



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 2, No. 88, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Tuesday 21 March 2023

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

- 1. Time for Reflection:** Revd Heller Gonzalez, Rector, St Augustine's Scottish Episcopal Church in Dumbarton, and Novice Brother of the Anglican Order of Cistercians, led Time for Reflection.
- 2. Topical Questions:** Questions were answered by Ministers.
- 3. Ministerial Statement:** The Minister for Drugs Policy (Angela Constance) made a statement and answered questions on Improving Care for People with Co-occurring Mental Health and Substance Use Conditions.
- 4. Expansion of Vocational and Technical Qualifications in Scotland's Secondary Schools:** The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (Shirley-Anne Somerville) moved S6M-08291—That the Parliament recognises the wide range of courses, including vocational and technical qualifications, on offer to Scotland's senior phase learners, providing them with a breadth of options to develop their abilities and aspirations in order to reach their full potential; welcomes that Scotland's secondary school learners are now undertaking a much wider range of courses than ever before, with 27.2% of school leavers in 2021-22 gaining vocational and technical qualifications at SCQF Level 5 and above, compared with just 7.3% in 2013-14; acknowledges that young people undertaking vocational and technical courses and qualifications, often facilitated through school-college partnerships, reflects the strengths of the Curriculum for Excellence and provides learners with the best chance of success in further learning, life and work; celebrates that a record number of young people were in work, training or further study after leaving school in

2022, with 95.7% of school leavers in a positive destination three months after leaving school; acknowledges the significant impact of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), Scotland's youth employment strategy, which was launched in 2014; pays thanks to the DYW regional groups and DYW school coordinators for their work in increasing opportunities for, and participation in, work-based learning for young people; recognises that each individual's learner pathway is different and should be celebrated in equal measure, and commends teachers, schools, colleges, universities, employers and third sector organisations across Scotland for their commitment to improving the opportunities for young people to undertake vocational and professional qualifications in Scotland.

Stephen Kerr moved amendment S6M-08291.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-08291 in the name of Shirley-Anne Somerville (Expansion of Vocational and Technical Qualifications in Scotland's Secondary Schools), insert at end “; urges the Scottish Government to take immediate steps to address the shortage of teachers in STEM subjects; notes the verdict of the recent report published by the University of Stirling and the Nuffield Foundation, co-authored by Marina Shapira, Mark Priestley, Tracey Pease-Hughes, Camilla Barnett and Michelle Richie, titled Choice, Attainment and Positive Destinations: Exploring the Impact of Curriculum Policy Change on Young People, on the negative consequences for young people from curriculum narrowing in relation to attainment, transitions, the subsequent study in school, and destinations beyond school; acknowledges that the Scottish Government Social Research report on The Impact of Scotland's Developing the Young Workforce Strategy on Education calls for teachers to be afforded the capacity to develop and implement work-based learning and feel confident to build in work-based learning across the curriculum, and calls on the Scottish Government to support a national campaign to raise awareness of the support available through DYW, involving the full range of national employer organisations, and a common core set of services and opportunities, outlining the advantages of participation for employers; calls on the Scottish Government to provide further support to employers to engage with young people with additional support needs to create employment opportunities; believes that the Scottish Government should tackle the disparity of esteem between different post-school pathways by raising awareness of the range of qualifications and routes to work that are valued by employers; recommends that the Scottish Government works with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and the DYW programme to ensure the creation of person-centred digital careers services, leading to a flexible and personalised career service offer, and urges the Scottish Government to use its forthcoming Purposes and Principles statement to provide clear strategic direction to Scotland's colleges as to what it expects and needs colleges to deliver.

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 53, Against 64, Abstentions 0).

Michael Marra moved amendment S6M-08291.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-08291 in the name of Shirley-Anne Somerville (Expansion of Vocational and Technical Qualifications in Scotland's Secondary Schools), insert at end “; notes with concern the findings of the recent report published by the University of Stirling and the Nuffield Foundation, which found that curriculum narrowing and a reduced choice of school subjects under the Curriculum for Excellence is affecting outcomes for Scotland's young people, with those attending schools in areas of high deprivation most affected; understands that broadening learning and training opportunities for Scotland's pupils cannot happen effectively without proper resourcing from the Scottish Government; recognises the important role that colleges play as providers of vocational and technical training opportunities and considers this role to be even more important considering the narrowing of subject provision in schools; calls on the Scottish Government to provide urgent clarity on whether additional resources for colleges in the 2023-24 budget will be mainstreamed or for what purposes this funding can be used; further calls on the Scottish Government to urgently publish the promised Purpose and Principles of Post-School Education, Research and Skills report to afford colleges strategic direction at a time when they are considering budget decisions, and calls on the Scottish Government to deliver genuine reform to Scotland's education system, ensuring that all young people have access to vocational qualifications in a school setting, and delivering parity of esteem between academic and vocational qualifications in Scotland.

