REFERENCE: SPCB (2026) - Paper 79

Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body
Thursday 5 November 2026 (Session 7)

Committee Convener Additional Remuneration

Executive Summary

1. At its meeting in September 2026, the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) considered whether there was a case in principle for Committee Conveners and other parliamentary roles to receive additional remuneration and agreed that officials should develop detailed proposals, informed by relevant comparators, for subsequent consideration.

2. The attached report at Annex A responds to that request and is submitted for the SPCB's consideration.

3. The report concludes that there is a robust and evidence-based case for the SPCB to consider whether the office of Committee Convener should be recognised through additional remuneration.

4. The SPCB is invited to consider the findings of the report and determine whether to agree the recommendations set out at paragraph 21 of this paper.

Background

5. In undertaking the review, consideration was given to the most appropriate comparator frameworks. The assessment concluded that comparable UK legislatures provide the most relevant benchmark, reflecting the responsibilities, authority, accountability and institutional leadership associated with the office of Committee Convener.

6. The report assesses the office of Committee Convener against common remuneration principles, comparator legislature arrangements and the principles already reflected within the Parliament's existing Salaries Scheme.

7. It is recognised that committee chairs within Scottish local authorities receive additional remuneration reflecting the responsibilities of their roles. These positions were considered as part of the benchmarking exercise but were not included within the comparator group. Local authority committee chairs operate within a fundamentally different governance and accountability framework, combining committee leadership with executive, strategic, portfolio-holder and spokesperson responsibilities within the council structure. These responsibilities differ materially from the scrutiny, inquiry and parliamentary leadership functions undertaken by parliamentary committee conveners and equivalent roles. Accordingly, Scottish local authority committee chairs were not considered to provide a sufficiently comparable benchmark for parliamentary committee leadership roles.

Issues

8. While SPCB's commission referenced Committee Conveners and other parliamentary roles, the attached report focuses solely on the office of Committee Convener. As set out in the report, remuneration arrangements for other parliamentary offices vary considerably across UK legislatures and no sufficiently consistent comparator framework exists to support evidence-based recommendations at this stage. Some roles attract additional remuneration in one legislature but not another and, where payments do exist, both the rationale and level of remuneration can differ significantly. Any consideration of another parliamentary office would require a separate assessment of the responsibilities, authority and accountability associated with that role and consideration on its own merits.

9. The report concludes that there is a robust and evidence-based basis upon which the SPCB may consider recognising the office of Committee Convener through additional remuneration.

10. Factors supporting that conclusion include:

    - consistency with principles already reflected within the Parliament's existing Salaries Scheme;
    - the leadership responsibilities, authority and accountability exercised by Conveners;
    - the institutional importance of committee leadership within a unicameral, committee-centred legislature; and
    - comparator evidence from other UK legislatures.

11. The report also considers alternative approaches and concludes that, should the SPCB wish to recognise the office of Committee Convener through additional remuneration, a payment equivalent to 20% of MSP salary would provide the most proportionate, transparent and evidence-based methodology, reflecting both comparator practice and principles already established within the Parliament's existing Salaries Scheme.

Governance

12. Draft amendments have been prepared to the Scottish Parliament Members' Salaries Scheme to provide for an additional salary for Conveners.

13. Consequential amendments have also been prepared to the pension arrangements established under the Scottish Parliamentary Pensions Act 2009 to ensure that the additional payment is pensionable from the same date.

14. Subject to the SPCB's agreement, the Parliamentary Bureau will be invited to schedule consideration of an SPCB motion seeking parliamentary approval of the necessary amendments to the Salaries Scheme and associated pension arrangements.

15. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached at Annex B. The assessment did not identify any adverse equality impacts arising from the proposed amendments to the Salaries Scheme.

Resource Implications

16. Applying the 20% methodology set out in the report results in a recurring annual cost of £342k, comprising salary costs, pension contributions and National Insurance contributions. This is based on 2026/27 MSP salary levels. As implementation would take effect from 1 April 2027, the actual cost will reflect the MSP salary levels in place at that date.

17. The annual cost of £342k represents approximately 0.23% of the SPCB's total annual budget.

18. The additional expenditure will be incorporated within the SPCB's financial planning and will constitute an additional recurring budget commitment from 2027/28 onwards.

Publication Scheme

19. If the SPCB agrees to the recommendations in the paper, then the paper and attached report will be published as soon as possible following this meeting, together with a letter from the Presiding Officer, as chair of the SPCB, to all Members.

