

Motion**S3M-3035 Bill Wilson: European Parliament Civil Liberties Committee's Recognition of Right to be Educated in and Speak Scots and Gaelic**

That the Parliament, further to motion S3M-3022 in the name of Jamie Hepburn (European Parliament Committee's Concern at Human Rights Abuses), welcomes the desire of the European Parliament's Civil Liberties Committee to promote regional or minority languages, and specifically the statement that it believes that "the right to speak and to be educated in one's mother tongue is one of the most basic fundamental rights", and accordingly expresses the opinion that failure to provide education in Scots and Gaelic to the children of native speakers of these languages should be considered a breach of human rights.

Supported by: Bill Kidd, Christina McKelvie*, Hugh O'Donnell*, Willie Coffey*, Stuart McMillan*
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/motionsAndAmendments/motions.htm>

S3M-3087 Bill Kidd: UK Government's White Paper's Threat to Lone Parents of Very Young Children and Disabled People—That the Parliament expresses concern at proposals contained in the UK Government's White Paper, *Raising expectations and increasing support: reforming welfare for the future*, to push lone parents of very young children and disabled people into taking mandatory steps toward work that is not necessarily available in a time of economic turndown, which it believes is the result of the economic incompetence of the UK Government; further believes that this represents bullying tactics against vulnerable groups and individuals, and considers that suggestions that schemes be piloted in Glasgow effectively amounts to test-bedding Glasgow in the same way as Scotland was test-bedded for the Poll Tax by the Thatcher government.

Supported by: Jamie Hepburn, Bashir Ahmad, Rob Gibson, Kenneth Gibson, Joe FitzPatrick, Brian Adam, Bill Wilson, Christina McKelvie, Alex Neil, Bob Doris, Patrick Harvie, Gil Paterson*
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/businessBulletin/bb-08/bb-12-15f.htm>

Questions and Answers**Period ending: 26th Dec****British Sign Language**

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive whether it routinely translates Scottish Government information into British Sign Language. (S3W-18671)

Stewart Maxwell: The Scottish Government recognises the importance of making information accessible to British Sign Language (BSL) users. We routinely provide BSL interpreters for meetings if BSL users will be present, and we consider providing BSL DVD translations of publications where appropriate, or if it is not appropriate, ensure that the relevant information is communicated to BSL users in a suitable way.

Questions and Answers**Period ending: 19th Dec****British Sign Language**

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body whether the Parliament routinely translates information into British Sign Language (BSL). (S3W-18674)

Mike Pringle: The SPCB is committed to the provision of BSL in the Parliament. Routinely, the SPCB considers BSL for all new publications produced by the Parliament and has translated most of the public information leaflets into BSL. The new engagement publication for instance will be the next BSL video produced. BSL translations can also be provided for parliamentary business and public engagement on request.

Continuous efforts are made to enhance the accessibility of information in the Parliament including its website, publications and official documents which are regularly reviewed through the SPCB Disability Equality Scheme.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body whether it has awarded a contract to any organisation to translate parliamentary information into British Sign Language (BSL). (S3W-18675)

Mike Pringle: A contract was awarded to MPH Accessible Media on 26 March 2007 to translate parliamentary information into BSL. They have completed eight videos, since then, seven of which are on the Parliament website. The contractor is currently translating a further publication on engagement.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body whether it will adapt the Parliament's website to enable British Sign Language (BSL) to be used. (S3W-18676)

Mike Pringle: The Parliament has a webpage dedicated to BSL and is currently working towards enhancing the use of BSL on the website.

This is being carried out through the web development project where accessibility issues are being fully considered. BSL users will be properly consulted to identify areas where BSL translation would be most effective on the Parliament's website.

Further improvements are being made to accessing BSL videos by embedding these on the Parliament website using Flash, and by providing access via other channels such as the Parliament's YouTube channel.

If the Member would like further information on the provision of BSL within the Parliament, the SPCB's Equality Team is happy to arrange a meeting to discuss the various arrangements in place.

Questions awaiting Answers	Period ending: 12th Dec
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S3W-18672 Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Executive whether it has awarded a contract to any organisation to translate Scottish Government information into British Sign Language.

S3W-18673 Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Executive whether it will adapt its website to enable British Sign Language to be used.

S3W-18675 Jackie Baillie: To ask the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body whether it has awarded a contract to any organisation to translate parliamentary information into British Sign Language.

Questions and Answers	Period ending: 5th Dec
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Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive whether powers to provide unwanted but essential treatment for a physical disorder can be obtained under Part 6 of the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000. (S3W-18033)

Shona Robison: If an adult is deemed to be incapacitated within the definition of part 1 of the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000, then an Intervention or Guardianship Order under Part 6 of the Act may confer powers to the guardian; welfare attorney, or person appointed under the Intervention Order to grant or refuse consent to the provision of medical treatment for the individual concerned.

