



OFFICIAL REPORT
AITHISG OIFIGEIL

Committee on the Scottish Government Handling of Harassment Complaints

Wednesday 2 October 2019

Session 5



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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**COMMITTEE ON THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT HANDLING OF HARASSMENT
COMPLAINTS
6th Meeting 2019, Session 5**

CONVENER

*Linda Fabiani (East Kilbride) (SNP)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Margaret Mitchell (Central Scotland) (Con)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- *Dr Alasdair Allan (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP)
- *Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab)
- *Donald Cameron (Highlands and Islands) (Con)
- *Alex Cole-Hamilton (Edinburgh Western) (LD)
- *Angela Constance (Almond Valley) (SNP)
- *Alison Johnstone (Lothian) (Green)
- *Maureen Watt (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)

*attended

LOCATION

The Adam Smith Room (CR5)

Scottish Parliament

Committee on the Scottish Government Handling of Harassment Complaints

Wednesday 2 October 2019

[The Convener opened the meeting at 12:17]

Decision on Taking Business in Private

The Convener (Linda Fabiani): Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to the sixth meeting in 2019 of the Committee on the Scottish Government Handling of Harassment Complaints. I ask members to turn off any electronic devices that might interfere with the proceedings.

Agenda item 1 is a decision on taking business in private. Under agenda item 2, the committee will consider letters from the First Minister and the permanent secretary to the Scottish Government. Both letters, which relate to records management and information technology, have been published online. I propose to move back into public session to announce any decisions taken during the discussion under agenda item 2. Do members agree to take agenda item 2 in private?

Members indicated agreement.

The Convener: We will therefore move into private session.

12:17

Meeting continued in private.

13:40

Meeting continued in public.

Approach to the Committee's Inquiry

The Convener: The committee is now back in public session after a very interesting discussion.

The committee notes that, in the context of the Scottish Government's current document management policy, having taken detailed briefings on information retention systems in our meeting today, it may no longer be possible to access all the information—please excuse me, anyone who is listening, including the official report staff; I am desperately trying to read my scribbles. I will start again.

Having taken detailed briefings on information retention systems, the committee notes that, in the context of the Scottish Government's current document management policy, it might be no longer available—I am sorry; I will try again. Third time lucky. Please excuse me again.

The committee notes, having taken detailed briefings on information retention systems in its meeting today, that, in the context of the Scottish Government's current document management policy, information may no longer be available if it predates the Scottish Government's instruction to retain of 22 March. The committee welcomes the Scottish Government's confirmation that it will share the information provided as part of the judicial review.

The committee notes that the Scottish Government uses enterprise vault, in which information—emails, for example—is held for a year before deletion. The committee is seeking further information on the Scottish Government's exchange configuration and exchange retention policy settings.

The committee discussed the permanent secretary's letter of 26 September and notes that legal expenditure of over £25,000 is routinely published on the Scottish Government's website. However, the committee notes that that is not the case in this instance, at the date of this committee meeting, and it will seek clarification.

The meeting is now closed.

Meeting closed at 13:43.

This is the final edition of the *Official Report* of this meeting. It is part of the Scottish Parliament *Official Report* archive and has been sent for legal deposit.

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