Next Steps

20. The next steps are:

- Subject to SPCB approval and subsequent parliamentary agreement to the required amendments, the revised arrangements would take effect from 1 April 2027.
- Officials will undertake the necessary payroll, pension and administrative implementation work and update relevant guidance and procedures.

Decision

21. The SPCB is invited to:

- note the findings and conclusions of the attached report;
- agree that Committee Conveners should receive an additional salary equivalent to 20% of MSP salary;
- approve the proposed amendments to the Salaries Scheme and associated pension arrangements and agree that an SPCB motion be lodged seeking parliamentary approval; and
- agree arrangements for publication of this paper and the attached report.

REFERENCE: SPCB (2026) - Paper 79

Director of People, Communications and Inclusion
November 2026

The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Committee Convener Additional Remuneration:

Evidence Review and Assessment Report



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Executive Summary

Commission and Purpose

1. This report was commissioned by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) to assess whether there is a robust and evidence-based case for recognising the office of Committee Convener through additional remuneration. In doing so, it considers whether the scope of responsibilities, level of accountability, parliamentary authority and leadership obligations attached to the office extend materially beyond those ordinarily associated with the role of MSP and therefore warrant separate recognition within the Scottish Parliament's Salaries Scheme.

2. The assessment has been prepared by the Director of People, Communications and Inclusion in her capacity as the principal adviser to the SPCB on people matters, including pay and reward.

3. The review draws upon common remuneration principles and considers:

   - the responsibilities, authority and accountability attached to the role;
   - the extent to which those responsibilities differ from those of MSPs generally;
   - institutional developments affecting the role;
   - remuneration arrangements operating in comparable legislatures;
   - the extent to which existing parliamentary remuneration principles apply to the role; and
   - affordability, proportionality and wider governance considerations.

4. The review has been undertaken in the context of wider parliamentary reform and increased emphasis on committee effectiveness, scrutiny, public participation and leadership.

Institutional Recognition

5. At its core, this review concerns the value that the Parliament attaches to the office of Convener and the extent to which that value is reflected within its Salaries Scheme.

6. The central question is not whether individual Conveners require additional remuneration, nor whether current Conveners would choose to accept it. Rather, it is whether the office of Convener carries responsibilities, authority and accountability that warrant formal recognition within the Salaries Scheme.

7. Remuneration systems do more than determine levels of pay. They provide a means by which institutions recognise roles that carry responsibilities, authority and accountability beyond those associated with the substantive office from which they are drawn. The issue for consideration is therefore whether the office of Convener constitutes a sufficiently distinct parliamentary function to warrant such recognition within the Salaries Scheme.

Principal Findings

8. The review finds that there is a credible and evidence-based basis for consideration of additional remuneration and that:

    - The Parliament's existing Salaries Scheme already recognises the principle that offices carrying materially greater responsibility, authority or accountability may appropriately attract additional remuneration.

    - Conveners undertake a combination of leadership responsibilities, parliamentary authority, and institutional accountability.

    - Conveners provide leadership for the Parliament's principal mechanisms of legislative scrutiny, financial scrutiny, policy examination and government accountability.

    - Comparable UK legislatures recognise these aspects of committee leadership through additional remuneration.

    - Evidence from independent remuneration reviews in other UK legislatures suggests a broad consensus on the relative value of committee leadership roles, with responsibilities typically attracting additional remuneration to around one-fifth of an elected Member's salary.

9. Taken together, the evidence demonstrates that there is a credible and evidence-based basis upon which the SPCB could conclude that recognition of the office through additional remuneration is warranted.

Introduction

10. This report considers whether the office of Convener should be recognised as a distinct parliamentary office within the Parliament's existing Salaries Scheme.

11. It does so in the context of wider parliamentary reform, including developments in committee scrutiny, public participation and the leadership responsibilities placed on Conveners.

12. The evidence in this report principally addresses whether the role of Convener is sufficiently distinct in its responsibilities, authority and accountability to warrant separate recognition within the Parliament's Salaries Scheme. The decision as to whether that distinction should be recognised through additional remuneration rests with the SPCB.

Methodology

13. The assessment draws upon remuneration principles commonly applied by independent remuneration bodies and review mechanisms when considering whether additional responsibilities warrant additional remuneration.

14. Such assessments typically consider:

- the nature and complexity of responsibilities undertaken;
- levels of authority and accountability;
- institutional impact; and
- external comparators.

15. Accordingly, this review has been structured around three principal tests:

Role Assessment

16. An assessment of the extent to which the role of Convener differs from that of an MSP generally in terms of responsibility, authority, accountability and contribution to the effective operation of the Parliament's committee system.

