendment on the agency's responsibility to support the transition to net zero emissions. That is a crucial aim, so I am more than happy to support that small but important amendment.

I move amendment 9.

**The Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy (Fergus Ewing):** Amendment 3 is a technical, tidying-up revision to ensure that the bill's terms are reflective of the full range of models that co-operatives and social enterprises come in. It is to do with a technical defect in Mr Smyth's amendment at stage 2—an amendment that we welcomed. I am pleased to hear that he agrees that the form of amendment 3 is acceptable.

Turning to amendments from other members, I am happy to support amendment 9 lodged by Colin Smyth. I agree that the agency should be involved in furthering development in the region that is both economically and socially "sustainable".

I am also happy to support Joan McAlpine's amendment 11, which emphasises the importance of

"protecting and enhancing the ... cultural"

as well as the natural heritage. I thank Finlay Carson for highlighting the issue at stage 2. It builds on the good work of members of the south of Scotland economic partnership such as Paula Ogilvie and Dame Barbara Kelly in bringing experience of book festivals and arts trusts to the south of Scotland. I will also be supporting Emma Harper's amendment 12, which brings the bill's wording into line with climate legislation.

I am getting off to an extremely positive start, Presiding Officer, which I hope is appreciated by all. However, I have some concerns about Mr Smyth's amendments 2 and 10. I start by saying that I understand what he is seeking to do, but I do not think that the amendments are technically felicitous.

I understand the point that Mr Smyth is making with the reference to "rural businesses", but I contend that all businesses in communities in the

south of Scotland are predominantly rural, including those based in some of the bigger towns such as Dumfries and Galashiels. If, by rural, Mr Smyth means those businesses that are considered to be rural industries, such as farming, forestry and fishing, it is absolutely the case that the agency will take a closer-than-ever interest in those industries, which are vital to the south of Scotland. I hope that members would expect nothing less and they are right to do so.

I appreciate the aim of amendment 10 about "affordable housing", which is key to inclusive growth as well as to achieving the aims of the proposed agency. However, I am sure that Mr Smyth would not want to rule out supporting other types such as mid-market housing and housing developments, not all of which may be affordable. Although his amendment is not intended to rule that out, it may have that effect.

I do not consider it necessary for the bill to refer to the promotion of affordable housing, because that is already absolutely clearly implicit in the aims that are set out in the bill and the ways in which those aims will be supported. For example, I refer members to sections 5(2)(f) and 5(2)(ba), which are already in the bill and through which the agency will support communities

"to help them meet their needs",

which of course incorporates affordable housing, and increase

"the number of residents in the South of Scotland who are of working age".

I encourage members to support amendments 9, 3, 11 and 12 and to resist amendment 2.

**Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (SNP):** My amendment 11 emphasises the importance of protecting and enhancing the cultural as well as the natural heritage of the south of Scotland. During stage 2, the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee was keen that cultural heritage be included in the bill in recognition of the role of culture alongside that of natural heritage. That resonates with people across the south of Scotland, who are rightly proud of their culture, which is why I would like amendment 11 to be supported.

The vibrancy of our area's culture is renowned locally, nationally and internationally. From the abbeys in the Borders to the castles and standing stones of Dumfries and Galloway, the south has a heritage of which to be proud. That heritage spans centuries, and many genres and forms. In 2021, we will celebrate the 250th birthday of Walter Scott and, next year, we will celebrate the 160th birthday of J M Barrie. I was pleased to attend the opening of Moat Brae storytelling centre, which is in the house in Dumfries in which J M Barrie found inspiration for Peter Pan.

In the south of Scotland, our summer starts with the Borders book festival and closes with the Wigtown book festival. Kirkcudbright thrived as an artists' town, leading Dorothy L Sayers to say:

"in Galloway, one either fishes or paints."

Of course, that historical success is being built on through the wonderful new art gallery that recently opened in Kirkcudbright. Coming right up to date, our success continues with the Dumfries born and Brit award-winning DJ Calvin Harris.

Culture and the creative economy are more than simply means in themselves, and are more than means of boosting tourism; they are also ways of developing community capacity and aiding regeneration. I cite the work of the Stove Network, which is an artists collective in Dumfries, in driving the Midsteeple quarter initiative, which is aimed at regenerating the High Street through housing and other economic activity. Part of the Stove's work includes the creative futures project, which is building community capacity in west Dumfries. That is a good example of art and culture playing an important role in engagement and in energising communities and community development—which is, of course, very much in the spirit of what we are doing with the bill.

Amendment 11 makes it clear that one way in which the new south of Scotland enterprise agency can further its aims is through maintaining, protecting and enhancing the cultural heritage of the south of Scotland. I urge members to support the amendment.

**Emma Harper (South Scotland) (SNP):** I welcomed the amendments at stage 2, first from the Scottish Government and then from Colin Smyth, that committed the new south of Scotland enterprise agency to working to support our climate change ambitions. Although Colin Smyth's amendment at stage 2 helped to move the framing of the provision into the appropriate net zero space, the language is not quite appropriate. My amendment 12 would therefore revise the language that was agreed to at stage 2: its aim is to bring it into line with current terminology in environmental legislation, and to provide better alignment with the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

Parliament is also considering the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill, which would set a world-leading statutory target for net zero greenhouse gas emissions, and is the flagship legislative response to the climate emergency. It is appropriate that we link what we are trying to achieve on environmental policy and legislation with the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill, so I encourage members to support amendment 12.

I support amendment 11. It is essential that the new agency supports the wide-ranging cultural aspects of the region, which Joan McAlpine described so clearly.

I agree with the cabinet secretary about amendment 10, which could lead to duplication in relation to housing developments, given that local authorities, housing authorities and the Scottish Government all share an aim to build affordable housing. Duplication is not the goal.

**John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Green):** Does Emma Harper agree that social housing and the role that it plays not only in retaining the population but in encouraging population growth is worthy of mention in the bill, given that an aim of the agency is to promote the south?

**Emma Harper:** I thank John Finnie for making that point. The Scottish Government is committed to building affordable housing in rural communities; that essential programme is in place. I am not keen for there to be duplication, and there are already concerns about multiple agencies and people not knowing what is the best direction in which to go. Affordable housing is essential, but its promotion does not need to be mentioned in the list of the agency's aims.

**Mike Rumbles (North East Scotland) (LD):** The Liberal Democrats will support Colin Smyth's amendment 9, Fergus Ewing's amendment 3, Joan McAlpine's amendment 11 and Emma Harper's amendment 12.

Like the cabinet secretary, we have issues with amendments 2 and 10. Amendment 2 is too restrictive. It would include in the bill the aim of "supporting rural businesses". We all want to support rural businesses, of course, but if we were to put that in the bill, what would we be saying about urban businesses? I do not think that amendment 2 would achieve what Colin Smyth is aiming for, and I do not think that such a provision should go in the bill.

Amendment 10 would add the aim of "promoting the development of affordable housing".

Liberal Democrats very much believe that mixed housing provision is necessary to support employment and to bring people into the south of Scotland. Reference to just affordable housing, important though it is, is too restrictive.

**Oliver Mundell (Dumfriesshire) (Con):** I represent that part of the world, where there is an acute problem with affordable housing. The arguments that Mr Rumbles and other members have made have not convinced me that any harm would come from making such an aim explicit in the bill. Will he explain his position?

**Mike Rumbles:** That was a helpful intervention; maybe I should explain more. Housing is a really important issue. Everyone deserves to live in a decent house. It is a fundamental human right, and we are not currently meeting that need. However, I think that the aim in section 5(2)(f), which is

“supporting communities to help them meet their needs”,  
is an enabling element.

**Colin Smyth:** Will the member take an intervention?

**Mike Rumbles:** I have just taken an intervention on that point, but I will take one from Mr Smyth.

**Colin Smyth:** Two members have referred to other aims of the agency in relation to support for communities. The same argument could have been made about the changes that we made at stage 2 to include transport and digital connectivity—and digital connectivity is a reserved issue. Will Mr Rumbles explain why he thinks it appropriate for the new agency to have aims that are about promoting improvements to transport and digital connectivity, but not to have an aim that is about promoting housing? Housing, transport and digital connectivity are probably the three biggest issues that face the south of Scotland.

**Mike Rumbles:** Colin Smyth has misunderstood me. I just said that everybody needs a decent house to live in. I said that it is a fundamental human right, on which we need to focus. However, I am worried about including in the bill an aim that is about only affordable housing. We must have affordable housing, but if we are to attract employment to the south of Scotland we need to promote a mix of housing, for everyone. The Government has taken the right approach with section 5(2)(f), which talks about

“supporting communities to help them meet their needs”,

That is the enabling provision that I prefer to support.

**Finlay Carson (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con):** Will the member take an intervention?

**Mike Rumbles:** I have finished.

**The Presiding Officer:** In that case, I ask Colin Smyth to wind up the debate.

**Colin Smyth:** I welcome the support from the cabinet secretary and other members for some of the amendments in my name in the group, but I am disappointed that there is no support for my substantive amendments on

“promoting the development of affordable housing”

and

“supporting rural businesses, enterprises and communities”.

I have to say that the arguments against the housing amendment are exactly the same ones that the Government put at stage 2 against including transport and digital connectivity, which is a reserved issue. One of the aims of the agency will be to improve connectivity, so it is disappointing that the Government does not believe that housing—which is probably the third major problem that the area faces—should be included.

15:00

**Fergus Ewing:** The reason why we think that amendments 2 and 10 should not be accepted is that affordable housing already falls within the definition of communities, and the matters that are to be pursued. The agency will already deal with that. Also, as Mr Rumbles indicated, singling out one type of housing, could—*[Interruption.]*

We are hearing a lot of noises off. By including one type of housing—which we all in the chamber absolutely support—we run the risk that the interpretation of law by the courts would be that the agency should not promote other types of housing. Surely that is not something that any member would wish.

**Colin Smyth:** Nobody is suggesting that the agency will take the lead on housing: it will not take the lead on transport, which is the role of Transport Scotland. The point is that we in the region have a challenge in respect of affordable housing. Housing is being built across Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders. Where the shortage exists, where we need intervention and where there is market failure is in affordable housing. That is one of the reasons why every day we see young people leaving the south of Scotland and moving to the central belt to get jobs and educational opportunities. They cannot afford housing in the south of Scotland and there are not job opportunities for them there.

Everybody recognises that that is a big challenge for the area. We should be recognising it by putting it on the face on the bill and making it an aim for the new agency.

**Rachael Hamilton (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con):** I agree that it is crucial that we bring young people back to the south of Scotland, but the situation is that they cannot find affordable housing. That is a crucial part of economic growth, so the Conservatives will support amendment 10.

**Colin Smyth:** On amendment 2, which would include “supporting rural businesses”, it has been implied that that would somehow mean not supporting urban businesses, which shows a complete misunderstanding of the rest of the aims in the bill, which include

“supporting inclusive and sustainable economic growth”

and

“encouraging business start-ups and entrepreneurship”

The bill already covers all businesses, but there is a specific challenge when it comes to rural businesses. Amendment 2 recognises that sometimes, to make a small community sustainable, four or five jobs might need to be created, which is as important as creating 100 jobs in a town or city. That is missing from the current economic development support that our region receives.

Likewise, amendment 2 recognises that in rural communities additional support is needed to make that happen and to make a difference. That is why it is important that the bill specify rural communities. It also encompasses the importance of the industries—from forestry, to agriculture, to aquaculture—that will make a big difference to the economy of Dumfries and Galloway and the Borders, going forward. That is why so many organisations, including the NFU Scotland, very much support the amendment.

**Mike Rumbles:** Colin Smyth said that it was “implied”, but it was not implied: I said straight out that just putting “supporting rural businesses” into law could easily be interpreted as saying that urban businesses may not be supported. That is the point. We have no revising chamber, so it is really important that we get it right at stage 3.

**Colin Smyth:** That interpretation means, frankly, that Mike Rumbles has not looked at the rest of the aims of the bill, which talk about

“encouraging business startups and entrepreneurship”

Those are covered, but the distinctive way in which we need to support rural business is not. One could argue, in the same way, that we should not include transport or support for digital connectivity because they exclude other things. That would be a ridiculous statement to make. Amendment 2 emphasises the importance of the new agency focusing on rural businesses. That is why I am happy to support amendment 2 and amendment 10, which, disappointingly, other members do not appear to support.

*Amendment 9 agreed to.*

*Amendment 2 moved—[Colin Smyth].*

**The Presiding Officer:** The question is, that amendment 2 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

**Members:** No.

**The Presiding Officer:** There will be a division. As this is the first division of the day, there will be a five-minute suspension while I call members to the chamber.

15:04

*Meeting suspended.*

15:11

*On resuming—*

**The Presiding Officer:** We move to the division.

**For**

Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)  
 Ballantyne, Michelle (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bowman, Bill (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)  
 Burnett, Alexander (Aberdeenshire West) (Con)  
 Cameron, Donald (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)  
 Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)  
 Chapman, Peter (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Corry, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Green)  
 Fraser, Murdo (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Golden, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)  
 Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)  
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Halcro Johnston, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Hamilton, Rachael (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)  
 Harris, Alison (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)  
 Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)  
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)  
 Kelly, James (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Lindhurst, Gordon (Lothian) (Con)  
 Lockhart, Dean (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Mason, Tom (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (Ind)  
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)  
 Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)  
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)  
 Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Smith, Elaine (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Smyth, Colin (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Tomkins, Adam (Glasgow) (Con)  
 Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Wightman, Andy (Lothian) (Green)

**Against**

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)  
 Adamson, Clare (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)  
 Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)  
 Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)



Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)  
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)  
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)  
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)  
 Cole-Hamilton, Alex (Edinburgh Western) (LD)  
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)  
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)  
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)  
 Denham, Ash (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)  
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)  
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)  
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)  
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)  
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)  
 Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)  
 Freeman, Jeane (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)  
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)  
 Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)  
 Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)  
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)  
 Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)  
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)  
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)  
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)  
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)  
 Lyle, Richard (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)  
 MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)  
 Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)  
 Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)  
 Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)  
 Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)  
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)  
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)  
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)  
 McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)  
 McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)  
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)  
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)  
 Rennie, Willie (North East Fife) (LD)  
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)  
 Ross, Gail (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)  
 Rumbles, Mike (North East Scotland) (LD)  
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)  
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)  
 Somerville, Shirley-Anne (Dunfermline) (SNP)  
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)  
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)  
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)  
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)

**The Presiding Officer:** The result of the division is: For 53, Against 60, Abstentions 0.

*Amendment 2 disagreed to.*

*Amendment 3 moved—[Fergus Ewing]—and agreed to.*

*Amendment 10 moved—[Colin Smyth].*

**The Presiding Officer:** The question is, that amendment 10 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

**Members:** No.

**The Presiding Officer:** There will be a division.

**For**

Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)  
 Ballantyne, Michelle (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bowman, Bill (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)  
 Burnett, Alexander (Aberdeenshire West) (Con)  
 Cameron, Donald (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)  
 Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)  
 Chapman, Peter (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Corry, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Green)  
 Golden, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)  
 Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)  
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Halcro Johnston, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Hamilton, Rachael (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)  
 Harris, Alison (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)  
 Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)  
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)  
 Kelly, James (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Lindhurst, Gordon (Lothian) (Con)  
 Lockhart, Dean (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Mason, Tom (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (Ind)  
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)  
 Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)  
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)  
 Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Smith, Elaine (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Smyth, Colin (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Tomkins, Adam (Glasgow) (Con)  
 Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Wightman, Andy (Lothian) (Green)

**Against**

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)  
 Adamson, Clare (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)  
 Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)  
 Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)  
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)  
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)  
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)  
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)  
 Cole-Hamilton, Alex (Edinburgh Western) (LD)

Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)  
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)  
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)  
 Denham, Ash (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)  
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)  
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)  
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)  
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)  
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)  
 Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)  
 Freeman, Jeane (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)  
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)  
 Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)  
 Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)  
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)  
 Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)  
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)  
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)  
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)  
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)  
 Lyle, Richard (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)  
 MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)  
 Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)  
 Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)  
 Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)  
 Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)  
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)  
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)  
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)  
 McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)  
 McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)  
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)  
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)  
 Rennie, Willie (North East Fife) (LD)  
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)  
 Ross, Gail (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)  
 Rumbles, Mike (North East Scotland) (LD)  
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)  
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)  
 Somerville, Shirley-Anne (Dunfermline) (SNP)  
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)  
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)  
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)  
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)

**The Presiding Officer:** The result of the division is: For 52, Against 60, Abstentions 0.

*Amendment 10 disagreed to.*

*Amendment 11 moved—[Joan McAlpine]—and agreed to.*

*Amendment 12 moved—[Emma Harper]—and agreed to.*

**The Presiding Officer:** Group 2 is on collaboration and co-operation with other bodies. Amendment 13, in the name of Claudia Beamish, is grouped with amendments 14 and 19.

**Claudia Beamish (South Scotland) (Lab):** I declare an interest as a member of the Co-operative group of members of the Scottish Parliament.

Amendment 13 would add to the aims in section 5 a requirement to encourage

“persons and bodies with an interest in the environment to co-operate in achieving environmental objectives”.

I have brought the amendment back from stage 2 because I strongly believe that the requirement should be in the bill. It would enable and facilitate—the cabinet secretary is not listening—a whole range of bodies and individuals, such as farmers, land managers and communities, urban and rural, to work together. The amendment would encourage groups to take environmental projects forward on a co-operative model.

I emphasise that it is about not only co-operation but a more robust model of co-operation. I am disappointed that the cabinet secretary does not grasp the importance of that. In commenting on the amendment at stage 2, he stated:

“It is essential that everyone works together and co-operates, but that is not really about the agency. The bill is not really about telling third parties what to do—that does not really come under the scope of the bill. People need to work together across the whole scope of government—that is expected and desirable—but it is not really within the scope of any bill that establishes a new body to state that third parties should co-operate. That should happen anyway”.—[*Official Report, Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee*, 8 May 2019; c 36-7.]

The “persons and bodies” that would be interested in the model would be self-selecting; there would be no obligation. The amendment is not about “should”, but “could”. It is not about telling people what to do, as the cabinet secretary stated was his interpretation at stage 2; it is about facilitating co-operative action.

