



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Minute of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) meeting held on Thursday 1 October 2020 at 9.00am, in Q1.03 and via video conference (vc)

Present:

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

In attendance:

- David McGill (vc)
- Michelle Hegarty
- Roy Devon (vc)
- Lynsey Hamill (vc)
- Tracey White (vc)
- Judith Morrison (vc)
- Cristine Livingstone (vc)
- James Vinestock (vc)
- Callum Thomson (vc)
- John McArthur (vc)
- Andrew Mylne (vc)
- Fergus Cochrane (vc)
- Gary Gibson (vc)
- Joanne McNaughton (vc)
- Huw Williams (vc)
- Lisa Creamer (vc)
- Judith Proudfoot, Secretary

Previous minutes

1. The SPCB agreed the minutes of previous meetings held on 17 September 2020.

Matters arising

Issues by correspondence

2. The following items had been dealt with by correspondence since the previous meeting:
 - 2.1 SPCB(2020)Paper 46 – the SPCB noted that two members of the Scottish Human Rights Commission were due to demit office in 2021 and agreed the terms and conditions for the recruitment of two new members.
 - 2.2 SPCB(2020)Paper 47 – the SPCB noted that the Convener of the Standards Commission for Scotland’s term of office was due to end in 2021 and agreed the recruitment process and terms and conditions for the new appointee.

Operational management of events – oral

3. The SPCB received an update on the potential impact of covid-19 on planning for State events.

COVID-19: update – SPCB(2020)Paper 48

4. The SPCB received an oral update on a review of arrangements for access to the chamber for MSPs in light of the latest covid-19 developments and the SPCB’s ongoing legal obligation to regularly review operating procedures to ensure all reasonably practicable measures were taken to keep building users safe. The SPCB agreed updated arrangements which would be put to the Business Bureau later that day.
5. The SPCB also discussed the temporary contract variations previously agreed and put in place for on-site service contracts. The SPCB noted updates on the main contracts and agreed specific arrangements going forward. The SPCB also agreed the implementation of fair work provisions into all on-site service contracts on a permanent basis for the duration of the covid-19 pandemic.

Election planning programme: update – SPCB(2020)paper 49

6. An Election Planning Programme Board had been established to oversee preparations for the 2021 Scottish parliamentary elections. This update focused primarily on the delivery of key post-election activities with a view to potential restrictions that may be in place due to covid-19.
7. The SPCB discussed some of the proposals and received reassurances that the essential ‘First Days’ business could be delivered albeit the format and timings may be slightly different from previous Sessions.
8. The SPCB also agreed that a survey should be undertaken of those MSPs who were newly elected in 2016 to help identify priority needs and inform development of an induction programme for newly elected Members in 2021.

Non-Government Bills Unit (NGBU): support for members and committees – SPCB(2020)paper 50

9. The SPCB received a further update on the work of the NGBU, the team that provides support to Members seeking to introduce Members' Bills and also committees with Committee Bills. The SPCB noted the level of work undertaken during the current Session, which had seen the highest number of NGBU-supported Members' Bills introduced for any session, and thanked NGBU and legal staff for their efforts.
10. The SPCB also noted that the current system for providing drafting services had worked well, particularly in terms of flexibility, and agreed the NGBU should secure similar arrangements for Session 6.

International engagement activity – SPCB(2020)paper 51

11. The SPCB welcomed the Report and thanked the International Relations Office for its response to Covid-19 which saw a series of virtual discussions quickly being initiated for the Presiding Officer with other legislatures and organisations with which the Scottish Parliament has prioritised strengthening relations.
12. The SPCB noted the Report.

Committee of the Regions contact group – SPCB(2020)paper 52

13. The SPCB discussed proposals by the Committee of Regions to establish a Contact Group and agreed that it supported the Scottish Parliament becoming a member. A paper would be submitted to the Business Bureau inviting it to agree the MSPs to participate. The International Relations Office would provide a secretariat support to those Members in that role.

AOB – In Private

14. The SPCB received an update on matters relating to the 2021 Scottish Parliament elections.

Date of next meeting

15. The next meeting of the SPCB was due to take place on Thursday 29 October 2020.