Change Assessment

17. An assessment of whether developments since the issue was last considered have altered the nature, visibility or expectation of the role of Convener and are therefore relevant to consideration of remuneration.

Benchmarking Assessment

18. A comparison of remuneration arrangements for equivalent committee roles in comparable legislatures.

19. The comparator roles included within the benchmarking exercise, together with the basis on which comparator roles were selected or excluded, are set out in the Annex to this report.

20. This approach reflects established remuneration principles embodied within the Parliament's Salaries Scheme, whereby additional remuneration may be appropriate where a role carries responsibilities, authority or accountability materially greater than those associated with the substantive role from which it is drawn.

21. No single source of evidence is sufficient to determine whether additional remuneration should be considered. Accordingly, this review does not rely solely on comparator benchmarking or on assessment of responsibilities. Rather, its conclusions are informed by consideration of the role itself, developments affecting the role since previous consideration, comparator evidence and consistency with the principles already reflected in the Parliament's existing Salaries Scheme. Taken together, these factors provide a more robust basis for assessment than any individual measure in isolation.

Assessment

22. Each of these areas of assessment is examined in turn below before an overall assessment is reached.

Role Assessment

Importance of Committee Leadership

23. Committee Conveners do considerably more than chair meetings.

24. As a committee-centred legislature, the Parliament delivers many of its core functions through the committee system. The effectiveness of committees is therefore closely linked to the Parliament's ability to hold the Scottish Government to account, examine legislation and engage meaningfully with the public.

25. Conveners are responsible for coordinating and overseeing this work, helping to ensure that committees operate effectively, are able to fulfil their scrutiny and accountability functions and engage effectively with those affected by the issues under consideration.

Leadership Responsibilities, Authority and Accountability

26. Convener responsibilities extend significantly beyond those associated with committee membership. While committee members contribute to collective scrutiny and decision-making, the leadership provided by Conveners helps shape committee work programmes and ensure the effective operation of their committees.

27. Conveners undertake a range of responsibilities beyond the formal conduct of committee meetings, including representing committees within the Parliament, engaging with witnesses and stakeholders and helping to ensure committees draw upon a broad range of evidence and perspectives. Much of this activity takes place outwith formal meetings and contributes directly to the effectiveness, visibility and impact of committee scrutiny. These responsibilities extend materially beyond those associated with committee membership alone.

28. Conveners also provide leadership beyond their individual committees through participation in the Conveners Group, which considers issues affecting the committee system, facilitates communication between committees and key parliamentary bodies, and supports the effective development of the Parliament's scrutiny and accountability framework. In addition, Conveners perform an important public-facing role on behalf of their committees, engaging with the media, representing committee views and findings, and helping communicate the purpose, work and impact of parliamentary scrutiny to the public.

Change Assessment

Developments Since Previous Consideration

29. Since the issue was last considered, the Parliament has placed increased emphasis on committee effectiveness, public participation and scrutiny through a range of parliamentary reform initiatives and inquiries.

30. These developments do not in themselves determine the case for additional remuneration. However, they provide relevant context in which to reconsider the issue alongside comparator evidence and established remuneration principles and the leadership responsibilities, visibility and accountability associated with the office of Convener.

31. The principal basis for assessment remains the responsibilities attached to the office, consistency with remuneration principles in the Parliament's Salary Scheme and comparator evidence from other legislatures.

Distinctiveness of the Office

32. A question that naturally arises is whether recognition of Conveners might create expectations in relation to other parliamentary roles.

33. While many other roles make an important contribution to the work of the Parliament, Conveners occupy a distinctive position. They lead the Parliament's principal mechanisms of scrutiny and accountability and perform a central leadership role within its committee-centred system of governance.

34. The distinction lies not in any single responsibility but in the combination of leadership, parliamentary authority, institutional accountability and a democratic mandate conferred through election by the Parliament.

35. Taken together, these characteristics place Conveners in a distinct category of parliamentary leadership and provide a clear basis for considering the office separately from other parliamentary roles.

36. This assessment does not imply that other roles could not warrant consideration within the Salaries Scheme. Indeed, some comparator legislatures provide additional remuneration for a wider range of parliamentary offices. However, remuneration arrangements for such roles vary considerably across legislatures. Some roles attract additional remuneration in one legislature but not another and, where payments exist, both the rationale and level of remuneration differ significantly. The existence of such roles does not provide a sufficiently consistent basis for comparative assessment and does not detract from the merits of assessing the Convener role in its own right.