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 54, Against 65, Abstentions 0).

The motion was agreed to (DT).

5. Decision Time: The Parliament took a decision on item 4 as noted above.

6. Road Improvements and the Dualling of the A9: The Parliament debated S6M-06478 in the name of Jamie Halcro Johnston—That the Parliament notes with concern the number of incidents that have taken place on the A9 over recent months and led to road closures, and injuries and fatalities; recognises the Scottish Government's commitments to dual the A9 from Perth to Inverness by 2025, which stand alongside other commitments to road improvements, such as dualling of the A96 by 2030, to support road safety, and provide the economic advantages of connectivity; notes the view that commitments and proposals on investment in the road network have not progressed at pace in recent years and that questions have been raised about the commitment of the Scottish Government to these proposals following the agreement between the Scottish Government and the Scottish Green Party Parliamentary Group; acknowledges the belief that work on the A9, in particular, is clearly not on schedule, and notes the calls for the Scottish Government to reaffirm these commitments on the basis of an updated and achievable timetable that should be presented to the Parliament as soon as possible, in order to reassure communities in the Highlands and Islands and across other regions that committed investment will take place.

7. Motion without Notice: Jamie Halcro Johnston 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 6.06 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
21 March 2023

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

Committee Reports

The following reports were published on 17 March 2023—

Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee, 5th Report, 2023 (Session 6):
Report on the Legislative Consent Memorandum and Supplementary
Legislative Consent Memorandum on the Energy Bill (UK Parliament
legislation) (SP Paper 340)

Criminal Justice Committee, 4th Report, 2023 (Session 6): The Crime
(International Co-operation) Act 2003 (Designation of Participating Countries)
(Scotland) Order 2023 [draft] (SP Paper 342)

Finance and Public Administration Committee, 4th Report, 2023 (Session 6):
Subordinate Legislation: The Budget (Scotland) Act 2022 Amendment (No.2)
Regulations 2023 (SP Paper 343)

Subordinate Legislation

Negative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 20 March 2023 and is
subject to the negative procedure—

Scottish Local Government Elections Amendment Regulations 2023 (SSI 2023/81)
laid under section 2(3)(b) of the Scottish Local Government Elections
(Candidacy Rights of Foreign Nationals) Act 2022

Laid Only Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 17 March 2023 and is not
subject to any parliamentary procedure—

Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 (Commencement No. 2) Regulations 2023 (SSI
2023/79 (C. 9))
laid under section 30(2) of the Interpretation and Legislative Reform
(Scotland) Act 2010

Other Documents

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 20 March 2023 and are
not subject to parliamentary procedure—

**Annual Report of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner - Statement by the
Prime Minister on Monday 20 March (SG/2023/7)** laid under Section 234(8) of the
Investigatory Powers Act 2016

Annual Report of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner 2021 (SG/2023/6)
laid under Section 234(8) of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016

Ayrshire College Board of Management Report and Financial Statements For the year ended 31 July 2022 (SG/2023/47) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

Borders College Annual Report and Financial Statements 2021-22 SG/2023/48 laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

City of Glasgow College Annual Report 2021-22 (SG/2023/49) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

Dundee and Angus College Report and Financial Statements For the year ended 31 July 2022 (SG/2023/51) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

Dumfries and Galloway College Annual Report and Financial Statements for the period 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2022 (SG/2023/50) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 21 March 2023 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Annual Report on the operation of the UK Internal Market 2022-2023 (OIM/2023/01) laid under section 33(5) of the United Kingdom Internal Market Act 2020

Edinburgh College Annual Report & Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2022 (SG/2023/52) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

Fife College Annual Accounts 2021-22 (SG/2023/53) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

Forth Valley College of Further and Higher Education Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2022 (SG/2023/54) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

Glasgow Clyde College Annual Report and Financial Statements for Year Ending 31 July 2022 (SG/2023/55) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

Glasgow Colleges' Regional Board Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements 2021-22 (SG/2023/56) laid under Section 22(5) of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000

Periodic Report on the UK Internal Market regime (OIM/2023/02) laid under section 33(6) of the United Kingdom Internal Market Act 2020

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