

Parliamentary Bureau – Impact of Ministerial changes on Portfolio Questions Cycle

Introduction

1. Following from the Scottish Government's announcement of ministerial changes and its publication of the revised [Cabinet Secretary and Ministerial portfolios](#), the Bureau is invited to consider a revision to the cycle for Portfolio Questions. Should there be any impacts on committee remits, a further paper will be brought to a future meeting.

Discussion

2. Portfolio Questions are currently scheduled on a 3-weekly cycle: The current cycle is as follows:

Week Commencing	Portfolio 1 (Wednesday)	Portfolio 2 (Wednesday)	Portfolio 3 (Thursday)
09 June 2025	Deputy First Minister Responsibilities, Economy and Gaelic	Finance and Local Government	Net Zero and Energy, and Transport
16 June 2025	Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands	Health and Social Care	Social Justice
23 June 2025	Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, and Parliamentary Business	Justice and Home Affairs	Education and Skills

3. Portfolio question times in the weeks commencing 16 June and 23 June were scheduled based on the previous Cabinet Secretary portfolios. Business Managers should note that due to the lead-in time for Portfolio Questions (the random draw of names and the deadline for lodging questions), the first week from which any new cycle could take place following the Bureau's decision would be the week beginning 1 September.
4. There are now eleven Cabinet Secretaries. Gillian Martin is Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Energy and Màiri McAllan is Cabinet Secretary for Housing. The Housing portfolio includes all aspects of housing policy, including heat in buildings (which was previously under Net Zero and Energy).
5. When the Bureau last considered the impact of ministerial changes on the Portfolio question time cycle in May 2024, it preferred to retain the 3-week cycle with nine Portfolio question time sessions. In order to maintain this cycle, it is proposed to add "Housing" to "Social Justice".
6. In addition, it is proposed to change Net Zero and Energy to Climate Action and Energy to reflect the change to Ms Martin's title.

7. The proposed changes are set out in the table below:

Week Commencing	Portfolio 1 (Wednesday)	Portfolio 2 (Wednesday)	Portfolio 3 (Thursday)
1 September 2025	Deputy First Minister Responsibilities, Economy and Gaelic	Finance and Local Government	Climate Action and Energy, and Transport
8 September 2025	Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands	Health and Social Care	Social Justice and Housing
15 September 2025	Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, and Parliamentary Business	Justice and Home Affairs	Education and Skills
22 September 2025	Deputy First Minister Responsibilities, Economy and Gaelic	Finance and Local Government	Climate Action and Energy, and Transport
29 September 2025	Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands	Health and Social Care	Social Justice and Housing
6 October 2025	Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, and Parliamentary Business	Justice and Home Affairs	Education and Skills

Recommendation

8. Business Managers are invited to discuss and agree the proposed revisions to the Portfolio questions cycle commencing from the week 1 September 2025.

Parliamentary Business Team
June 2025