15:15

The cabinet secretary also stated at stage 2 that the term

“with an interest in the environment”

is vague. I disagree with that, and I will give examples of things that would be far more difficult for individual, small-scale farmers, land managers and community groups to do without support and advice on working co-operatively.

One example is river basin-wide work—including such actions as riparian tree planting—to mitigate flooding and bring shade to salmon spawning grounds.

Another example is the removal of non-native invasive plant species, such as giant hogweed, from a wide area. That is less worth doing on a

small scale because of the likelihood of the species continuing to spread despite being tackled.

Another example is agroforestry schemes, which would enable action that would, because of economies of scale, make tree planting more possible across smaller landholdings in a way that would otherwise be more difficult.

My final example is woodland planting. There are already many good examples of communities doing that, in Peebles and other places in South Scotland. That would be further enhanced. My amendment would support and facilitate communities working on that and many other issues with advice and support from the agency.

In view of the recent United Nations report on nature and the extinction warnings therein, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warning about remaining below an increase of 1.5°C, the new commitment by the Scottish Government to net zero emissions by 2045, which is welcome, and, more broadly, the climate and environment emergencies and the cabinet secretary's commitment to look at all policies in those contexts—certainly in the context of climate change—I am clear that amendment 13 adds to the aims in a way that would facilitate a co-operative approach to positive environmental and climate change objectives.

That support for co-operation for environmental purposes is surely exactly the sort of policy marker that the Scottish Government should make explicit in this relevant bill. In view of those imperatives, the amendment is in the public interest. I hope that, even at this late stage, the cabinet secretary will reconsider his position and agree to my amendment, in view of the arguments that I have put forward.

The Presiding Officer will be pleased to hear that I will leave the other two amendments in the group to the members who lodged them.

I move amendment 13.

**Maureen Watt (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP):** During the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee's consideration of the bill, it was clear that, with a number of bodies operating in the south of Scotland, it would be important to ensure that the new agency did not duplicate existing activity, but enhanced the current landscape. My amendment 14 makes it clear that, in working to deliver its aims, the new agency should encourage and facilitate collaboration. Collaboration can effectively contribute to advancing the agency's aims, whether the collaboration and co-operation are between the various agencies that operate in the region, or other persons or bodies.

Claudia Beamish and Colin Smyth similarly recognise the need for collaboration and co-operation to be mentioned in the bill, but their amendments place a narrower focus on the purpose of that collaboration and the bodies involved. Collaboration will be important to the delivery of all the aims of the new agency, whether they are environmental, economic or social aims, and we should not be prescriptive about that collaboration.

My amendment seeks to emphasise the importance of the new agency working collaboratively and promoting collaboration in pursuit of its aims. It provides the necessary flexibility to drive collaboration and co-operation in the most appropriate way and with the most appropriate bodies.

I ask members to support amendment 14.

**Colin Smyth:** My amendment 19 places a duty on the new agency to facilitate co-operation between relevant bodies. That serves a specific purpose that relates to the practical operations of public bodies in the region. It is about not just supporting the broad concept of co-operation but making co-operation a requirement.

There is no doubt that one of the key concerns that local stakeholders raised with the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee during stage 1 was how the new agency would work with existing bodies. The risk of duplication or gaps was raised, and most stakeholders stressed the need for a cohesive and collaborative approach to achieving aims.

The new agency will work alongside Scottish Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, the business gateway, the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council, two local authorities, whatever governance structure is introduced to run the Borderlands initiative, and many others.

The cluttered landscape and concerns about poor co-operation between existing bodies have been real problems in the region in the past. As we add a new agency to the list of existing bodies, we cannot afford a repeat of such a situation in the future. Simply saying that co-operation will take place is not as robust as it being underpinned in legislation. The REC Committee recognised that in its stage 1 report, which called for

"the development of appropriate mechanisms to facilitate collaboration and coordination between the new agency and all of the various existing agencies operating in the region, including the Strategic Board."

An example of such a mechanism was provided by the leader of Dumfries and Galloway Council, Elaine Murray, who gave evidence on behalf of the council and all the groups on the council. She suggested that there should be a memorandum of

understanding between the various public authorities.

Amendment 19 is not prescriptive about the approach that should be taken. We can talk all we like about promoting improved transport and digital connectivity, but that will be meaningless unless we make it a priority—indeed, a legal requirement—for there to be clear collaboration and co-operation across agencies. The best way to focus minds on the need for such collaboration is by making it a legal requirement.

Amendment 13, in the name of Claudia Beamish, calls for the agency to take a role in encouraging co-operation to achieve environmental aims. Such co-operation could cover a range of models, from formal co-operatives or catchment-based co-operation to more general collaboration, and that would clearly be a positive move. Given that the new agency will have a social and an environmental remit as well as an economic remit, it is fair to ask the agency to play a role in encouraging such co-operation.

Likewise, amendment 14, in the name of Maureen Watt, calls for the agency to facilitate collaboration in the region. Amendment 14 would be a worthwhile addition to the bill, and I lodged an amendment with the same wording. However, the new agency needs to have a leadership role in the region on issues that are relevant to its aims, and I do not think that amendment 14 goes far enough in delivering that. I do not believe that amendment 14 is in any way a substitute for amendment 19, as Maureen Watt seemed to imply; it will complement amendment 19.

**Fergus Ewing:** In differing ways, amendments 13, 14 and 19 all seek to impress upon the new agency the importance of working collaboratively and promoting collaboration. A culture of co-operation has been a key characteristic of the work across the south to date that has been taken forward by the south of Scotland economic partnership. Indeed, we have already seen the willingness of the partnership to work with other agencies and communities to deliver for the region. I am confident that the relationships that it has forged and the fresh dynamic that it has brought to discussions and activities will continue.

The Government strongly encourages co-operation and alignment in order to deliver maximum impact. First, we highlight that theme in the strategic guidance letters that we issue to agencies, and I intend to do the same in the guidance letters that we will send to the south of Scotland enterprise agency. Secondly, co-operation is a key theme of the work of the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board, which, by its very existence, is concerned with creating greater synergy and alignment across the planning of our enterprise and skills agencies. In addition, the

chair of the new agency will be a member of the strategic board. Thirdly, we are committed to establishing regional economic partnerships across Scotland.

It would not make sense for all three amendments in the group, which seek to do the same thing, to make it into the bill. Saying the same thing in legislation several times in slightly different words tends to make the law not clearer, but more confusing. I therefore encourage members to support amendment 14, in the name of Maureen Watt, and to reject the other amendments in the group. I will set out the reasons why.

Amendment 14 is the most complete statement about the sort of collaboration that I am sure everybody in the chamber wants the new agency to engage in and promote. The amendment makes it clear that the new agency should work collaboratively with others and that it should encourage and facilitate others to work co-operatively among themselves to support the delivery of all the agency's aims, including furthering sustainable "economic and social development" and improving

"the amenity and environment of the South of Scotland".

In contrast, amendment 13, in the name of Claudia Beamish, relates only to collaboration on achieving environmental aims. I welcome the fact that Ms Beamish has lodged the amendment to highlight the undoubted importance of collaboration on environmental goals. However, if the bill were to underscore the importance of collaboration on environmental matters only, it would suggest that collaboration on economic and social development was less important. I do not think that that is the message that anyone, including Ms Beamish, wants to send through the bill, which is concerned with setting up an enterprise agency.

Amendment 19, in the name of Colin Smyth, is also narrower than amendment 14. Whereas amendment 14 and, for that matter, amendment 13 are rightly concerned with the promotion of co-operation among all persons, be they public, private or third sector, amendment 19 is limited to dealing with co-operation in the public sector and makes no reference to bodies in the private or third sector. It further confines the agency's role to facilitating co-operation between itself and other public authorities operating in the region instead of acknowledging that the agency might also wish to encourage co-operation between and with any public body that might play a part in achieving the agency's aims, even if that body operates or is based outwith the region. As a result, amendment 19 ignores the importance of the agency working co-operatively with, for example, neighbouring local authorities in Ayrshire and South

Lanarkshire, in spite of the committee's strong view at stage 1 that it would want the agency to work in co-operation with them.

For those reasons, I encourage members to support amendment 14, in the name of Maureen Watt, which will be helpful in fostering co-operation and collaboration in an expansive way, and to reject the other amendments in the group.

**Claudia Beamish:** As Colin Smyth said on amendment 19, stakeholders have stressed the need for the new agency to work in a cohesive and collaborative way with existing bodies. However, his comment about a cluttered landscape is really important. With any form of collaboration, the lines of communication have to be really clear.

As a resident of Clydesdale who represents the whole South Scotland region, I take the point about working with other local authorities that are not included in the area covered by the agency, but I do not think that amendment 19 excludes anything. In fact, it is inclusive with regard to collaboration, and it is disappointing that the cabinet secretary is not prepared to support it. Including it in the bill would have brought clarity.

I do not want to add very much to what I have said about my amendment 13, but given the climate and environment emergencies that have been called, I believe that it is a dereliction of duty on the part of the Scottish Government not to support it, given what it says about environmental co-operation. My amendment is not exclusive and it does not prevent social and economic co-operation. It simply emphasises the importance of this particular aspect in light of the climate emergency.

I will leave it at that, Presiding Officer. We will see where we go.

**The Presiding Officer:** The question is, that amendment 13 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

**Members:** No.

**The Presiding Officer:** There will be a one-minute division.

#### For

Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)  
 Ballantyne, Michelle (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bowman, Bill (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)  
 Burnett, Alexander (Aberdeenshire West) (Con)  
 Cameron, Donald (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)  
 Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)  
 Chapman, Peter (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Corry, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Green)

Golden, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)  
 Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)  
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Halcro Johnston, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Hamilton, Rachael (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)  
 Harris, Alison (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)  
 Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)  
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)  
 Kelly, James (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Lindhurst, Gordon (Lothian) (Con)  
 Lockhart, Dean (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Mason, Tom (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (Ind)  
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)  
 Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)  
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)  
 Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Smith, Elaine (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Smyth, Colin (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Tomkins, Adam (Glasgow) (Con)  
 Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Wightman, Andy (Lothian) (Green)

#### Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)  
 Adamson, Clare (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)  
 Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)  
 Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)  
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)  
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)  
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)  
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)  
 Cole-Hamilton, Alex (Edinburgh Western) (LD)  
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)  
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)  
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)  
 Denham, Ash (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)  
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)  
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)  
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)  
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)  
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)  
 Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)  
 Freeman, Jeane (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)  
 Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)  
 Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)  
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)  
 Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)  
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)

Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)  
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)  
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)  
 Lyle, Richard (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)  
 MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)  
 Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)  
 Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)  
 Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)  
 Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)  
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)  
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)  
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)  
 McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)  
 McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)  
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)  
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)  
 Rennie, Willie (North East Fife) (LD)  
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)  
 Ross, Gail (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)  
 Rumbles, Mike (North East Scotland) (LD)  
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)  
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)  
 Somerville, Shirley-Anne (Dunfermline) (SNP)  
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)  
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)  
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)  
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)

**The Presiding Officer:** The result of the division is: For 53, Against 59, Abstentions 0.

*Amendment 13 disagreed to.*

*Amendment 14 moved—[Maureen Watt]—and agreed to.*

### Section 6—Action plan

15:30

**The Presiding Officer:** Group 3 is on consultation on the action plan. Amendment 15, in the name of Colin Smyth, is grouped with amendments 16 and 17.

**Colin Smyth:** Amendments 15 to 17 set out requirements and timescales for the new agency to review and consult on its action plan. During stage 2, having lodged a number of amendments on that issue, I agreed to consider the committee's feedback on them. However, the principle remains exactly the same: consulting communities will be essential to the new agency, and I believe that the bill must include clear requirements in that regard. We need an agency that is for and very much rooted in the south of Scotland. Unless we find local solutions to the local challenges and opportunities facing the economy and communities in the region, the agency will not deliver on its aim. That means listening to the communities in the south of Scotland.

Amendment 17 would place a requirement on the new agency to consult before making its first

action plan and a maximum of five years after that. It is important that the agency's action plan is kept up to date, to ensure that it is always relevant to the needs and priorities of the region, and consulting on the plan regularly would help to achieve that. A maximum five-year window would deliver the flexibility needed to allow the agency to make plans on its own terms and to synchronise with those of other enterprise agencies. I stress that the five-year period is a maximum—we should fully expect the agency to revise its plan often enough that that upper limit does not need to be enforced and to ensure that on-going consultation and community engagement are part of its regular activity.

Local input to any consultation is essential. The agency needs to reflect the views of the people whom it serves. Amendment 17 makes it clear that the new agency would have to consult

"people who live and work in the South of Scotland, and ... businesses and public authorities that operate"

in the south of Scotland. However, I consider it crucial that local authorities in particular have the opportunity to respond, and the amendment would make provision for that in proposed new section 6A(3) by making it clear that the agency must specifically seek views from Dumfries and Galloway Council and Scottish Borders Council. Proposed new section 6A(4) would require the agency to report on what it will do in response to the views obtained through the consultation process. In the interests of transparency, that report would have to be sent to Scottish ministers and local authorities and then laid before Parliament.

Amendments 15 and 16 are technical, and are required should amendment 17 be agreed to.

I move amendment 15.

**Fergus Ewing:** I support amendments 15 to 17, which address key issues of whom the agency should consult, when and how often, and what it should do with the consultation findings. The amendments would give effect to key matters raised at stage 2, but without imposing an unduly bureaucratic burden on the agency.

By stating that the action plan must be reviewed at least every five years, amendment 17 will ensure that the agency's planning cycle can be synchronised with that of the other enterprise agencies. I am pleased that the amendment also expressly states that the agency must consult those

"who live and work in the South of Scotland",  
 as well as

"businesses and public authorities that operate"

in the south, including both local authorities, which are critical partners for the agency.

I hope that members will join the Government in supporting the amendments.

*Amendment 15 agreed to.*

*Amendment 16 moved—[Colin Smyth]—and agreed to.*

### Section 6A—Consultation on action plan

*Amendment 17 moved—[Colin Smyth]—and agreed to.*

### Section 7—General Powers

**The Presiding Officer:** Group 4 is on powers not being used to contribute to the arms trade. Amendment 1, in the name of John Finnie, is the only amendment in the group.

**John Finnie:** Throughout deliberations on and scrutiny of the bill, much has been made of Highlands and Islands Enterprise being a comparator for the new agency. Over a number of years, Scottish Green Party colleagues and I have asked about the role of public moneys provided to companies in the defence sector. In 2017, I asked a series of questions, which culminated in a meeting with the chief executive of Highlands and Islands Enterprise, where she explained that—she gave a real example—just because a company is manufacturing batteries that are used in motor vehicles but could be used in tanks does not necessarily mean that they are working for the defence sector. I got a breakdown of the moneys that had been provided and I was assured that there was no promotion of such activities. Members can imagine my surprise when I received an invitation from Highlands and Islands Enterprise the following week that highlighted an event on aerospace and defence sector opportunities in the region. It said:

“Businesses in the Highlands and Islands are being invited to a free workshop to find out how the region can benefit from opportunities in the aerospace, defence, security and space industries.”

The event, which was held in Inverness, was organised by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and ADS Scotland. For members who do not know what ADS Scotland is, I will read out what it says on its website:

“ADS is one of the founding partners of the Defence Growth Partnership ... which aims to secure a thriving UK defence sector delivering long-term security, growth and prosperity for our nation. As a partnership between Industry and Government, the DGP is an important part of generating high-tech, export-led growth.”

**Rachael Hamilton:** I am listening intently to what the member is saying. Does he have any examples that relate to the south of Scotland?

Why is he using an example from the Highlands and Islands?

**John Finnie:** I am grateful that the member is listening intently to what I am saying. If she continues to do so, I hope that my reason for using the example will become clear. I started off by saying that HIE and south of Scotland enterprise are comparator bodies.

ADS Scotland’s website goes on to say:

“The DGP is working to:

- Grow the UK’s global market share through increased exports
- Foster greater collaboration and innovation across the sector, bringing products and services to the market that meet customer needs
- Improve competitiveness through the whole value chain”.

At stage 2, when I lodged an amendment on the issue that covered a range of services that could be made available to the military, I was told by a number of members that it was far too expansive. Therefore, I have lodged a stage 3 amendment that mentions the word “munitions”. Members might ask where that word comes from. It is frequently cited by the Scottish Government. Last year, my colleague Ross Greer asked the Scottish Government

“what information it has regarding whether any companies that it provides financial support to have supplied weapons or equipment that might have been used in the alleged war crimes in Yemen by the Saudi Arabian air force”.

In his reply, Paul Wheelhouse said:

“The Scottish Government has not used public money to support the manufacture or export of munitions from Scotland”.—[*Written Answers*, 23 February 2018; S5W-14272.]

### **David Stewart (Highlands and Islands) (Lab):**

The member will know that there is great support in the chamber for funding of the spaceport in Sutherland, which HIE has provided great funding for. Does Mr Finnie object to HIE funding the spaceport?

**John Finnie:** Mr Stewart will know that there are a number of competitions for space moneys in the Highlands, in which HIE is actively involved. I am talking about the defence sector.

When he was asked what the definition of “munitions” was, Ivan McKee said:

“The ... definition for munition is a ‘weapon or ammunition—particularly for military use’. Scotland’s enterprise agencies do not support the manufacture or export of munitions.”—[*Written Answers*, 28 September 2018; S5W-18505.]

**Oliver Mundell:** I understand that the member might have very different views from me on some of these issues, but does he not recognise that it is

a bit odd to rule out the making of munitions for UK armed forces anywhere in the south of Scotland?

**John Finnie:** No, I do not think that that is remotely odd.

The subject was discussed during the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee's stage 2 consideration of the bill, when, as I mentioned, I lodged a more expansive amendment on the issue. Fergus Ewing said:

"As the First Minister has made clear, the Scottish Government and its enterprise and skills agencies do not provide funding for the manufacture of munitions ... our enterprise agencies do not support the manufacture of munitions".—[*Official Report, Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee*, 8 May 2019; c 63-4.]

If that is the case, I cannot see why there would be any issue with the Scottish Government supporting amendment 1, but I understand that it does not plan to do so.

