Parliamentary Bureau – Appointment of Officeholder

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Purpose

1. This paper invites the Parliamentary Bureau to timetable a motion inviting the Parliament to nominate an individual to His Majesty for appointment as the next Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The current Ombudsman, Rosemary Agnew, demits office on 30 April 2025.

Timing

2. Time in the business programme is sought for a debate on this appointment; ideally during the week beginning 31 March 2025.

Background

3. Under the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002, the Ombudsman is an individual appointed by His Majesty on the nomination of the Scottish Parliament.

4. Standing Orders Rule 3.11 provides for the nomination of individuals for appointment by His Majesty. The Rules provide that when a vacancy is due to arise, a cross-party selection panel, chaired by the Presiding Officer, will be established for the purpose of recommending a person for nomination by the Parliament to His Majesty for appointment.

5. The cross-party selection panel sat on Monday 3 March 2025. It was chaired by the Presiding Officer and the members were Ariane Burgess MSP, Jamie Greene MSP, Fulton MacGregor MSP, Carol Mochan MSP and Michelle Thomson MSP.

Conclusion

6. The motion seeking the Parliament's agreement to the nomination will be lodged by Ariane Burgess MSP.

7. The Bureau is invited to agree to the motion being laid for debate week beginning 31 March 2025 and if this is not possible, as soon as possible thereafter.

Parliamentary Business Team
March 2025