



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Vol. 3, No. 11 Session 4

Meeting of the Parliament

Wednesday 5 June 2013

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

The meeting opened at 2.00 pm.

1. Portfolio Questions: Questions on Justice and Law Officers, and Rural Affairs and the Environment were answered by Cabinet Secretaries, Ministers and Scottish Law Officers.

2. Land Reform: Claire Baker moved S4M-06845—That the Parliament notes the publication of the Land Reform Review Group’s interim report; recognises that the Land Reform Review Group was appointed by the Scottish Government to offer a “radical review of land reform”; believes that ownership of land is an economic and social issue; recognises that the Scottish Government has the power to deliver further land reform now; supports greater diversification of land ownership in Scotland, and calls on the Scottish Government to demonstrate a commitment to radical and bold land reform.

The Minister for Environment and Climate Change (Paul Wheelhouse) moved amendment S4M-06845.2 to motion S4M-06845—

After first “Scottish Government” insert—

“as an advisory group independent of Scottish ministers”.

After debate, the amendment was agreed to.

Alex Fergusson moved amendment S4M-06845.1 to motion S4M-06845—

Leave out from second “Land Reform Review Group” to end and insert—

“independent group is looking at the future of land ownership and management in Scotland with a view to enabling communities to benefit from further land reform; understands that the report simply ends phase one of the process and that much work still remains to be done; agrees that, while community ownership is to be encouraged, a willing buyer and willing seller are paramount, and welcomes the group’s decision not to examine land tenancy issues, which are currently being scrutinised by the Tenant Farming Forum.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 12, Against 98, Abstentions 0).

The motion, as amended, was then agreed to ((DT) by division: For 98, Against 12, Abstentions 0).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—That the Parliament notes the publication of the Land Reform Review Group’s interim report; recognises that the Land Reform Review Group was appointed by the Scottish Government as an advisory group independent of Scottish ministers to offer a “radical review of land reform”; believes that ownership of land is an economic and social issue; recognises that the Scottish Government has the power to deliver further land reform now; supports greater diversification of land ownership in Scotland, and calls on the Scottish Government to demonstrate a commitment to radical and bold land reform.

3. Student Support: Hugh Henry moved S4M-06843—That the Parliament notes the introduction of the minimum income guarantee for students; notes that grants for lower-income students are being cut; believes that lower-income students are being financially disadvantaged in Scotland compared to elsewhere in the UK; does not accept that lower-income students should be disadvantaged in order to provide support for those from better-off households, and believes that the cuts to grants for lower-income students should be reversed in order to address inequality in access to higher education in Scotland.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning (Michael Russell) moved amendment S4M-06843.2 to motion S4M-06843—

Leave out from first “notes” to end and insert—

“believes that access to university should be based on ability to learn, not ability to pay; further believes that neither upfront nor backdoor tuition fees have any place in Scotland; welcomes the removal of tuition fees, saving around 125,000 students up to £27,000 compared with England; further welcomes the introduction of the minimum income guarantee to give the poorest students a minimum income of £7,250 per year in maintenance support from 2013-14 and the increase in the minimum level of student loan to £4,500 a year for every eligible student, and agrees with comments by the National Union of Students Scotland that Scotland has ‘the best support package in the whole of the UK’.”

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 65, Against 45, Abstentions 0).

Murdo Fraser moved amendment S4M-06843.1 to motion S4M-06843—

Insert at end—

“, and believes that both better student support and improvements in the school education system for those from disadvantaged backgrounds are essential if Scotland is to tackle its relatively poor record of access to higher education from this group”.

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 45, Against 63, Abstentions 2).

The motion, as amended, was then agreed to ((DT) by division: For 65, Against 44, Abstentions 1).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—That the Parliament believes that access to university should be based on ability to learn, not ability to pay; further believes that neither upfront nor backdoor tuition fees have any place in Scotland; welcomes the removal of tuition fees, saving around 125,000 students up to £27,000 compared with England; further welcomes the introduction of the minimum income guarantee to give the poorest students a minimum income of £7,250 per year in maintenance support from 2013-14 and the increase in the minimum level of student loan to £4,500 a year for every eligible student, and agrees with comments by the National Union of Students Scotland that Scotland has ‘the best support package in the whole of the UK’.

4. Business Motion: Joe FitzPatrick, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S4M-06861—That the Parliament agrees the following programme of business—

Tuesday 11 June 2013

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Ministerial Statement: Update on the Reform of the Common Fisheries Policy

followed by Scottish Government Debate: Supporting a Sporting Nation, Celebrating and Building on Scotland's Success in Youth Sport

followed by Legislative Consent Motion: Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill – UK Legislation

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 12 June 2013

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions
Health and Wellbeing

followed by Scottish Government Debate: Progress toward National Planning Framework 3 and the Scottish Planning Policy

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 13 June 2013

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

12.30 pm Members' Business

2.30 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.30 pm Ministerial Statement: Report of the Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education

followed by Scottish Government Debate: The Scottish Guardianship Service, a Celebration of Success

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

Tuesday 18 June 2013

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

followed by Topical Questions (if selected)

followed by Scottish Government Business

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Wednesday 19 June 2013

2.00 pm Parliamentary Bureau Motions

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions

Infrastructure, Investment and Cities;
Culture and External Affairs

followed by Scottish Government Business

followed by Business Motions

followed by Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

followed by Members' Business

Thursday 20 June 2013

11.40 am Parliamentary Bureau Motions

11.40 am General Questions

12.00 pm First Minister's Questions

12.30 pm Members' Business

The motion was agreed to.

5. Business Motion: Joe FitzPatrick, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S4M-06862—That the Parliament agrees that consideration of the Tribunals (Scotland) Bill at stage 1 be completed by 8 November 2013.

The motion was agreed to.

6. Designation of Lead Committee: Joe FitzPatrick, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S4M-06863—That the Parliament agrees that the Health and Sport Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill at stage 1.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

7. Approval of SSI: Joe FitzPatrick, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S4M-06864—That the Parliament agrees that the Public Services Reform (Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland etc.) Order 2013 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

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

9. Bank Branch Closures: The Parliament debated S4M-05922 in the name of John Mason—That the Parliament expresses deep disappointment in the Royal Bank of Scotland's (RBS) latest decision to close a number of branches across Scotland, including Gourrock and one of its two remaining branches in Glasgow Shettleston; considers that these proposals go against the wishes of many RBS

customers, particularly those in poorer areas who may not have easy access to internet and mobile banking, and finds a sense of irony in RBS' decision to turn its back on customers who it considers bailed it out after it found itself in serious financial difficulties.

The meeting closed at 5.40 pm.

P E Grice
Clerk of the Parliament
5 June 2013

Appendix

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

Committee Reports

The following report was published on 5 June 2013—

Justice Committee, 8th Report, 2013 (Session 4): Inquiry into the effectiveness of the provisions of the Title Conditions (Scotland) Act 2003 (SP Paper 338).

The following reports are being published on 6 June 2013—

Justice Committee, 9th Report, 2013 (Session 4): Children's Legal Assistance (Scotland) Regulations 2013 (SP Paper 339).

Education and Culture Committee, 8th Report, 2013 (Session 4): Report on Subordinate Legislation (SP Paper 340).

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