I turn to the south of Scotland. Penman Engineering in Dumfries received funding from Scottish Enterprise. Penman's products include armoured vehicles for military purposes. I am told that one of its products is the Penman Metras MRV, which looks similar to a Humvee. [Interruption.] The Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands says that it is used as an ambulance, but the company's promotional material shows it with a machine gun mounted on the top. That is not my idea of an ambulance.

**The Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands (Paul Wheelhouse):** The risk of speaking from a sedentary position is that the member might mishear. I said that Penman Engineering also makes ambulances.

**John Finnie:** I am a big fan of ambulances. If they can be manufactured in the south of Scotland, that is really good.

In 2012, Penman Engineering applied for an export licence for military vehicles for Saudi Arabia, and it had previously applied for export licences for military vehicles for Libya.

We are repeatedly told that diversification is what it is all about, and that is commendable.

**Oliver Mundell:** Will the member confirm for my constituents whether he intends his amendment to rule out future funding for Penman Engineering or whether he recognises that that company does not make munitions?

**John Finnie:** I did not quite catch the end bit. If the member reads amendment 1, he will see that I would rule out any funding for munitions, yes.

**Oliver Mundell:** On a further point of clarification, I am saying that Penman Engineering

in Dumfries does not make munitions. Does the member agree with that point?

**John Finnie:** I have read out the information that I have about that. If the company does not make munitions, that is good.

Given the undoubted support of the Scottish Government for no funding to be made available for munitions, it will have no difficulty supporting amendment 1.

I move amendment 1.

**Mike Rumbles:** Amendment 1 purports to be about the arms trade, but it is not about the arms trade. In the amendment, the Greens define the arms trade as being the sale of munitions "for domestic procurement". This is not about the arms trade, and it is a bit false to pretend that it is.

**John Finnie:** Will the member give way?

**Mike Rumbles:** John Finnie has had his say. He can come back later on, when he sums up.

Amendment 1 is not about the arms trade, despite what we have heard from John Finnie just now. What about domestic munitions such as shotguns for farmers and all that sort of thing? If a company making those wanted to set up in the south of Scotland, amendment 1 would run counter to that.

I spent 15 years in the Army. As long as we have an Army, it will need munitions; I hope that we all agree with that. Do the Greens not want us to have an Army with munitions? Do they not want us to have an Army at all? Let us be honest in this sort of debate.

This is a remarkably daft amendment, if I am allowed to say so, Presiding Officer. It was not supported by anybody else at stage 2 and it should not be supported by anybody other than the Greens at stage 3. I hope that we will send a resounding message that if we have an Army, it must have munitions, for goodness' sake!

**Finlay Carson:** The Conservatives will certainly not be supporting John Finnie's amendment, particularly in light of his suggestion that it might affect companies such as Penman Engineering in Dumfries and Helmet Integrated Systems in Stranraer, which produces cutting-edge technology for helmets that go to the American air force and the gendarmes in France. Removing funding from such companies would be disastrous for the south of Scotland, not just for Stranraer.

We will not support amendment 1 because it would not achieve what John Finnie intends.

**Stewart Stevenson (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP):** The purpose of the products of Helmet Integrated Systems is safety. In other words, the helmets are for protecting people from



incidents that happen in the field of war. The 100 people who are employed at Helmet Integrated Systems will be listening carefully to this debate. The idea that the south of Scotland enterprise agency should be denied the opportunity to support that company, and other innovative companies that are genuinely saving lives in the most hazardous of conditions, is insupportable.

**Fergus Ewing:** We cannot support amendment 1, although we acknowledge Mr Finnie's right to bring it back to Parliament.

Put simply, amendment 1 could prevent the new agency from providing support to companies in the defence sector in the south of Scotland, even for business development activities and development into other areas.

As the First Minister has made clear, the Scottish Government and its enterprise and skills agencies do not provide funding for the manufacture of munitions. Our agencies' support helps firms to diversify and develop non-military applications for their technology. We recognise the importance of the aerospace, defence and marine sectors in Scotland, which employ many young graduates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects. The agencies work proactively with those sectors to help them to diversify their activities and to grow and sustain employment.

15:45

That position would apply to the new agency as well. It is important to ensure that we do not restrict the flexibility of the new agency to be able to do that work, which amendment 1 would do. The defence, aerospace and marine sectors in Scotland matter to our economy and we do not wish to damage the contribution that companies in those sectors make, or the ability to respond at a future date, should exceptional circumstances that relate to the defence of the state mean that we wish to provide support to a business to enable it to provide goods and services to the military.

I, too, will mention Helmet Integrated Systems in Stranraer, which is part of Gentex Europe. The company employs more than 100 people, who have a mixed range of skills, and is a living-wage employer. It has been based in south-west Scotland since the 1980s. It currently manufactures safety helmets for police, fire and rescue crews, as well as products for various industrial applications and specialist helmets for civil and military aircrew. In short, it provides equipment that keeps those who put themselves in the face of danger, often daily, safe. The staff use their expertise, skills and knowledge to provide high-quality equipment that those who undertake dangerous and risky work rely on to keep them

safe. Far from being an employer that the Government, and indeed its enterprise agencies, should stop supporting, it is exactly the sort of business that we wish to continue to help, should the need arise in the future.

I urge members to oppose amendment 1.

**John Finnie:** There have been some interesting contributions, but it would have been excellent if the members who contributed had actually looked at the amendment, rather than presume what it says.

For instance, Mr Rumbles somehow thought that the previous iteration of the amendment was trying to interfere with military involvement in emergencies such as flooding, and another member thought that I was trying to attack the knitwear industry in the Borders. Unless helmets are being used as weapons—and I do not think that any of us would suggest that—I wish all the companies that have been mentioned every success.

Of course, the word “diversification” is bandied about a lot, and we were told in an official answer that Lockheed Martin, which is the largest arms manufacturer in the world, is an information technology company that is based in Aberdeen.

The mantra of the Green Party is people, planet and peace. By supporting the amendment, members will have an opportunity to do something positive. I hope that members take that opportunity.

**The Presiding Officer:** The question is, that amendment 1 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

**Members:** No.

**The Presiding Officer:** There will be a division.

**For**

Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Green)  
Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)  
Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)  
Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)  
Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)  
Wightman, Andy (Lothian) (Green)

**Against**

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)  
Adamson, Clare (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)  
Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)  
Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)  
Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)  
Ballantyne, Michelle (South Scotland) (Con)  
Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)  
Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)  
Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)  
Bowman, Bill (North East Scotland) (Con)  
Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)  
Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)  
Burnett, Alexander (Aberdeenshire West) (Con)  
Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)  
Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)  
Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)

Chapman, Peter (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)  
 Cole-Hamilton, Alex (Edinburgh Western) (LD)  
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)  
 Corry, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)  
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)  
 Denham, Ash (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)  
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)  
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)  
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)  
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)  
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)  
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)  
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)  
 Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)  
 Freeman, Jeane (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)  
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)  
 Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)  
 Golden, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)  
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)  
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)  
 Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Halcro Johnston, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Hamilton, Rachael (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)  
 Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 Harris, Alison (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)  
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)  
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)  
 Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)  
 Kelly, James (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)  
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Lindhurst, Gordon (Lothian) (Con)  
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)  
 Lockhart, Dean (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Lyle, Richard (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)  
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)  
 Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)  
 Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)  
 Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)  
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)  
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)  
 Mason, Tom (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)  
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)  
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (Ind)  
 McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)  
 McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)  
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)  
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)

Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)  
 Rennie, Willie (North East Fife) (LD)  
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)  
 Ross, Gail (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)  
 Rumbles, Mike (North East Scotland) (LD)  
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)  
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)  
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)  
 Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Smith, Elaine (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Smyth, Colin (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Somerville, Shirley-Anne (Dunfermline) (SNP)  
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)  
 Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)  
 Swinney, John (Perthshire North) (SNP)  
 Tomkins, Adam (Glasgow) (Con)  
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)  
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)  
 Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)

**The Presiding Officer:** The result of the division is: For 6, Against 107, Abstentions 0.

*Amendment 1 disagreed to.*

#### After section 7

*Amendment 19 moved—[Colin Smyth].*

**The Presiding Officer:** The question is, that amendment 19 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

**Members:** No.

**The Presiding Officer:** There will be a division.

#### For

Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)  
 Ballantyne, Michelle (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bowman, Bill (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)  
 Burnett, Alexander (Aberdeenshire West) (Con)  
 Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)  
 Chapman, Peter (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Corry, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Green)  
 Golden, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)  
 Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)  
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Halcro Johnston, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Hamilton, Rachael (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)  
 Harris, Alison (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)  
 Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)  
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)  
 Kelly, James (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)

Lindhurst, Gordon (Lothian) (Con)  
 Lockhart, Dean (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Mason, Tom (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (Ind)  
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)  
 Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)  
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)  
 Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Smith, Elaine (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Smyth, Colin (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Tomkins, Adam (Glasgow) (Con)  
 Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Wightman, Andy (Lothian) (Green)

### Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)  
 Adamson, Clare (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)  
 Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)  
 Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)  
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)  
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)  
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)  
 Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)  
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)  
 Cole-Hamilton, Alex (Edinburgh Western) (LD)  
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)  
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)  
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)  
 Denham, Ash (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)  
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)  
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)  
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)  
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)  
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)  
 Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)  
 Freeman, Jeane (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)  
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)  
 Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)  
 Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)  
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)  
 Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)  
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)  
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)  
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)  
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)  
 Lyle, Richard (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)  
 MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)  
 Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)  
 Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)  
 Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)  
 Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)  
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)  
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)  
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)  
 McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)

McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)  
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)  
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)  
 Rennie, Willie (North East Fife) (LD)  
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)  
 Ross, Gail (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)  
 Rumbles, Mike (North East Scotland) (LD)  
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)  
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)  
 Somerville, Shirley-Anne (Dunfermline) (SNP)  
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)  
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)  
 Swinney, John (Perthshire North) (SNP)  
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)  
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)

**The Presiding Officer:** The result of the division is: For 51, Against 62, Abstentions 0.

*Amendment 19 disagreed to.*

### After section 9

**The Presiding Officer:** Before we turn to group 5, members may have noticed that we have passed the agreed time limit for the debate on the previous group to finish. I exercise my power under rule 9.8.5A to allow debate on this group to continue, to avoid the debate being unreasonably curtailed. We are about 10 minutes behind.

Group 5 is on a workers' interests committee. Amendment 4, in the name of the cabinet secretary, is the only amendment in the group.

**Fergus Ewing:** This Government wants Scotland to be a world-leading fair work nation by 2025. We believe that fair work is key to underpinning our economic success and the wellbeing and prosperity of individuals, businesses, organisations and society with more and better jobs and more and better working conditions.

We know that the south of Scotland is a low pay region, and that there is a need to enhance productivity; workers' and employees' conditions and relationships with their work are key to that. Although there has been welcome progress in closing the pay gap between men and women in the region and elsewhere in the rural economy, the gap persists. Issues that contribute to inequality and in-work poverty constrain economic growth, incomes and the wealth of the region and we are determined that the agency will help to address those issues. The establishment of a workers' interests committee will help to achieve that.

Amendment 4 will ensure that worker engagement will be a core function of the agency and that workers' voices will be heard and listened to. I envisage that the committee will encompass the widest range of workers' interests, including those who are employees and those who are self-

employed. It is deliberately wide so that the new agency will be informed by issues impacting on a broad range of working people. It is important that the perspectives of all those who work in the south of Scotland are heard. At just over 20 per cent, the south of Scotland has a much higher proportion of people who are self-employed than Scotland as a whole at 12 per cent. Indeed, among Scotland's 32 local authority areas, Dumfries and Galloway has the highest self-employment rate and Scottish Borders the third highest rate, at 22 and 19 per cent respectively.

This is a specific, deliberate and concerted effort to ensure that the new agency will consider what can be done to advance workers' interests, which will not only deliver an effective voice but result in effective and credible policies and actions.

**Mike Rumbles:** Will the cabinet secretary confirm that the term "workers" has a wider meaning than just employees?

**Fergus Ewing:** Yes. I am happy to confirm that the term "workers" will incorporate employees and those who are in self-employment and not schedule E employees. For the reasons that I have just stated, that issue has been particularly important in the south of Scotland.

I expect the workers' interests committee to include representation from business, which could be provided from organisations such as the Federation of Small Businesses, the Scottish Chambers of Commerce and the Institute of Directors Scotland, to name but a few. That will ensure that the new agency hears advice from different perspectives, so that its actions are properly informed.

Amendment 4 complements amendment 5, which we will come to shortly in group 7, which will require the Government to issue a fair work direction for the agency, and amendments 7 and 8 in group 8, which will ensure that the membership of the agency as a whole has experience or knowledge of the issues that face those who work in the south of Scotland.

I thank the Scottish Trades Union Congress for our constructive dialogue, which has helped to put our social partnership into action. Those discussions have been productive and I know that the STUC has welcomed the considerable progress that has been made on the matter of fair work. I want to build on those discussions as we implement the requirements in the bill to ensure that fair work is embedded in the new agency and that the voice of workers is heard. I am committed to doing so.

I move amendment 4.

**Colin Smyth:** I support amendment 4, in the name of the cabinet secretary, which will create a

workers' interests committee. At stage 2, I lodged an amendment that called for the agency's board to include trade union representation, in order to ensure that the board would be responsive to the needs and concerns of workers in the region. That remains my preferred position and it is the preferred position of the STUC.

One of the biggest challenges that the agency faces is the need to tackle low pay and support the creation of high-quality, well-paid jobs in the south of Scotland. Trade unions have an essential role to play in that. A consistent trade union voice on the board would have been a big asset to the new agency. Although I am disappointed that the Government has not lodged an amendment to guarantee trade union representation on the board, I hope that the workers' interests committee will be given sufficient authority and power to ensure that the voice of workers is heard loud and clear in the work of the new agency.

**Finlay Carson:** I welcome amendment 4 in the name of the cabinet secretary. We had concerns regarding the appointment of a trade union member to the board. This is a good compromise that recognises the above-average level of self-employed workers in the south of Scotland.

We support the cabinet secretary's amendment.

*Amendment 4 agreed to.*

#### Section 14—Annual report

**The Presiding Officer:** Group 6 is on an annual report. Amendment 18, in the name of Colin Smyth, is the only amendment in the group.

**Colin Smyth:** Amendment 18 requires the agency's annual report to include an assessment of progress against the agency's aims, as set out in the bill, and its action plan. As it stands, the bill does not require the annual report to include performance monitoring; it requires the agency to report only on its activities, not on their impact or outcomes. Updating stakeholders and communities on delivery is essential. Amendment 18 guarantees that that will happen on an annual basis and adds an important additional element of accountability.

I move amendment 18.

**Fergus Ewing:** I agree that annual reports are an important means of providing accountability and transparency and that they should assure people, not least in the south of Scotland, that the agency is working to deliver on its functions, aims and the priorities that were identified through consultation in its action plan.

Annual reports should demonstrate impacts and outcomes from the agency's activities. That is why section 14 already makes clear that the agency

“must, after each financial year ... prepare and publish a report of its activities during the year”.

There is another way to ensure that that happens. As part of our governance arrangements with each public body, we agree a framework document. That is a requirement of the Scottish public finance manual, in which we set out requirements for annual reports and accounts in relation to outlining bodies’ main activities and performance against agreed objectives and targets; it makes abundantly clear what an annual report on activities should say.

Therefore, although I understand and support the intention behind Colin Smyth’s amendment, I do not believe that it adds anything necessary to the bill. I respectfully submit that it is self-evident that an annual report should cover delivery on the agency’s aims and priorities. I hope that Mr Smyth agrees and that he will withdraw his amendment.

**Colin Smyth:** If something is going to happen, as the cabinet secretary says it will, I do not see the problem with including it in the bill—unless it is perhaps not going to happen. Amendment 18 is a small amendment that makes it clear that the annual report should include performance monitoring. As things stand, that is not specified in the bill. Therefore, I find it difficult to understand why anybody would oppose this small amendment.

I press amendment 18.

**The Presiding Officer:** The question is, that amendment 18 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

**Members:** No.

**The Presiding Officer:** There will be a division.

#### For

Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)  
 Ballantyne, Michelle (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bowman, Bill (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)  
 Burnett, Alexander (Aberdeenshire West) (Con)  
 Cameron, Donald (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)  
 Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)  
 Chapman, Peter (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Corry, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Green)  
 Golden, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)  
 Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)  
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Halcro Johnston, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Hamilton, Rachael (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)  
 Harris, Alison (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)

Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)  
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)  
 Kelly, James (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Lindhurst, Gordon (Lothian) (Con)  
 Lockhart, Dean (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Mason, Tom (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (Ind)  
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)  
 Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)  
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)  
 Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Smith, Elaine (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Smyth, Colin (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Tomkins, Adam (Glasgow) (Con)  
 Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Wightman, Andy (Lothian) (Green)

#### Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)  
 Adamson, Clare (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)  
 Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)  
 Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)  
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)  
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)  
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)  
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)  
 Cole-Hamilton, Alex (Edinburgh Western) (LD)  
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)  
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)  
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)  
 Denham, Ash (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)  
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)  
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)  
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)  
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)  
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)  
 Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)  
 Freeman, Jeane (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)  
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)  
 Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)  
 Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)  
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)  
 Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)  
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)  
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)  
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)  
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)  
 Lyle, Richard (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)  
 MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)  
 Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)  
 Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)  
 Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)

Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)  
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)  
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)  
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)  
 McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)  
 McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)  
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)  
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)  
 Rennie, Willie (North East Fife) (LD)  
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)  
 Ross, Gail (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)  
 Rumbles, Mike (North East Scotland) (LD)  
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)  
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)  
 Somerville, Shirley-Anne (Dunfermline) (SNP)  
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)  
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)  
 Swinney, John (Perthshire North) (SNP)  
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)  
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)

**The Presiding Officer:** The result of the division is: For 53, Against 61, Abstentions 0.

*Amendment 18 disagreed to.*

#### After section 15

**The Presiding Officer:** Group 7 is on fair work direction. Amendment 5, in the name of the cabinet secretary, is the only amendment in the group.

16:00

**Fergus Ewing:** I undertook at stage 2 to consider what, if anything, we might be able to put in the bill to further our ambitions on fair work. That required careful deliberation, because those ambitions are linked to reserved matters and we need to be certain that anything that we put in the bill is within legislative competence and would not create difficulties for the new agency.