37. Any consideration of other roles would require a separate assessment of the responsibilities, authority, accountability and institutional significance of the office concerned, together with the relevant evidence and remuneration principles.

38. Any proposal relating to another parliamentary office would also require to be considered through an appropriate and independent review process and assessed on its own merits rather than by analogy with the findings of this review.

Assessment of Distinctiveness

39. The evidence supports the conclusion that the office of Committee Convener constitutes a distinct parliamentary leadership role whose responsibilities, authority and accountability extend materially beyond those associated with the role of MSP and committee membership alone.

Benchmarking Assessment

Current Arrangements

40. The Parliament's Salaries Scheme already recognises that certain parliamentary offices carry responsibilities beyond those associated with membership of the Parliament and therefore attract additional remuneration.

41. Additional remuneration is currently provided for a range of parliamentary and governmental offices, including the Presiding Officer, Deputy Presiding Officers, Cabinet Secretaries, Ministers and Law Officers.

Established Principle

42. The significance of the existing arrangements lies not in the specific offices that attract additional remuneration but in the principle they reflect. The Parliament has already established that where an office carries responsibilities, authority or accountability beyond those associated with the role of MSP generally, additional remuneration may be appropriate. The relevant question is therefore whether the office of Convener carries responsibilities and accountabilities of sufficient significance and distinctiveness to warrant similar consideration.

Consistency and Fairness

43. An important principle of remuneration systems is that roles carrying materially different levels of responsibility, accountability and authority should be treated consistently and transparently.

44. Recognition of Conveners would therefore represent the application of an existing principle rather than the creation of a new one.

Wider Comparison of Member Remuneration

45. Direct comparison of committee leadership payments in cash terms can be misleading because overall remuneration frameworks differ significantly across legislatures. Basic salary, pension provision and resettlement arrangements all contribute to the overall value of remuneration packages and therefore provide important context when assessing comparator evidence.

Basic Pay and Pension

	MSP	MP	MS	MLA
Basic Remuneration	£77,711	£98,599	£79,817	£67,200
MSP Pay as a % of Comparator	-	78.8%	97.4%	115.6%
Parliament's pension contribution (%)	22.6%	10.5%	18.0%	17.1%
Parliament's pension contribution (£)	£17,563	£10,353	£14,367	£11,491
Total pay and pension value	£95,274	£108,952	£94,184	£78,691

Resettlement Grants

Legislature	Arrangement
House of Commons	Twice statutory redundancy entitlement. Payable only if not returned.
Scottish Parliament	Higher of 50% of salary or one-twelfth of salary per completed year of service (maximum 12 years). Payable if standing down or not returned.
Senedd Cymru	One month's salary per completed year of service, capped at six months. Payable only if not returned.
Northern Ireland Assembly	One month's salary per completed year of service, capped at six months. Payable if standing down or not returned.

Comparative Context

46. The comparison demonstrates that MSP basic salary is lower than Members of the House of Commons and marginally below that of Members of Senedd Cymru. However, the Scottish Parliament's pension contribution results in an overall salary and pension package that is broadly comparable to that available to Senedd Cymru Members and materially higher than that available to Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

47. The analysis also demonstrates that MSPs benefit from comparatively favourable resettlement arrangements. Taken together, these factors illustrate that comparisons based solely on headline salary do not provide a complete picture of the overall value of parliamentary remuneration.

48. The purpose of this analysis is not to assess the adequacy of MSP remuneration. Rather, it explains why the review places greater weight on the relative value attached to committee leadership roles within comparator legislatures than on the absolute cash value of individual payments.

49. Each of the relevant UK legislatures provides additional remuneration for committee leadership responsibilities notwithstanding wider differences in pay, pension and resettlement arrangements.

Legislature	Basic Salary	Additional Payment	Premium
Scottish Parliament	£77,711	Nil	0.0%
Senedd Cymru	£79,817	£16,212	20.3%
House of Commons	£98,599	£19,763	20.0%
Northern Ireland Assembly	£67,200	£12,000	17.9%

Sources: IPSA, Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd and Northern Ireland Assembly Determination.

50. The principal significance of the benchmarking evidence lies not in the cash value of comparator payments but in the consistency of approach adopted by independent remuneration frameworks. Across all comparator legislatures, committee leadership is recognised as a distinct parliamentary function warranting additional remuneration, typically around one-fifth of Member base salary.

51. Applying the same methodology to the current MSP base salary would produce an additional payment of approximately £15,500 per annum.

