



# The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 4, No. 92, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 19 March 2025

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

**1. Portfolio Questions:** Questions on Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, and Parliamentary Business, and then Justice and Home Affairs, were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and a Minister.

**2. Reforming Scotland's West Coast Ferries:** Claire Baker moved S6M-16845—That the Parliament deplores the continuing economic and social damage inflicted on Clyde and Hebrides communities through the Scottish Government's failure to provide adequate ferry services; calls on the Scottish Government to reconsider its decision to impose a 10 % increase in fares on Scottish Government funded ferry services, contrary to the recommendations of the delivery companies; is concerned that no Scottish yard has been selected to deliver any of the ferries in the Small Vessel Replacement Programme; believes that the governance structure for west coast ferry services has failed, and calls for the award of a new Clyde and Hebrides ferry contract to be accompanied by a fundamental reform of governance, which puts island communities and workers at the heart of decision making and accountability.

The Cabinet Secretary for Transport (Fiona Hyslop) moved amendment S6M-16845.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-16845 in the name of Claire Baker (Reforming Scotland's West Coast Ferries), leave out from “deplores” to end and insert “recognises the challenges that have faced a number of island communities with ferry service disruptions but notes that CalMac crews

delivered 95.8% of services in the last recorded contract year; welcomes the provision of over £530 million in 2025-26 for maintaining and improving ferry services, replacing vessels, upgrading ports and harbours, and investing further in low-carbon inter-island ferries, with at least £21 million to progress phase 1 of the Small Vessel Replacement Programme; acknowledges that the delivery of six new large vessels, providing fleet resilience, and the procurement of seven new small vessels, which is currently in the 10-day 'standstill period', and the replacement for the MV Lord of the Isles, will provide 37% of the total fleet with new vessels, helping to reduce emissions and create more sustainability, resilience and reliability for residents, businesses and communities; notes that public engagement is being undertaken in Orkney and Shetland to inform the procurement of two new freight vessels for the Northern Isles services; acknowledges the work underway to make a direct award for the next Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services contract, and the roundtable with all stakeholders, including the Ferries Community Board and trade unions, to collectively discuss ambitions for the contract, including putting public service delivery and accountable key performance indicators developed with communities at its heart, and agrees that delivery of the award will then provide the space and opportunity for more fundamental reform of governance.”

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 57 (including 3 proxy votes), Against 52, Abstentions 7).

Sue Webber moved amendment S6M-16845.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-16845 in the name of Claire Baker (Reforming Scotland's West Coast Ferries), insert at end “; believes that the social and economic impact of ferry disruption is causing existential harm to Scotland's islands; shares the frustrations of Scotland's islanders and ferry passengers, who believe that their needs are not being prioritised by the Scottish Government; notes that the increasing maintenance repair bill for the ageing fleet has hit £98 million in the last decade, which compromises the ability to invest in new infrastructure and maintain affordable ticket prices; agrees with the Audit Scotland report that the five-year business plan for Ferguson Marine Port Glasgow was overly reliant and predicated on winning the Small Vessel Replacement Programme contract; is concerned with the repeated awarding of ferry-build contracts to numerous overseas shipyards whilst taxpayers in Scotland are funding a publicly owned yard on the Clyde; notes the Scottish Government's plan to purchase Ardrossan Harbour and urges Scottish ministers to ensure that the much-needed infrastructure upgrades to the port that were promised are delivered in a timely and cost-effective manner, and calls on the Scottish Government to be clear about its long-term intentions for Ferguson Marine Port Glasgow, and the future of Scottish shipbuilding, in light of an apparent lack of faith in it shown to date.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 52, Against 56 (including 3 proxy votes), Abstentions 7).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 58 (including 3 proxy votes), Against 52, Abstentions 6).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament recognises the challenges that have faced a number of island communities with ferry service disruptions but notes that CalMac crews delivered 95.8% of services in the last recorded contract year; welcomes the provision of over £530 million in 2025-26 for maintaining and improving ferry services, replacing vessels, upgrading ports and harbours, and investing further in low-carbon inter-island ferries, with at least £21 million to progress phase 1 of the Small Vessel Replacement Programme; acknowledges that the delivery of six new large vessels, providing fleet resilience, and the procurement of seven new small vessels, which is currently in the 10-day 'standstill period', and the replacement for the MV Lord of the Isles, will provide 37% of the total fleet with new vessels, helping to reduce emissions and create more sustainability, resilience and reliability for residents, businesses and communities; notes that public engagement is being undertaken in Orkney and Shetland to inform the procurement of two new freight vessels for the Northern Isles services; acknowledges the work underway to make a direct award for the next Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services contract, and the roundtable with all stakeholders, including the Ferries Community Board and trade unions, to collectively discuss ambitions for the contract, including putting public service delivery and accountable key performance indicators developed with communities at its heart, and agrees that delivery of the award will then provide the space and opportunity for more fundamental reform of governance.

