



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Minute of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) meeting held on Thursday 23 January 2020 at 2:15pm, in Q3.02, QH

Present:

- Ken Macintosh MSP (Chair)
- David Stewart MSP
- Andy Wightman MSP
- Liam McArthur MSP
- Sandra White MSP

Apologies:

- Ruth Davidson MSP

In attendance:

- David McGill
- Michelle Hegarty
- Joanne McNaughton
- Eric MacLeod
- Graeme Donoghue
- Judith Proudfoot, Secretary

Flag policy

1. The Presiding Officer provided the SPCB with an update of the views expressed at the meeting of the Parliamentary Bureau on Tuesday 21 January.
2. The SPCB then reflected on events following its decision to stop flying the European flag with effect from 31 January, and on the principles behind its decision. These were:
 - The role of the SPCB is to provide the services and facilities for all MSPs and to protect the reputation of the Parliament as an impartial institution.
 - Members of the SPCB are elected as parliamentarians, not as party representatives. Decisions are taken based on the best interests of the institution and are not politically motivated.

- The European flag has been flown since the Parliament moved to Holyrood in recognition of the UK's membership of the European Union.
 - The UK will no longer be a member of the European Union from 31 January. The decision to stop flying the European flag reflects the relationship in law.
 - The European flag would be flown on Europe Day, 5 May, in recognition of the continued ties with the Council of Europe.
3. While unable to attend the meeting, Ruth Davidson MSP provided comments which were fed in to the discussion.
 4. All members of the Corporate Body, with the exception of Sandra White MSP who dissented, reaffirmed the SPCB's decision on the flag flying. It was agreed that the Presiding Officer would write to Business Managers to update them on the outcome of SPCB's meeting.

Date of next meeting

5. The next meeting of the SPCB was due to take place on Thursday 30 January 2020.