The Senedd Cymru as the Primary Comparator

52. The Senedd provides the strongest comparator for Scotland. Both legislatures place significant emphasis on committee-led scrutiny and use elected committee leadership arrangements. While there is no requirement to replicate the Senedd's payment level, the rationale underpinning its approach provides a particularly relevant benchmark.

Assessment

53. The benchmarking evidence demonstrates a consistent practice amongst comparable legislatures of recognising committee leadership through additional remuneration and suggests that a methodology based on a proportion of salary provides a more meaningful comparator than any individual payment figure.

Options for Consideration

54. Based on the findings of this review, three broad options emerge for consideration.

Option 1: Maintain the Status Quo

This would avoid additional expenditure and maintain current arrangements. However, it would mean that additional responsibilities, authority and accountabilities associated with the office of Convener continue to be treated differently from roles that currently attract additional remuneration under the Parliament's existing Salaries Scheme and from equivalent committee leadership roles in comparable legislatures.

Option 2: Adopt the Current Senedd Cymru Payment

This would provide a clear and readily identifiable comparator benchmark, reflecting arrangements operating in a legislature with similar committee-led characteristics. However, it would import a payment level established within a different remuneration framework and would not directly reflect the Parliament's own Salaries Scheme or remuneration principles.

Option 3: Apply an Additional Payment Equivalent to 20% of MSP salary

This would align with the methodology adopted in comparable legislatures whilst remaining proportionate to the Parliament's own Salaries Scheme. It would recognise the distinct responsibilities carried by Conveners through a methodology that is evidence-based, transparent and capable of being applied consistently over time.

Comparative Assessment of Options

55. Each option is capable of justification. However, when assessed against the evidence set out in this review, a methodology based on a proportion of MSP salary provides the closest alignment with:

a. the principles already reflected within the Parliament's existing Salaries Scheme;

b. the responsibilities, authority and accountability associated with the role of Convener;

c. the approach adopted by comparable legislatures;

d. the principle of proportionality.

56. Such an approach would enable any additional remuneration to remain aligned with the Parliament's existing Salaries Scheme while reflecting the broadly consistent methodology applied elsewhere in the UK.

57. The evidence does not require the adoption of any specific remuneration outcome. However, should the SPCB conclude that the office of Convener warrants recognition through additional remuneration, the evidence indicates that a payment equivalent to 20% of MSP salary provides the most transparent, proportionate and evidence-based basis for doing so, reflecting the broadly consistent methodology adopted independently across comparable UK legislatures.

Countervailing Considerations

58. There are legitimate arguments against the introduction of additional remuneration.

59. A principal argument against additional remuneration is that committee leadership forms part of the wider responsibilities associated with parliamentary service and should not attract separate financial recognition. It may also be argued that election as Convener already carries forms of recognition, influence and parliamentary standing that sufficiently acknowledge the significance of the role. Others may question whether additional expenditure can be justified within a constrained fiscal environment or express concern about implications for other parliamentary roles.

60. These considerations are legitimate and ultimately involve questions of judgement as well as evidence. However, they must be weighed against the findings of this review, which indicate that the role of Convener carries responsibilities and accountabilities extending beyond those generally associated with the role of MSP and is recognised accordingly in comparable legislatures.

61. Ultimately, public confidence is most likely to be maintained where remuneration decisions are grounded in transparent methodology, objective evidence and clear remuneration principles.

Implementation Considerations

62. Should the SPCB decide to recognise the office of Convener through additional remuneration, consideration would also require to be given to circumstances in which an MSP is appointed to act as Convener on a temporary basis.

63. Under Standing Orders, an Acting Convener may be appointed where the Convener is, or is likely to be, absent from proceedings of the committee for an extended period of maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave, adoption leave, or shared parental leave. In such circumstances, the Acting Convener may exercise the functions and responsibilities of the Convener for a potentially significant period.

64. A consequential issue for consideration would therefore be whether, and in what circumstances, any additional remuneration should apply to Acting Conveners. A proportionate approach would be to apply it only where the functions of Convener are exercised continuously for a specified minimum period. The four-week qualifying period adopted by the Senedd Cymru demonstrates one approach to addressing this issue and provides a useful comparator should the SPCB wish to consider similar arrangements[1].

65. More generally, the introduction of additional remuneration would require amendment to the Salaries Scheme and consequential amendment to pension arrangements, as the additional payment would be pensionable. Any such changes would require parliamentary approval.

66. These implementation and governance considerations do not affect the merits of the case for and against additional remuneration but would require detailed consideration should the SPCB decide to pursue implementation.

