



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

# Conveners Group

## Agenda

6th Meeting, 2022 (Session 6) Wednesday 21 September 2022

The group will meet at 12.30pm in Committee Room 2.

1. Minutes
2. Work programme
3. Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments inquiry into Future parliamentary procedures and practices: oral update from Convener of the Committee - [Report on inquiry into Future Parliamentary procedures and practices | Scottish Parliament](#)

**Next meeting – Wednesday 28 September**

The papers for this meeting are as follows –

1. Minutes of last meeting

CG/S6/22/7/M

2. Work programme

CG/S6/22/7/1

## Contact details for the clerk

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## Conveners group

### Minutes

6<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 2022 (Session 6) Wednesday 22 June 2022

Present:

Liam McArthur MSP, Convener

Clare Adamson MSP, Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee (virtual)

Claire Baker MSP, Economy and Fair Work Committee (virtual)

Siobhian Brown MSP, COVID-19 Recovery Committee

Ariane Burgess MSP, Local Government, Housing & Planning Committee (virtual)

Jackson Carlaw MSP, Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee

Finlay Carson MSP, Rural Affairs, Islands & Natural Environment Committee

Joe FitzPatrick MSP, Equalities, Human Rights & Civil Justice Committee (virtual)

Dean Lockhart MSP, Net Zero, Energy & Transport Committee

Gillian Martin MSP, Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

Audrey Nicoll MSP, Criminal Justice Committee

Sue Webber MSP, Education, Children and Young People Committee

Elena Whitham MSP, Social Justice and Social Security Committee

Apologies were received from:

Kenneth Gibson MSP, Richard Leonard MSP, Stuart McMillan MSP and Martin Whitfield MSP

1. **Minutes:** The Conveners Group agreed the minutes of the last meeting. The Group also agreed to hold an additional meeting on Wednesday 21 September to accommodate the next session with First Minister on 28 September. The Group agreed that the theme for this session with the First Minister would focus on the Programme for Government.
2. **Post-EU scrutiny Session 6 strategic priority for CG: update on progress:** The Group received an update from Clare Adamson MSP on the post-EU questions it asked at its meeting on 30 March. The Group agreed to receive a further progress update before the end of the year.
3. **Cross-committee scrutiny Session 6 strategic priority for CG: approach to scrutiny and role for CG:** The Group discussed recent examples of cross-

committee working undertaken by the Criminal Justice Committee, Health, Social Care and Sport Committee, Covid-19 Recovery Committee and the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee. The Group noted the benefits of cross-committee working and highlighted the importance of early engagement with committees and the Scottish Government. The Group reiterated its commitment to drive forward this work. It was agreed that best practice guidance would be produced based on this experience to support committees in planning future cross-committee working.

- 4. Net zero and sustainable development Session 6 strategic priority for CG: approach to scrutiny:** The Group discussed a proposed package of support designed to help strengthen the scrutiny of NetZero and sustainable development. The Group agreed:

**Leadership role for Conveners Group**

The Group will encourage, facilitate, and support the work of individual committees, with the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee taking a strategic leadership role ensuring a consistency of approach is being applied across all committees.

**Role for Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee**

The Committee will continue its conventional scrutiny role as lead Committee in the policy areas of transport, energy, and a number of environmental matters, which will include scrutinising the net zero implications of policy in these areas.

**Package of Options to Strengthen Cross-Cutting Scrutiny**

- Annual updates to the Conveners Group from the UK Climate Change Committee (UKCCC) – The Group will receive annual updates and advice from the UKCCC following the publication of the annual Scotland climate change progress report.
- Impacts on policy areas – The group noted that it can commission research, potentially through SPICe, to illustrate how climate change impacts on policy areas across subject committees. The information would be shared with committees in the form of SPICe briefings and oral committee briefings. To aid this piece of work, Conveners Group agreed to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport to ask for specific emissions data for each portfolio area to be provided on an annual basis.
- Strengthening parliamentary processes & procedure – To help strengthen the scrutiny of Net Zero, committees will look at their practices and the quality of information provided by the Scottish Government, and consider what other information or approaches might be required.

**Support for committees**

- Special advisor – The Group noted that a climate change/net zero advisor will be appointed to the NZET Committee, and that thought should be given to how support can be provided to other committees. The Group also noted that SPICe is exploring potential collaborations with Scottish universities.
- Roll-out of the Sustainable Development Impact Assessment tool (SDIA) – To help committees approach their work through the lens of sustainable development, they will be encouraged to use the SDIA tool more widely, such as during the approach to the scrutiny of Bills.

