

PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU

REFERRAL OF A BILL AT STAGE 1: GOOD FOOD NATION (SCOTLAND) BILL

Introduction

1. The Good Food Nation (Scotland) Bill was introduced in the Parliament on 7 October 2021 by the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands, Mairi Gougeon MSP.

Discussion

2. The Good Food Nation (Scotland) Bill makes provision to require the Scottish Ministers and other public authorities (initially Local Authorities and Health Boards) to make, and have regard to, Good Food Nation Plans. In preparing these plans, Ministers and the relevant public authorities are to have regard to potential outcomes in relation to social and economic wellbeing, the environment, health and economic development. As such, the plans may cover a wide range of issues and therefore touch on the remits of multiple committees.
3. The Bill falls within the remit of the following committees:

Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee

The remit of the Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee is to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands. This Bill relates to food policy which falls within the responsibilities of the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands. As such, the remit of the Committee is engaged.

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

The remit of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee includes to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care. This includes “health protection and improvement” which this Bill has implications in relation to and health is one of the matters that regard must be had to in developing the plans. The remit of this Committee is therefore engaged.

Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee

The remit of the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee is to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport. This includes the

climate crisis and environmental protection. As the environment is one of the issues which regard must be had to in preparing the Good Food Nation Plans, the remit of this Committee is also engaged.

Social Justice and Social Security Committee

The remit of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee is to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government, excluding matters relating to local government, housing and planning. This includes matters such as social justice, social economy and tackling inequalities. As “social and economic wellbeing” is to be considered in relation to the development on plans, it is foreseeable the plans could have an impact on these issues. As such, the remit of this Committee is engaged.

Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee

The remit of the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee includes to consider and report on matters relating to local government, housing and planning. As Local Authorities are required to produce Good Food Nation Plans, the remit of this committee is engaged.

Economy and Fair Work Committee

The remit of the Economy and Fair Work Committee is to consider and report on matters relating to the economy falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy. As economic development is one of the areas that regard must be had to in developing the Good Food Nation Plans, the remit of this committee is also engaged.

4. It is understood that the Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment has the main interest in this Bill.

Recommendation

5. It is suggested that the Bureau recommend to the Parliament that the Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee be designated as the lead committee. We are not aware of any desire on the part of any other committee to be designated as a secondary committee. However, the lack of a formal designation does not prevent any committee from considering the Bill if it so wishes.

Parliamentary Business Team

October 2021

DRAFT MOTION

Designation of Lead Committee: That the Parliament agrees that the Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Bill at stage 1.