



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

The Presiding Officer

01 September 2026

Jenni Minto MSP
Convener
Standards Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

Dear Jenni,

Interim review of Temporary Rule 6: Lodging deadlines for Public Bills at Stages 2 and 3

The Parliamentary Bureau considered the interim review of Temporary Rule 6.

The rule temporarily varies Standing Orders by changing the deadline for lodging amendments to Public Bills at Stages 2 and 3 on each day from 4.30 pm to 2.30 pm, other than the final lodging day for non-Budget Bills for which the deadline remains 12 noon.

The Bureau considered the evidence gathered during the initial months of the pilot period and, at its meeting on 23 June 2026, agreed to write to the SPPA Committee with its interim conclusions.

The Bureau noted that the temporary rule was introduced to allow Daily Lists of amendments to be prepared and circulated earlier in the day, giving Members more time to consider and respond to them.

Before the change, Daily Lists for Bills with large numbers of amendments were frequently circulated late in the evening. For example, the Daily Lists for the Housing (Scotland) Bill and the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill at Stage 3 were circulated at 9.05 pm and 7.55 pm respectively on the day before final lodging day. Similar patterns were evident for a number of other Bills.

The Bureau noted that the evidence gathered during the pilot period suggests the temporary rule has achieved its aim. Even where large numbers of amendments were lodged, Daily Lists were generally circulated much earlier than before. For example, the Daily Lists for the Children (Care) Bill and the Crofting and Scottish Land Court Bill at Stage 2 were circulated between 5.10 pm and 5.40 pm on the days before final lodging day, despite the high volume of amendments.

The Bureau considered that, under the previous 4.30 pm deadline, these lists would almost certainly have been circulated much later in the evening.

The Bureau also noted no evidence that the revised deadline has negatively affected Members' ability to participate in the amendment process. As the final lodging deadline has not changed, the overall period available for lodging amendments remains the same. However, the Bureau recognised that Members have less time to review amendments lodged between 2.30 pm and 4.30 pm on the day before final lodging day.

It is also too early to assess whether more amendments are being carried forward to final lodging day Daily Lists. Both issues will continue to be monitored. The Bureau noted that the circulation times for final lodging day Daily Lists have remained broadly unchanged since the temporary rule was introduced.

In reviewing the wider impact of the temporary rule, the Bureau considered views from the Scottish Government and the Non-Government Bills Unit.

The Scottish Government supported gathering more evidence before making a final decision and highlighted issues that may need further consideration, including how the earlier deadline affects discussions between Ministers and Members and the specific circumstances of Budget Bills.

The Bureau also noted the view of the Non-Government Bills Unit that the temporary rule has been a "very helpful and sensible change" allowing supporting work for Members to begin earlier and reducing the need for parliamentary staff to work late into the evening. The Bureau noted that no concerns about the operation of the temporary rule have been raised with legislation clerks by individual Members during the initial pilot period.

Having considered the evidence currently available, the Bureau's interim conclusion is that the operation of temporary rule 6, has been positive and that the pilot has so far delivered the anticipated benefits.

The Bureau recognises that the rule has been in operation for a limited period and that a further review would be helpful before a decision on the longer-term arrangements should be made.

The temporary rule ceases to apply on 21 December 2026. The Bureau agreed therefore that the pilot should continue for the remainder of the period approved by Parliament and it will consider a further paper towards the end of 2026. At that stage, the Bureau will consider whether it should invite the SPPA Committee to recommend a permanent amendment to Standing Orders or whether the temporary rule should be extended for a further period.

The Bureau will also consider any related procedural changes which might further improve the time available to Members to engage with amendments and prepare for amending proceedings.

I trust that the SPPA Committee will find these interim conclusions helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kenneth J Gibson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kenneth J Gibson MSP

Presiding Officer