



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 2, No. 47, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 23 November 2022

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

- 1. Urgent Question:** An urgent question, to ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the UK Supreme Court's ruling on the legality of an independence referendum bill, was answered by the Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture (Angus Robertson).
- 2. Portfolio Questions:** Questions on Covid-19 Recovery and Parliamentary Business and then Finance and the Economy were answered by a Cabinet Secretary and Ministers.
- 3. Protecting Primary Care:** Jackie Baillie moved S6M-06899—That the Parliament notes the recent warnings by BMA Scotland about the pressures on general practice, with 81% of practices surveyed reporting that demand was exceeding capacity and it estimating that an extra 1,000 whole time equivalent (WTE) GPs are needed now; understands that not all practices have access to full multi-disciplinary teams, limiting GPs' ability to focus on the patients that need them most, and therefore regrets the Scottish Government's decision to cut £65 million from primary care services and £5 million from the Sustainability Payment to practices; considers that this diminishes the ability of GPs to respond to winter pressures and will exacerbate the crisis in primary care, with serious consequences for staff and patients and the wider NHS this winter; is alarmed by reports that NHS board chief executives are considering the implementation of a two-tier system of access within the NHS, and considers this to be privatisation through the back door; remains committed to the founding principle of the NHS of being freely available at the point of need; calls on the Scottish Government to reconsider the cuts to primary

care and to give an urgent update on where the 800 additional GPs it pledged in 2017 will be located, and regrets that the Scottish National Party administration is considering the privatisation of the NHS in Scotland.

The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care (Humza Yousaf) moved amendment S6M-06899.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-06899 in the name of Jackie Baillie (Protecting Primary Care), leave out from "notes" to end and insert "recognises the pressures on primary care and right across the NHS and social care due to the effects of Brexit, the global pandemic and the cost of living crisis; notes that the overriding priority for the delivery of healthcare must be to deliver the best outcomes for patients; supports the actions of the Scottish Government to abolish prescription charges and recognises that, under the current administration, they will remain free for all; believes that prescription charges are a tax on illness and that healthcare must be based on the clinical needs of patients and not their ability to pay; recognises that primary care provision extends beyond the work of general practice and welcomes that free eye care tests continue to be protected, that dental charges have been abolished for young people, and that, through NHS Pharmacy First, more first-line care is being provided for free through community pharmacies; recognises, in general practice, that Scotland currently has a record high level of GPs and that Scotland has proportionately more GPs than any other nation in the UK; welcomes that efforts to recruit 800 additional GPs by 2027 are on track, with 277 already in post by 2021; understands that, to support GP practices, over 3,220 multidisciplinary healthcare professionals have been recruited since 2018; acknowledges that primary care funding has increased again in the current financial year and understands that integration joint board reserves provided for primary care are to be utilised for primary care; recalls that it was the current administration that took the legislative steps necessary to stop the privatisation and commercialisation of GP services that was permitted by the previous Labour-led administration; further recalls that it was the current administration that brought Stracathro back into the NHS after its work was put into private hands by the previous Labour-led administration, and shares the Scottish Government's unswerving commitment to the founding principles of the NHS to be publicly owned, publicly operated and free at the point of need."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 67, Against 54, Abstentions 0)

Sandesh Gulhane moved amendment S6M-06899.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-06899 in the name of Jackie Baillie (Protecting Primary Care), insert at end ", and finds it extremely concerning that there are siloed conversations within the Scottish Government occurring without the Chief Medical Officer or Chief Nursing Officer, and that there is a lack of clinical input into political decision-making, leading to Scottish Government announcements being divorced from the reality of life and purpose of the service."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 53, Against 67, Abstentions 0).

The motion was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 66, Against 55, Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament recognises the pressures on primary care and right across the NHS and social care due to the effects of Brexit, the global pandemic and the cost of living crisis; notes that the overriding priority for the delivery of healthcare must be to deliver the best outcomes for patients; supports the actions of the Scottish Government to abolish prescription charges and recognises that, under the current administration, they will remain free for all; believes that prescription charges are a tax on illness and that healthcare must be based on the clinical needs of patients and not their ability to pay; recognises that primary care provision extends beyond the work of general practice and welcomes that free eye care tests continue to be protected, that dental charges have been abolished for young people, and that, through NHS Pharmacy First, more first-line care is being provided for free through community pharmacies; recognises, in general practice, that Scotland currently has a record high level of GPs and that Scotland has proportionately more GPs than any other nation in the UK; welcomes that efforts to recruit 800 additional GPs by 2027 are on track, with 277 already in post by 2021; understands that, to support GP practices, over 3,220 multidisciplinary healthcare professionals have been recruited since 2018; acknowledges that primary care funding has increased again in the current financial year and understands that integration joint board reserves provided for primary care are to be utilised for primary care; recalls that it was the current administration that took the legislative steps necessary to stop the privatisation and commercialisation of GP services that was permitted by the previous Labour-led administration; further recalls that it was the current administration that brought Stracathro back into the NHS after its work was put into private hands by the previous Labour-led administration, and shares the Scottish Government's unswerving commitment to the founding principles of the NHS to be publicly owned, publicly operated and free at the point of need.

4. Cost of Living: Mortgage Rescue Scheme: Mark Griffin moved S6M-06898—That the Parliament notes the increase in mortgage costs due to the sharp rise in interest rates following the UK Government's disastrous mini-budget; believes that, combined with wider cost of living pressures, higher mortgage repayments will push some households into poverty and that action is needed to prevent a spike in arrears and homelessness; recognises that the Scottish Government's Mortgage to Shared Equity scheme has not had a successful application since 2015-16, and calls for the Scottish Government to relaunch and revamp the scheme so that it is not limited to only those with existing high levels of equity, that eligibility thresholds reflect true house price values and that there is a maximum application turnaround time of two months.

