

Thursday 20 March 2025

# Business Bulletin

*Iris Ghnothaichean*



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Royal Assent

The Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2025 received Royal Assent on 19 March 2025.

## Today's Business

### Meeting of the Parliament

**11:40 am** Parliamentary Bureau Motions

**11:40 am** General Questions

**12:00 pm** First Minister's Questions

**followed by** Members' Business — S6M-16434 Michael Matheson: Awareness of Criminal Exploitation of Children

**2:15 pm** Parliamentary Bureau Motions

**2:15 pm** Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body Questions

**2:30 pm** Portfolio Questions  
Education and Skills

**followed by** Rural Affairs and Islands  
Committee Debate: Salmon Farming in  
Scotland

**followed by** Urgent Question: Stephen Kerr:  
To ask the Scottish Government what its  
response is to the Project Willow report.

**followed by** Business Motions

**followed by** Parliamentary Bureau Motions

**5:00 pm** Decision Time

### Committee Meetings

**9:00am** Social Justice and Social Security  
Committee

**9:00am** Standards, Procedures and Public  
Appointments Committee

**9:30am** Constitution, Europe, External Affairs  
and Culture Committee

**9:30am** SPCB Supported Bodies Landscape  
Review Committee

## Meeting of the Parliament

### 11:40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

### 11:40 am General Questions

- 1. Mark Ruskell:** To ask the Scottish Government when it will conclude its assessment of the case for a new rail station at Newburgh. ([S6O-04458](#))
- 2. Rona Mackay:** To ask the Scottish Government what the estimated cost would be of permanently extending free rail travel to companions of Blind Persons National Entitlement Card holders, in light of the campaigning by Sight Scotland and Deafblind Scotland. ([S6O-04459](#))
- 3. Jackie Dunbar:** To ask the Scottish Government how it plans to build on the reported successes of the Aberdeen City Region Deal, which is due to conclude its 10-year plan next year. ([S6O-04460](#))
- 4. Emma Harper:** [Not Lodged] ([S6O-04461](#))
- 5. James Dornan:** To ask the Scottish Government what measures are being taken to mitigate any impact on disability payment recipients in Scotland of reported UK Government benefit reductions. ([S6O-04462](#))
- 6. Annabelle Ewing:** To ask the Scottish Government when it last met the chief executive of Fife Council to discuss the housing emergency. ([S6O-04463](#))
- 7. Lorna Slater:** To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on the deposit return scheme, including whether it will be appointing a deposit management organisation on schedule in April 2025. ([S6O-04464](#))
- 8. Karen Adam:** To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to Aberdeenshire Council's decision to remove the nightwatch service at Macduff Harbour, in light of reported concerns about the economic impact of the decision. ([S6O-04465](#))

### 12:00 pm First Minister's Questions

- 1. Russell Findlay:** Question to be taken in Chamber. ([S6F-03914](#))
- 2. Anas Sarwar:** Question to be taken in Chamber. ([S6F-03915](#))
- 3. Alex Cole-Hamilton:** To ask the First Minister when the Cabinet will next meet. ([S6F-03919](#))
- 4. Michelle Thomson:** To ask the First Minister what assessment the Scottish Government has made of the recent *UK Living Standards Review 2025*, from the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, and any implications for its work to grow Scotland's economy. ([S6F-03926](#))
- 5. Rachael Hamilton:** To ask the First Minister how the Scottish Government is marking Endometriosis Awareness Month. ([S6F-03924](#))
- 6. Kevin Stewart:** To ask the First Minister what action the Scottish Government is taking to tackle Islamophobia in Scotland, in light of reports of an attack on a mosque in Aberdeen at the weekend. ([S6F-03920](#))