Amendment 5 works within the constraints on legislative competence to ensure that fair work is embedded in the approach that we expect south of Scotland enterprise to take. It requires Scottish ministers to issue a direction to the new agency to make it clear that we expect it “to promote fair work” in all that it does. In the direction, we will set out our expectations of what the new agency should take forward. I anticipate significant alignment to the fair work action plan that the Government published last year.

Amendment 5 also requires that people representing the interests of workers and employers in the region are consulted about the fair work direction before it is made. That gives effect to our commitment that the new enterprise agency will act as an exemplar in the area to establish the dimensions of fair work—namely effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and

respect—both in its role as an employer and in its activities with business.

As members will recognise, we do not use direction-making powers lightly. The fact that we have taken a specific power affirms our determination to make fair work more than just an aspiration. The Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee recommended in its stage 1 report that we include “furthering fair work” in the bill’s aims. I hope that members will accept that I have sought to give effect to that call and will support the amendment.

I move amendment 5.

**Colin Smyth:** I very much welcome the cabinet secretary’s amendment 5, which calls for a fair work direction to be issued to the agency that sets out its responsibilities in that regard. The agency has a vital role to play in promoting fair work in the region. At stage 2, I pressed for the bill to be amended to reflect that. The promotion of fair work will help to tackle many of the challenges facing the region, particularly around pay and working conditions, and it will help the agency to achieve a number of its other aims.

It is important that the agency’s responsibilities with regard to fair work are clearly set out in the bill, so that they are not considered either optional or secondary to the aims that are included in the bill. I am content that the approach in amendment 5 provides a way of delivering that while avoiding the legal challenge of legislating on employment law, which is a reserved matter. I am therefore happy to support the amendment.

*Amendment 5 agreed to.*

#### Schedule 1—Members and staff

**The Presiding Officer:** Group 8 is on south of Scotland enterprise: membership. Amendment 6, in the name of the cabinet secretary, is grouped with amendments 7, 7A and 8.

**Fergus Ewing:** Amendments 6, 7 and 8 focus on the skills and expertise required of members of south of Scotland enterprise. Creating a new agency is an opportunity to bring a fresh approach to economic development in the south of Scotland. Members of the agency will be key to shaping its culture and approach in delivering for the area’s interests and needs, so it is vital for agency members to have the right mix of skills and expertise.

As demonstrated by the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018, this Government is committed to improving the diversity of our boardrooms, in order to ensure that they are properly representative of modern Scotland and, importantly, that public boards

benefit from a wider range of skills, knowledge and expertise.

Although south of Scotland enterprise will be subject to the provisions of the 2018 act, amendment 6 seeks to go further by encouraging diversity in its membership. Paragraph 1(2A) of schedule 1 was added at stage 2. I listened carefully to the views expressed by a number of committee members during the debate on that amendment, particularly on the need to ensure that the issues facing workers in the region are represented on the board.

One of the key issues for the region is the need to increase the working age population and to encourage more young people to stay in and move to the area to live and work. That is now rightly recognised in section 5(2)(ba). It is also right that the agency's membership reflects that aspiration. There is a risk that, by emphasising the importance of members having both knowledge and experience, paragraph 1(2A) of schedule 1 in its current form could inhibit people who lack experience—particularly young people—from becoming agency members.

To address the concerns that a number of members expressed at stage 2, amendment 6 would change the emphasis of paragraph 1(2A) of schedule 1 so that it refers to members having either knowledge or experience. Ensuring that the membership criteria do not inhibit young people from applying to be members will open up opportunities to hear the voice of young people and shows our commitment to seek opportunities to deliver a legacy from our year of young people in 2018.

Amendments 7 and 8 address workers representation, which is a key dimension, and the provision of effective work. Taken with amendment 5, which requires a fair work direction, and amendment 4, which establishes a workers' interests committee—we have already debated those amendments—amendments 7 and 8 will sustain a culture of fair work and fair work practices in the long term, making the consideration of workers' interests the norm in the agency.

For those reasons, I ask members to support those three amendments in my name. I hope that my explanation of why we are proposing changing “and” to “or” through amendment 6 will persuade Colin Smyth of the best intentions of the change. I am seeking to be as inclusive as possible. Accordingly, I hope that Mr Smyth will not move his amendment 7A but, if he does, I ask members not to support it.

I move amendment 6.

**Colin Smyth:** Amendment 6, in the name of the cabinet secretary, would be a step backwards

from what is in the bill at present. The bill requires the membership “taken as a whole” to have “experience and knowledge”; it does not refer to members individually. At no point does the bill say that individual members must have knowledge and experience; it simply says that the whole board should have that. Amendment 6 would change that so that the board as a whole would need to have only experience or knowledge. I believe that the membership overall should have experience and knowledge. Given that the bill is clear that it relates to the board as a whole, the consequence of amendment 6 could be that the entire board could have experience but no knowledge of the region or vice versa.

The justification for amendment 6 appears to be to ensure that young people can sit on the board. It is somewhat patronising to suggest that young people who live in the region do not have any experience of it. Their experience as young people living in the region is exactly what we need on the board. The wording as it stands would not prevent any individual, including a young person with only experience or knowledge, from sitting on the board. I reiterate that schedule 1 refers to the board “as a whole”. Therefore, this is a completely unnecessary change and one that risks the quite absurd situation in which the entire board may have no experience or knowledge of the region. I think that that is what we call an unintended consequence.

Likewise, Fergus Ewing's amendment 7 opts for “or” rather than “and”, and amendment 7A, in my name, seeks to change that. As I said, paragraph 1(2A) refers to the board's membership taken as a whole and does not apply to every individual member. In my view, amendment 7 is already a disappointing addition to the bill that falls short of the dedicated trade union representation that I wanted. I see absolutely no benefit from weakening the bill further by requiring the board to have either knowledge or experience of the issues facing workers in the region rather than requiring the board as a whole to include members with a combination of both.

**Mike Rumbles:** I commend the cabinet secretary for his amendments, which I particularly wanted to be in the bill. There are no unintended consequences—they are deliberate measures. The cabinet secretary has listened to the evidence that we presented and the points that we made. When we advertise outside the usual channels for membership of the board, we do not want to put off young people in any way from applying to be considered as members. If we put it in legislation that members of the board must have experience and knowledge of the issues facing those who work in the south of Scotland, that could be off-putting to some young people.

**Rachael Hamilton:** Colin Smyth made the point that the provision relates to the membership taken as a whole and not individually. I agree entirely with the sentiment that experience or knowledge is important but, when we look at the board as a whole, we can see that experience and knowledge are important.

**Mike Rumbles:** I could not agree more, but the point that I am making, and the point that is being missed, is that if we are thinking outside the box and trying to go outwith the usual channels, to get young people on the board of the south of—

**Colin Smyth:** Will the member take an intervention?

**Mike Rumbles:** The member should let me address the point before he tries to intervene.

We want to think outside the box, and the minister is in charge of the process. If people see in the bill and in adverts that go out that board members must have experience and knowledge, they could be put off applying. That is the evidence that was put to me; I put it to the cabinet secretary and he listened. To keep the current wording would be a backward step.

I understand the intentions and the issue. The board as a whole can have knowledge and experience, but requiring both knowledge and experience can put people off applying. If we are in the business of change and doing things differently, we have to make every effort to encourage young people to take part.

**Finlay Carson:** This is very confusing. Perhaps the cabinet secretary, who is a lawyer, can clarify the matter. As Colin Smyth said, the bill as amended at stage 2 refers to

“the desirability of ensuring that the membership (taken as a whole)—

(a) has experience and knowledge of the whole of the South of Scotland”.

Surely replacing “and” with “or” means that the whole board could simply have experience or simply have knowledge. Perhaps the cabinet secretary will explain why a change is needed.

**Stewart Stevenson:** One of the great problems that youngsters face when they leave the education system is getting their first job. When I was a graduate with a humble degree, I had three job offers. That ain't the case now: I have family members, better qualified than me, for whom it has taken three years to get a proper job. We need to ensure that we do not create barriers, in the minds of applicants and in the application process, that prevent people from applying who are probably better qualified than many who have experience, and who would bring their knowledge to bear on the problems that face the south of Scotland, where it is particularly difficult to retain

young people. I will certainly not support amendment 7A.

**Fergus Ewing:** I have listened to and enjoyed the debate. It is our desire and intention that we do not deter young people from seeking to apply and, if appropriate, becoming members of the new enterprise agency board. It is absolutely right that we avoid doing anything that stops or discourages that, which is the point that Mr Stevenson—

**Jamie Greene (West Scotland) (Con):** Will the cabinet secretary take an intervention?

**Fergus Ewing:** Hang on a second. I might give way later.

Mr Stevenson made that point, and he is absolutely right. Views were imputed to me—

**Jamie Greene:** Will the cabinet secretary take an intervention?

**Fergus Ewing:** No, I will not.

Views were imputed to me by Mr Smyth that I not only do not hold but would not dream of holding, far less expressing. That is unfortunate. I confirm that I am not suggesting that all young people have had no experience—that would be absurd. What I am saying is that many young people, for various reasons, have not had the opportunity to amass experience of life and work beyond, for example, further and higher education.

It is abundantly clear that the incisive arguments that Mr Rumbles put forward—[*Interruption.*] I see that there is a lot of support for that sentiment. It is clear that Mr Rumbles's incisive arguments should be preferred. We, at least, are determined that young people should not be left behind and should play an active, positive and growing part in the business of south of Scotland enterprise as it does its job for the south of Scotland.

**The Presiding Officer:** The question is, that amendment 6 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

**Members:** No.

**The Presiding Officer:** There will be a division.

**For**

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)  
 Adamson, Clare (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)  
 Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)  
 Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)  
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)  
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)  
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)  
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)  
 Cole-Hamilton, Alex (Edinburgh Western) (LD)  
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)  
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)  
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)  
 Denham, Ash (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)  
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)  
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)



Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)  
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)  
 Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Green)  
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)  
 Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)  
 Freeman, Jeane (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)  
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)  
 Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)  
 Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)  
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)  
 Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)  
 Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)  
 Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)  
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)  
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)  
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)  
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)  
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)  
 Lyle, Richard (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)  
 MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)  
 Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)  
 Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)  
 Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)  
 Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)  
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)  
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)  
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)  
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (Ind)  
 McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)  
 McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)  
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)  
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)  
 Rennie, Willie (North East Fife) (LD)  
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)  
 Ross, Gail (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)  
 Rumbles, Mike (North East Scotland) (LD)  
 Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)  
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)  
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)  
 Somerville, Shirley-Anne (Dunfermline) (SNP)  
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)  
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)  
 Swinney, John (Perthshire North) (SNP)  
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)  
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)  
 Wightman, Andy (Lothian) (Green)

#### Against

Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)  
 Ballantyne, Michelle (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bowman, Bill (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)  
 Burnett, Alexander (Aberdeenshire West) (Con)  
 Cameron, Donald (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)  
 Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)  
 Chapman, Peter (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Corry, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)

Golden, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)  
 Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Halcro Johnston, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Hamilton, Rachael (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)  
 Harris, Alison (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)  
 Kelly, James (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Lockhart, Dean (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Mason, Tom (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)  
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)  
 Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Smith, Elaine (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Smyth, Colin (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Tomkins, Adam (Glasgow) (Con)  
 Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)

**The Presiding Officer:** The result of the division is: For 68, Against 45, Abstentions 0.

*Amendment 6 agreed to.*

*Amendment 7 moved—[Fergus Ewing].*

*Amendment 7A moved—[Colin Smyth].*

16:15

**The Presiding Officer:** The question is, that amendment 7A be agreed to. Are we agreed?

**Members:** No.

**The Presiding Officer:** There will be a division.

#### For

Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)  
 Ballantyne, Michelle (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bowman, Bill (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)  
 Burnett, Alexander (Aberdeenshire West) (Con)  
 Cameron, Donald (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)  
 Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)  
 Chapman, Peter (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Corry, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Green)  
 Golden, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)  
 Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)  
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)

Halcro Johnston, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Hamilton, Rachael (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)  
 Harris, Alison (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)  
 Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)  
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)  
 Kelly, James (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Lindhurst, Gordon (Lothian) (Con)  
 Lockhart, Dean (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Mason, Tom (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)  
 Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)  
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)  
 Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Smith, Elaine (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Smyth, Colin (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Tomkins, Adam (Glasgow) (Con)  
 Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Wightman, Andy (Lothian) (Green)

#### Against

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)  
 Adamson, Clare (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)  
 Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)  
 Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)  
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)  
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)  
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)  
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)  
 Cole-Hamilton, Alex (Edinburgh Western) (LD)  
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)  
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)  
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)  
 Denham, Ash (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)  
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)  
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)  
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)  
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)  
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)  
 Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)  
 Freeman, Jeane (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)  
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)  
 Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)  
 Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)  
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)  
 Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)  
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)  
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)  
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)  
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)  
 Lyle, Richard (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)

MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)  
 Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)  
 Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)  
 Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)  
 Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)  
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)  
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)  
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)  
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (Ind)  
 McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)  
 McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)  
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)  
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)  
 Rennie, Willie (North East Fife) (LD)  
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)  
 Ross, Gail (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)  
 Rumbles, Mike (North East Scotland) (LD)  
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)  
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)  
 Somerville, Shirley-Anne (Dunfermline) (SNP)  
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)  
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)  
 Swinney, John (Perthshire North) (SNP)  
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)  
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)

**The Presiding Officer:** The result of the division is: For 52, Against 62, Abstentions 0.

*Amendment 7A disagreed to.*

**The Presiding Officer:** The question is, that amendment 7 be agreed to. Are we agreed?

**Members:** No.

**The Presiding Officer:** There will be a division.

#### For

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)  
 Adamson, Clare (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)  
 Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)  
 Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)  
 Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)  
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)  
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)  
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)  
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)  
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)  
 Cole-Hamilton, Alex (Edinburgh Western) (LD)  
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)  
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)  
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)  
 Denham, Ash (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)  
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)  
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)  
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)  
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)  
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)  
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Green)  
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)  
 Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)  
 Freeman, Jeane (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)  
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)

Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)  
 Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)  
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and  
 Lauderdale) (SNP)  
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)  
 Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)  
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)  
 Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)  
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)  
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)  
 Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)  
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)  
 Kelly, James (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)  
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)  
 Lyle, Richard (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)  
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)  
 Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)  
 Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)  
 Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)  
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Martin, Gillian (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP)  
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)  
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)  
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)  
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (Ind)  
 McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)  
 McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)  
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)  
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)  
 Rennie, Willie (North East Fife) (LD)  
 Robison, Shona (Dundee City East) (SNP)  
 Ross, Gail (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)  
 Rumbles, Mike (North East Scotland) (LD)  
 Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)  
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)  
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)  
 Smith, Elaine (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Smyth, Colin (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Somerville, Shirley-Anne (Dunfermline) (SNP)  
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)  
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)  
 Swinney, John (Perthshire North) (SNP)  
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine)  
 (SNP)  
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)  
 Wightman, Andy (Lothian) (Green)

### Against

Ballantyne, Michelle (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Bowman, Bill (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)  
 Burnett, Alexander (Aberdeenshire West) (Con)  
 Cameron, Donald (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)  
 Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)  
 Chapman, Peter (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Corry, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Golden, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)

Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Halcro Johnston, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Hamilton, Rachael (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire)  
 (Con)  
 Harris, Alison (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Lindhurst, Gordon (Lothian) (Con)  
 Lockhart, Dean (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Mason, Tom (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)  
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)  
 Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Tomkins, Adam (Glasgow) (Con)  
 Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)

**The Presiding Officer:** The result of the  
 division is: For 87, Against 27, Abstentions 0.

*Amendment 7 agreed to.*

*Amendment 8 moved—[Fergus Ewing]—and  
 agreed to.*

**The Presiding Officer:** That ends consideration  
 of amendments. As members will be aware, at this  
 stage in the proceedings, I am now required under  
 the standing orders to decide whether, in my view,  
 any provision of the bill relates to a protected  
 subject matter; that is, whether it modifies the  
 electoral system and franchise for Scottish  
 parliamentary elections. In my view it does not  
 do such thing, and therefore it does not require a  
 supermajority at stage 3.

## South of Scotland Enterprise Bill

**The Presiding Officer (Ken Macintosh):** The next item of business is a debate on motion S5M-17517, in the name of Fergus Ewing, on the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill at stage 3.

16:18

**The Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy (Fergus Ewing):** I am pleased to open the stage 3 debate on the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill.

**The Presiding Officer:** One second, cabinet secretary. I ask members to keep the conversations down—a debate is going on.

**Fergus Ewing:** This is a momentous day for the south of Scotland, which will usher in a new era for Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders—an era in which the area has its own enterprise agency that is able to respond to the different and distinct rural economy, to drive inclusive and sustainable growth to benefit its communities and to meet the needs and interests of all who live there.

We all recognise the untapped potential of the south of Scotland. It has real strengths in traditional sectors such as farming, forestry, fishing and textiles; it has developed sectors such as food and drink, tourism and creative industries; and it has the opportunity to contribute to the industries of the future, not least in the low-carbon economy. It has a wealth of natural resources ready to contribute to the area's sustainable economic growth.

It also has a wealth of people resources, ambitious for their area and entrepreneurial, with a sense of belonging and a lively culture and enjoying a great quality of life. It is no accident that John Buchan's hero Richard Hannay sought sanctuary in the south of Scotland,

"in this blessed, honest-smelling hill country,"

where, he says,

"every mile put me in better humour with myself."

However, we also all recognise that the region has challenges to overcome: low pay and low productivity; gaps in connectivity and infrastructure; and a declining and ageing population, with young people, sadly, not always seeing or finding reasons to stay.

With this legislation, we have sought to establish an agency to lead on addressing those challenges. The bill sets out the legislative basis for a new agency with the right powers to take forward the right activities. It provides us with an agency that will further the sustainable economic and social development of the south of Scotland

and which will seek to improve the amenity and environment of the area. It is clearly accountable—to Government, to the Parliament and, importantly, locally. Further, of course, the legislation will now be an exemplar in delivering real progress on fair work practices. We set out to deliver a fresh and different approach, and we have done so.

