

Conveners Group
Wednesday 18 June 2025
4th Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

Biannual meetings with the First Minister

Introduction

1. The Conveners Group will consider correspondence from Kenneth Gibson MSP, Convener of the Finance and Public Administration Committee, regarding the Group's biannual meetings with the First Minister in agenda item 6.
2. The next meeting with the First Minister is due to take place after summer recess. The clerks will confirm the date in due course.
3. The correspondence asks the Group to consider a new format for future meetings. A copy of the correspondence is provided in the **Annexe**.

Action

4. The Group is asked to discuss the suggested proposal and agree the format of future meetings with the First Minister.

Clerks to the Committee
June 2025

Annexe: Correspondence from the Finance and Public Audit Committee on the format of the meetings with the First Minister

3 April 2025

Dear Liam

Further to the Conveners Group meeting with the First Minister on 26 March 2025, the Finance and Public Administration Committee discussed the format of these sessions and agreed to write to you with a suggested alternative approach.

Building on the welcome improvements you have made to this session over the last few years, the Committee believes that further enhancements could be made to improve efficiency and the effectiveness of Conveners Group's scrutiny of the First Minister.

Currently, Conveners Group has around 100 minutes to question the First Minister, which can lead to disengagement and lack of interaction.

Conveners' questions and answers towards the end of the sessions end up being rushed and ineffective. I therefore wonder if a better use of time would be for the session to be split into two separate meetings of one hour each. Both of the two sessions could involve eight Conveners, with them being grouped by common issues and similar areas of interest. This could encourage a more interactive and engaging session where Conveners are able and eager to ask more supplementary questions

If we ensure the First Minister has adequate notice of the dates, this format could work for both him and Conveners in ensuring more engaging and worthwhile scrutiny sessions.

I would of course be very happy to discuss this possible model in more detail if it would be helpful.

Kenneth Gibson
Convener
Finance and Public Audit Committee