## Conveners Group

### 7th Meeting, 2022 (Session 6), Wednesday 21 September 2022

## Work programme

### Introduction

1. This paper sets out the Group's work programme based on the Group's agreed strategic objectives.

### Background

2. Members will recall that the Group has agreed to schedule some items of business in addition to its standard agenda. These include meetings with the First Minister, the UK Committee on Climate Change, as well as with the Minister for Parliamentary Business.
3. This paper invites the Group to reach a view on the scheduling of this business in order to accommodate these additional items of business as well as maintaining momentum on its strategic objectives as part of its work programme.

### Meeting with the First Minister

4. The next meeting with the First Minister is due to take place on Wednesday 28 September. As with the previous session, this will start at 12 noon and will last for approximately 90 minutes.
5. The Group has agreed previously that this meeting will focus on the Programme for Government which this year was framed around the current cost of living issues.
6. In order to support the management of this meeting, Conveners are asked to provide an indication of the themes that they wish to raise with the First Minister. This will help the flow of the meeting and also help achieve sustained questioning in particular areas wherever possible.
7. **Conveners are invited to note the arrangements for this meeting and to provide an indication in advance of themes that they wish to raise with the First Minister.**

### UK Committee on Climate Change

8. Conveners will recall that the Group agreed a package of measures to support the scrutiny of net zero and sustainable development.

9. As part of this package, the Group agreed to invite the UK Committee on Climate Change (UKCCC) to provide an annual update to the Group. The issues raised in this meeting would inform the scrutiny work of individual committees.
10. It is proposed that the first of these meetings takes place at the Group's meeting on 26 October.
11. It is proposed that around 1 hour would be allocated to this session which would take place in private. It is also proposed that this would include a standard meeting to allow the Group to deal with its ongoing work programme and receive updates on its strategic priorities.
12. In order to accommodate this, it is proposed to extend this meeting by around 30 minutes to make it 90 minutes. This would avoid the need to schedule an additional meeting.
- 13. Conveners are invited to note the proposed scheduling of this meeting with the UKCCC and the extension to the meeting time to accommodate this.**

## **Meeting with Minister for Parliamentary Business**

14. The Group has agreed previously to invite the Minister for Parliamentary Business to attend a Conveners Group meeting on an annual basis. The purpose of this meeting is to provide the opportunity for Conveners to raise any issues in relation to parliamentary business, including the Programme for Government, with the Minister.
15. The Minister attended the Group's meeting November 2021 where issues around the scheduling of business were raised. It is proposed that the next discussion with the Minister should take place at the November 2022 meeting.
- 16. The Group is invited to note the proposal to schedule the next meeting with the Minister for Parliamentary Business in November.**

## **Schedule of meetings and committee debates**

17. The schedule of meetings for the remainder of the year is set out below. All meetings take place on Wednesday lunchtime and meeting requests have been issued to Conveners. The meeting request for the session with the UKCCC will be updated to accommodate an extension.
18. Also included are details of committee debates for the Group to note. These dates may be changed following the recent suspension of business. Conveners will be provided with any updates on the scheduling of these debates.
- 19. The Group is invited to note this information and use it to reach a view on the points set out above.**

<b>Date and main items of business</b>
21 September <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard meeting</li> </ul>
28 September (90-120 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with First Minister (in public)</li> </ul>
26 October (proposed 90 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with UKCCC</li> <li>• Additional Items</li> </ul>
30 November <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with the Minister for Parliamentary Business</li> <li>• CG Strategic Priority: Post-Legislative Scrutiny</li> <li>• Additional Items</li> </ul>
21 December <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard meeting</li> <li>• CG Strategic Priority: Participation, Diversity and Inclusion</li> <li>• Additional Items</li> </ul>

#### **Schedule of committee debates**

22/09/2022	Standards, Procedures & Public Appointments Committee	Debate its report on future procedures and practices
05/10/2022	Social Justice and Social Security Committee	Robbing Peter to pay Paul: Low income and the debt trap
08/11/2022	Health, Social Care & Sport Committee	Inquiry into alternative pathways to primary care
17/11/2022	Constitution, Europe, External Affairs & Culture Committee	Impact of Brexit on devolution

## **Recommendation**

**20. The Group is invited to consider and reach a view on the points raised in this paper.**

**Conveners Group Clerking Team  
September 2022**