Throughout this process, I have welcomed cross-party support for the bill's proposals. Since the bill's introduction in October, members have worked together to create legislation that provides a strong statutory framework for the new agency. The positive stage 1 debate confirmed MSPs' support, and we have worked since then to build consensus where it matters.

I am grateful for the work of the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee and for its careful scrutiny of the bill at stages 1 and 2. Its thoughtful stage 1 report reflected its evidence gathering and helped to inform amendments that I and others made at stage 2. I also welcome the consideration and input of the Finance and Constitution Committee and the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee.

Of course, passing the bill today is not the end of the story. The next chapter will focus on implementation. Work is already under way to translate law into an operational agency that is ready to start work on 1 April 2020. South of Scotland enterprise will be up and running in eight months' time, signalling this Government's intent to not only create an agency but deliver one. We want an agency with staff working across the region, delivering the activities that people want to see and that are set out in the bill.

Our next step is to appoint the agency's chair, and that process is now under way. We will then move to appoint the agency's members. We are determined to ensure that south of Scotland enterprise benefits from the right mix of skills and experiences. The amendments that have been made today will help to deliver that diversity. I hope that the south of Scotland's MSPs will encourage people to apply.

With this legislation, we had the opportunity to be bold and ambitious, and we took it. It is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a new enterprise agency—an agency that can transform the area's economy by building on its strengths and traditions; an agency that creates opportunities for everyone; an agency that supports communities to thrive; and an agency that can make a real difference for individuals and businesses.

I, therefore, move,

That the Parliament agrees that the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill be passed.

16:23

**Finlay Carson (Galloway and West Dumfries)**

**(Con):** The creation of a south of Scotland enterprise agency was a manifesto commitment of the Scottish Conservatives ahead of the 2016 election, and I believe that today represents a hugely welcome and exciting step forward in addressing the barriers to economic sustainability and economic growth in the communities that I represent in Galloway and West Dumfries, and in the wider south of Scotland region.

In living and running a business in Galloway for more than 35 years, I have always been aware of the unique nature of the economy in the south of Scotland. I have always recognised the significant challenges that my rural constituency faces. However, more importantly, I have always known of the significant opportunities that we have.

The Scottish Conservatives' 2016 manifesto commitment recognised that the rural communities and businesses of the south of Scotland had unique economic needs that were similar to those in the Highlands and Islands. I welcome the fact that, now, the Government, the lead committee and, ultimately, the bill that is before us recognise and accept the unique challenges and opportunities that exist in the south of Scotland.

Today, in many ways, we are moving back to something similar to the old Dumfries and Galloway Enterprise model, but, this time, the model is much improved, with stronger local accountability and focus. As is the case with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the new agency will place an emphasis on socioeconomic as well as simply economic development.

Despite its weaknesses, Dumfries and Galloway Enterprise helped to support and create businesses that are still thriving today. The south of Scotland enterprise agency can be a catalyst for economic growth and business creation once again, in a region that so badly needs it.

The Scottish Conservatives will support the bill at it stands at decision time. As the bill progressed through its committee stage, welcome measures strengthened it and its aims. Although there are many situations where Colin Smyth and I disagree, on this occasion, I welcomed his amendment that put a duty on the new body to facilitate co-operation with other relevant bodies. I am pleased that an amendment has gone through on that basis. In practice, it will ensure that the south of Scotland enterprise agency acts as a catalyst for future projects across the region, facilitating the co-operation and joint working with other bodies that will be key to its overall success. To give just a few examples, those bodies might be Transport Scotland, VisitScotland, Skills Development Scotland or the R100 delivery

organisation that is yet to be announced. Throughout the consultation on the bill, there was a recognition that they should be the focus of projects that will boost local infrastructure.

I know from the petition on the A75 road upgrade that I have been running that infrastructure is an important topic, and that transport investment is important to my constituents. Although it would not be appropriate for the new body to fund any road-building infrastructure projects, it would absolutely be appropriate for it to be the overarching agency and the driving force behind necessary improvements, backed up by a close working relationship with the relevant body, which, in that case, would be Transport Scotland.

That type of facilitation could move us towards a more cost-effective and accountable system, where local residents and businesses know that there is an evidence-based plan of action to remove the barriers to economic sustainability. Such an action plan must recognise that the south of Scotland is ideally situated midway between Scotland's central belt and the northern powerhouse across the border. It continues to be a source of great anger for me and my constituents that I have to do this but I will take the opportunity to once again remind the Government that Stranraer—and its ports at Cairnryan—is one of the most important gateways into Scotland, and that the lack of appropriate investment in the A75 and A77 should be a source of extreme embarrassment to this Government. I hope that the new agency can assist the Government in making the right road-infrastructure decisions in the very near future.

During the consultation period on the agency, I received many comments that the engagement process must be straightforward and transparent, particularly for those who are pitching new projects. The south of Scotland enterprise agency should act as a one-stop shop and avoid what many individuals and businesses have had to go through in the past, where they have been pushed from pillar to post and have had to jump through many different hoops when it has come to funding applications.

Maureen Watt's amendment at stage 2 was welcome as it ensured that the new agency will be transparent and accountable to local people. I welcome the fact that that amendment will see the agency launch a consultation on its action plan. We also supported Colin Smyth's amendment on the consultation action plan that will be undertaken by the new agency. Although it is right that the agency should seek the views of local bodies, including local authorities, I stress that councils should not be in a position to in any way veto, disproportionately influence or, indeed, delay the

agency in carrying out its functions. In making its plan publicly available after consultation, the enterprise agency will fulfil a duty to the people of the south of Scotland, who have made it clear that they must play a part in the decision-making process. In addition, the requirement for a review after five years gives confidence that there will be regular checks on how the agency plans to deliver on the aspirations that we have today.

During the 2016 election, as well as standing on a manifesto that committed to the creation of a south of Scotland enterprise agency, I also stood on the platform of opposing further centralisation by the Scottish Government. That is why I welcome the fact that the bill has been strengthened, and that Scottish ministers will need to consult the enterprise agency and provide reasons before changing directives or offering new directives.

For far too long, the south of Scotland has suffered from a lack of focus and investment, which has resulted in many people—in particular young people—moving away, and potential investors being put off by the lack of adequate infrastructure. I hope that this afternoon, Wednesday 5 June 2019, heralds the dawn of a new era for the south of Scotland, in which the local people of Dumfries and Galloway and the south of Scotland will start to have the equity of access to tools and funding that has been so lacking in the past, and in which the true contribution that the people of the south of Scotland can make to the rest of the UK and beyond will start to be realised.

As the MSP for Galloway and West Dumfries, I am confident that this is the first step in unlocking the massive untapped potential that the natural resources, and the people and their skills, have to offer, and I look forward to seeing that on the ground. This region will be not only the most beautiful place to do business but the best.

16:29

**Colin Smyth (South Scotland) (Lab):** Having campaigned for better support for the south of Scotland economy for 10 years, I welcome the fact that we will soon move from the establishment of a south of Scotland enterprise agency being an issue for debate in the Parliament to its being a reality for communities across the south of Scotland.

It is important not to lose sight of why such an agency is needed. I stood to be a member of the Scottish Parliament in 2016 because, as a local councillor who chaired the economy committee and the south of Scotland alliance, I saw every day that too many of the big economic challenges that the area faced were simply not being

addressed. There is the scandal of low pay, with average earnings in Dumfries and Galloway being £11.52 per hour compared with a national average of £14.30—that makes the region the lowest paid in Scotland. There is the skills shortage: more than a quarter of the population of the south of Scotland are graduates, whereas the national figure is more than a third. There are also the low levels of productivity and growth. Gross value added per person in Dumfries and Galloway is 21 per cent lower than the national average; in the Borders, the figure is 26 per cent lower than the national average.

It is not just that those challenges were not being properly tackled; the opportunities for the area and its strengths and huge potential were not being fulfilled.

The south of Scotland is an area of outstanding natural beauty, with a history and a cultural heritage that are second to none, but in many ways our tourism potential is still untapped. There are sectors in our region—forestry, energy, arts and culture, and many others—that have a reputation for excellence, but there needs to be more focus from our economic agencies on delivering the inclusive sustainable growth that our region needs from those sectors.

We have a strong small and medium-sized business base that provides many opportunities to grow and create jobs—with the right level of support. The current economic agency model has simply not delivered that support for the region. We have a vibrant and ambitious social enterprise base that is already making a difference to communities, but it is desperate to do more and to access the same support that is offered to other businesses to help to achieve that growth. We also have excellent local colleges and a university campus with the potential to expand so that they can deliver more of the skills that our communities need.

Our location means that parts of the south of Scotland are just two hours' travel from 14 million people—the 14 million potential customers in the central belt and the north of England.

Crucially, the people of the south of Scotland have a real community spirit, and a desire and determination to make the south of Scotland better. That determination is the reason why there is such strong support for the establishment of the new agency and the reason why the people of the south of Scotland now want to get on with making the agency a reality.

On behalf of my constituents, I place on record my thanks to everyone who has delivered the bill to pave the way for the agency. That includes the cabinet secretary for taking the bill through Parliament and for the strong interest that he has

taken in the south of Scotland economy. While he picks himself up off the floor, I will caveat that by giving particular thanks to the south of Scotland economic development team, led by Karen Jackson, who have supported the cabinet secretary's work.

I would, of course, like to have seen the bill go further: on co-operation between agencies; on more local accountability; on tackling poverty; on improving housing; and on trade union representation—and, obviously, on using the word “and” instead of “or”. However, I am pleased to have made some changes to the bill to strengthen the aims of the agency through including, for example, support for social enterprises, helping to take forward the fair work agenda and, crucially, putting in place local consultation on the agency's action plan to ensure that the agency is rooted in the south of Scotland. I appreciate that the Government has often had to move its position to ensure that those changes happen.

The people who deserve most praise are the people of the south of Scotland, who have campaigned long and hard for the new agency and who will take it forward. I have the privilege of living in Dumfries and Galloway in the south of Scotland and I am a proud Doonhamer, but it breaks my heart to see so many young people leaving the region not through choice but because of the lack of high-skilled, well-paid jobs or the range of further and higher education opportunities to deliver the skills that they want and which our economy needs. If we look back in 10 years' time and see so many young people still being forced to turn their back on the south of Scotland, we will have failed.

It is now up to all of us to get behind and support the bill and make the new agency a success in delivering the strong and vibrant local economy that I know the south of Scotland can have.

16:34

**John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Green):**

It has been a real pleasure to have been involved with the bill. A number of people—the clerks, as ever, the witnesses and the people and representatives of the south of Scotland—need to be thanked for that. Elected representatives from the south of Scotland visited our committee on a number of occasions, of course, and there is no doubting the enthusiasm and energy that they brought and the additional contribution that they made.

Like others, I thank the cabinet secretary for the role that he has played in bringing people together. Those who were sitting in the public gallery half an hour ago might have thought that

the process was not very conciliatory, but making legislation is based on debating issues—sometimes in a very heated manner. I think that we have come up with a good bill, but the proof of the pudding will be seen, as my colleague Colin Smyth said, in years to come. There has been a consensual approach.

Many members have talked about manifesto commitments, and my party—the Scottish Green Party—also had the creation of such an agency as a manifesto commitment.

Comparisons have been made with the Highlands and Islands on a number of occasions, but I do not think that we can always make direct comparisons. There is much to be learned—good and bad—from the experience in the Highlands and Islands. After the second world war, the Highlands were shaped by the hydro schemes, which were introduced by the then Secretary of State for Scotland, Tom Johnston. Subsequently, the Highlands and Islands Development Board was established. As humans, we can be very cynical and we tend to reflect on the negatives rather than the positives, but an awful lot of positives came from that work. The new iteration is Highlands and Islands Enterprise, albeit that it has a slightly changed focus.

Partnership is always important. Throughout the bill process, we have discussed the role that the agency can play in galvanising support and bringing people together on the common objective of making the lives of people in the south of Scotland better. As someone who is enthusiastic about the role that the state can play, I hope that people will reflect on the enthusiasm for the new agency and that they will not be so scared of state involvement. Partnership with communities is very important.

Funding has been mentioned. There was never going to be a like-for-like comparison between the south and the Highlands. As a member for the Highlands and Islands region, I have been keen to stress that this should not be about having a competition between north and south; it should be about making things better for the south. As others have said, a gauge of success will be not only retaining the existing population—there is no doubt that better education facilities and an increase in the availability of skills, leading to increased wages will help in that regard—but growing the population.

It was not that the issue had been forgotten about, but, having heard the views of Dr Calum Macleod of Community Land Scotland that part of the new agency's remit should be to establish “a community assets team”, I was pleased to have a part in ensuring that the bill says that. In the years to come, people will appreciate that such a team has brought people together.

The engagement started long before we began work on the bill. As has been said, the process has had a long genesis, and it is important to congratulate Professor Griggs and the south of Scotland economic partnership.

Co-location will be crucial as the agency moves forward, because there is no doubt that relationships are improved if we can see the whites of people's eyes.

My colleague Colin Smyth made an important point—this is something that we can learn from the Highlands—about it being very easy to create a three-figure number of jobs in an urban area and to laud that, but having a small number of jobs in a rural area is also important, if it means that the rural school can be retained along with everything else that goes with such jobs.

I look forward to the success of the new agency.

16:38

**Mike Rumbles (North East Scotland) (LD):**

The Liberal Democrats fully support the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill, which is the kind of legislation that can really benefit the people of the south of Scotland. It is about supporting the environment and, at the same time, supporting inclusive and sustainable economic growth. It is about increasing the number of residents who are of working age, enhancing skills and capacities that are relevant to employment, encouraging business start-ups and entrepreneurship, and promoting improved transport services. However, most important, it is about supporting communities to help them meet the needs that they have identified.

I am particularly pleased that members of the committee worked well together to improve the bill—people who heard the exchanges on some of today's amendments might not think so, but we did—as a result of engaging with people in the south of Scotland. In particular, the committee's formal meeting in Dumfries and our meeting in Galashiels were excellent.

I want to put on record that the cabinet secretary Fergus Ewing has clearly and demonstrably worked hard to ensure that we get the bill right. He was willing to listen to the evidence, he responded extremely well to the committee's stage 1 report—which, I have to say, has not always been my experience of ministerial responses to such reports—and he lodged very constructive amendments at stage 2. He has done the same thing today at stage 3. If I may say so—and I do not think that I am betraying any confidences here—his work with MSPs of all parties between each stage of the process has been welcome.

I reiterate that the bill should enable us to achieve real change in the south of Scotland. However, it is only a start. In fact, after working so long on it in committee, I have to say that I have mixed feelings about it. If I think that we have got it right, why do I have such feelings? Because I am an MSP from the north-east, and I would like a similar bill for my constituents. The cabinet secretary's deputy, who is sitting beside him, is a north-east MSP, too, and I hope that the two of them are having a conversation about the issue right now and that they turn their heads towards the north-east in future. That would be a really first-class idea.

**Maureen Watt (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP):** As the member would realise if he came to some of the events in the north-east, the national health service and Scottish Enterprise in Grampian have been very fortunate in having Opportunity North East—or ONE—work on enterprise in the north-east. In fact, it has almost doubled the funding available.

**Mike Rumbles:** There were already organisations in the south of Scotland that had the same purpose. I would have thought that the member, who is a member of the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee, would have realised that. What I am saying is that what we have done for the south of Scotland we could do for the north-east.

Following on from that very positive intervention, I am pleased to say that this is a good bill. As I know that time is short, I will finish by saying that the cabinet secretary deserves recognition for his work in delivering it.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer (Linda Fabiani):** I thank everyone for the brevity of their speeches. It has allowed us to make up time.

We now move to the open debate, in which there is one speaker.

16:42

**Emma Harper (South Scotland) (SNP):** I am extremely pleased to speak in favour of the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill. The bill, which I have engaged with at stage 1 and throughout the parliamentary process, will undoubtedly benefit the south of Scotland by supporting communities, businesses—including our small businesses and microbusinesses—and people across the south, and by developing, supporting and continuing the process of empowerment in order to deliver the transformational economic and cultural change that will be key to the region's success.

I have had the privilege of working with the people who have been involved in the interim body, SOSEP—the south of Scotland economic



partnership. Indeed, I have been able to work closely and collaboratively with many people, including Professor Russel Griggs, Rob Dickson, Dame Barbara Kelly, Amanda Burgauer, Lorna Young, Aylett Roan and others, all of whom I regularly engage with to discuss issues from across South Scotland. From the outset, I want to thank all those who have been involved for their work, which has allowed us to take a fresh approach to promoting sustainable economic growth in the south-west and across the rest of the south of Scotland.

I also thank everyone who has provided a briefing for the debate today, and the clerks, who have, as always, worked extremely competently to get us to this stage.

On 14 January, I attended the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee's informal workshop and formal committee meeting at Easterbrook hall in Dumfries. The meeting, which was attended by more than 120 people from a range of community groups, local authorities and businesses from across the south-west of Scotland, provided the opportunity for local voices to feed into the committee's work and, ultimately, its report. People said what they felt had to be done in order to provide benefit and to address the unique challenges of the south-west of Scotland. In doing so, they were able to inform the members of the committee. Such stakeholder engagement meetings have been key to informing the bill's approach and content, so I thank the Scottish Government and the REC Committee for their level of engagement with the people who will be directly impacted by the bill.

It is vital that the new south of Scotland enterprise agency takes a fresh and tailored approach to supporting the south of Scotland's economy. The area, particularly the south-west including Dumfries and Galloway, has a different and distinct rural economy with wide-ranging and significant opportunities, as well as its fair share of challenges, including an ageing population, the need for private sector investment and the need for a good standard of transport infrastructure. Our roads have been mentioned already: I agree with Finlay Carson that we need to focus not only on our rail infrastructure, but on our roads, including the A75, the A76 and the A77.

The Borders has a train line that connects its communities to Edinburgh and the central belt, but people in Galloway and areas between Dumfries and Stranraer do not have that ease of connectivity to the central belt and the wider regions. I am therefore pleased that the bill is intentionally high level and enabling. It aims to provide the south of Scotland enterprise agency with the powers that are necessary for it to

achieve its strategic aims flexibly and responsively.