Audiology

James Kelly (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive what the average waiting time for audiology services is in (a) NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and (b) NHS Lanarkshire. (S3W-18178)

Shona Robison: Information on audiology average waiting times is not available centrally. Audiology waiting times will be included within the 18 week referral to treatment standards by 2011 and systems are being developed to report progress towards that target. Information Services Division of National Services Scotland will publish audiology waiting times from 1 April 2009.

Homecoming Scotland

James Kelly (Glasgow Rutherglen) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive what discussions have been held with South Lanarkshire Council in relation to its involvement in hosting events as part of Homecoming Scotland 2009. (S3W-18195)

Jim Mather: The Homecoming Scotland 2009 team at EventScotland have had a good level of engagement with South Lanarkshire Council. A local authority email distribution list was used to invite local authorities to distribute the Homecoming partner events registration form to events organisers in the area that met the funding criteria. Two partner event registration forms were submitted from the South Lanarkshire area - the Biggar Little Festival and Scotland's Living History Festival/Lanark Medieval Festival. Both of these events are now in the Homecoming programme and will feature in the next printed events guide and on the Homecoming events search engine.

South Lanarkshire Council also have a Homecoming contact and the Homecoming team have been in touch with that official, who has received two local authority e-updates that have been issued by the Homecoming team. She has confirmed that South Lanarkshire will have approximately 25 events in the local Homecoming programme.

Identity Cards

George Foulkes (Lothians) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive when (a) ministers and (b) officials have met UK ministers or officials from the Home Office to discuss identity cards and what concerns were expressed at the meetings. (S3W-18046)

Fergus Ewing: Ministers have been in communication with the Home Office both by telephone and by letter throughout the year. These communications have explored the implications for Scotland of the National Identity Scheme and latterly, the launch of ID cards for foreign nationals.

In October, at the request of the IPS, Scottish Government officials met with IPS officials to discuss if and how the ID card proposals might impact on the functions of Scottish ministers. No decisions were made at that meeting and the discussions have not yet concluded.

Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive whether the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 provides for the covert administration of drugs. (S3W-18029)

Shona Robison: The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 does not address the issue of covert medication. It does contain safeguards about the types of treatment for mental disorder that can be given compulsorily to a patient and when a second opinion must be obtained from an independent doctor appointed by the Mental Welfare Commission. The principles of the Act should be taken into account when making any decision to treat a patient for mental disorder.

Medication

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive in what circumstances it might be necessary to covertly administer anti-psychotic drugs. (S3W-18030)

Shona Robison: Administering medication covertly may be considered where it is necessary to treat a person for their physical or mental health and they do not have capacity to refuse or consent to such medication.

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive whether the existence of good practice guidelines sufficiently protects an elderly dementia patient from being inappropriately prescribed an anti-psychotic drug. (S3W-18031)

Shona Robison: Peer review and monitoring arrangements are in place including the 2007 published Standards for Integrated Care Pathways for Dementia which contain specific advice on the use of medication. The Standards are designed to protect all patients and inform best practice in care settings (Bib. number 44374).

The standards are being implemented and an accreditation system is in place. An online toolkit is launched today which provides additional resources and sharing of good practice to support local delivery of the published standards.

Richard Baker (North East Scotland) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive whether the existence of good practice guidelines is sufficient to protect a patient from being prescribed medication that could cause a fatal adverse reaction, if prescribed covertly. (S3W-18032)

Shona Robison: Any decision to give medication for mental disorder covertly to a patient who is unable to consent must be made taking account of the principles of the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 and where appropriate the 2003 act. In particular, any benefit must be balanced against the risk of giving the medication covertly. Following the Mental Welfare Commission good practice guidelines will ensure that the risks are identified, assessed, regularly reviewed and prescription to be administered under guidance of a qualified clinician.

Voluntary Sector

Peter Peacock (Highlands and Islands) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive what funds Highlands and Islands Enterprise made available in the form of grants under the Strengthening Communities budget for distribution to the voluntary sector in (a) 2006-07, (b) 2007-08 and (c) 2008-09. (S3W-18034)

Jim Mather: Distribution of grants to the voluntary sector is an operational matter for Highlands and Islands Enterprise. I have asked its chief executive to write to you on this matter.

