

Emergency Motions
Autumn Conference 2024

1. Withdrawal of Support for National Care Service Bill

Proposer: Anthony Carroll

Seconder: Gillian Mackay

Preamble:

On 27th September and 8th October 2024, COSLA and the STUC respectively announced their withdrawal of support for the National Care Service bill. Given the parliamentary arithmetic, Green MSP votes are critical to the progress or not of this bill. After 2 years of negotiation and even before final consideration of stage 2 amendments, the SNP have lost confidence of major stakeholders.

The bill is now contrary to Green values. This motion directs the party to respond accordingly.

Motion text:

Conference notes:

the failure of the SNP and Scottish Government to maintain support from councils and trade unions for the National Care Service Bill;
our policies on Social Care under 7.2.19 of the PRD;

Conference believes:

That Scottish Green MSPs have striven to to bring our manifesto's radical vision for structural reform to care, however Conference recognises the Scottish Government's bill for a National Care Service does not deliver that. Greens re-affirm our commitment to local accountability and delivery, and believes that the funding for re-structuring in the Scottish Government's plans could be better used to help deliver local social care services that have been under intense financial pressure;

That party policy and Green values cannot be achieved by the current untenable National Care Service Bill;

that the parts of the bill worth salvaging can be progressed in a radically reduced bill which focuses on support for unpaid carers and enhanced rights for care sector workers that on balance in it's current form is now a net negative for the care sector.

Therefore: Conference agrees that our MSPs should urgently work with relevant stakeholders including Trade Unions and Local Authorities who have raised concerns, and in some cases oppose the bill, about the NCS to radically reduce the bill's scope, instead making it one that focuses on increasing support and rights to those providing care, including unpaid carers.

If the re-scoping of the bill focusing on enhancing support & rights for those providing care is unable to achieve consent from key stakeholders & Parliament, and the bill is presented as it stands, then Conference instructs Green MSPs to vote to oppose the National Care Service Bill.

2. 2025/26 Budget Negotiations

Proposer: Ross Greer

Seconder: Gillian Mackay

Preamble:

The prospect of in-year cuts to funding secured by our MSPs via budget negotiations was previously extremely remote. Given the financial crisis now facing the Scottish Government, largely as a result of Westminster austerity, in-year changes to the Scottish Budget are now being made at an unprecedented scale. In August and September the Scottish Government announced cuts to a number of schemes previously secured and championed by Green MSPs. This raises the prospect of similar decisions being made by SNP Ministers in 2025/26, creating an additional barrier to agreement in budget negotiations.

Motion text:

That conference

Notes with disappointment a number of budgetary decisions made by SNP Ministers following the end of the Bute House Agreement, namely the cuts made in August and September to the Nature Restoration Fund, the pilot scheme for free asylum seeker bus travel and to active travel, as well as the reinstatement of peak-time rail fares and dropping of the commitment to further expand free school meals

Believes that these and other recent decisions highlight the positive impact made by the Scottish Greens in government and the negative consequences of Greens no longer being in the room when such decisions are made

Agrees with the Green Parliamentary Group that the risk of similar in-year cuts is now a significant barrier to agreement on the 2025/26 Scottish budget, given the unprecedented financial crisis facing the Scottish Government

Therefore mandates the Green Parliamentary Group to require that any potential budget agreement includes ongoing oversight mechanisms intended to ensure that the budget is delivered as agreed, or that any necessary changes are made by mutual agreement.