**3. Children's Rights and Temporary Accommodation:** Mark Griffin moved S6M-16844—That the Parliament notes the publication of *In Their Own Words: Children's Experiences in Temporary Accommodation*, a research publication commissioned by Shelter Scotland from De Montfort University and University College London; accepts the findings of the publication, which concludes that children in Scotland are adversely affected by the shocking conditions found in some forms of temporary accommodation; recognises that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) provides children with rights to have their best interests considered when decisions about them are being taken, including the right to life and the ability to develop, the right to school, the right to protection from violence in all forms, and the right to play and rest; notes with concern that the report highlights a number of examples of these rights being breached; accepts that the use of hotel-like accommodation for children in temporary accommodation carries a high risk of breaching children's rights under the UNCRC; notes that amendments to the Housing (Scotland) Bill have been laid that would require relevant bodies to have regard to the rights of the child in dealing with cases of homelessness, and calls on the Scottish Government to ensure that children in Scotland are placed in safe and secure homes which take account of their rights under the UNCRC.

The Minister for Housing (Paul McLennan) moved amendment S6M-16844.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-16844 in the name of Mark Griffin (Children's Rights and Temporary Accommodation), insert at end “; notes the actions taken to address the issues highlighted in the report, including the publication of the temporary accommodation standards framework and bringing forward the amendment to implement Awaab's Law in the Housing

(Scotland) Bill, and welcomes that the number of children in temporary accommodation has reduced in 20 local authority areas.”

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

Meghan Gallacher moved amendment S6M-16844.2—

As an amendment to motion S6W-16844 in the name of Mark Griffin (Children's Rights and Temporary Accommodation), insert at end “; believes that the report underlines the urgent need for the Scottish Government to outline an action plan to address the housing emergency, and notes that the Housing (Scotland) Bill is a missed opportunity to encourage more investment and housebuilding in Scotland.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 53, Against 63 (including 3 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

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

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament notes the publication of *In Their Own Words: Children's Experiences in Temporary Accommodation*, a research publication commissioned by Shelter Scotland from De Montfort University and University College London; accepts the findings of the publication, which concludes that children in Scotland are adversely affected by the shocking conditions found in some forms of temporary accommodation; recognises that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) provides children with rights to have their best interests considered when decisions about them are being taken, including the right to life and the ability to develop, the right to school, the right to protection from violence in all forms, and the right to play and rest; notes with concern that the report highlights a number of examples of these rights being breached; accepts that the use of hotel-like accommodation for children in temporary accommodation carries a high risk of breaching children's rights under the UNCRC; notes that amendments to the Housing (Scotland) Bill have been laid that would require relevant bodies to have regard to the rights of the child in dealing with cases of homelessness; calls on the Scottish Government to ensure that children in Scotland are placed in safe and secure homes which take account of their rights under the UNCRC; notes the actions taken to address the issues highlighted in the report, including the publication of the temporary accommodation standards framework and bringing forward the amendment to implement Awaab's Law in the Housing (Scotland) Bill, and welcomes that the number of children in temporary accommodation has reduced in 20 local authority areas.

**4. Urgent Question:** An urgent question, to ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the findings of the fatal accident inquiry for Lea Lamont, Ellie McCormick, and Mira-Belle Bosch, published on 14 March 2025, which suggest that the three child fatalities were avoidable, was answered by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care (Neil Gray).

