

# **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE**

Tuesday 13 November 2001  
*(Morning)*

Session 1

£5.00

© Parliamentary copyright. Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body 2001.

Applications for reproduction should be made in writing to the Copyright Unit,  
Her Majesty's Stationery Office, St Clements House, 2-16 Colegate, Norwich NR3 1BQ  
Fax 01603 723000, which is administering the copyright on behalf of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate  
Body.

Produced and published in Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body by The  
Stationery Office Ltd.

Her Majesty's Stationery Office is independent of and separate from the company now  
trading as The Stationery Office Ltd, which is responsible for printing and publishing  
Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body publications.

---

# CONTENTS

**Tuesday 13 November 2001**

	<b>Col.</b>
<b>ITEMS IN PRIVATE</b> .....	1309
<b>TRAVELLING PEOPLE</b> .....	1309

---

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE** **18<sup>th</sup> Meeting 2001, Session 1**

### **CONVENER**

\*Kate MacLean (Dundee West) (Lab)

### **DEPUTY CONVENER**

\*Kay Ullrich (West of Scotland) (SNP)

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

\*Mrs Lyndsay McIntosh (Central Scotland) (Con)

\*Mr Michael McMahon (Hamilton North and Bellshill) (Lab)

\*Mr Gil Paterson (Central Scotland) (SNP)

Cathy Peattie (Falkirk East) (Lab)

\*Elaine Smith (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab)

\*Mr Jamie Stone (Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross) (LD)

\*attended

### **CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE**

Lee Bridges

### **SENIOR ASSISTANT CLERK**

Richard Walsh

### **ASSISTANT CLERK**

Roy McMahon

### **LOCATION**

Committee Room 2



## Scottish Parliament

### Equal Opportunities Committee

*Tuesday 13 November 2001*

*(Morning)*

[THE CONVENER *opened the meeting at 10:00*]

### Items in Private

**The Convener (Kate MacLean):** Agenda item 1 is to ask the committee to agree to take items 3, 4 and 5 in private. Is that agreed?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

### Travelling People

**The Convener:** Agenda item 2 is consideration of a draft motion for the committee's business in the chamber next week. We are considering not the motion that was originally sent out, but the motion that was put on members' desks today. Does anyone have comments or questions?

**Elaine Smith (Coatbridge and Chryston) (Lab):** Does the revised motion represent the only way in which committees can word motions? Must we ask the Parliament to note the report rather than call on the Executive to act?

**The Convener:** The revised motion follows the protocol for committee motions in the chamber.

**Elaine Smith:** I presume that in speaking to the motion, committee members can make the points that the report makes.

**The Convener:** Members can say anything that they want to. Points can be made without being included in the motion.

**Kay Ullrich (West of Scotland) (SNP):** I can see the reasoning behind the revised motion, as it frees committee members to take their own point of view, but surely it represents a volte-face from the original motion. Can anyone shed any light on the change? When I was a member of the Health and Community Care Committee, all committee members agreed across party lines with a report when we debated one in the chamber. Where did the idea behind the revised motion come from?

**Lee Bridges (Clerk):** From the beginning, most committees have lodged motions that ask that the Parliament notes a report. That avoids any division—any vote—in the chamber on a consensual committee report. If a word as bland as "notes" is used in the motion, members can say

anything they like and the topics that are spoken about in the chamber are unrestricted.

**The Convener:** As I said, members can make points in the debate. If the committee is unsatisfied with the Executive's first response or its response in the debate, we will decide how to progress. That is something for the future. For the debate in the chamber, we are following the protocol to which other committees adhere. There are not a tremendous number of options available.

**Kay Ullrich:** When was the decision taken? The clerk sent us a message that the motion had to be changed to use the word "notes".

**Lee Bridges:** That was fully my responsibility, as I did not check the original motion. After I sent out the original motion, it was pointed out to me that it was not what is done. Circulating the original motion was my mistake.

**Kay Ullrich:** So the practice is not new.

**The Convener:** It was my decision to change the motion to follow the way in which committee business is usually presented in the chamber.

**Elaine Smith:** Although the motion uses only the word "notes", it asks the Parliament to note our report, which has clear recommendations and presents our decisions and how we feel about the issue. Although the motion is bland, the report that the motion asks the Parliament to note is not bland. We must make that point.

**The Convener:** It is largely irrelevant how the motion appears in the business bulletin. The report and its recommendations are the subject of the motion. If we ask the Parliament to note the report, the motion will be unopposed. We can decide how we proceed with Executive responses with which we are unhappy. Committee members are unhappy with quite a few of the Executive's responses and those points can come out in debate. As a committee, we will then decide how to progress.

Is the wording of the motion agreed to?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

**The Convener:** I apologise to the press and the public for the short public meeting.

10:05

*Meeting continued in private until 10:22.*



Members who would like a printed copy of the *Official Report* to be forwarded to them should give notice at the Document Supply Centre.

No proofs of the *Official Report* can be supplied. Members who want to suggest corrections for the archive edition should mark them clearly in the daily edition, and send it to the Official Report, 375 High Street, Edinburgh EH99 1SP. Suggested corrections in any other form cannot be accepted.

The deadline for corrections to this edition is:

**Tuesday 20 November 2001**

Members who want reprints of their speeches (within one month of the date of publication) may obtain request forms and further details from the Central Distribution Office, the Document Supply Centre or the Official Report.

#### PRICES AND SUBSCRIPTION RATES

##### DAILY EDITIONS

*Single copies: £5*

*Meetings of the Parliament annual subscriptions: £500*

The archive edition of the *Official Report* of meetings of the Parliament, written answers and public meetings of committees will be published on CD-ROM.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT, compiled by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre, contains details of past and forthcoming business and of the work of committees and gives general information on legislation and other parliamentary activity.

*Single copies: £3.75*

*Special issue price: £5*

*Annual subscriptions: £150.00*

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS weekly compilation

*Single copies: £3.75*

*Annual subscriptions: £150.00*

Standing orders will be accepted at the Document Supply Centre.

Published in Edinburgh by The Stationery Office Limited and available from:

**The Stationery Office Bookshop**  
71 Lothian Road  
Edinburgh EH3 9AZ  
0131 228 4181 Fax 0131 622 7017

**The Stationery Office Bookshops at:**  
123 Kingsway, London WC2B 6PQ  
Tel 020 7242 6393 Fax 020 7242 6394  
68-69 Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6AD  
Tel 0121 236 9696 Fax 0121 236 9699  
33 Wine Street, Bristol BS1 2BQ  
Tel 01179 264306 Fax 01179 294515  
9-21 Princess Street, Manchester M60 8AS  
Tel 0161 834 7201 Fax 0161 833 0634  
16 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GD  
Tel 028 9023 8451 Fax 028 9023 5401  
The Stationery Office Oriel Bookshop,  
18-19 High Street, Cardiff CF1 2BZ  
Tel 029 2039 5548 Fax 029 2038 4347

**The Stationery Office Scottish Parliament Documentation**  
Helpline may be able to assist with additional information  
on publications of or about the Scottish Parliament,  
their availability and cost:

**Telephone orders and inquiries**  
**0870 606 5566**

**Fax orders**  
**0870 606 5588**

**The Scottish Parliament Shop**  
George IV Bridge  
EH99 1SP  
Telephone orders 0131 348 5412

sp.info@scottish.parliament.uk

www.scottish.parliament.uk

**Accredited Agents**  
(see Yellow Pages)

and through good booksellers