



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Minute of the Leadership Group (LG) meeting held on Monday 8 February 2021 at 09.30, via Teams

Present:

- David McGill (Chair)
- Michelle Hegarty
- Alan Balharrie
- Susan Duffy
- Sara Glass
- Judith Morrison (joined the meeting at 10.10am)
- Callum Thomson
- Tracey white

Apologies:

- Lynsey Hamill

In attendance:

- Joanne McNaughton (items 3 and 4)
- Lis Craig (item 5)
- Willie Heigh (items 5 and 8)
- Erin Borthwick (items 5 and 7)
- Lorna Foreman, Helen Nicolson and Vicky McSherry (item 5)
- John McArthur, Katy Orr and Tommy Lynch (item 6)
- Andy Munro (item 7)
- Huw Williams
- Lisa Creamer
- Judith Proudfoot, Secretary

Item 1: Previous minutes

1. LG agreed the minute of the meeting held on 25 January 2021.

Item 2: Matters arising

2. There were no matters arising.

Item 3: Covid-19: update – (oral)

3. It was anticipated that parliamentary business would continue to follow the pattern of 2 hybrid days and one virtual for the next couple of weeks and then move to 3 hybrid meeting days reflecting the nature of the business proposed in the coming weeks. Committees, other than the Scottish Government Handling of Harassment Complaints Committee, were likely to continue meeting virtually to the end of the session. Proposals for changes to the Standing Orders had been agreed by the Bureau and would be put to the Parliament.
4. The Covid Working Group continued to monitor the First Minister's statements and evaluate the impact of any changes announced such as the possible return to 'tier levels' after February. It was not currently anticipated that general public engagement activities at Holyrood would recommence this calendar year but this would be kept under review. Testing facilities and the vaccination programme were discussed as well as the wearing of face masks.

Item 4: LG and SPCB forward look – LG(2021)Paper07 and LG(2021)Paper08

5. LG noted the items scheduled for future LG and SPCB meetings up to the end of March 2021. Provisional meeting dates would be circulated for LG meetings up to the summer recess.

Item 5: Quarterly Reports

Q3 finance report – LG(2021)Paper09

6. LG discussed the Quarter 3 finance report which would be presented to the SPCB at its next meeting as part of the Chief Executive's Report.
7. Considerable work was being done to manage and re-prioritise resources across the organisation in response to the significant impacts of covid-19.
8. LG noted the Report.

Q3 performance report – LG(2021)Paper10

9. LG welcomed the Report which reflected the work over recent months to review, re-prioritise and reschedule activities in light of covid-19.
10. LG noted the Report.

Q3 workforce dashboard – LG(2021)Paper11

11. LG welcomed the comprehensive suite of management information now being provided by HR on a monthly basis to Group Heads. In particular, LG noted and welcomed the drop in sickness levels and mental welfare issues being reported which reflected the significant work being done across the organisation on providing support in these areas.
12. In relation to reporting, LG agreed to add a new performance indicator measurement to the performance management report. This would be related to the staff survey satisfaction response to the “I feel proud to work for my organisation” question.
13. LG reviewed the level of uptake and current arrangements for the Special Leave Policy and agreed to retain the 10-day cap but to continue to monitor. HR continued to meet with individual Group Heads to discuss specific cases and ensure consistency of application of the policy. Further guidance was also being produced by HR which would contain a number of example scenarios.
14. The Covid Working Group was working on communications to issue that week providing an update on special leave and re-deployment arrangements.

Item 6: Election Planning Programme: update – LG(2021)Paper12

15. LG received an update on planning taking place ahead of the 2021 Scottish parliamentary elections.
16. Those offices principally affected by the compression of dissolution into one day (5 May) had been identified and work was ongoing to ensure plans were in place to deal with the additional and/or more intensive workloads.
17. Plans for the ‘First Days’ following the election were being developed based on scenarios reflecting possible levels of covid-19 restrictions in place at the time. These plans primarily covered registration of new Members and induction arrangements. While it was hoped some activities would be possible on site, it was noted that the SPCB had an over-riding duty of care to ensure activities at Holyrood were carried out safely and officials needed to assess the risks to that duty and manage Members’ expectations when presenting proposals.
18. LG noted the update and the amount of work being done amid high levels of uncertainty.

Item 7: Strategic Risk Register: update – LG(2021)Paper13

19. The format of the Register was under review although work was still at an early stage

due to the pressures of Covid. Discussions with individual Group Heads were taking place and comments/suggestions were invited from other LG members.

20. LG agreed a number of revisions to the Register, as set out in the paper, pending the review.

Item 8: Session 6 Strategy – LG(2021)Paper14

21. LG discussed the latest update on work to develop an updated strategy for the Parliament for session 6. The aim was to agree the focus of the draft strategic themes which should be meaningful across all areas but specific enough for future change and improvement work strategies to link into the wording.

22. LG provided feedback and agreed the themes were generally correct but needed honed. The next iteration would be brought back for further discussion and agreement of outcomes in April.

Item 9: AOB

23. Group Heads were reminded that the deadline for submitting requests for flexi buy-out for staff was 22 February.

Date of next meeting

24. The next meeting of the LG was scheduled for 25 February 2021.

LG secretariat
February 2021