



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 5, No. 110, Session 5

Meeting of the Parliament

Thursday 18 March 2021

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

The meeting opened at 12.30 pm.

1. First Minister's Questions: Questions were answered by the First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon).

2. Committee Meeting Times: The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans (Graeme Dey), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved S5M-24423—That the Parliament agrees that, under Rule 12.3.3B of Standing Orders, the Committee on the Scottish Government Handling of Harassment Complaints can meet, if necessary, at the same time as a meeting of the Parliament on Thursday 18 March 2021.

The motion was agreed to.

3. Portfolio Questions: Questions on Economy, Fair Work and Culture were answered by a Cabinet Secretary and Ministers.

4. Local Government Finance (Scotland) Order 2021 [draft]: The Minister for Trade, Innovation and Public Finance (Ivan McKee) moved S5M-24395—That the Parliament agrees that the Local Government Finance (Scotland) Order 2021 [draft] be approved.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

5. National Mission to Reduce Drug Deaths and Harms: The Minister for Drugs Policy (Angela Constance) moved S5M-24396—That the Parliament recognises that almost 3,400 people in Scotland have lost their lives to drug misuse in the last three years; believes that this scale of loss of life is not only a tragedy on the friends and families left behind, but is also a mark of shame on the nation; notes the Scottish Government's proposal to lead a national mission to reduce drug deaths and harms, and to agree that this is a public health emergency requiring partnership working and concerted action at all levels of public life, and welcomes the announcement of significant increased funding to support this national mission to be invested in a range of areas that will have the biggest impact in getting individuals into treatment and keeping them alive.

Brian Whittle moved amendment S5M-24396.1—

As an amendment to motion S5M-24396 in the name of Angela Constance (National Mission to Reduce Drug Deaths and Harms), insert at end “; welcomes the Scottish Government's acknowledgement that more should have been done sooner to tackle Scotland's tragic rate of drug deaths; notes the Scottish Government's change in stance towards funding for residential rehabilitation and welcomes the additional £20 million of funding per year for facilities, which the Scottish Conservatives have repeatedly requested; believes that there needs to be more focus on long-term recovery programmes, including non-pharmaceutical and abstinence-based treatments, and calls for easier access to services and cross-portfolio working towards future prevention measures.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 43, Against 69, Abstentions 1).

James Kelly moved amendment S5M-24396.3—

As an amendment to motion S5M-24396 in the name of Angela Constance (National Mission to Reduce Drug Deaths and Harms), insert at end “; acknowledges that additional resources are necessary after years of funding cuts to services; supports the use of public health interventions such as safe consumption facilities to prevent overdoses and save lives; considers that the resources of the police and criminal justice system should be focused on preventing supply of harmful drugs in Scotland's communities and ensuring that vulnerable drug users are not exposed to unnecessary court action; notes that the scale of drugs deaths in Scotland is the highest in the UK, and believes that, as well as preventing deaths, there is a need to deliver improvements in treatment options and the availability of same-day treatment for those who seek help with substance misuse.”

After debate, the amendment was agreed to ((DT) by division: For 113, Against 1, Abstentions 0).

Liam McArthur moved amendment S5M-24396.2—

As an amendment to motion S5M-24396 in the name of Angela Constance (National Mission to Reduce Drug Deaths and Harms), insert at end “; calls on

the next Scottish administration to coordinate a plan for a Scotland-wide network of heroin-assisted treatment facilities, and agrees to work towards diverting people caught in possession of drugs for personal use into treatment and ceasing imprisonment in these cases, helping save lives.”

After debate, the amendment was agreed to (DT).