[1] final-determination-2025-26-english-screen-1.pdf

Conclusions

67. Four principal conclusions emerge from this review:

- The Parliament's existing Salaries Scheme already reflects the principle that offices carrying materially greater responsibility, authority or accountability than those associated with the role of MSP may appropriately be recognised through additional remuneration.

- The Parliament exercises many of its core functions through its committee system. Conveners therefore provide leadership for the Parliament's principal mechanisms of scrutiny and evidence-led policy examination and perform an important parliamentary leadership function.

- Conveners undertake responsibilities, authority and accountability that extend materially beyond those generally associated with committee membership or the role of MSP.

- Comparator legislatures consistently recognise committee leadership through additional remuneration and have adopted broadly similar approaches to determining its relative value.

68. Taken together, the evidence supports the conclusion that the office of Convener is a distinct parliamentary role whose responsibilities, authority, accountability and institutional significance extend materially beyond those associated with the role of MSP.

69. The assessment concludes that developments in the committee system, together with comparator evidence and the established remuneration principles reflected in the Parliament's existing Salaries Scheme, provide a more comprehensive basis for assessment than was available to previous reviews.

70. The evidence set out in this report indicates that the office of Convener is sufficiently distinct to support consideration of additional remuneration. The remaining question for the SPCB is whether it wishes that distinction to be recognised through the Salaries Scheme.

71. Should the SPCB wish to pursue this matter further, a methodology based on a proportion of MSP salary, rather than direct adoption of another legislature's payment level, would provide the most transparent and defensible approach. Such a methodology would recognise the distinct nature of committee leadership while maintaining alignment with the Parliament's existing arrangements and the principle of proportionality.

72. Applying an additional payment equivalent to approximately 20% of MSP salary, currently around £15,500 per annum, would be broadly consistent with the methodology adopted in comparable legislatures and with the relative valuation of committee leadership reached independently elsewhere in the UK.

73. The evidence reviewed in this report therefore demonstrates that there is a clear, objective and robust basis upon which the SPCB may consider recognising the office of Convener through additional remuneration.

Annex

Comparator Selection and Benchmarking Assessment

1. The benchmarking exercise was undertaken using role profiles that reflect the duties, responsibilities and institutional context of each role. Ensuring that comparisons are based on the nature of the role, rather than title alone, is essential to establishing a robust and credible benchmark.

2. The benchmarking exercise identified committee chair roles in the House of Commons, Senedd Cymru and Northern Ireland Assembly as the most appropriate comparators for Scottish Parliament committee conveners.

3. Scottish local authority committee chairs were considered as part of the exercise but excluded from the comparator benchmark. While these roles involve committee leadership responsibilities, they also encompass executive, strategic, portfolio-holder, governance and spokesperson functions within the council structure. As these responsibilities differ materially from the scrutiny, inquiry and parliamentary leadership functions undertaken by Scottish Parliament committee conveners, they were not considered sufficiently comparable for benchmarking purposes.

Comparator	Role title	Role outline	Source	Selected
Scottish Parliament	Committee Convener	**The main functions are:** • to agree the agenda for each meeting and to chair committee meetings • to speak and act on behalf of the committee at other times (in particular during Chamber debates) or in speaking about a report to the media • to participate in the work of the Conveners Group.	SPICe Briefing	Yes
House of Commons	Select Committee Chair	**Among the key elements of the role are:** • providing support and direction to the committee's staff between formal meetings • ensuring that committee members can contribute to the choice of inquiry topics, oral evidence sessions and reports, and • providing the committee's public face	UK Parliament Website	Yes
Senedd Cymru	Committee Chair	**The main role is to:** • ensure that there is a fair balance of opportunities for committee members to ask questions and for witnesses to respond. • represent the committee publicly, in media activity, and in meetings with stakeholders or Welsh Government Ministers • guide the direction of inquiries, sign off on draft reports and official papers, and coordinate the committee's forward work programme	Senedd Cymru Website	Yes

Comparator	Role title	Role outline	Source	Selected
Northern Ireland Assembly	Committee Chair	**The main role is to:** • chair committee meetings • speak on behalf of the committee • agree agendas for committee meetings.	Northern Ireland Assembly Website	Yes
Scottish Local Authorities	Chair of Committee/ Senior Spokesperson	**The main functions are:** **1. Committee** • To act as Chair of a Committee and liaise with senior officers within their portfolio regarding committee business. • To ensure Committee and working group meetings are conducted effectively in accordance with standing orders and encourage participation and debate. **2. Strategic/Corporate** • To contribute to the development of the Council's corporate strategies to help ensure the development of service policy within the corporate environment in relation to their portfolio. • To providing regular reports on the areas of work for which they have responsibility, including reporting back on meetings with organisations and other events outside the Council. • To take a corporate lead in the development of the Council as an organisation and the formulation and achievement of its strategic vision.	Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee (SLARC)	No