However, I make a plea to the people who will be involved—including the chair, when appointed—to ensure that the agency is not Borders-centric, and that Dumfries and Galloway and the south-west are considered equally. That aim will be aided by the location of the agency, which will have a headquarters hub and will operate not just in one area, but throughout the south, which is crucial due to the region's rural geography. John Finnie has already mentioned the importance of co-location. I will be making representations for the hub to be located centrally—perhaps in Dumfries, itself.

I am pleased that the bill makes clear the Government's commitment to ensuring that the new agency receives a fair budget and that it is funded on a per capita equivalent basis to Highlands and Island Enterprise.

I, again, put on record my support for the creation of this much-needed agency in the south of Scotland. It has been a long time coming. I look forward to continuing to work with all involved, to ensure that it delivers for my constituents, particularly across the south-west and the rest of South Scotland, and to ensure that they are collaborated with and not forgotten.

I encourage all members to support the bill at decision time.

16:46

**Claudia Beamish (South Scotland) (Lab):** I, too, welcome the bill. I acknowledge the cabinet secretary's work on the bill. I particularly thank my fellow South Scotland region colleague and friend Colin Smyth and the other South Scotland MSPs for their input to and scrutiny of the bill, in addition to what was done by the committee.

As Scottish Labour's spokesperson on land reform, I particularly welcome the amendments that were lodged by Gail Ross and John Finnie and agreed to at stage 2, which will empower communities and give the new enterprise agency a similar social remit and land ownership remit to Highlands and Island Enterprise, which has been so successful in supporting and enabling communities by placing the sustainability of their economic future in their own hands. The amendments are very important in respect of empowering communities to take ownership of local land and building assets. As was discussed at stage 2, that has been a success of HIE, so I am encouraged that the new agency will have a similar social remit.

I strongly support the bill, and I am excited about seeing the positive effects that the agency

will bring to communities in South Scotland, especially in relation to retaining young people in the region. However, I have a continuing concern that I feel strongly about: where the bill will deliver for people who live within the agency's boundaries starkly highlights the lack of support for the communities that it will not reach.

Recent assurances from Scottish Enterprise have not gone far enough. Some of my constituents in Clydesdale and South Ayrshire are concerned and disappointed by what they believe to be a failure of the Government to provide them with a similar opportunity. What reassurance can the cabinet secretary give to my constituents? What specific actions will he take to support Clydesdale? Clydesdale is part of the South Scotland region that I represent, and it looks far more to the south than it does to Glasgow. I worry about the supposed reassurance that was given by Scottish Enterprise in a recent letter to me. It stated:

"a series of regional economic partnerships have been formed across much of Scotland with Clydesdale covered by the Glasgow City region".

I have seen no evidence of focus on the sustainable development of Clydesdale in the Glasgow city region deal. What can the cabinet secretary do to address those concerns quickly? They are surely well beyond being operational matters.

On a more positive note, Transport Scotland has written to me highlighting that the second strategic transport projects review will

"take account of the priorities emerging from the new National Transport Strategy and support government policies including those on climate change and tackling inequality."

I hope that it will also include rurality.

I am delighted that the bill was amended at stage 2, following amendments that were lodged by Colin Smyth, to include environmental policies that recognise the need to support the shift to a net zero emissions economy. It is necessary, in the context of the current climate emergency, that the bill reflects that.

However, I am disappointed that the cabinet secretary did not recognise the significance of my amendment 13, which would have included in the bill a provision on support for co-operation for environmental reasons, given that we face an environment and climate emergency. I hope that he will ensure that such issues are dealt with in regulation.

I welcome the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill, and I look forward to its being passed and to working with all those who are involved in sustainable development across the region.

16:50

**Rachael Hamilton (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con):** I refer members to my entry in the register of interests.

Today, Conservative members will vote to pass the bill and let the proposed agency become a reality. The new south of Scotland enterprise agency holds the key to unlocking significant potential right across our region, and I look forward to the renewed economic drive that I hope it will deliver.

The new agency should be an enabler, not a disabler. It must be dynamic and it must suit the needs of the south of Scotland. Many members have said that it is based on the Highlands and Islands Enterprise model, but our area is distinctive and different from the Highlands, so a bespoke approach that is shaped by people who have a passion for the south of Scotland must shine through in what SOSE does.

It is unfortunate that Colin Smyth's amendment 2, which included support for rural businesses, was not agreed to, because such support is crucial in our large rural region. Removing barriers is the key to achieving accessible funding. I want the agency to make obtaining support a lot simpler, and to have a focus on rurality.

As the shadow culture secretary, I was pleased that Joan McAlpine's amendment 11 on cultural assets, which I supported, was agreed to. Given our unique culture, history and heritage, we need to attract more tourists to the south of Scotland. Initiatives such as the #seesouth campaign must be built on and expanded.

We were disappointed that amendment 10, on affordable housing, was not agreed to, because the issue is crucial to the south of Scotland's economy. A lack of affordable housing could be considered to be a barrier to retaining young people and to encouraging economic growth. A key aim of SOSE is to deliver construction skills, so a focus on affordable housing could have played a key role in meeting that aim.

I recognise that the new agency will not solve all the problems, but it will go some way by improving support for start-ups, and it will encourage a supportive business atmosphere. For years, we have had low-wage, low-hours jobs, a gender pay gap and a skills shortage. Those issues are not unique to the Borders, but they are definitely exacerbated by the rurality of the area and its poor connectivity—physically and digitally.

As I have suggested, skills development is essential for retaining young people and for upskilling working-age people, given the south of Scotland's ageing demographic. We must have an agency that works in partnership with the colleges,

and which encourages knowledge exchange. That is why we supported Maureen Watt's amendment 14, which brought in "persons", as well as organisations. A greater range of society than just businesses must participate in achievement of the overall aims of the new agency and in economic growth.

Through SOSE, further education institutions must be supported to encourage rural skills. The Scottish Borders area is as rural as Dumfries and Galloway, so working in partnership will be absolutely key. In doing that, we must make it easy for people to access education by reducing transport difficulties. Making learning an out-of-class experience relies on good digital infrastructure: so far, we are lagging behind in that respect. The impact of such action could be significant in driving greater innovation in the economy, and in improving competitiveness in the workforce and productivity in business. Ultimately, that will lead to better sustainability for local businesses.

The gender pay gap is a massive issue, and I believe that it deserves the greatest attention. If we are to retain young people—especially young women—in the Borders and in Dumfries and Galloway, we need to ensure that that gap is closed. It would be fantastic if the new agency could support more women into the workforce and provide support for women to start up new businesses.

We will support the bill. I look forward to the agency being delivered.

16:54

**Fergus Ewing:** The bill allows for an enterprise agency to be made of the south of Scotland, by the south of Scotland, for the south of Scotland.

I thank all those in the south of Scotland who contributed to the proceedings and the consultation for their positive engagement with the bill process. Their perspectives have helped to shape the legislation and will continue to shape the priorities of their enterprise agency.

I add my praise to the members of the south of Scotland economic partnership. During the past 18 months, their work has been unstinting in their local engagement and in the meetings that they have attended throughout the area. I have not seen anything like it, and I have been around for quite a long time.

Emma Harper mentioned some of the members of the partnership. I pay tribute to them, particularly the chair, Professor Russel Griggs, for their energy and commitment, which have given an element of excitement about the new opportunities that lie ahead. Their foundation work

has paved the way for the new enterprise agency to flourish.

I also take this opportunity to thank the committee clerks for their work. As Finlay Carson said, the committee held meetings around the region. It did not just stay in Edinburgh to take evidence. It got out of here and went into the south of Scotland to meet and hear from and listen to people there. The committee is to be commended for that; it involves an awful lot of effort and hard work.

I also express my profound personal thanks to the members of the Scottish Government bill team. I was pleased to hear other members, including Colin Smyth, thank them as well, because we have worked together, and members across the chamber have seen just how significant and helpful the contribution of Government officials in the bill team has been. I thank them for their sterling work in drafting and shaping the bill, and for their willingness to find solutions, and, as Mr Rumbles pointed out, to respond positively to the views of members on the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee and from the south of Scotland. This has been a collegiate effort and I am pleased that Parliament has performed that role.

The bill fulfils a programme for government commitment to create a new enterprise agency for the south of Scotland. It was a key recommendation arising from the enterprise and skills review. I pay tribute to Keith Brown for his work thereanent and for shaping the bill content and establishing the partnership. Our collective efforts, including those of members from across the chamber, will ensure that the south of Scotland enterprise agency takes the different and fresh approach that people asked us for.

Rachael Hamilton quite rightly talked about the important work that is being done for women. She is absolutely right. I expect the women in agriculture development, for example, to be an early opportunity to build on that work.

The agency will be a keystone organisation, looking to bring together economic, social and environmental development to create jobs and prosperity for everyone who works there

Although we have had our differences this afternoon, I give my absolute assurance that the differences that we have discussed have been about process and not about substance. In response to questions raised by Finlay Carson, Claudia Beamish and Colin Smyth, I say yes, of course, the agency will take a close interest in furthering all the matters that have been referred to; yes, of course, it will seek to advance rural business; and yes, of course, it will take a deep,

close and profound interest in pursuing the best environmental practice.

I specifically wanted to provide direct and positive responses to all members—you all know that I am, in fact, Mr Positive.

**Richard Lyle (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP):** Hear, hear!

**Fergus Ewing:** Thank you. It is quite remarkable that consensus has broken out in the chamber and I am touched by all the nice things that people have said, particularly Mr Rumbles. I have never said this before—

**Graeme Dey (Angus South) (SNP):** You will never say it again.

**Fergus Ewing:** —and as Mr Dey has pointed out, I might never say it again, but all I can say is, “Aw, shucks!”

Today, we are tracing a foundation for a new chapter in the life of Scotland, and the south of Scotland in particular. When Willie Ross strove to establish a development board for the Highlands and Islands, he said:

“the Highlander has been the man on Scotland’s conscience”.—[*Official Report, House of Commons*, 16 March 1965; Vol 708, c 1095.]

For too long, the people of the south of Scotland have perceived themselves to be forgotten and neglected. We now have a chance to bring that to an end. In the words of one of the region’s greatest living sons, Calvin Harris—[*Laughter*.] Yes, I know him well; I know of him. In the words of Calvin Harris, I say to the people of the region:

“It’s not about what you’ve done ... It’s all about where you going ... Right now is where you shine”.

## Business Motion

17:00

**The Presiding Officer (Ken Macintosh):** The next item of business is consideration of business motion S5M-17533, in the name of Graeme Dey, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, setting out a business programme.

*Motion moved,*

That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Tuesday 11 June 2019

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

*followed by* Topical Questions (if selected)

*followed by* Ministerial Statement: Update on P1 Standardised Assessments

*followed by* Stage 3 Debate: Fuel Poverty (Target, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Bill

*followed by* Stage 3 Proceedings: Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill

*followed by* Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee Debate: Changes to Standing Orders

*followed by* Committee Announcements

*followed by* Business Motions

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

*followed by* Members’ Business

Wednesday 12 June 2019

1.15 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

1.15 pm Members’ Business

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity; Justice and the Law Officers

*followed by* Ministerial Statement: Scottish Greenhouse Gas Emissions 2017

*followed by* Ministerial Statement: Update on Veterans Strategy

*followed by* Stage 3 Proceedings: Census (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill

*followed by* Business Motions

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

*followed by* Members’ Business

Thursday 13 June 2019

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister’s Questions

*followed by* Members' Business  
 2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions  
 2.00 pm Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body Questions  
 2.15 pm Portfolio Questions:  
 Government Business and  
 Constitutional Relations  
*followed by* Ministerial Statement: Disclosure  
 (Scotland) Bill  
*followed by* Stage 1 Debate: Restricted Roads (20  
 mph Speed Limit) (Scotland) Bill  
*followed by* Legislative Consent Motion: Wild  
 Animals in Circuses (No. 2) Bill  
*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions  
 5.00 pm Decision Time

5.00 pm Decision Time

(b) that, in relation to any debate on a business motion setting out a business programme taken on Wednesday 12 June 2019, the second sentence of rule 8.11.3 is suspended and replaced with "Any Member may speak on the motion at the discretion of the Presiding Officer";

(c) that, in relation to First Minister's Questions on Thursday 13 June 2019, in rule 13.6.2, insert at end "and may provide an opportunity for Party Leaders or their representatives to question the First Minister"; and

(d) that, for the purposes of Portfolio Questions in the week beginning 10 June 2019, 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.—[*Graeme Dey*]

*Motion agreed to.*

Tuesday 18 June 2019

2.00 pm Time for Reflection  
*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions  
*followed by* Topical Questions (if selected)  
*followed by* Portfolio Questions:  
 Culture, Tourism and External Affairs  
*followed by* Stage 3 Proceedings: Planning  
 (Scotland) Bill  
*followed by* Committee Announcements  
*followed by* Business Motions  
*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions  
 5.00 pm Decision Time  
*followed by* Members' Business

Wednesday 19 June 2019

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions  
 2.00 pm Portfolio Questions:  
 Education and Skills  
*followed by* Stage 3 Proceedings: Planning  
 (Scotland) Bill  
*followed by* Business Motions  
*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions  
 5.00 pm Decision Time  
*followed by* Members' Business

Thursday 20 June 2019

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions  
 11.40 am General Questions  
 12.00 pm First Minister's Questions  
*followed by* Members' Business  
 2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions  
 2.00 pm Portfolio Questions:  
 Health and Sport  
*followed by* Stage 3 Proceedings: Planning  
 (Scotland) Bill  
*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

## Parliamentary Bureau Motions

17:00

**The Presiding Officer (Ken Macintosh):** The next item is consideration of six Parliamentary Bureau motions. I call Graeme Dey to move motions S5M-17534, S5M-17536, S5M-17537 and S5M-17538, on approval of Scottish statutory instruments, S5M-17535, on a draft notice, and S5M-17539, on the designation of a lead committee.

### *Motions moved,*

That the Parliament agrees that the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019 [draft] be approved.

That the Parliament agrees that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Modification) (No. 1) Order 2019 [draft] be approved.

That the Parliament agrees that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Modification) (No. 2) Order 2019 [draft] be approved.

That the Parliament agrees that the Head Teachers Education and Training Standards (Scotland) Regulations 2019 [draft] be approved.

That the Parliament agrees that the Code for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Breeding Chickens (Revocation) (Scotland) Notice 2019 be approved.

That the Parliament agrees that the Equalities and Human Rights Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the Female Genital Mutilation (Protection and Guidance) (Scotland) Bill at stage 1.—  
[Graeme Dey]

## Decision Time

17:01

**The Presiding Officer (Ken Macintosh):** The first question is, that motion S5M-17517, in the name of Fergus Ewing, on the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill, be agreed to. As the question is on passing a bill, there will be a division.

### **For**

Adam, George (Paisley) (SNP)  
 Adamson, Clare (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)  
 Allan, Alasdair (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)  
 Arthur, Tom (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)  
 Baker, Claire (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)  
 Ballantyne, Michelle (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Beamish, Claudia (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Beattie, Colin (Midlothian North and Musselburgh) (SNP)  
 Bibby, Neil (West Scotland) (Lab)  
 Bowman, Bill (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Briggs, Miles (Lothian) (Con)  
 Brown, Keith (Clackmannanshire and Dunblane) (SNP)  
 Burnett, Alexander (Aberdeenshire West) (Con)  
 Cameron, Donald (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Campbell, Aileen (Clydesdale) (SNP)  
 Carlaw, Jackson (Eastwood) (Con)  
 Carson, Finlay (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con)  
 Chapman, Peter (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Coffey, Willie (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)  
 Cole-Hamilton, Alex (Edinburgh Western) (LD)  
 Constance, Angela (Almond Valley) (SNP)  
 Corry, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Crawford, Bruce (Stirling) (SNP)  
 Cunningham, Roseanna (Perthshire South and Kinross-shire) (SNP)  
 Denham, Ash (Edinburgh Eastern) (SNP)  
 Dey, Graeme (Angus South) (SNP)  
 Doris, Bob (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP)  
 Dornan, James (Glasgow Cathcart) (SNP)  
 Dugdale, Kezia (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Ewing, Annabelle (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)  
 Ewing, Fergus (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP)  
 Fabiani, Linda (East Kilbride) (SNP)  
 Findlay, Neil (Lothian) (Lab)  
 Finnie, John (Highlands and Islands) (Green)  
 FitzPatrick, Joe (Dundee City West) (SNP)  
 Forbes, Kate (Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch) (SNP)  
 Freeman, Jeane (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)  
 Gibson, Kenneth (Cunninghame North) (SNP)  
 Gilruth, Jenny (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)  
 Golden, Maurice (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Gougeon, Mairi (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)  
 Grahame, Christine (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)  
 Grant, Rhoda (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Gray, Iain (East Lothian) (Lab)  
 Greene, Jamie (West Scotland) (Con)  
 Greer, Ross (West Scotland) (Green)  
 Griffin, Mark (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Halcro Johnston, Jamie (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Hamilton, Rachael (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Con)  
 Harper, Emma (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 Harris, Alison (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Harvie, Patrick (Glasgow) (Green)  
 Haughey, Clare (Rutherglen) (SNP)  
 Hepburn, Jamie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (SNP)  
 Hyslop, Fiona (Linlithgow) (SNP)

Johnson, Daniel (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)  
 Johnstone, Alison (Lothian) (Green)  
 Kelly, James (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Kerr, Liam (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Kidd, Bill (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP)  
 Lamont, Johann (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Lennon, Monica (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Leonard, Richard (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Lindhurst, Gordon (Lothian) (Con)  
 Lochhead, Richard (Moray) (SNP)  
 Lockhart, Dean (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Lyle, Richard (Uddingston and Bellshill) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Angus (Falkirk East) (SNP)  
 MacDonald, Gordon (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)  
 Macdonald, Lewis (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 MacGregor, Fulton (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)  
 Mackay, Rona (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)  
 Macpherson, Ben (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (SNP)  
 Maguire, Ruth (Cunninghame South) (SNP)  
 Marra, Jenny (North East Scotland) (Lab)  
 Mason, John (Glasgow Shettleston) (SNP)  
 Mason, Tom (North East Scotland) (Con)  
 Matheson, Michael (Falkirk West) (SNP)  
 McAlpine, Joan (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 McArthur, Liam (Orkney Islands) (LD)  
 McDonald, Mark (Aberdeen Donside) (Ind)  
 McKee, Ivan (Glasgow Provan) (SNP)  
 McMillan, Stuart (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)  
 McNeill, Pauline (Glasgow) (Lab)  
 Mitchell, Margaret (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Mountain, Edward (Highlands and Islands) (Con)  
 Mundell, Oliver (Dumfriesshire) (Con)  
 Neil, Alex (Airdrie and Shotts) (SNP)  
 Paterson, Gil (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)  
 Rennie, Willie (North East Fife) (LD)  
 Ross, Gail (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross) (SNP)  
 Rumbles, Mike (North East Scotland) (LD)  
 Ruskell, Mark (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green)  
 Russell, Michael (Argyll and Bute) (SNP)  
 Scott, John (Ayr) (Con)  
 Scott, Tavish (Shetland Islands) (LD)  
 Simpson, Graham (Central Scotland) (Con)  
 Smith, Elaine (Central Scotland) (Lab)  
 Smith, Liz (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Smyth, Colin (South Scotland) (Lab)  
 Somerville, Shirley-Anne (Dunfermline) (SNP)  
 Stevenson, Stewart (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP)  
 Stewart, Alexander (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)  
 Stewart, David (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)  
 Stewart, Kevin (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)  
 Swinney, John (Perthshire North) (SNP)  
 Todd, Maree (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)  
 Tomkins, Adam (Glasgow) (Con)  
 Watt, Maureen (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)  
 Wheelhouse, Paul (South Scotland) (SNP)  
 White, Sandra (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP)  
 Whittle, Brian (South Scotland) (Con)  
 Wightman, Andy (Lothian) (Green)

**The Presiding Officer:** The result of the division is: For 113, Against 0, Abstentions 0.

That is agreed to and the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill is passed. [*Applause.*]

*Motion agreed to,*

That the Parliament agrees that the South of Scotland Enterprise Bill be passed.

