EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE

Tuesday 8 January 2002
(*Morning*)

Session 1

£5.00

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 8 January 2002

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE
1st Meeting 2002, 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)
Tommy Sheridan (Glasgow) (SSP)
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 1

Scottish Parliament

Equal Opportunities Committee

Tuesday 8 January 2002

(*Morning*)

[THE CONVENER *opened the meeting at 10:07*]

Items in Private

The Convener (Kate MacLean): I welcome everyone back to the first committee meeting after the new year. I hope that members had a good break and that they are looking forward to what will be the committee's last full calendar year this session.

Agenda item 1 is to ask the committee to agree to take item 5, which is consideration of the general principles of the Public Appointments (Parliamentary Approval) (Scotland) Bill; item 6, which is consideration of a paper on the gender inquiry; and item 7, which is consideration of the committee's future work programme, in private. Is that agreed?

Members *indicated agreement*.

The Convener: We have received apologies from the new member, Tommy Sheridan, so item 2, which was his declaration of interests, will not happen. We have also received apologies from Jamie Stone, Elaine Smith, Kay Ullrich and Gil Paterson.

Reporters

The Convener: Item 3 is consideration of the draft report by Gil Paterson, the disability reporter. In view of the taking-stock meeting on 22 January, I have spoken to Gil, who is happy for us to go ahead with our consideration, so I suggest that we take the item today. Is that agreed?

Members *indicated agreement*.

The Convener: Members have a copy of the draft report and of a paper that was circulated by the clerks. Do members have comments or questions on the draft report?

Mr Michael McMahon (Hamilton North and Bellshill) (Lab): Does the draft report relate to the inquiry that we want to initiate for the European year of people with disabilities in 2003 or is it part of a separate process?

Richard Walsh (Clerk): The disability reporter suggested that, subject to the committee's agreement, in addition to providing a summary of everything that has been done so far, the draft report could be used as the basis on which to begin an inquiry into the state of preparations for the European year of people with disabilities in 2003.

The Convener: That would also be subject to consultation with disability organisations.

Mr McMahon: Will disability organisations have access to the draft report to allow them to make suggestions or will we have to co-ordinate to allow us to arrive at a conclusion?

Richard Walsh: As with the gender reporter's recent work, once the committee has agreed the draft report, it will be collated and published and will become a public document. Depending on what the committee wants, there could then be consultation about what has been done so far and what various relevant bodies have proposed.

Mr McMahon: Would we have to ask bodies specifically to give us their interpretation of the report and ask for suggestions or would that happen as a matter of course?

Richard Walsh: It would probably be best for the committee to direct bodies to areas in which they are interested, but the publication of the report will probably generate interest of its own accord.

The Convener: Is that okay?

Mr McMahon: Yes. Has Gil Paterson indicated what future work should flow from the report?

Richard Walsh: The third bullet point of paragraph 10 of the paper suggests that the disability reporter, supported by clerks, should

work up proposals on how the implementation of the year of people with disabilities in 2003 could be monitored throughout 2002.

The Convener: We can agree on the draft report today and ask Gil Paterson to report at the next meeting, under the reporters item, and answer questions. We should agree on the draft report to enable the meeting on 22 January to go ahead. We can speak to Gil Paterson at the next committee meeting about what we should do with the report.

Cathy Peattie (Falkirk East) (Lab): I share Michael McMahon's concerns. The year of people with disabilities in 2003 is an opportunity to pull together organisations that work in the disability sector and give them a chance to promote issues. Some mechanism must exist to enable us to listen. I know that that is happening through pulling the report together, but there must be a formal link with the organisations. We must not assume that we know what they will want to say. Once we have had the taking-stock meeting on 22 January, we might want to review how we should progress and work towards 2003 with agencies involved in disability, so that we make the best of the year.

The Convener: I do not see any difficulty with that.

Does the committee agree the draft report as the basis for the meeting on 22 January?

Members *indicated agreement*.

The Convener: Is it also agreed that we inform Scottish Executive officials of the broad areas that we will discuss, so that they will be able to prepare, to make the meeting more meaningful?

Members *indicated agreement*.

"Fair for all"

The Convener: Item 4 is the Scottish Executive's publication, "Fair for all". Members have received a paper from the clerks and they should also have received a copy of the document. I do not know whether it was sent out by the clerks or by the Scottish Executive.

Richard Walsh: We sent it out the day after the committee papers were issued.

The Convener: Members should all therefore have received the document. Do members have comments on it?

10:15

Cathy Peattie: I have read the report, but I have not seen the paper from the clerks. It may have gone to my office and I have not caught up with it yet.

I have several concerns about the report that might be answered in the paper. My concerns focus on the ethnic minority communities. An assumption can be made that services cater for and are designed for communities. I have experience of health boards and other agencies making that assumption without having any liaison or dialogue with communities. Progress must be made on community development and building capacity with communities, especially in relation to women in ethnic minority communities. I know from working with Asian women in the past that they often feel excluded from services. People often talk to the men in their communities and not the women. Asian women have the same aspirations and concerns in relation to community care, care in hospital and back-up support as any other women. The report contains good intentions, but not the mechanisms to ensure that they are fulfilled. I apologise for not having read the paper from the clerks. I will look for it.

In its conclusions, the report mentions evaluation and the specific performance indicators that will be used to measure each national health service organisation. That is a good intention, but to find out how it is working, or not working, broad evaluation must be carried out. That means involving the organisations and agencies that I am talking about. A stakeholder approach must be taken to performance indicators. All the agencies and organisations must be involved, including folk in the community who use the service, staff, trade unions and managers. That must happen and it must be laid down. We can talk about performance indicators, but unless they are qualitative they are meaningless. I do not see enough about that in the report.

Mr McMahon: The committee has experienced what Cathy Peattie describes in relation to almost every issue that we have considered. The suggestions look good on paper, but we do not know how the Scottish Executive will monitor their delivery at the coalface. The mechanisms are absent. The Executive says that there are opportunities to share best practice and that the document will have a catalytic effect and will make people reassess the situation, but there is no formal way of assessing whether health boards and trusts are implementing good practice and achieving the aims of the report. I know that the committee makes this point time and time again, but monitoring must be carried out and performance indicators must be put in place to enable us to assess whether the good intentions in reports are delivered. I question whether the report shows us how the Executive will scrutinise the delivery of the service.

The Convener: The conclusions state that the broad actions that are outlined in the report will be underpinned with specific performance indicators and that those will be measured regularly.

It would be useful to write to the Minister for Health and Community Care to express the committee's concerns that scrutiny of delivery should be meaningful.

Cathy Peattie: The point is how the indicators are measured and by whom.

The Convener: We can raise those points with the Minister for Health and Community Care.

In relation to the committee's inquiry on Gypsy Travellers, the report states that Gypsy Travellers will be recognised as a separate ethnic group for the implementation of the plan.

Is it agreed that we write to the Minister for Health and Community Care with the comments that members have made?

Members *indicated agreement*.

The Convener: Is it also agreed that the report be used in the examination of orders under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and that further work should be carried out on an analysis of the approach and the potential application to other areas within the committee's remit?

Members *indicated agreement*.

10:19

Meeting continued in private until 10:58.

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 15 January 2002

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: £350.00

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 CF12BZ
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

Printed in Scotland by The Stationery Office Limited

ISBN 0 338 000003 ISSN 1467-0178