Comparator	Role title	Role outline	Source	Selected
		3. Spokesperson • To promoting awareness of service strategies, achievements, and constraints in order to inform the public, government and other organisations. • To act as spokesperson within and outside the Council in relation to the Committee's remit. • To advocate within the local community, and with appropriate agencies and bodies, for the services within their area. **4. Governance** • To contribute to the effective governance of the Council. To ensure the overall co-ordination and management of the relevant Committee function and terms of reference. **5. Liaison** • To work closely with the Chief Officer and senior managers to provide clarity on political direction and assist in working through strategies and plans within their portfolio. • To maintaining good communications with Council employees, providing a bridge between the Council and employees to provide a policy background for, and recognition of, their work.		

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Additional Remuneration for Committee Conveners

Policy, practice or decision	Amend the Scottish Parliament Members' Salaries Scheme, with consequential pension changes, to provide Committee Conveners with an additional pensionable salary equivalent to 20% of MSP salary.
Business area and assessment owner	People, Communications and Inclusion; Director of People, Communications and Inclusion.
Decision-maker	Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) in the first instance. Ownership ultimately rests with the Parliament.
Proposed implementation date	1 April 2027.
Date of assessment	November 2026.
Review point	After the first full year of operation, or sooner if the Scheme, qualifying conditions, relevant evidence or implementation arrangements change.

1. Purpose and scope

The proposal recognises the role of Committee Convener as a distinct parliamentary leadership position carrying responsibilities, authority and accountability beyond those ordinarily associated with the role of MSP. The intended outcome is a transparent and proportionate remuneration arrangement, consistent with the principles of the existing Salaries Scheme and broadly aligned with comparator legislatures.

The payment would attach to the role rather than to the personal characteristics of its holder. It would apply on the same basis to all qualifying Conveners and would be pensionable. Where an MSP exercises the functions of Convener on an acting basis, the proposed approach is for payment only where those functions are exercised continuously for at least one calendar month.

Those directly affected are MSPs elected or appointed as Committee Conveners and MSPs acting in that role for the qualifying period. The proposal does not change eligibility for the role, the process for selecting Conveners, committee remits, the duties of the role, or the support and reasonable adjustments available to Members.

2. Equality duty

The SPCB is subject to the general public sector equality duty in the Equality Act 2010. In exercising its functions, it must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of

opportunity; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The SPCB uses an evidence-based process to support fair, inclusive and transparent decision-making.

3. Evidence and engagement

The assessment draws on the accompanying evidence review, the existing Salaries Scheme, the proposed Scheme and pension amendments, and comparator arrangements in the House of Commons, Senedd Cymru and Northern Ireland Assembly. It also considers the design of the payment, the affected group and the proposed acting arrangements. This evidence can be reviewed in the Report.

The available evidence concerns the responsibilities and relative value of the role. The paper does not record disaggregated equality data about current or prospective Conveners, qualitative evidence from Members, or consultation with equality groups. It is therefore possible to assess the neutrality of the remuneration rule itself, but not to conclude whether existing patterns of representation or barriers to committee leadership affect who is likely to benefit in practice.

4. Assessment against the three needs of the duty

Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The payment is attached to performance of the Convener role and applies on identical terms to each role-holder. No eligibility or payment condition refers to a protected characteristic. No direct discrimination has been identified. No provision, criterion or practice within the remuneration proposal itself appears likely to place people sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. Existing legal duties and protections remain unchanged.

Advance equality of opportunity. Equal payment for the same role supports consistent recognition of responsibility. The proposal does not determine who becomes a Convener and does not itself add to or remove any under-representation or barriers in the route to committee leadership. Proportionate monitoring can help establish whether benefits are distributed unevenly and whether any concern relates to the separate selection or support arrangements. Such monitoring this will be subject to having sufficient robust data available to perform this.

Foster good relations. A published rationale and consistent methodology may support confidence that remuneration is based on the responsibilities of the role rather than the personal status of its holder. Communications should explain the role-based rationale, the evidence considered and the outcome of this assessment.

5. Protected characteristic assessment

The following assessment is made with recognition that there is limited diversity data available in relation to MSPs and potential future elected Members.

