



# The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 4, No. 38, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 9 October 2024

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 on Justice and Home Affairs were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and a Minister.

**2. Budget Priorities 2025-26:** Ross Greer moved S6M-14825—That the Parliament notes that the fiscal levers that are currently available to the Scottish Government are inadequate to fully protect public services and communities from UK Government austerity and economic turmoil, but that the Scottish Government must use every power at its disposal to address the urgent social, economic and environmental challenges that Scotland faces, and calls, therefore, on the Scottish Government to explore all avenues to fiscal sustainability, including seeking opportunities for further powers, such as those over levies and charges, to be devolved to local government for 2025-26, creating new powers, such as a cruise ship levy, exploring how a carbon emissions land tax and a power of general competence could be delivered and ensuring the most effective and progressive use of existing tax powers and tax reliefs and that spending does not undermine the core missions of tackling child poverty and the climate emergency.

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government (Shona Robison) moved amendment S6M-14825.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-14825 in the name of Ross Greer (Budget Priorities 2025-26), insert “, and calls on the UK Labour administration to scrap the fiscal rules of the former UK Conservative administration.”

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 65 (including 2 proxy votes), Against 51 (including 2 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

Murdo Fraser moved amendment S6M-14825.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-14825 in the name of Ross Greer (Budget Priorities 2025-26), leave out from “notes” to end and insert “agrees that the fiscal levers currently available to the Scottish Government are more than adequate to deliver the economic growth that is vital to sustain public services; recognises that the current fiscal settlement, provided by the former UK Conservative administration, is the most generous on record, and that the Scottish Government has failed to properly utilise the monies allocated to it, by instead choosing to prioritise wasteful projects, such as the National Care Service; notes that the Scottish Government's financial incompetence, which was exacerbated by the former Bute House Agreement with the Scottish Green Party, has resulted in Scotland becoming a high-tax, low-growth economy that has lost the confidence of the business sector and has resulted in severe public sector spending cuts to fix the Scottish Government's financial black hole, and urges the Scottish Government to show some common sense and ignore the economic and financial illiteracy proposed by the Scottish Green Party, which proposes yet more burdensome taxation and anti-growth regulations, and to use the generous fiscal powers that it already has to deliver a Budget that prioritises economic growth and provides for all of Scotland.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 27, Against 89 (including 4 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

Michael Marra moved amendment S6M-14825.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-14825 in the name of Ross Greer (Budget Priorities 2025-26), leave out from “notes” to end and insert “understands that tackling the social, economic and environmental challenges that Scotland faces and delivering sustainable funding for public services is only possible through delivering sustainable economic growth and an economy that works for everyone in Scotland; recognises the importance of the UK Government's commitment to fix the foundations of the economy, and understands that Scotland will benefit from this approach; understands that the Scottish Government's wasteful spending and failure to plan ahead have led to significant pressures on the Scottish Budget, including £5 billion lost to waste; notes that the Scottish Fiscal Commission has projected a £1.9 billion gap between spending pledges and available funding in the Budget by 2027-28, and believes that, in addition to effectively using the extensive fiscal powers available to it, the Scottish Government should prioritise fiscal competence and transparency in the management of Scotland's finances.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 21 (including 1 proxy vote), Against 92 (including 2 proxy votes), Abstentions 4 (including 1 proxy vote)).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 64 (including 2 proxy votes), Against 52 (including 2 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament notes that the fiscal levers that are currently available to the Scottish Government are inadequate to fully protect public services and communities from UK Government austerity and economic turmoil, but that the Scottish Government must use every power at its disposal to address the urgent social, economic and environmental challenges that Scotland faces; calls, therefore, on the Scottish Government to explore all avenues to fiscal sustainability, including seeking opportunities for further powers, such as those over levies and charges, to be devolved to local government for 2025-26, creating new powers, such as a cruise ship levy, exploring how a carbon emissions land tax and a power of general competence could be delivered and ensuring the most effective and progressive use of existing tax powers and tax reliefs and that spending does not undermine the core missions of tackling child poverty and the climate emergency, and calls on the UK Labour administration to scrap the fiscal rules of the former UK Conservative administration.

**3. Free Bus Travel for Asylum Seekers:** Maggie Chapman moved S6M-14823—That the Parliament believes that the Scottish Government should extend free bus travel to people seeking asylum as soon as possible and at least before the end of the current parliamentary session.

The Cabinet Secretary for Transport (Fiona Hyslop) moved amendment S6M-14823.3—

As an amendment to motion S6M-14823 in the name of Maggie Chapman (Free Bus Travel for Asylum Seekers), insert at end “, and urges the UK Government to provide adequate financial support to local authorities and asylum seekers to ensure that they are not pushed further into hardship.”

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 68 (including 3 proxy votes), Against 48 (including 1 proxy vote), Abstentions 1).

