



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Minute of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) meeting held on Thursday 7 September 2023 at 9.00am

Present:

- Alison Johnstone MSP (chair)
- Claire Baker MSP
- Jackson Carlaw MSP
- Maggie Chapman MSP
- Christine Grahame MSP

In attendance:

- David McGill
- Michelle Hegarty
- Becky Thomson, Helen Birrell
- Willie Heigh, Erin Borthwick
- Tracey White, Roz Thomson, Judith Morrison, Alison Fraser
- Billy McLaren, James Drummond
- Sara Glass, Alan Balharrie
- Huw Williams, Janice Crerar
- Mark Brough
- Eric MacLeod
- Lisa Creamer
- Judith Proudfoot, Secretary

Previous minutes

1. The SPCB agreed the minute of the meeting held on 29 June 2023.

Matters arising

2. The SPCB noted the following matters had been dealt with by correspondence since the last meeting:
 - Noted the response from the Bureau to the SPCB's letter and subsequent meeting to discuss late sittings.

- Noted confirmation of the Building Energy Management System contract award.
- Noted updates on catering service, wifi access, chamber works and the creche service.
- SPCB (2023) Paper 53: parliamentary travel – noted the travel arrangements in relation to a CPA Annual Conference and approved the associated costs.
- SPCB (2023) Paper 54: parliamentary travel – noted the travel arrangements in relation to the Arctic Circle Assembly and BIPA and approved the associated costs.

Security works – Paper 48

3. The SPCB approved a request for security works at a Member's local office following a Police Scotland survey and also approved additional costs relating to another Member's previous request.

Members' survey feedback – Paper 49

4. The SPCB received a presentation summarising the outputs from the most recent survey of MSPs. These regular interviews, undertaken by parliamentary officials, provide Members with the opportunity to feedback on the wide range of services delivered to them across the Scottish Parliamentary Service.
5. The results showed high levels of satisfaction with SPCB services.

Non-government Bills Unit update – Paper 50

6. In October 2022 the SPCB discussed the level of demand for Members' Bills this session, the size of some of the proposals for bills and the level of public interest in certain proposals. This paper provided an update about the current position in relation to non-Government Bills and about how the Non-Government Bills Unit (NGBU) and Legal Services Office were currently allocating their resources at a time of high demand.
7. The SPCB noted that at this point in the session there was likely to be insufficient time left in the parliamentary session to progress new proposals through the policy development, consultation and drafting phases using NGBU in order that they could be scrutinised by the relevant committee and in the chamber. Taking this into account, the SPCB agreed that clerking and legal services should focus their resources, which were now fully committed, on bill proposals currently being worked on by NGBU. This would not, however, prevent a Member from progressing with a new proposal for a Member's Bill and Members could still discuss this with NGBU.

8. The SPCB also agreed to approach the SPPA Committee with a view to discussing the Members' Bill process for future sessions.

Lobbying Register Annual Report – Paper 51

9. The SPCB noted that there was no statutory requirement to produce an Annual Report but that it is produced by the Lobbying Register Team to help provide public information about the progress and operation of the Lobbying Register. It also provides an update for the SPCB and the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments (SPPA) Committee, which has lobbying within its remit.
10. The SPCB also noted that the Team was carrying out an audit process, issuing statement letters to registered organisations' Chief Executives and senior representatives. This was aimed at improving compliance and responding to historical queries.

Corporate Systems Programme update

11. Corporate Systems encompass the business-critical applications for Finance, People Services, and Payroll for the organisation. The SPCB received an update on the programme of work to replace the existing applications.

Officeholder governance – Paper 52

12. The Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) had recently commissioned an independent review of its governance arrangements (with the SPCB's full support). The review had now concluded and reported to the Commission.
13. The SPCB discussed those recommendations in the report that had implications for the SPCB and agreed that before progressing any actions it would write to the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee, given the important relationship that exists between it and the Commission, to seek a meeting to discuss.

Any other business

Creche service

14. The SPCB noted an update on the more restrictive terms of the on-site creche service license recently awarded by the Care Inspectorate. This followed updated Health and Social Care Standards and the subsequent guidance "Out to play" and "Space to grow". The SPCB asked officials to continue to liaise with the Care Inspectorate to look for any alternative arrangements that could be accommodated at Holyrood. The SPCB agreed to also revisit other childcare support options.

Date of next meeting

15. The next meeting of the SPCB was scheduled for 21 September 2023.

SPCB secretariat
September 2023