Although there is no specific requirement to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment in this case, the SPCB has chosen to do so as a matter of good governance and transparency.

Protected characteristic	Likely impact and evidence	Conclusion or action
Age	The payment is available on the same basis irrespective of age. A pensionable addition may have different practical value depending on career stage and individual pension circumstances, but the remuneration rule does not differentiate by age.	Neutral. No adverse impact identified. Positive impact anticipated for role holder
Disability	The proposal does not change eligibility for the role or the duty to make reasonable adjustments. Disabled Members could be affected by inaccessible working practices, but those barriers would arise from the operation of or access to the role rather than the additional payment. Payroll information and implementation processes must be accessible.	Neutral in design. Retain reasonable adjustments and accessible implementation. No adverse impact identified. Positive impact anticipated for role holder
Gender reassignment	The payment and qualifying conditions do not differentiate by gender reassignment status. Personal information in payroll, pension and monitoring processes must be handled lawfully, securely and sensitively.	Neutral. No adverse impact identified. Positive impact anticipated for role holder
Marriage and civil partnership	No distinction is made by marital or civil partnership status. Any pension consequences follow the applicable pension arrangements rather than a differential remuneration rule.	Neutral. No adverse impact identified. Positive impact anticipated for role holder
Pregnancy and maternity	The proposal is role-based and does not change protections relating to pregnancy, maternity or absence. Care is required to ensure that a role-holder is not disadvantaged through the interaction of absence, temporary cover and acting arrangements. The proposed arrangements may have a positive impact by ensuring that an Acting Convener who assumes the	No inherent adverse impact. Confirm treatment during pregnancy-related and maternity absence in implementation guidance. Positive impact anticipated for role holder

Protected characteristic	Likely impact and evidence	Conclusion or action
	functions and responsibilities of the role for more than four weeks receives the associated additional remuneration. This supports effective maternity cover and ensures that sustained additional responsibility is recognised consistently and transparently	
Race	The payment applies on identical terms irrespective of race, nationality or ethnic origin.	Neutral in design. No adverse impact identified. Positive impact anticipated for role holder.
Religion or belief	No distinction is made by religion or belief. Existing arrangements for participation in parliamentary business and religious observance are unaffected.	Neutral. No adverse impact identified. Positive impact anticipated for role holder.
Sex	The payment applies equally to women and men who hold the office.	Neutral in design. No adverse impact identified Positive impact anticipated for role holder.
Sexual orientation	The payment and qualifying conditions do not differentiate by sexual orientation.	Neutral. No adverse impact identified. Positive impact anticipated for role holder.

6. Intersectionality and wider considerations

Members may experience the combined effects of more than one protected characteristic. Disability, pregnancy or maternity, age, sex, race, religion or belief and caring responsibilities may interact with the time, visibility, travel and participation demands of parliamentary leadership. The remuneration proposal does not create those demands.

Socio-economic background and caring responsibilities are not protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 but may affect whether Members can take on leadership responsibilities. Additional remuneration may recognise the demands of the office, but it should not be assumed, without evidence, that it removes practical barriers.

As described, diversity data in relation to MSPs is limited. A process to provide robust data for monitoring for unequal access to the office and therefore unequal access to the additional payment would need to be agreed by Members.

7. Actions and mitigating measures

- Apply the same percentage, qualifying period, pension treatment and effective-date rules consistently to every eligible role-holder.
- Confirm in implementation guidance how payment will operate during pregnancy-related, maternity, disability-related and other authorised absences, and during acting arrangements.
- Make information about the change available through accessible channels and formats.
- Test payroll, pension and administrative processes before commencement to ensure they do not create avoidable barriers or inconsistent treatment.

8. Outcome, monitoring and sign-off

Assessment outcome: Proceed, subject to the actions and safeguards in section 7.

On the evidence available, the proposal is not expected to create an adverse equality impact. It applies a uniform, role-based remuneration rule and does not change access to, or the functions of, the role. This conclusion is limited to the remuneration proposal. It does not establish that there are no wider equality issues in access to committee leadership.

The assessment should be reviewed after the first full year of operation and earlier if the Scheme, qualifying conditions, appointment arrangements, implementation guidance or relevant evidence changes, or if an equality concern is raised. The review should consider authorised absence and acting periods, complaints or requests for adjustment, accessible communications, and aggregate distributional information where this can be used lawfully without identifying individuals.

Assessment owner	Director of People, Communications and Inclusion
Date completed	November 2026
Approved by	To be completed
Date approved	To be completed
Review date	After the first full year of operation, or sooner if required