

Parliamentary Bureau – Designation of a Bill at Stage 1

Greyhound Racing (Offences) (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

1. The Greyhound Racing (Offences) (Scotland) Bill was introduced in the Parliament on 23 April 2025 by Mark Ruskell MSP.

Discussion

2. The Bill makes it an offence to race greyhounds on racetracks in Scotland.
3. Section 1 provides that it is an offence for a person who owns, or is responsible for, a greyhound to permit it to race on a racetrack.
4. Section 2 creates an offence for operating a greyhound racetrack.
5. Sections 3 to 8 make associated provision for enforcement by way of summary proceedings, deprivation orders, disqualification orders, seizure orders and termination or variation of disqualification.
6. Section 9 makes provision for appeals against orders.
7. Sections 10 to 14 make final provisions.
8. The Bill falls within the remit of the following committees—

Rural Affairs and Islands Committee

The remit of the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee includes matters relating to animal welfare falling within the responsibility of the Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity who supports the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands. The Bill aims to improve animal welfare by banning greyhound racing on oval racetracks and accordingly the remit of this Committee is engaged.

Criminal Justice Committee

The remit of the Criminal Justice Committee includes matters relating to criminal justice falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs. The Bill creates new offences in relation to racing greyhounds and owning a greyhound racetrack. Accordingly, the remit of this Committee is engaged.

9. It is understood that the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee is best placed to be designated as the lead committee in respect of this Bill.
10. We are not aware of any interest of the Criminal Justice Committee in being formally designated as a secondary committee. Lack of formal designation does not, of course, prevent the committee from considering the Bill if it subsequently decides to do so.

Recommendation

11. The Bureau is invited to consider recommending to the Parliament by motion that it agrees, under Rule 9.6.1, that the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee be designated as lead committee.
12. A draft motion can be found below.

Draft Parliamentary Bureau motion on the Greyhound Racing (Offences) (Scotland) Bill:

Designation of Lead Committee – That the Parliament agrees that the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the Greyhound Racing (Offences) (Scotland) Bill at Stage 1.

Parliamentary Business Team
April 2025