Sue Webber moved amendment S6M-14823.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-14823 in the name of Maggie Chapman (Free Bus Travel for Asylum Seekers), leave out from “extend” to end and insert “ensure that there are reliable and affordable bus services in every community across Scotland; acknowledges that the Scottish Government has failed to make the 'public transport network cleaner, smarter and more accessible than ever before', as was the stated aim of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, and calls on the Scottish Government to introduce a national £2 bus fare for any single ticket on a bus route, to fully support the Community Bus Fund to allow local authorities to propose bus services in their area, and to implement integrated ticketing across all public transport.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 28, Against 88 (including 4 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

Claire Baker moved amendment S6M-14823.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-14823 in the name of Maggie Chapman (Free Bus Travel for Asylum Seekers), insert at end “, and further believes that public transport should be affordable, accessible and reliable for everyone.”

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 89 (including 4 proxy votes), Against 28, Abstentions 0).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 68 (including 3 proxy votes), Against 27, Abstentions 20 (including 1 proxy vote)).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament believes that the Scottish Government should extend free bus travel to people seeking asylum as soon as possible and at least before the end of the current parliamentary session; urges the UK Government to provide adequate financial support to local authorities and asylum seekers to ensure that they are not pushed further into hardship, and further believes that public transport should be affordable, accessible and reliable for everyone.

**4. Business Programme:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-14843—That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Tuesday 29 October 2024

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

*followed by* Topical Questions (if selected)

*followed by* Scottish Government Debate: Fiscal Sustainability

*followed by* Committee Announcements

*followed by* Business Motions

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

*followed by* Members' Business

Wednesday 30 October 2024

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

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

*followed by* Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Business

*followed by* Business Motions

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

*followed by* Approval of SSIs (if required)

5.10 pm Decision Time

*followed by* Members' Business

Thursday 31 October 2024

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* Finance and Public Administration Committee Debate: Scotland's Commissioner Landscape

*followed by* Business Motions

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 5 November 2024

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

*followed by* Topical Questions (if selected)

*followed by* Stage 3 Proceedings: Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill

*followed by* Committee Announcements

*followed by* Business Motions

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

*followed by* Members' Business

*followed by* Members' Business

Wednesday 6 November 2024

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 7 November 2024

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* Scottish Government Business

*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 28 October 2024, 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.

**5. Committee Meeting Times:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-14844—That the Parliament agrees that, under Rule 12.3.3B of Standing Orders, the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee can meet, if necessary, at the same time as a meeting of the Parliament from 2.00 pm until the conclusion of consideration of the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill at stage 2 on Tuesday 29 October 2024.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

**6. Committee Membership:** The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-14862— That the Parliament agrees that the following changes to committee membership will apply from close of business on Thursday 10 October 2024—

Stephen Kerr be appointed to replace Meghan Gallacher as a member of the Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee;

Liam Kerr be appointed to replace Russell Findlay as a member of the Criminal Justice Committee;

Roz McCall be appointed to replace Tim Eagle as a member of the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee;

Jamie Halcro Johnston be appointed to replace Brian Whittle as a member of the Economy and Fair Work Committee;

Miles Briggs be appointed to replace Liam Kerr as a member of the Education, Children and Young People Committee;

Douglas Ross be appointed to replace Sue Webber as a member of the Education, Children and Young People Committee;

Tess White be appointed to replace Meghan Gallacher as a member of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee;

Pam Gosal be appointed to replace Annie Wells as a member of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee;

Craig Hoy be appointed to replace Jamie Halcro Johnston as a member of the Finance and Public Administration Committee;

Brian Whittle be appointed to replace Tess White as a member of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee;

Meghan Gallacher be appointed to replace Miles Briggs as a member of the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee;

Alexander Stewart be appointed to replace Pam Gosal as a member of the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee;

Tim Eagle be appointed to replace Rachael Hamilton as a member of the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee;

Liz Smith be appointed to replace Roz McCall as a member of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee; and

Sue Webber be appointed to replace Oliver Mundell as a member of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

**7. Decision Time:** The Parliament took decisions on items 2, 3, 5 and 6 as noted above.

The meeting closed at 6.17 pm.

**David McGill**  
Clerk of the Parliament  
9 October 2024

## **Appendix**

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

### **Committee Reports**

The following reports were published on 9 October 2024—

Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee, 12th Report, 2024 (Session 6): Report on the Legislative Consent Memorandum on the Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Bill (UK Parliament legislation) (SP Paper 657)

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 60th Report, 2024 (Session 6): Subordinate Legislation considered by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee on 8 October 2024 (SP Paper 658)

Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee, 6th Report, 2024 (Session 6): Subordinate Legislation considered by the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee on 8 October 2024 (SP Paper 659)

### **Subordinate Legislation**

#### **Affirmative Instruments**

The following instrument was withdrawn on 9 October 2024—

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2024 [draft]

#### **Other Documents**

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 9 October 2024 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

**Nuclear Decommissioning Authority Annual Report and Accounts 2023-24 (SG/2024/124)** laid under Section 14 (8) of the Energy Act 2004 and Section 26 (11) of the Energy Act 2004



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