**followed by Members' Business  
Debate on the subject of—**

**[S6M-16434](#) Michael Matheson: Awareness of Criminal Exploitation of Children**—That the Parliament welcomes the recent reports of Professor Alexis Jay and Action for Children, and the charity's service provision, which highlight the issue of criminal exploitation of children; considers that the testimony from exploited young people, Action for Children staff who support these young people, and other professionals connected with this work have described the harrowing and shocking experiences that children have encountered; understands that this issue hides in plain sight and that criminal exploitation of children can take place anywhere across Scotland, including in the Falkirk West constituency, and can happen to anyone; believes that these reports offer an opportunity to raise awareness of this important topic with members of the public, parliamentarians and decision makers, while also creating the chance to explore solutions to tackling this form of child abuse, and notes the belief that, in doing so, society can help to meet the aims and vision of The Promise, ensuring that Scotland does become the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up, where they feel loved, safe, respected and able to realise their full potential.

## 2:15 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

## 2:15 pm Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body Questions

**1. Paul Sweeney:** To ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, further to the answer to question S6W-34464, what its position is on whether MSPs should be able to participate in the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme, in addition to the Armed Forces Visits Programme, should they wish to do so, in light of it being a structured 15-day course with one of the armed services, and it also offering the opportunity to enrol on a Royal College of Defence Studies postgraduate degree level course in strategic leadership and international strategic studies, and it therefore being different in nature. ([S6O-04476](#))

**2. Patrick Harvie:** To ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body whether it will consider removing from its catering outlets any products made by companies identified by the UN Human Rights Office as being involved in activities related to illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. ([S6O-04478](#))

**3. John Mason:** To ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body what information it has on for what reason stamps that are issued in the Parliament's Post Office are not Scotland Country Definitive stamps by default. ([S6O-04474](#))

**4. Mark Ruskell:** To ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body what discussions it has had with the Scottish Parliamentary Pension Scheme trustees about investments in Tesla and any other companies that may conflict with the scheme's Statement of Investment Principles. ([S6O-04477](#)) R

**5. Ariane Burgess:** To ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body what measures it is taking to support any LGBTQ+ staff whose welfare may be negatively impacted by any increase in the use of language in the Chamber and committees that may be perceived as trans-exclusionary. ([S6O-04479](#))

**6. Rachael Hamilton:** To ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body what recent assessment it has made of the resources given to the Legislation team. ([S6O-04475](#))

## 2:30 pm Portfolio Questions

## Education and Skills

- 1. Jamie Halcro Johnston:** To ask the Scottish Government how it is ensuring that schools in the Highlands and Islands are safe learning environments for pupils and staff. ([S6O-04466](#))
- 2. Liam McArthur:** To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to ensure that there is adequate access to support in schools for children with additional support needs in island areas, including the Orkney constituency. ([S6O-04467](#))
- 3. Evelyn Tweed:** To ask the Scottish Government how it supports schools to ensure that pupils with additional support needs can access learning environments that meet their needs without being excluded from activities or isolated from their peers. ([S6O-04468](#))
- 4. Clare Adamson:** To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to ensure that local authorities provide co-ordinated support plans for pupils who need extra support. ([S6O-04469](#))
- 5. Audrey Nicoll:** To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on the action being taken to support maths learning in secondary schools. ([S6O-04470](#))
- 6. Fulton MacGregor:** To ask the Scottish Government what support there is for the parents or guardians of children and young people with additional support needs who require a specific school placement. ([S6O-04471](#))
- 7. Elena Whitham:** To ask the Scottish Government what work it is carrying out with local authorities regarding the wellbeing of school pupils and staff. ([S6O-04472](#))
- 8. Willie Coffey:** To ask the Scottish Government what impact the \*Scottish\* Digital Academy is having on improving digital skills in Scotland. ([S6O-04473](#))

## followed by Rural Affairs and Islands Committee Debate: Salmon Farming in Scotland

[S6M-16852](#) **Finlay Carson on behalf of the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee: Salmon Farming in Scotland**—That the Parliament notes the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee's 1st Report, 2025 (Session 6), *Follow-up inquiry into salmon farming in Scotland* (SP Paper 720).

followed by Urgent Question: **Stephen Kerr: To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the Project Willow report.**

## followed by Business Motions

## followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

## 5:00 pm Decision Time

## Committee Meetings

All meetings take place in the Scottish Parliament, unless otherwise specified.

