

## Parliamentary Bureau - Referral of draft proposal

### Prohibition of Greyhound Racing (Scotland) Bill

1. A draft proposal for a Bill to promote the welfare of greyhounds by introducing an offence of permitting greyhounds to race at racetracks in Scotland. The draft proposal was lodged on 7th February 2024 by Mark Ruskell MSP.
2. The draft proposal is accompanied by a consultation document which runs from 8th February 2024 to 1st May 2024.
3. In terms of Standing Orders (Rule 9.14.5) the Parliamentary Bureau is required to refer the draft proposal to a committee (or committees) within whose remit the subject matters falls.
4. This referral is for information only – there is no expectation that the committee will scrutinise or report on the draft proposal at this stage.

### Discussion

5. The draft proposal appears to engage the remits of the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee and the Criminal Justice Committee
6. The remit of the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee is to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, with the exception of matters relating to land reform, natural resources and peatland, Scottish Land Commission, Crown Estate Scotland, and Royal Botanic Garden.
7. The remit of the Criminal Justice Committee is to consider and report on matters relating to criminal justice falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs, and functions of the Lord Advocate other than as head of the systems of criminal prosecution and investigation of deaths in Scotland.
8. The proposal seeks to promote the welfare of greyhounds. It aims to deter greyhound racing by introducing a new offence of permitting a greyhound to race at racetracks in Scotland.
9. The proposal relates to animal health and welfare which falls within the remit of the Minister for Energy and the Environment who supports the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands. On that basis, the remit of the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee is engaged. The Committee has also relatively recently been considering a petition to end greyhound racing in Scotland.
10. The draft proposal seeks to introduce a criminal offence of permitting a greyhound to race at racetracks in Scotland into Scots law with sanctions including custodial sentences and fines. It is intended that the creation of the criminal offence will prevent greyhound racing in Scotland. In this respect, the remit of the Criminal Justice Committee is engaged.

11. Based on the above, the draft proposal would appear to engage the remits of the two committees. It is suggested that, on balance, the remit most relevant to this draft proposal is the remit of the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee

## **Decision**

12. The Bureau is invited to refer the draft proposal on prohibition of greyhound racing to the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee.

Non-Government Bills Unit  
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