



OFFICIAL REPORT
AITHISG OIFIGEIL

Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

Thursday 16 June 2016

Session 5



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Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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STANDARDS, PROCEDURES AND PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE
1st Meeting 2016, Session 5

CONVENER

*Clare Adamson (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Green)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Tom Arthur (Renfrewshire South) (SNP)

*Clare Haughey (Rutherglen) (SNP)

*Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)

*John Scott (Ayr) (Con)

*Alexander Stewart (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

*attended

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Douglas Wands

LOCATION

The James Clerk Maxwell Room (CR4)

Scottish Parliament

Convener

Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

Thursday 16 June 2016

[John Scott opened the meeting at 10:30]

Interests

John Scott (Ayr) (Con): I welcome everyone to the first meeting in session 5 of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee and remind everyone present to turn off their mobile phones and other electronic devices. I am very pleased to welcome to the committee new members of Parliament in particular.

All members will be aware that one of the endearing conventions of our committee structure is that the oldest member of the committee gets to do the first part of the meeting before we elect a convener. Before we move to that job, I invite members to declare their interests.

I will start. I am a farmer and a landowner. I think that that is all that I need to declare.

Clare Adamson (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP): I have no specific interests to declare for the committee, but obviously I have interests that the Parliament will publish shortly.

Patrick Harvie (Glasgow) (Green): I do not think that I have any relevant interests to declare.

Tom Arthur (Renfrewshire South) (SNP): I do not think that I have any relevant interests to declare.

Clare Haughey (Rutherglen) (SNP): I do not think that I have any relevant interests to declare.

Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab): I do not know whether this is particularly relevant, but I am a shareholder in two private limited companies. I am a director of both companies, but I am non-salaried and non-working. Both relate to the retail sector.

In light of the broad scope of the committee, I thought that it was important to make a full declaration of that.

Alexander Stewart (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): I do not think that I have any relevant interests other than that I am a councillor in Perth and Kinross Council. That may have some relevance.

John Scott: That is terrific. Thank you very much.

10:32

John Scott: The next item of business is to choose the convener. All members will have read paper 2, which outlines the process.

Members will be aware that Parliament has already decided that the convener will be a member of the Scottish National Party. I seek nominations for the convener, please.

Tom Arthur: I nominate Clare Adamson.

John Scott: There are no other nominations.

Clare Adamson was chosen as convener.

John Scott: I welcome Clare Adamson to the post of convener of the committee.

The Convener (Clare Adamson): I thank the committee very much for selecting me to be the convener. As members can probably tell, I am struggling a bit with my voice today. I hope that I will be able to get through the meeting without too many problems.

Deputy Convener

10:33

The Convener: Agenda item 3 is the choice of the deputy convener. The Parliament has agreed that only members of the Scottish Green Party are eligible for nomination to be deputy convener. I understand that Patrick Harvie has his party's nomination for the post. I nominate him to be the deputy convener.

Patrick Harvie: That was from a wide field.

Daniel Johnson: It is about quality, not quantity.

Patrick Harvie was chosen as deputy convener.

The Convener: I welcome Patrick Harvie to the post of deputy convener.

Work Programme

10:34

The Convener: Agenda item 4 is discussion of the work programme. The previous committee produced a legacy paper, which has been circulated to members of the committee for information.

We are aware that the committee will be required to consider proposed changes to the titles and remits of several mandatory committees. The Presiding Officer has written to the committee regarding that issue.

I propose that we agree to hold a business planning day towards the end of the summer recess at which the committee can discuss in more detail its remit and future work. Do members agree to that?

Members indicated agreement.

The Convener: The clerks will contact us over the summer to see whether we can agree a date for the meeting, towards the end of August. I hope that the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland and perhaps the Presiding Officer will be able to attend, at least for part of the day.

Do members want to raise any items of business that we might want to include in our discussions on the business planning day?

Patrick Harvie: This issue is not specifically about our business planning day. Other committees are scheduling business planning days, including the committees whose remits we are going to consider, and I am aware that we will be asked to consider committee remits only in September, after we come back from the summer recess. Is there a way of signalling to the committees whose remits are likely to change that that is something that they can consider? I am a member of the Finance Committee, which is one of the committees that is likely to have its remit expanded, and there is a sense that some of those committees are constrained in the business planning that they can undertake until their remits have been changed. Can we give a clear signal that committees can look at the wider remits that they expect to take on when they are looking at their work plans?

The Convener: That is a valid point. This committee will meet on the last Thursday before the summer recess. I will write to the conveners of the other committees to seek their guidance on whether we should discuss the matter at that meeting, which would give us the opportunity to deal with some of the issues.

I think that Daniel Johnson wants to comment.

Daniel Johnson: It is right that we discuss our work programme in more detail when we have more time, but I just wanted to record my thanks to the outgoing committee for the legacy report that it provided. The committee highlighted a number of issues that give us good pointers as to what we should be looking at in the coming months, if not years.

The Convener: That is also a valid point. Our predecessor committees have been very successful in previous sessions and we want to continue their work.

If members have no further suggestions or comments about the work programme, we can close the meeting. Thank you all for your attendance. I look forward to working with you all.

Meeting closed at 10:37.

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