



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Minute of the Gender Sensitive Parliament Advisory Group meeting held on Wednesday 17 December at 12.30pm

Present:

- Rt Hon Alison Johnstone MSP, Presiding Officer (Chair)
- Ruth Maguire MSP, Scottish National Party
- Sue Webber MSP, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party
- Beatrice Wishart MSP, Scottish Liberal Democrats
- Maggie Chapman MSP, Scottish Green Party
- Professor Sarah Childs, Personal Chair of Politics and Gender, University of Edinburgh
- Professor Meryl Kenny, Professor of Gender and Politics, University of Edinburgh
- Hannah Johnson, Gender Audit Adviser to the Welsh Parliament

Apologies:

- Carol Mochan MSP, Scottish Labour Party
- Femi Otitoju, Diversity and Inclusion Consultant

In attendance:

- Allan Campbell, Head of Operations, Chief Executive Group

Officials supporting the Advisory Group and officials from the Office of the Presiding Officer also attended.

Item 1: Minute of previous meeting and matters arising

1. The Group agreed the minute of the meeting on 29 October 2025.
2. The Group noted the letter issued to the SPPA Committee from the Presiding Officer on behalf of the Group, regarding the Committee's recently published report on strengthening committees' effectiveness.

3. Prof. Childs and Prof. Kenny provided an update on their recent visit to the German Bundestag, where they attended several events with the aim of sharing experiences and advice from Scotland's gender sensitive audit.

Item 2: Taking forward recommendations into next session – cyclical approach

4. Prof. Childs and Prof. Kenny delivered a presentation to the Group about embedding the audit recommendations ahead of Session 7. The Group further discussed the cyclical approach in the context of its legacy approach.
5. The Presiding Officer noted her intention to write to party leaders regarding candidate selection. The Group requested officials investigate options for a public statement to be supported by party leaders and report back at the next meeting.

**Action: Office of the Presiding Officer,
Allan, GSPAG Secretariat**

6. Officials further agreed to produce a package ahead of the next meeting, which both outlines the key achievements of the Advisory Group so far and reflects its legacy approach.

Action: Allan, Prof. Childs, Prof. Kenny

Item 3: Update on progress on recommendations

7. The Group discussed the updates presented in the paper.
 - **Recommendation 3:** The Group received an update on the status of the recently conducted disability audit of the parliamentary estate and noted that the reports would be circulated in due course. This would be further discussed at the meeting scheduled in February.
 - **Recommendation 18:** The Group noted an update on the proposed changes to the Standing Orders agreed by the SPPA Committee.
 - **Recommendation 21:** The Group noted the proposed change to the Standing Orders, made by the SPPA Committee.
 - **Recommendation 24:** The Group noted that officials would bring an update on this recommendation to the next meeting.

Action: GSPAG Secretariat

[Sue Webber MSP and Beatrice Wishart MSP left the meeting]

Item 4: Current ‘family friendly’ provision for MSPs (Recommendation 3)

8. The Group received an update on the ‘family friendly’ provisions currently available in Parliament and agreed to include its reflections as part of its legacy approach.

Action: Allan, GSPAG Secretariat

Item 5: Parents and Carers Survey (Recommendation 10)

9. The Group received an update on the results of the recently conducted Parents and Carers Survey.
10. The Group considered its next steps regarding the survey and agreed that a summary of the results should be published. The Group further agreed that the parents and carers survey and the diversity survey should be conducted again soon after the 2026 election.

Action: Allan, GSP Secretariat

Item 6: MSP Exit Interviews (Recommendation 11)

11. The Group requested that officials investigate potential options to gather data from Members who are standing down, for the Group to consider at its next meeting.

Action: Allan

Item 7: Any other business

12. The Group noted the recently published CPA article relating to Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities network plans to publish accessibility guidelines for Legislatures.
13. The Group discussed suggested plans for the Parliament to include at the International Women’s Day event scheduled in March 2026.
14. The Presiding Officer thanked the Advisory Group members for their contributions, and the Group noted its thanks to officials for the support they have provided this year.

Date of next meeting

15. The next meeting of the Advisory Group was scheduled for 25 February 2026.

**Gender Sensitive Parliament Advisory Group Secretariat
December 2025**