The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government (Shona Robison) moved amendment S6M-06898.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-06898 in the name of Mark Griffin (Cost of Living: Mortgage Rescue Scheme), leave out from "Scottish Government's" to end and insert "Home Owners' Support Fund is a demand-led mortgage rescue programme to support low-income homeowners facing difficulty meeting payments to stay in their property through moving to either a rent or shared-equity scheme; notes that the Scottish Government is already reviewing the eligibility criteria of the Fund in light of the cost of living crisis; acknowledges the actions taken by the Scottish Government to also support people in the rented sector during the current cost crisis through the actions in the Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) (Scotland) Act 2022 and through up to £86.6 million in Discretionary Housing Support; calls on the UK Government to ensure that there is an adequate social security net to support people in time of hardship, including homeowners with mortgages; believes that the current nine-month wait for loan-only support with mortgages within Universal Credit is too long, and agrees that this is one of the many areas where Universal Credit is not fit for purpose."

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 67, Against 54, Abstentions 0).

Miles Briggs moved amendment S6M-06898.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-06898 in the name of Mark Griffin (Cost of Living: Mortgage Rescue Scheme), leave out from "following" to end and insert "due to Vladimir Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine and the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic; welcomes the billions of pounds in cost of living support packages announced by the UK Government to support the most vulnerable households during this difficult period; recognises that Scottish Government decisions have contributed to the cost of living crisis by failing to address the housing crisis that exists in Scotland; condemns the Scottish Government for scrapping the Help to Buy scheme that helped prospective homeowners to get on the property ladder, and calls on the Scottish Government to reintroduce a Help to Buy scheme and develop a Rent to Buy scheme."

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 30, Against 91, Abstentions 0).

The motion was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 72, Against 49, Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament notes the increase in mortgage costs due to the sharp rise in interest rates following the UK Government's disastrous mini-budget; believes that, combined with wider cost of living pressures, higher mortgage repayments will push some households into poverty and that action is needed to prevent a spike in arrears and homelessness; recognises that the Home

Owners' Support Fund is a demand-led mortgage rescue programme to support low-income homeowners facing difficulty meeting payments to stay in their property through moving to either a rent or shared-equity scheme; notes that the Scottish Government is already reviewing the eligibility criteria of the Fund in light of the cost of living crisis; acknowledges the actions taken by the Scottish Government to also support people in the rented sector during the current cost crisis through the actions in the Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) (Scotland) Act 2022 and through up to £86.6 million in Discretionary Housing Support; calls on the UK Government to ensure that there is an adequate social security net to support people in time of hardship, including homeowners with mortgages; believes that the current nine-month wait for loan-only support with mortgages within Universal Credit is too long, and agrees that this is one of the many areas where Universal Credit is not fit for purpose.

5. Ministerial Statement: The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care (Humza Yousaf) made a statement and answered questions on NHS Forth Valley Update.

6. Business Programme: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S6M-06914—That the Parliament agrees—

(a) the following programme of business—

Tuesday 29 November 2022

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Scottish Government Debate: EU Retained Law

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 30 November 2022

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

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

followed by Scottish Government Debate: Recognising the Vital Role Men Must Play in Challenging and Eradicating Violence Against Women and Girls

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 1 December 2022

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, Housing and Local Government

followed by Scottish Government Debate: World Aids Day

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 6 December 2022

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Scottish Government Business

followed by Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee Debate:

Proxy Voting

followed by Committee Announcements

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 7 December 2022

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions: Constitution, External Affairs and Culture; Justice and Veterans

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 8 December 2022

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: Education and Skills

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 November 2022, 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.

7. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 3 and 4 as noted above.

8. Recognising the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women: The Parliament debated S6M-06299 in the name of Pam Gosal— That the Parliament recognises the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on 25 November, and the 16 Days of Activism following this, which run from 25 November to 10 December 2022, Human Rights Day; recognises that the 2022 global theme is "UNITE! Activism to end violence against women and girls"; notes the view that this is an opportunity to come together with the global women's

movement to call for an end to gender-based violence; further notes reports that the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG); believes that VAWG remains the most pervasive human rights violation worldwide; understands that it affects more than an estimated 1 in 3 women; notes that it is estimated that on average a woman or girl is killed by someone in her own family every 11 minutes across the globe; welcomes that, during the pandemic, UN Women, women's rights organisations and others acted with urgency to secure policy changes aimed at eradicating VAWG; believes that there is growing evidence that VAWG is preventable; commends the hard work of organisations and individuals that aim to eradicate any and all forms of violence against women, and notes the view that Parliament should do everything in its power to contribute to the work to stop violence against women and girls.

9. Motion without Notice: Pam Gosal moved without notice that, under Rule 8.14.3, the debate be extended by up to 30 minutes. The motion was agreed to.

The meeting closed at 7.27 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
23 November 2022

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

Subordinate Legislation

Negative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 23 November 2022 and is subject to the negative procedure—

Processed Cereal-based Foods and Baby Foods for Infants and Young Children (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2022 (SSI 2022/342)
laid under section 48(3) of the Food Safety Act 1990

Legislative Consent Memorandum

The following memorandum was lodged on 23 November 2022—

Keith Brown, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans: Legislative Consent Memorandum on the Public Order Bill (UK Parliament legislation) (LCM-S6-30)

Other Documents

The following document was laid before the Parliament on 23 November 2022 and is not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman: Compendium of Case Reports and discontinued investigations for November 2022 (SPSO/2022/11) laid under Sections 15(1) and 15(1A) of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002

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