**5. Business Programme:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-16855—That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Tuesday 25 March 2025

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

*followed by* Topical Questions (if selected)

*followed by* Ministerial Statement: Scottish Government Response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report

*followed by* Scottish Government Debate: Scotland - A Fair Trade Nation

*followed by* Committee Announcements

*followed by* Business Motions

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

*followed by* Members' Business

Wednesday 26 March 2025

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

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

*followed by* Ministerial Statement: Secure Accommodation in Scotland - Capacity

*followed by* Stage 1 Debate: Land Reform (Scotland) Bill

*followed by* Financial Resolution: Land Reform (Scotland) Bill

*followed by* Business Motions

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

*followed by* Approval of SSIs (if required)

5.30 pm Decision Time

*followed by* Members' Business

Thursday 27 March 2025

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

*followed by* Members' Business

2.30 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

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

*followed by* Ministerial Statement: Response to Fatal Accident Inquiries (Deaths in Custody)

*followed by* Stage 1 Debate: Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill

*followed by* Business Motions

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.30 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 1 April 2025

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

*followed by* Topical Questions (if selected)

*followed by* Stage 1 Debate: Criminal Justice Modernisation and Abusive Domestic Behaviour Reviews (Scotland) Bill

*followed by* Financial Resolution: Criminal Justice Modernisation and Abusive Domestic Behaviour Reviews (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 2 April 2025

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands; Health and Social Care

*followed by* Scottish Government Business

*followed by* Business Motions

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

*followed by* Approval of SSIs (if required)

5.00 pm Decision Time

*followed by* Members' Business

Thursday 3 April 2025

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

*followed by Members' Business*

2.30 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.30 pm Portfolio Questions: Social Justice

*followed by* Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee and Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee Debate: The Aarhus Convention and Access to Environmental Justice

*followed by* Business Motions

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

(b) that, for the purposes of Portfolio Questions in the week beginning 24 March 2025, 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.

The motion was agreed to.

**6. Stage 2 Timetable:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-16856—That the Parliament agrees that consideration of the Education (Scotland) Bill at stage 2 be completed by 9 May 2025.

The motion was agreed to.

**7. Approval of SSI:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-16857—That the Parliament agrees that the National Bus Travel Concession Schemes (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) Order 2025 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

**8. Approval of SSI:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-16858—That the Parliament agrees that the Community Care (Personal Care and Nursing Care) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2025 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

**9. Approval of SSI:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-16859—That the Parliament agrees that the Social Security (Up-rating) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2025 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

**10. Approval of SSI:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-16860—That the Parliament agrees that the Social Security Up-rating (Scotland) Order 2025 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

**11. Designation of Lead Committee:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-16861—That the Parliament agrees that the Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the UEFA European Championship (Scotland) Bill at stage 1.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

**12. Decision Time:** The Parliament took decisions on items 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 as noted above.

**13. Addressing Sexual Violence in Scotland's Hospitals:** The Parliament debated S6M-16705 in the name of Tess White—That the Parliament considers that single-sex spaces for women and girls across Scotland's public services are being eroded, with worrying implications for their rights and safety; acknowledges what it sees as the fundamental importance of the dignity, privacy and safety of women and girls in sanitary and changing facilities, as well as in hospital settings where women and children are often at their most vulnerable; highlights the Women's Rights Network Scotland report, *How safe are our Scottish hospitals?*, authored by Carolyn Brown and Mary Howden and published in March 2025, which found that, over a five-year period between 2019 and 2024, 276 sexual assaults and 12 rapes took place across 57 hospitals; considers that the actual figures will likely be much higher given that, it understands, data is not routinely kept by all Scottish hospitals; notes in particular that 22 sexual assaults and one rape reportedly took place in NHS Grampian over this period, while 17 sexual assaults and three rapes reportedly took place in NHS Tayside, with, it understands, a high number occurring on hospital wards; believes that hospitals should be a place of safety for patients and staff, and notes the view that urgent action should be taken to address any sexual violence on the NHS estate, and further notes the view that such action should include the introduction of robust and transparent record keeping procedures to help inform preventative practices, as well as accommodating women on single-sex wards wherever possible and protecting single-sex spaces for biological female patients and staff.

The meeting closed at 6.15 pm.

**David McGill**  
Clerk of the Parliament  
19 March 2025



## **Appendix**

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

### **Committee Reports**

The following reports were published on 19 March 2025—

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 20th Report, 2025 (Session 6): Instruments considered by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee during the third quarter of the Parliamentary Year 2024-25 (SP Paper 759)

Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee, 5th Report, 2025 (Session 6): Stage 1 report on the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill (SP Paper 760)

### **Other Documents**

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 19 March 2025 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

**Glasgow Low Emission Zone Annual Report 2024 (GCC/2025/01)** laid under Section 29(1) of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019

**Scottish Public Services Ombudsman: Compendium of Case Reports for March 2025 (SPSO/2025/03)** laid under Sections 15(1) and 15(1A) of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002

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