Peter Peacock (Highlands and Islands) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive what arrangements it has put in place to ensure that voluntary organisations are aware of where they may seek alternative project funding, in the circumstance where the organisation was previously eligible to apply for funding through the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) but is no longer eligible as a result of introduction of the social enterprise criteria. (S3W-18035)

Jim Mather: In line with the reforms to the enterprise agencies, HIE will increasingly focus its strengthening communities interventions on the most remote and fragile areas and on activity which will promote the sustainable economic development of those areas. This includes developing the social economy, to which end it will work closely with Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

The Scottish Government provides funding to the CVS network to help the third sector to thrive and grow at local level across Scotland. This funding includes support for the provision of funding advice and support. CVS across Highlands and Islands, as elsewhere, has the experience and capability to provide this advice. I would advise any voluntary organisation in need of funding support to contact its local CVS in the first instance.

Peter Peacock (Highlands and Islands) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive, following the change to Highlands and Islands Enterprise funding arrangements, what importance it places on providing adequate funding to the voluntary sector in the Highlands and Islands. (S3W-18036)

Jim Mather: The Scottish Government places great importance on strong support to the third sector. This is why we have increased funding levels to the support networks of Volunteer Centres and Councils for Voluntary Service over this spending period, and why we are working with the third sector and the public sector to ensure the third sector is supported and strengthened at local level. In total, the Scottish Government has committed £93 million to building the capacity of the third sector in the period 2008-11, a 37% increase over the previous spending review period. This will help create the right environment in which the third sector can thrive, and create the conditions in which direct investment in the sector can have the greatest effect.

Local and national funding programmes – including the Scottish Government’s £30 million Scottish Investment Fund – will therefore be made in the context of the wider support that is being provided to the third sector.

Peter Peacock (Highlands and Islands) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive, following the change to Highlands and Islands Enterprise funding arrangements, whether it anticipates that it will have an increased role in funding of the voluntary sector in the Highlands and Islands. (S3W-18037)

Jim Mather: The Scottish Government expects all community planning partners to take into account the role and potential of the third sector in delivering public services, in helping to stimulate growth in the Scottish economy and in supporting community action at grassroots level.

For its part the Scottish Government has committed £93 million to building the capacity of the third sector in the period 2008-11, a 37% increase over the previous spending review period. This will help create the right environment in which the third sector can thrive, and create the conditions in which direct investment in the sector can have the greatest effect. Local and national funding programmes – including the Scottish Government’s £30 million Scottish Investment Fund – will therefore be made in the context of the wider support that is being provided to the third sector.

Peter Peacock (Highlands and Islands) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive, following the change to Highlands and Islands Enterprise funding arrangements, whether it believes that Highlands and Islands councils have an increased role in funding of the voluntary sector. (S3W-18038)

Jim Mather: In line with the reforms to the enterprise agencies, HIE will increasingly focus its strengthening communities interventions on the most remote and fragile areas and on activity which will promote the sustainable economic development of those areas. This includes developing the social economy, to which end it will work closely with Councils for Voluntary Service and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

With responsibility for design and delivery of the single outcome agreement moving to all community planning partners, there will continue to be an important role for councils, as well as for the Scottish Government, the wider public sector and independent funders, in supporting the work of the third sector in the Highlands and Islands.

Peter Peacock (Highlands and Islands) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive, following the change to Highlands and Islands Enterprise funding arrangements, whether additional funds have been provided to local authorities in the Highlands and Islands parliamentary region to allow the authorities to offer additional financial support to voluntary sector organisations. (S3W-18039)

Jim Mather: Councils, along with their community planning partners and the Scottish Government, will continue to have an important role in supporting the work of the third sector in the Highlands and Islands.

For its part the Scottish Government has committed £93 million to building the capacity of the third sector in the period 2008-11, a 37% increase over the previous spending review period. This will help create the right environment in which the third sector can thrive, and create the conditions in which direct investment in the sector can have the greatest effect.

Health

Dr Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab): To ask the Scottish Executive whether the procedures for child screening will (a) remain universal and (b) be undertaken by or under the supervision of a fully trained health visitor for neonates or for infants in the first (i) 10 days, (ii) eight weeks, (iii) three months, (iv) four months, (v) 13 months and (vi) three to five years of life. (S3W-17951)

Shona Robison: Child health screening, surveillance and health promotion will remain a universal service as described in Health for all Children guidance issued by the Scottish Executive in 2005. Contacts outlined in the core programme include neonate, first 10 days of life, six to eight weeks, three months, four months, 13 months and three to five years as well as entry to primary school, primary 7 and at stages within Secondary School. Currently Health Visitors do not supervise or provide the child health screening, surveillance and health promotion programme in its entirety. The programme is provided by a team of appropriately trained practitioners which includes paediatricians, midwives, GPs, health visitors, staff nurses and others with the necessary skills required for each contact. The programme will continue to be provided by an appropriately trained team. A link to the guidance which contains details of the core programme can be found at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/04/15161325/13269>