### Social Justice and Social Security Committee 9th Meeting, 2025

The Committee will meet at 9:00 am in T4.40-CR2 The Fairfax Somerville Room

1. **Decision on taking business in private:** The Committee will decide whether to take item 4 in private.
2. **Subordinate legislation:** The Committee will consider the following negative instrument—  
[Council Tax Reduction and Council Tax \(Discounts\) \(Miscellaneous Amendment\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2025 \(SSI 2025/55\)](#)
3. **Housing (Scotland) Bill:** The Committee will consider the Bill at Stage 2.
4. **Work programme:** The Committee will consider its approach to developing its work programme.

### Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee 4th Meeting, 2025

The Committee will meet at 9:00 am in T4.60-CR6 The Livingstone Room

1. **Decision on taking business in private:** The Committee will decide whether to take items 3, 4 and 5 in private.
2. **Committee effectiveness:** The Committee will take evidence, in a roundtable discussion, from—  
Gemma Diamond, Director of Innovation and Transformation, Audit Scotland;  
Dr Marc Geddes, Senior Lecturer in Politics, University of Edinburgh;  
Sir David Natzler KCB, Clerk of the House of Commons 2015-2019, Clerk of Committees 2008-09 and Clerk to the House of Commons Reform Committee (the Wright Committee) 2009-10;  
Professor Meg Russell, Director, Constitution Unit, University College London;  
Brian Taylor, Former Political Editor BBC Scotland, Columnist The Herald.
3. **Evidence Session:** The Committee will consider the evidence it heard earlier under agenda item 2.
4. **Code of Conduct Rule Changes:** The Committee will consider draft Code of Conduct Rule changes.
5. **Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016:** The Committee will consider a note from the Clerk.

### Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee 10th Meeting, 2025

The Committee will meet at 9:30 am in TG.40-CR1 The Burns Room

1. **Decision on taking business in private:** The Committee will decide whether to take item 3 in private.
2. **Review of the UK EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement Inquiry: Part 2:** The Committee will take evidence from—  
Angus Robertson, Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture,  
Elliot Robertson, Head of EU Secretariat, External Affairs, Dr Frank Möeschler, Head of

Research, EU Office, and Rachel Sunderland, Deputy Director, Population and Migration, Scottish Government.

3. **Evidence Session:** The Committee will consider the evidence it heard earlier under agenda item 2

### **SPCB Supported Bodies Landscape Review Committee 7th Meeting, 2025**

The Committee will meet at 9:30 am in T1.60-CR4 The Clerk Maxwell Room

1. **Decision on taking business in private:** The Committee will decide whether to take item 3 in private.
2. **SPCB supported bodies landscape review:** The Committee will take evidence from—  
Dr Ian Elliott, Senior Lecturer in Public Administration, University of Glasgow;  
Dr Matthew Gill, Programme Director, Institute for Government;  
Dr Ruth Lamont, Reader in Child and Family Law, University of Manchester; UKRI Thematic Research Lead, UK Parliament;  
Alison Payne, Research Director, Reform Scotland.
3. **Correspondence:** The Committee will consider correspondence from the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee.
4. **SPCB supported bodies landscape review (in private):** The Committee will consider correspondence from the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee.

## Contacts for Further Information

All telephone numbers 0131 348 XXXX

Web site: <https://www.parliament.scot>

General Enquiries	5000
Chamber Desk (Motions and Questions)	5199
Parliamentary Business Team (Chamber, Parliamentary Bureau)	5187
Legislation Team	5277
Non-Government Bills Unit (NGBU)	6124

Committee web sites at:

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/committees>

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