

**Written submission from Lorna Slater MSP**  
**Scottish Green Party**  
**6 February 2025**

Thank you for the letter and for your work on this, it is something we feel very strongly about in the Scottish Green Group. Please accept this response from me on behalf of the Group.

We are fully supportive of the proposed Standing Order changes in relation to gender balance on SPCB and Bureau, but we do have comments on the proposed changes with respect to the gender balance of the PO/DPOs.

We would not want to see changes to Standing Orders that would prevent an all-woman team of PO and DPOs. While we have a present and historical imbalance in favour of men in parliament and in public life more generally, blocking women from taking posts seems counter-productive. We would propose wording more along the lines of:

(b) Where the Presiding Officer and the first deputy Presiding Officer are ~~the same gender~~ **both men**, any candidate of that same gender shall not be a candidate for election as the second deputy Presiding Officer."

And

(b) where the elected Presiding Officer and a deputy Presiding Officer are ~~the same gender~~ **both men** and there is a vacancy in the office of the other deputy Presiding Officer, a member of that same gender is not eligible for nomination as a candidate for election as that other deputy Presiding Officer.

And

(c) If all the available officers are ~~of the same gender~~ **men**, a member of that gender is not eligible for nomination as a candidate for election as additional deputy Presiding Officer; or (d) If the election of a member of a particular gender as additional deputy Presiding Officer would result in all the available officers being ~~of the same gender~~ **men**, a member of that gender is not eligible for nomination as a candidate for election as additional deputy Presiding Officer.