**The Presiding Officer:** I propose to ask a single question on six Parliamentary Bureau motions, unless any member objects.

The question is, that motions S5M-17534 to S5M-17539, in the name of Graeme Dey, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, be agreed to.

*Motions agreed to,*

That the Parliament agrees that the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019 [draft] be approved.

That the Parliament agrees that the Code for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Breeding Chickens (Revocation) (Scotland) Notice 2019 be approved.

That the Parliament agrees that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Modification) (No. 1) Order 2019 [draft] be approved.

That the Parliament agrees that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Modification) (No. 2) Order 2019 [draft] be approved.

That the Parliament agrees that the Head Teachers Education and Training Standards (Scotland) Regulations 2019 [draft] be approved.

That the Parliament agrees that the Equalities and Human Rights Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the Female Genital Mutilation (Protection and Guidance) (Scotland) Bill at stage 1.

## Child Safety Week 2019

**The Deputy Presiding Officer (Christine Grahame):** The final item of business is a members' business debate on motion S5M-17050, in the name of Clare Adamson, on child safety week 2019. The debate will be concluded without any question being put.

### *Motion debated,*

That the Parliament notes that Child Safety Week, the flagship annual campaign run by the Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT), takes place between 3 and 9 June 2019 with the theme, Family life today: where's the risk?; understands that, after the neonatal period, accidents are the main cause of childhood death in Scotland, responsible for two out of five child deaths, and that, in 2018, some 7,260 children were admitted to hospital in an emergency after an accident with some experiencing life-changing injuries; appreciates CAPT highlighting the new dangers that face families today from the more complex aspects of modern life in which the very things that help make life more convenient can bring new risks, such as button batteries that can kill when swallowed, child appealing washing capsules that can poison or nappy sacks stored under cot mattresses that can suffocate babies; acknowledges the additional concern of the agencies involved that children living in Scotland's most deprived communities are more likely to experience a preventable accident than those from the least deprived areas; applauds Child Safety Week's online resources and activities, which are available free to families and agencies through support from the Scottish Government, and which are designed to raise awareness of both risks and preventative strategies; acknowledges Child Safety Week's continuing promotion and support of collaborative approaches, and commends the efforts of all agencies that work together to seek to increase the safety of children and young people.

17:04

**Clare Adamson (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP):** I thank the members who have signed the child safety week motion and all those members who will take part in the debate.

Child safety week is the flagship annual campaign that is led by the Child Accident Prevention Trust, or CAPT, and this year it runs from 3 to 9 June. This year's theme is "Family life today: where's the risk?"

Accidents remain the main cause of death in Scotland for children and babies. Two out of five child deaths are from unintentional injury and 7,260 children were admitted to hospital last year following accidental injury, some of whom experienced life-changing injuries.

However, that is just the tip of the iceberg, because those were hospital admissions. The figures do not record presentations at accident and emergency departments from accidents that could have resulted in breaks to bones, burns or scalds or any of the lesser injuries that

nonetheless are very traumatic for the young children who are involved.

I will highlight a change in circumstance since I last debated child safety here. The Scottish Government has committed to embedding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into Scots law and all aspects of Scottish life. That will be particularly important, because we know from the statistics that disadvantaged groups and those from SIMD—Scottish index of multiple deprivation—areas of deprivation are far more likely to be the victims of accidents and unintentional injury. Article 24 of the convention seeks

"To ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge"

in a number of areas, including

"the prevention of accidents".

I apologise to the minister in advance that I am likely to be bringing this issue to the chamber frequently over the coming years to ensure that accident prevention makes it to the top of the political agenda. That is very important, because we have a statutory duty for road safety in Scotland but there is not a statutory duty for safety in the home, for instance. Pressures on councils have led to many home safety positions being incorporated into other council roles, such as in trading standards. We must be very vigilant about that.

The partners who are involved in this year's child safety week include the Scottish Government's safer Scotland campaign, the "Think!" road safety information for road users, Bitrex, which has produced the bitterest substance ever discovered—I do not know whether the minister has yet taken a Bitrex test, but she will not have forgotten it if she has—and the Thomas Cook Children's Charity, which is committed to improving lives and benefiting communities across the United Kingdom.

I will turn to some of the dangers for child safety. I recommend that people look at the Child Accident Prevention Trust's Twitter feed and its website, which contain really useful information about potential dangers to young people and children and give good advice to parents about how to avoid unintentional injuries. Burns and scalds can result from the use of hair straighteners, which can cause a grab injury that could restrict the movement of a young child as they grow older, making a lifelong change to outcomes for that young person. We also have to be very vigilant about hot drinks and hot bath water.



One of the most frightening experiences for a parent is when breathing stops. Changes in the ways in which we live have brought new dangers for toddlers, of which blind cords are a particular example—a campaign about that has run for a number of years now. We have also seen recently the tragedy of babies and young children being suffocated by nappy sacks, and there is lots of advice about safe storage, away from cots and play areas, of those potential dangers for young people.

Poisoning is also a worry for parents; in my day, we kept all the bleaches and chemicals in a cupboard and were told not to put them into bottles that looked like drinks. I remember those messages, but time and technology have moved on and we now have a risk from liquid tabs, which are very common in households for use with dishwashers and laundry. Having taken cognisance of the work that the cross-party group on accident prevention and safety awareness and other organisations have done, a lot of manufacturers have moved away from prettier colours and stronger scents in order to make liquid tabs less appealing to young children. That is to be welcomed.

Button batteries have become common in many electrical items that we buy. A lot of them are in toys that are presented for use by children and toddlers. They pose a particular hazard because they can be easily swallowed by a young child and can have a devastating—in some circumstances, fatal—impact. We must alert parents to those possible dangers.

Falls in and around the house, such as falls from cots and highchairs, can have a serious impact on young people. We should look to prevent those wherever possible.

Members might know that I have a particular interest in road safety. In my family, I have had a tragedy regarding road safety, which is what brought me to this area. I am not a practitioner in safety but, in the position that I have had as a councillor and now as an MSP, I feel that I should promote it.

I am not the only person who has taken that positive from a family tragedy. In Scotland, there has been a lot of work done on drowning. We now have a Scottish drowning prevention strategy that came from the work of the members of the cross-party group. I pay particular credit to the Spiers family in Glasgow. Duncan and Margaret lost their son when he was on a night out in Glasgow and drowned in the River Clyde. They have been campaigning tirelessly to have the signage along the Clyde walkways improved and to have ropes attached to the life preservers that are on the quayside. I pay tribute to any family who has become the face of a safety message. It means

much more to the public because it adds a human aspect and puts a face to what can be seen as a dry and technical advice area. Families have come forward to show the effect of burns on their children. People have come forward to warn about how they have been affected by carbon monoxide poisoning. I pay tribute to the bravery of those families who are willing to come forward and try to prevent that from happening to anyone else.

Fire safety and carbon monoxide poisoning are two areas that we worry about for our families. There is now more frequent use of electrical equipment. Cheaper versions of equipment and chargers can pose a danger. I pay tribute to the work of Electrical Safety First in advising consumers on ethical purchasing and, along with the trading standards officers who work in that area, warning of those dangers.

Later this evening, I will convene the cross-party group on accident prevention and safety awareness. We now have more than 140 members, all of whom are dedicated to making our working and leisure lives as safe as possible. We have said that we want Scotland to be the best place in the world to grow up. That means that we want Scotland to be the safest place in the world to grow up. *[Applause.]*

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** I know why people in the public gallery want to clap, but applause is not permitted in the public area.

17:14

**Gillian Martin (Aberdeenshire East) (SNP):** I thank Clare Adamson, not just for securing this debate but for the huge amount of work that she does on safety issues. Being safe is about assessing risk and taking steps to minimise that risk. We can do that only through discussion and education, and I thank her for all that she does to facilitate that.

Family life has always been a changing situation. The other day, I was speaking to a constituent at a sports club, and it turned out that he had been a fireman in the 1970s in Clydebank. In the 1970s, before we moved to Aberdeenshire, my mother and father had their three small children in a flat in Faifley—or “the Faifley”, as it is known. I was recalling the day that we had a chip pan fire and joking with him that he had perhaps attended, and he said: “I think every Clydebank family in the 1970s had a chip pan fire at one time or another. I’ll have been to thousands.” That high risk has largely gone. We do not use open chip pans any more, electrical safety has improved and the home is an altogether safer place. However, as technology improves, old dangers are replaced with new ones. Helping children to understand what to do to avoid harm and to deal with

accidents and emergencies can never start too young.

I commend the work done in schools in my constituency by the dinky doctors. I had a wonderful morning with the nursery children at Mintlaw primary school who were treated to a fun, interactive hour during which they learned how to call for an ambulance and what to do if, for example, they got burned or a member of their family needed help. The dinky doctors embed accident prevention and response into short sessions for children right up to primary 7 that are age appropriate every step of the way. For the nursery kids, teddy was the patient and the kids would know what to do if teddy fell and was not answering. In the later stages of school, the dinky doctors teach more complex things to young people, such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other emergency response methods.

Avoidance of accidents in the home environment is the key to a child's safety, but many accidents still happen in the home. As wood burning stoves and open fires become more fashionable, the dangers that we thought we had eradicated with the affordability of central heating, by having radiators instead of open fires, are coming back. As fashions change and hair straighteners with high-temperature ceramic plates are used every day in the home, we increase the chance of really severe burns.

I thank the Child Accident Prevention Trust for the excellent action pack that it has developed, which looks at ways to prevent accidents in the modern home. I will put a link to it on my social media as it is exactly the sort of resource that will help families, community groups and organisations to make meaningful safety changes in homes across the country to keep the people who are most precious to us safe from harm.

What of the future? We have a climate emergency and families will be encouraged to leave their cars at home as they do the school run. That is only right and I welcome it, but it means that our streets will have to get safer. Provision of safe routes to school is built into the requirements on every local authority. Colleagues will know that I am a cyclist—a nervous one—and I also want safe cycle routes to school to be a requirement as we tackle the twin challenges of childhood obesity and climate change.

Children should have the right to cycle on a path that is free from cars, and parents should have the peace of mind to allow their children the freedom to get to school under their own steam, on foot or by bike. Right now, for too many children, cycling to school is far too dangerous. We know that a quarter of all cyclist deaths are children. We need infrastructure change to start now. Other European Union countries have made a conscious

decision to change their streets to encourage cycling and prevent accidents. Lives are being saved, health and wellbeing are being improved and families have peace of mind.

We can do what we can through education to make our homes safer, but safety on our streets needs decisive action to give children the right of a safe cycle route.

17:18

**Alison Harris (Central Scotland) (Con):** I thank Clare Adamson for bringing this members' business debate on child safety week to the chamber. As we have heard, child safety week runs from 3 to 9 June, thanks to charities such as the Child Accident Prevention Trust who work tirelessly in their efforts to raise awareness of the risks of child accidents and, more importantly, how they can be prevented.

The theme for this year's child safety week is "Family life today: where's the risk?", and the aim is to highlight the dangers facing families today from our modern and sometimes complex lifestyles. I have visited numerous nurseries in my capacity as party spokesperson for children and young people. Although the visits have not been directly about child safety, the stringent rules that nurseries have in place and the standards to which they operate in order to prevent accidents are always very evident.

I am sure that I am not alone when I say that children should be free to lead active healthy lives and should be given every encouragement to experiment, play and take risks. Odd bumps and scrapes are all part of growing up. They are how we learn about the world around us and, as parents, we accept that. But there is a balance to be struck. Sadly, accidents involving children continue to devastate lives, with under-fives particularly at risk. On average, half of the under-fives who attend accident and emergency every year do so following an accident that could have been prevented. However, it does not have to be like that. By getting down to our kids' level and seeing the world through their eyes, we can spot dangers and help to keep them safe.

Sadly, many neighbourhoods have seen the demise of the school crossing patrol, meaning that fewer primary school children are receiving pedestrian training. I firmly believe that road safety awareness is a crucial life-saving skill and that all children should have pedestrian training. However, education is, of course, just one aspect of road safety. As parents, we have a vital role in teaching our children the skills that they need to stay safe.

As I mentioned, family life today is far more complex than it was in the past. It is certainly more complex than it was even 10 years ago, and it is

often the very things that make life more convenient that bring new risks and dangers. I include in that things such as dishwasher tablets and laundry capsules. They might sit innocently in a cupboard, but their eye-catching packaging turns them into something that appeals to a child's curiosity. They are pretty to look at but potentially deadly in a child's hands.

Probably one of today's biggest distractions around the home and outside it is the use of mobile phones. I am sure that we are all familiar with the age-old saying, "You need eyes in the back of your head when you have young children." The time that it takes to be distracted by reading a single text is enough time for a child to run out on to a busy road or street, to swallow a dishwasher tablet or worse.

The reality is that mobile phones are now part of everyday life, but aside from their distractions, they also come with a whole host of risks for our children. Roughly 35 per cent of children in the 10 to 11 age bracket own a mobile phone. Children today are growing up in a completely different world and they face problems that I never had to face when I was younger. People might think that their child will not be affected by sexting, for example, but the statistics strongly disagree. According to a UK survey on teenage mobile phone habits, six out of 10 UK youths have been asked to send a sexual image or video of themselves. Shockingly, 25 per cent of those who were asked had actually sent an explicit image and, even more shockingly, a third of them sent it to someone who they knew online but not in real life.

When I list all the dangers that our children are exposed to nowadays, in the home and outside it, I think that if my children were still young, I would never let them out of my sight. However, we have a duty to our children to let them be just that—children. We have a duty to let them explore, learn and laugh and to let them live.

17:23

**Iain Gray (East Lothian) (Lab):** I thank Clare Adamson for bringing this important issue to the Parliament's attention. The devastating impact that childhood accidents can have on children and their families and communities has already been highlighted. The fact that accidents are—as the motion tells us—the largest cause of childhood death in Scotland after the neonatal period should give us pause for reflection on whether we are doing all that we can to reduce such incidents.

The work of the Child Accident Prevention Trust is vital in supporting parents and families to understand and to navigate the risks of modern family life. Child safety week is a welcome

opportunity to highlight the work that the trust and many other organisations are doing and, as colleagues have done, to highlight the resources, online and otherwise, that those organisations have created for access by parents and families.

Accidents can, of course, happen to any family in any home. Parenting is tough and difficult and is a risk in itself, whatever the family circumstances. We can all think of plenty of examples of tragedy striking the privileged or the celebrity, but that cannot hide the fact—to which Clare Adamson drew our attention—that childhood accidents and, by extension, preventable hospital admissions are socially patterned, in Scotland and elsewhere.

The most recent statistics show a difference of around 30 per cent between the most and least deprived areas on admissions to hospital as a result of unintentional injury in children. What is more, as with pretty much every illness, condition and reason for hospital admission, there is an exact gradient that shows that no matter where someone is on the SIMD ladder, they are less likely to be admitted for an unintentional injury than someone who lives in a more deprived area and more likely to be admitted than someone who lives in a less deprived area.

Therefore, the chances of suffering admission for an accident are significantly determined by a person's socioeconomic status. The question is what can be done to reduce that disparity and the overall number of accidents that lead to injury and admission? How do we support more vulnerable families to minimise the risk to their children?

We know what works, to some extent. This week, the Institute for Fiscal Studies published evidence that sure start centres in England—family centres that are situated in the most disadvantaged areas and are designed to provide targeted early years care and learning for the whole family—have reduced the hospitalisation gap between children from the most deprived areas and children from the least deprived areas by as much as half. That is a significant reduction.

Such improvements in children's health and wellbeing show what can be achieved if we address the wider issues of inequality and vulnerability in families. As we reflect on this evening's debate and consider what can be done to promote greater safety for children, we should bear in mind the results from England and the evidence that addressing inequalities of income and wealth can make a difference.

17:27

**Mark Ruskell (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Green):** I thank Clare Adamson for her leadership in the Parliament on child safety and I commend the excellent work of the Child Accident

Prevention Trust, about which I have heard in the cross-party group on accident prevention and safety awareness.

There is almost a week to go before the stage 1 debate on the Restricted Roads (20 mph Speed Limit) (Scotland) Bill, which I introduced, so I will comment on the importance of speed reduction in tackling child casualties in our communities.