The motion, as amended, was then agreed to (DT).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—That the Parliament recognises that almost 3,400 people in Scotland have lost their lives to drug misuse in the last three years; believes that this scale of loss of life is not only a tragedy on the friends and families left behind, but is also a mark of shame on the nation; notes the Scottish Government's proposal to lead a national mission to reduce drug deaths and harms, and to agree that this is a public health emergency requiring partnership working and concerted action at all levels of public life; welcomes the announcement of significant increased funding to support this national mission to be invested in a range of areas that will have the biggest impact in getting individuals into treatment and keeping them alive; acknowledges that additional resources are necessary after years of funding cuts to services; supports the use of public health interventions such as safe consumption facilities to prevent overdoses and save lives; considers that the resources of the police and criminal justice system should be focused on preventing supply of harmful drugs in Scotland's communities and ensuring that vulnerable drug users are not exposed to unnecessary court action; notes that the scale of drugs deaths in Scotland is the highest in the UK; believes that, as well as preventing deaths, there is a need to deliver improvements in treatment options and the availability of same-day treatment for those who seek help with substance misuse; calls on the next Scottish administration to coordinate a plan for a Scotland-wide network of heroin-assisted treatment facilities, and agrees to work towards diverting people caught in possession of drugs for personal use into treatment and ceasing imprisonment in these cases, helping save lives.

6. Urgent Question: An urgent question on what the Scottish Government's response is to Lothian Buses stopping its services at 7.30pm on 17 March in response to reported incidents where buses have been attacked and staff endangered, was answered by the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity (Michael Matheson).

7. Changes to Private and Hybrid Bill Procedures: Bill Kidd, on behalf of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee, moved S5M-24364—That the Parliament notes the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee's 6th Report 2021 (Session 5), *Standing Order Rule Changes – Private and Hybrid Bill Procedures* (SP Paper 973), and agrees that the changes to Standing Orders set out in Annex A of the report be made with effect from 12 May 2021.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

8. Changes in Relation to Revised Accompanying Documents for Emergency Bills: Bill Kidd, on behalf of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee, moved S5M-24391—That the Parliament notes the Standards,

Procedures and Public Appointments Committee's 10th Report 2021 (Session 5), *Standing Order Rule Changes – Delegated Powers Memorandum and Emergency Bills* (SP Paper 987), and agrees that the changes to Standing Orders set out in Annexe A of the report be made with effect from 12 May 2021.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

9. Changes to the Financial Scrutiny Provisions: Bill Kidd, on behalf of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee, moved S5M-24375—That the Parliament notes the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee's 3rd Report 2021 (Session 5), *Standing Order Rule Changes on the Financial Scrutiny of Bills* (SP Paper 964), and agrees that the changes to Standing Orders set out in Annexe A of the report be made with effect from 12 May 2021.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

10. Code of Conduct – Register of Interests – Gifts Threshold: Bill Kidd, on behalf of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee, moved S5M-24359—That the Parliament notes the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee's 5th Report 2021 (Session 5), *Code of Conduct - Register of Interests – Gifts Threshold* (SP Paper 972), and agrees that the proposed changes come into effect on 6 May 2021.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

11. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 as noted above.

The meeting closed at 6.15 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
18 March 2021

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

Committee Reports

The following reports were published on 18 March 2021—

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee, 19th Report, 2021 (Session 5): European Charter of Local Self-Government (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill: Stage 2 (SP Paper 994)

Finance and Constitution Committee, 4th Report, 2021 (Session 5): Annual Report 2020-21 (SP Paper 1003)

Covid-19 Committee, 7th Report, 2021 (Session 5): Subordinate legislation considered by the Covid-19 Committee at its meeting on 18 March 2021 (SP Paper 1004)

Subordinate Legislation

Affirmative Instruments

The following affirmative instrument was withdrawn on 18 March 2021—

Sea Fishing (EU Exit) (Scotland) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 [draft]

Negative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 18 March 2021 and is subject to the negative procedure—

Non-Domestic Rates (Coronavirus Reliefs) (Scotland) Regulations 2021 (SSI 2021/151)
laid under section 153(6) of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994

Other Documents

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 18 March 2021 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority Strategy, Effective from March 2021
SG/2021/48 laid under paragraph 6(3) of Schedule 2 of the Energy Act 2004

Scottish Government: Annual report on procurement activity in Scotland - An overview of procurement activity 2018-19 **SG/2021/1** laid under Section 21(4)(b) of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014

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