



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 3, No. 108, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Thursday 9 May 2024

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

The meeting opened at 11.40 am.

1. General Questions: Questions were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.

2. First Minister's Questions: Questions were answered by the First Minister (John Swinney).

3. Shining a Light on Domestic Abuse in LGBT+ History Month: The Parliament debated S6M-12342 in the name of Collette Stevenson—That the Parliament condemns domestic abuse in all its forms; understands that domestic abuse often consists of intimate partner violence (IPV), and that this is defined by the World Health Organization as behaviours including sexual abuse, violence, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours perpetrated by a current or former intimate partner; is concerned by Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) statistics showing that 30,139 charges were reported to COPFS with a domestic abuse identifier in 2022-23; notes that these figures show that the accused was male in 86% of these cases; understands that Police Scotland statistics for 2021-22 show that 1,691 domestic abuse incidents were recorded with same-sex victims and suspected perpetrators, representing around 3.5% of incidents in which gender was recorded, but that the data is not broken down for transgender people; believes that these statistics are a stark reminder of what it considers to be the unacceptable levels of domestic abuse in Scotland, but considers that these likely underestimate the scale of LGBTQ+ domestic abuse; understands that research suggests that 30% to 45% of LGBTQ+ people will ever experience IPV, which, it believes, is in line with cisgender women in heterosexual relationships; notes the

view that structural inequalities could be prohibiting LGBTQ+ victims of domestic abuse from coming forward or receiving the support that it considers they deserve from services; acknowledges that the theme of LGBT+ History Month 2024, "Medicine: #UnderTheScope", aims to showcase the work of LGBT+ healthcare staff and highlight what it sees as the health inequalities experienced by LGBTQ+ people today; believes that domestic abuse is a public health issue; considers that the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 strengthened the law to protect people in East Kilbride and across Scotland against abusive behaviour, including physical and psychological abuse, as well as coercive control; recognises the Scottish Government's Equally Safe strategy to tackle violence against women and girls; notes the calls for a national LGBTQ+ domestic abuse policy, with specific outcomes and measures to help the community, including ensuring that services and staff have the right procedures and training to ensure that LGBTQ+ people get appropriate support; further notes the belief that such a policy could be aligned with or supplementary to Equally Safe, which, it considers, offers a good framework for such a policy; notes reports that LGBTQ+ people can face barriers in accessing services, including potential stigma, misunderstanding of LGBTQ+ relationships, and what it considers to be default heterosexual norms; further notes the calls for a comprehensive analysis to identify gaps in domestic abuse service provision for LGBTQ+ individuals, to ensure routine risk assessment processes are more inclusive for LGBTQ+ experiences, and to ensure that LGBTQ+ people are considered and included in sexual violence and domestic abuse courses; acknowledges that a roundtable on LGBTQ+ IPV was held in the Parliament on 8 February 2024, with stakeholders including members of the LGBTQ+ community and representatives from the third sector, local authorities and Police Scotland; understands that this roundtable for the wider LGBTQ+ community builds on previous research by academics in Scotland, including Dr Steven Maxwell, from the University of Glasgow, and Professor Jamie Frankis, from Glasgow Caledonian University, into same-sex male relationship IPV; believes that LGBTQ+ people experiencing domestic abuse should not be made to feel invisible, and notes that people who have experienced domestic abuse are encouraged to seek the support to which they are entitled.

4. Appointment of Scottish Ministers: The First Minister (John Swinney) moved S6M-13154—That the Parliament agrees that Kate Forbes be appointed as a Scottish Minister.

The motion was agreed to by division (For 63, Against 57, Abstentions 3).

5. Appointment of junior Scottish Ministers: The First Minister (John Swinney) moved S6M-13155—That the Parliament agrees that Ivan McKee be appointed as a junior Scottish Minister.

The motion was agreed to (For 63, Against 49, Abstentions 10).

6. Data Protection and Digital Information Bill - UK Legislation: The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice (Shirley-Anne Somerville) moved S6M-13129—That the Parliament agrees that the relevant provisions in the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill, introduced in the House of Commons on 8 March 2023 and

subsequently amended, so far as these matters fall within the legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament should be considered by the UK Parliament.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

7. Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill: Christine Grahame moved S6M-12991—That the Parliament agrees to the general principles of the Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

8. Appointments of the Chair and Commissioners to the Poverty and Inequality Commission: The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice (Shirley-Anne Somerville) moved S6M-13131—That the Parliament notes the Social Justice and Social Security Committee's consideration and recommendation of seven appointments to the Poverty and Inequality Commission at its meeting on 18 April 2024, and, in accordance with the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017, approves the appointment by the Scottish Ministers of Peter Cawston, Kim Dams, Taliah Drayak, Louise Hunter, Ross McQueenie and Rami Okasha as members of the Poverty and Inequality Commission for the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2028, and of Paul Fletcher as a member for the period from 1 December 2024 to 30 June 2028, and further notes the Committee's consideration and recommendation of the extension of the short-term appointments by the Scottish Ministers of Professor Stephen Sinclair as Chair of the Poverty and Inequality Commission for the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2028, and of Professor Suzanne Fitzpatrick as a member of the Poverty and Inequality Commission for the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2028.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

9. Motion Without Notice: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved without notice that, under Rule 11.2.4, Decision Time be brought forward to 4.50pm.

The motion was agreed to.

10. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 6, 7 and 8 as noted above.

The meeting closed at 4.51 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
9 May 2024

Appendix

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

Subordinate Legislation

Negative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 9 May 2024 and is subject to the negative procedure—

Education (Fees and Student Support) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2024 (SSI 2024/140)

laid under section 133(2) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and section 1 of the Education (Fees and Awards) Act 1983

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