As Clare Adamson said, there are many personal stories out there. Mine is that a primary school classmate was run over and killed while he was out playing on his bike. The incident did not happen outside the school; it happened in the residential streets where my friend lived, as is the case in four-fifths of the child casualties on our roads. My friend's death had an unimaginable impact on his family and the wider community.

The first person to be killed in a motor accident was killed in 1896. At the time, the coroner wrote in his report that such a thing would never happen again. It is unfortunate that, more than 100 years on, there have been more than half a million deaths through road accidents in the UK alone.

Although things are getting better, it is important that we continue to take action. An important and central step in delivering safer streets is to get the speed limit right. It is about infrastructure, as Gillian Martin said, and it is about taking that first step of getting a safer speed limit, not just outside schools but where people actually live—where my friend was killed.

Government policy on the issue is good. A limit of 20mph is the norm and is backed by the World Health Organization, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the EU. The reality, however, is that whether you live on a street that has 20mph or 30mph limits is a postcode lottery. A child who lives in the Borders is likely to be growing up on a 30mph road; in Fife or Edinburgh, it will be a 20mph road. Last week, the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee published its stage 1 report, which recognises the benefits of a 20mph limit for road safety and promoting walking and cycling. However, the committee recommended that local councils could continue not to introduce 20mph limits, should they wish. I do not agree with that and believe that it will perpetuate the inconsistency that we already have in Scotland and that leaves some children more vulnerable than others.

I commend Sustrans, which does fantastic work on child safety. Unfortunately, it was not invited to give evidence to committee, but it came out with a report a couple of weeks ago that showed that traffic incidents are three times more likely to happen in deprived areas than in more affluent areas. That is a double injustice because deprived communities are often locked out of transport

opportunities, yet the people who live in them face higher risks purely because of their postcode. We all know that a discretionary approach means that it will always be the more affluent, well-organised communities with community councils that will successfully lobby for 20mph zones, while deprived communities will be left behind.

The evidence that 20mph works is there. In Fife, we saw a 20 per cent reduction in accidents as a result of going completely to a 20mph limit and it was even higher—a 32 per cent reduction—in more deprived communities. It is time for our country to join Wales and London, and for Scotland to be declared a 20mph nation. It is time to ensure that the default speed limit in the streets where we live, work and play goes from 30mph to 20mph.

17:32

**Mark McDonald (Aberdeen Donside) (Ind):** I, too, congratulate Clare Adamson on the debate and echo Mark Ruskell's comments that, for a number of years now, Ms Adamson has been leading the way in this Parliament in relation to safety and accident prevention. I hope that that continues to be the case.

In her speech, she mentioned poisoning and I noted in the Child Accident Prevention Trust's information the emerging and growing risk of liquid nicotine refills for e-cigarettes:

"Hospitals are reporting growing numbers of children accidentally swallowing liquid nicotine from e-cigarette refills."

That emerging risk needs to be borne in mind by individuals and families where those refills are to be found. They need to think very carefully about safe storage.

Clare Adamson also spoke about the cases that we refer to as the tip of the iceberg, because we see them measured in statistics. That chimes with a report from the journal, "The Archives of Disease in Childhood". One of the co-authors was Dr Jamie Cooper, a consultant in emergency medicine at the Royal Aberdeen children's hospital, who said:

"We only see the tip of the iceberg, we only see it when it is not alleviated."

The article highlighted three cases from within Aberdeen alone of children choking after eating whole grapes. Unfortunately, a five-year-old boy choked while eating grapes at an after-school club and had a heart attack and died. A seventeen-month-old boy choked while eating grapes with his family at home and, although the grape was eventually removed by paramedics, sadly the little boy still died. In the third instance, a two-year-old choked while snacking on grapes in the park, suffered two seizures and spent five days in

intensive care, but thankfully recovered. Those are only the cases in Aberdeen. The report—

**Clare Adamson:** Will the member take an intervention?

**Mark McDonald:** I will just finish the point. The report highlights that grapes are

“the third most common cause of food-related”

incidents. My researcher wondered what the other two were, so she looked them up; they are hot dogs and sweets. I still cut up grapes before I feed my children and the chances are that I will do so until they are teenagers and tell me to stop it.

**Clare Adamson:** The cross-party group on accident prevention and safety awareness was delighted to have a presentation, arranged through the Mark Scott leadership for life awards, from a group of schools in Cumbernauld that had taken inspiration from those stories and had developed a training programme. Pupils from those schools became trained in first aid and then went out and taught pupils in primary schools about the dangers of choking and passed on their expertise to those younger children. Does the member agree that first-aid awareness is important and that people should take advantage of opportunities to learn about it?

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** I will make up your time, Mr McDonald.

**Mark McDonald:** I am grateful for that, Presiding Officer.

I absolutely agree with the point that Clare Adamson makes, and I will return to it later, now that I have been given the time back.

Clare Adamson also mentioned drowning. Members from the north-east might remember the tragic incident in 2016 when my constituent Julie Walker died at Aberdeen beach while trying to save her six-year-old son, Lucas, who, sadly, also died. That incident led to the formation of the Aberdeen water safety group, bringing together various agencies in the city of Aberdeen to consider how water safety could be promoted not only at the beach, but also with regard to the two rivers and the open water in the city.

I will highlight another group in my constituency: Absafe does a huge amount of work to improve safety awareness in the city. It has an interactive facility in Bridge of Don called the safe, where its team and volunteers deliver engaging, fun and informative sessions that teach children about everyday hazards and how to deal with them. Issues that it covers include road, railway, home and fire safety, solvent misuse, antisocial behaviour, cyber-bullying and security. It is funded by Aberdeen City Council to ensure that every primary 7 child in the city receives a

complimentary day visit, and its lessons follow the curriculum for excellence, ensuring that the delivery is age appropriate, supports required learning outcomes and fits the getting it right for every child principles.

Finally, Clare Adamson mentioned first aid, and I absolutely agree that first-aid training is important. It was great to see the announcement that all local authorities will deliver CPR training in schools, but CPR training will take you only so far in being able to save a life. For example, in a choking incident, wider first-aid training is necessary. I note that St Andrew's First Aid has submitted a petition to the Public Petitions Committee calling for first-aid training in all primary schools. I recognise that the Government has said that that is better dealt with by individual local authorities. I hope that we might see some leadership from the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and individual local authorities so that wider first-aid training can be made available to children and that they can be equipped not only to spot hazards but to deal with the situations that they might face with their peers.

17:37

**Bill Kidd (Glasgow Anniesland) (SNP):** Like others, I share my appreciation that Clare Adamson has brought the topic of child safety week to the chamber. By doing so, Clare has provided us with the opportunity to highlight the impact that safety habits and accident prevention measures can have on families across Scotland.

It is important that we continue to discuss child safety, because there are new and unexpected hazards that people were not aware of previously—others have mentioned that, but it is worth repeating. We need to learn about those things and be aware of what can happen in our modern world. The Child Accident Prevention Trust, which instigated child safety week, says that more than 2,000 children are admitted to hospital as a result of accidents every week. We can work to reduce that number by prompting consideration of some of the new dangers and hazards that children face.

By their nature, accidents are an unpleasant surprise, and the Child Accident Prevention Trust is working to reduce that element of surprise by collating information about the causes of accidents. It provides tips to help parents consider unexpected hazards. With that information, it has created a free guide for educators, childcare practitioners and other professionals to help them start conversations with parents about how to prevent the unexpected. In other words, the trust has created free prompts for parents and practitioners to help them recognise hazards that

they otherwise, and understandably, might not have been aware of.

What underpins the debate, and is also the context of and the motivator for child safety week, is the deeply sad reality that that information has not always been available to parents, with the result that many have lost children through accidents, which are the leading cause of death, serious injury and acquired disability for children and young people in the UK. That reality makes the discussion of child safety extremely important. Alongside the Child Accident Prevention Trust, parents, teachers, childcare practitioners and more, we are all motivated to start a Scotland-wide conversation about how we can minimise hazards and prevent accidents.

I fully support child safety week and have written to all schools and nurseries in my Glasgow Anniesland constituency to encourage teachers and play workers to use the free materials that are provided by the Child Accident Prevention Trust. The conversation needs to be inclusive—one in six parents have difficulty reading. It is therefore important that the action pack's activities are used to engage parents. The issue needs to be on everyone's radar, so that children across Scotland and from all backgrounds are safe. That can include practical demonstrations as well as leaflets.

The Child Accident Prevention Trust's action pack outlines simple and practical information that covers hazards that can cause burns and scalds, or that can cause a child to stop breathing, as well poisoning, falls and drowning. It also contains tips on road and fire safety, and tells us that a baby's skin is 15 times thinner than an adult's, meaning that babies can be badly burnt by hot things much more easily than an adult can. It also tells us that young children do not have the reflex to pull away from something that is burning them; rather, that reflex is learned. The Trust points out the example hazard of a hot drink in the form of a cup of tea or coffee, which can scald a baby as long as 15 minutes after it has been made.

The free pack is available to download from the Child Accident Prevention Trust's website and contains many helpful tips. It is easy to read and has activities that childcare practitioners can use to help to engage parents in the conversation. I encourage those who work with children and who are in contact with parents to use the Trust's free materials, to participate in child safety week 2019 and to start conversations about how we can increase children's safety.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** I gently remind members to use full names in the chamber. There have been only a few slip-ups in this understandably perfectly friendly debate.

17:42

**Brian Whittle (South Scotland) (Con):** I add my congratulations to Clare Adamson on bringing this topic to the chamber, and I commend the work that she continues to do in this important field.

We all know the phrase "accidents happen". However, we are debating the fact that there are many cases where they do not have to happen, and where simple precautions could be taken to make places safer for our children. As parents will tell us, planning ahead and trying to see accidents before they happen are things that they do intuitively.

A young child sees the world differently from an adult: literally, because they are smaller than us; and figuratively, because they might see a sweetie where we see a washing liquid capsule. Later in my speech, I will focus on the point that children—particularly young children—who do not understand the dangers rely on their parents and other adults to take responsibility and reduce risks.

Collaborative working is important not only among organisations that run campaigns such as child safety week, but between parents and families, whether that is new parents getting the opportunity to share their experiences with other new parents, new grandparents sharing their memories and knowledge, or older children being encouraged to think about hazards and how they can protect their younger siblings at home. Speaking from experience, I will support anything that reduces the risk of my stepping barefoot on a piece of Lego.

Education plays a huge role, whether it is formal education and guidance from the Scottish Government and other agencies, or the anecdotal education that we gain from speaking to other people and learning from their experiences.

We have heard today about the dangers of modern lifestyles—about how there are more electronic devices that use smaller button-type batteries; colourful washing liquid capsules; and even things such as blind cords. Not all of those are new dangers—choking hazards and poisonous liquids are nothing new, and many of the same basic rules still apply.

It is not the case that we want to take a nanny-state approach. It is vital that we give children the space to learn awareness of their environment. Children will always hurt themselves at some point and, when they do, they learn how to avoid it happening again, and how to deal with it. We are talking about building up resilience. We have to be careful not to sanitise children's environments too much so that they do not have the ability to learn.

It is important not only to eliminate hazards around children but to try to teach them why we

are doing that, what the hazards are and what they could do. Teaching our children to be aware of hazards is just as important as keeping hazards away from them.

I go back to the idea that adults need to take responsibility and reduce the risks for their children. I had a couple of meetings last week, one of which was with Alcohol Focus Scotland. It had interviewed children of parents who have an alcohol problem. A phrase that the children used resonated with me. What they most wanted to happen was their parents not drinking while they were still up—they wanted their parents to take their alcohol once they had gone to bed. That resonates with us for many different reasons. I knew that this debate was coming up, and that resonated with me. We know that alcohol impairs our ability to focus on our environment. I am not talking about just the attention that is given to children; if our judgment is impaired—obviously, this counts for drug use, as well—by definition, the danger to children must increase.

Yesterday, I was down in Westminster with the Scottish Affairs Committee looking at the drug and alcohol problem in Scotland. There are more drug and alcohol use problems when there is deprivation, and there is a much bigger and wider issue that we need to discuss. Iain Gray has already mentioned that we need to focus our attention on that. We need to look at how we are dealing with the drug and alcohol issue. In turn, that will improve the safety of children's environments.

I would love to talk about that in more depth, Presiding Officer, but I realise that my time is at an end, so I will leave it there.

I again thank Clare Adamson for lodging the motion.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** You need to lodge a parliamentary motion for a members' business debate, for example, if you want to expand on that, Mr Whittle. That would be worthy.

17:47

**The Minister for Children and Young People (Maree Todd):** I thank Clare Adamson for lodging a really important motion. Maintaining the safety of our children is of the utmost importance, and the Scottish Government remains committed to that—as it does to improving safety for everyone across Scotland.

It has been great to hear what members across the chamber have said about all the innovative work that is going on throughout Scotland to help children to recognise risks, and to help young people to spot hazards, risk assess and respond to accidents. That work goes on from nurseries to

schools and community groups, and it has been a pleasure to hear about it.

The work that Ms Adamson leads through the cross-party working group on accident prevention and safety continues to address important issues and contributes to keeping us safe. That work crosses many of our national outcomes and ambitions. We have heard a whole variety of different angles in the chamber, which shows us how cross-cutting the issue is. Those national outcomes and ambitions include the safety of particular population groups, including children and older people; how we move about our communities on foot and by transport; and the key messages on staying safe in our homes. I commend the cross-party group for its endeavours on that, and the range of partners involved, including the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, the Scottish community safety network, COSLA, the Scottish public health network, the Scottish Business Resilience Centre and, of course, the Child Accident Prevention Trust. The Scottish Government is once again delighted to support national child safety week in Scotland this week.

The key to success in the area lies in working together to raise awareness of risks and to progress actions and initiatives that help to reduce incidents. It is important to work with our communities to better understand the issues and identify solutions.

As we have heard, it is clear from the statistics that, sadly, unintentional harm remains a major cause of death and injury among children. The under-fives are disproportionately affected by unintentional harm, and it is one of the leading causes of death in children under the age of 15 in Scotland. Although we want children to lead active, healthy lives, we need to equip parents with the tools and information that will enable them to do so safely. The tragic impact on parents of losing a child or of dealing with a child with life-changing injuries cannot be underestimated. I know that everyone in the chamber agrees that one life lost is one too many.

Although it is clear that work still needs to be done to reduce those figures, we know that the number of children who are admitted to hospital as a result of unintentional injuries has fallen steadily over the past decade, from 8,353 in 2008-09 to 7,259 in 2017-18. The number of child deaths due to unintentional injury has also fallen from a peak of 147 in the mid-1980s, when I was a youngster, to 16 in 2017. That is a dramatic shift.

The need to keep up the momentum links directly to the importance of child safety week. Since 2008, the Scottish Government has supported the Child Accident Prevention Trust in running this special week, which helps to increase

awareness and informs parents about accident risks to children and the simple steps that can be taken to avoid such accidents.

Earlier today, the Minister for Community Safety, Ash Denham, visited Smilechildcare pre-school centre, where she met childcare providers, parents and carers. The event focused primarily on burns, scalds and poisonings, and I understand that everyone involved, including families and practitioners, agreed that it was useful and informative. I spent this morning in Clober nursery in Milngavie, which has an incredibly innovative set-up. The nursery was doing a lot of outdoor work involving science, technology, engineering and maths, and the children were sawing and working with hammers and nails. Incredible work was going on, but a lot of work had gone into risk assessing the activities to ensure that the children could safely explore where their curiosity took them.

As Clare Adamson highlighted, this year's child safety week, which is themed "Family life today: where's the risk?", is dedicated to raising awareness about the risks of everyday household items that have become a convenient part of modern living. We know that the under-fives suffer most injuries at home, and this year's campaign highlights how, due to modern technology and other advances, home safety is much more complex than ever before, which makes it difficult for each new generation. Some of the same old hazards exist, but some hazards are brand new and did not exist previously. The distraction of mobile devices—I am as guilty as any parent of watching my phone when I should be watching my children—and the increased use of button batteries and brightly coloured detergent liquitabs pose new risks to children's health and wellbeing that parents and carers might not have considered. It was great to hear Clare Adamson say that manufacturers are responding to some of the concerns that have arisen by taking account of risk mitigation in their designs, which is an important way of tackling the issue.

I am aware that, over the week, a range of local activities is taking place across the country. Work is going on with health visitors, community nursery nurses and Home-Start groups, among others, to raise awareness of key accident hazards together with practical prevention measures.

**Maurice Corry (West Scotland) (Con):** The minister has referred to accidents in Scotland more generally but, with respect to drowning accidents, does she agree that it is concerning that 59 per cent of Scotland's councils do not have a water safety policy for coastal or inland waters?

**Maree Todd:** I agree that that is concerning. I grew up in a small fishing village and represent the Highlands and Islands region, which has a vast

and beautiful coastline. Nowadays, we are well aware of the risks of water, but accidents seem to keep occurring with devastating regularity. I am sure that drowning is preventable, so anything that we can do to tackle the risks should be done.

The Scottish Government is delighted to endorse the child safety week's resource packs, which are available to community groups and services and which provide ideas and information on how to prevent accidents. I congratulate the Child Accident Prevention Trust on, once again, working so hard to raise awareness through this excellent week-long initiative.

Nationally, policies including GIRFEC, the baby box programme and the family nurse partnership all contribute to ensuring that our children lead healthy, happy and safe lives.

The Government continues to work with national and local partners to raise awareness of unintentional injuries and to improve outcomes for all vulnerable groups. That includes the work that we have done this year with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. That organisation has done a great deal of work as part of the building safer communities executive group on unintentional harm, which is chaired by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The group engages a range of partners in recognition of the fact that this is a problem that we will solve if we work together.

On Friday, that partnership will host its second national learning event for local practitioners, with more than 100 delegates coming together to discuss and share local practice. The event will also see the launch of an unintentional harm and injury website for local practitioners to share evidence, guidance and best practice examples from across Scotland. That fantastic tool has been developed collectively, and it will be excellent to see it grow as a route to improving outcomes through learning from all the great work that is under way across Scotland and adapting it to meet local need.

Once again, I thank Clare Adamson for bringing this important issue to the chamber, and I again commend the Child Accident Prevention Trust and ROSPA for their truly excellent and continued work to support child safety across Scotland.

*Meeting closed at 17:55.*



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