



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Minute of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) meeting held on Thursday 5 March 2026 at 9.00am

Present:

- Alison Johnstone MSP (chair)
- Claire Baker MSP (items 5-8)
- Jackson Carlaw MSP
- Maggie Chapman MSP
- Christine Grahame MSP

In attendance:

- David McGill, Clerk/Chief Executive
- Michelle Hegarty, Deputy Chief Executive
- Heather MacLennan
- Susan Mansfield, Gael Scott
- Callum Thomson
- Irene Fleming
- Mairi Pearson
- Allan Campbell
- Eric MacLeod
- Mark Brough
- Lisa Creamer
- Lynn Russell, Head of Secretariat

Item 1: Meeting with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

1. The SPCB held its annual meeting with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and welcomed Paul McFadden to his first SPCB meeting since taking up office in October 2025.
2. The SPCB discussed a range of matters with the Ombudsman including the significant increase in the complaints landscape and the impact this is having on the SPSO, plans to consider and incorporate efficiencies in the work of the SPSO and how the SPSO currently engages with the Scottish Parliament.
3. The SPCB Supported Bodies Landscape Review Committee's recommendation that the SPSO be given enhanced powers to enable it to conduct own-initiative investigations in the public interest was also discussed, as well as how the shared services provided by the SPSO to other officeholders is currently operating.

4. The SPCB thanked the Commissioner for his attendance.

Item 2: Previous meeting

5. The SPCB agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2026.

Item 3: Matters arising

6. The following items were dealt with by correspondence since the meeting on 19 February 2026:

- Paper 15: Catering Services Tariff Update - The SPCB noted the increase to the catering tariff for the Garden Level Restaurant, The Holyrood Room and Events & Hospitality brochures, effective from 1 April 2026.
- Paper 16: 2026 election guidance - The SPCB agreed election guidance for Members not returned following the 2026 Scottish Parliamentary election. It also noted minor revisions to the guidance for Members and their staff during the 2026 Scottish Parliamentary Election campaign and guidance for Members who are not standing at the 2026 Scottish parliamentary election.
- The SPCB also noted:
 - The Gaelic Language Plan Annual Report, covering the period November 2024 - November 2025.
 - Correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs to the Criminal Justice Committee to advise that the Scottish Government has launched a 12-week consultation as part of its review in fulfilment of the statutory requirements under section 6 of the Scottish Biometrics Commissioner Act 2020.
 - Correspondence from the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee to the SPCB regarding Standing Order rule changes.
 - A memo from the Head of Operations providing a further update on developments on the 2026 election programme.
 - The Legacy report of the Conveners Group in Session 6.

Item 4: Chief Executive's Report

7. The SPCB considered the Chief Executive's Report which highlighted activities across the Parliament from October to March 2026 and includes Quarter 3 Finance, Performance and Workforce Data reports.

8. The SPCB discussed a number of items referred to in the report. This included the total year to date expenditure, and the underspend position as at the end of December 2025, which the SPCB noted was within the quarter 3 performance

target of 2.5%. The SPCB also discussed the Corporate Systems Programme Phase 1b, and the rationale for the revised timescales. It further discussed the impact of the global Microsoft Azure outage in October 2025 on parliamentary business and resilience planning in place for the future. The SPCB also noted trends in the SPCB staff turnover and the staff unplanned absence rate, as set out in the report.

9. Following discussion, the SPCB noted the report.

Item 5: Futures Forum review – Paper 17

10. The SPCB discussed the outcome of phase 3 of the review of futures thinking in the Scottish Parliament. Following discussion, the SPCB agreed to close the review on the basis that an internal futures service will be created and situated within the Parliamentary Business Directorate, and that, therefore, Scotland's Futures Forum Limited would be dissolved.

Item 6: Committee service standards – Paper 18

11. The SPCB considered a proposal to develop standards of service for parliamentary committees for Session 7, to ensure transparency about service levels and assist committees in how they manage competing demands. Following discussion, the SPCB agreed that standards of service for committees should be developed.

Item 7: Session 7 Governance

12. The SPCB discussed proposed updates to the SPCB's governance arrangements in Session 7. The SPCB will agree final proposals by correspondence.

Item 8: SPCB Legacy report

13. The SPCB considered a first draft of its Session 6 legacy report.

Date of next meeting

14. The next meeting of the SPCB was scheduled for 12 March 2026.

SPCB Secretariat
March 2026