

# **JUSTICE 2 SUB-COMMITTEE**

Tuesday 5 September 2006

Session 2

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### JUSTICE 2 SUB-COMMITTEE

1<sup>st</sup> Meeting 2006, Session 2

#### OLDEST COMMITTEE MEMBER

\*John Home Robertson (East Lothian) (Lab)

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

\*Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab)

\*Alex Fergusson (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (Con)

\*Mr Kenny MacAskill (Lothians) (SNP)

\*Jeremy Purvis (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD)

\*attended

#### CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Jennifer Smart

#### SENIOR ASSISTANT CLERK

Claire Menzies Smith

#### LOCATION

Committee Room 5



## Scottish Parliament

### Justice 2 Sub-Committee

*Tuesday 5 September 2006*

[THE OLDEST COMMITTEE MEMBER *opened the meeting at 10:00*]

**John Home Robertson (Oldest Committee Member):** It is now 10 o'clock, so we will start proceedings on time. I welcome back Kenny MacAskill and all other members after what I hope has been a useful recess. It seems no time since I was one of the youngest members of the House of Commons, but I am now told that I am the oldest member of the Justice 2 Sub-Committee; I chair it in that capacity.

We are sometimes told that the Parliament does not address important issues, but I cannot think of a more important issue than the one that we have been charged with inquiring into. This is the first sub-committee that the Parliament has established and we have an important issue to study.

## Interests

10:00

**John Home Robertson:** As I am the oldest committee member, it is my duty to chair the meeting while it deals with declarations of interest and the choice of convener. I will go round the table for declarations of interest. I have no relevant interests to declare.

**Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Lab):** I have no relevant interests to declare.

**Mr Kenny MacAskill (Lothians) (SNP):** I have no interests to declare.

**Jeremy Purvis (Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale) (LD):** I have no interests to declare.

**Alex Fergusson (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale) (Con):** I have nothing to declare.

**John Home Robertson:** That disposes of that agenda item.

## Convener

10:01

**John Home Robertson:** Item 2 is the choice of convener, who must come from the Labour Party. I invite nominations.

**Alex Fergusson:** I hope that Mr Home Robertson will not take what I say as a personal insult or anything to do with his age, but I have great pleasure in nominating Jackie Baillie to convene the sub-committee.

*Jackie Baillie was chosen as convener.*

**John Home Robertson:** I ask Jackie Baillie to take the chair. I will get out of the way and take my coffee elsewhere.

**The Convener (Jackie Baillie):** Thank you very much.

**John Home Robertson (East Lothian) (Lab):** Congratulations.

**The Convener:** John Home Robertson has chosen to move further away—he has left me isolated.

**Jeremy Purvis:** He is obviously in a huff.

**The Convener:** In our eyes, he will always be the youngest committee member.

## Deputy Convener

10:02

**The Convener:** Item 3 is the choice of deputy convener, who the Parliament has resolved will come from the Scottish National Party. I invite nominations for deputy convener.

**Jeremy Purvis:** I am happy to nominate Kenny MacAskill.

**Mr MacAskill:** Thank you.

*Mr Kenny MacAskill was chosen as deputy convener.*

**The Convener:** Congratulations, Kenny.

## Adviser

10:02

**The Convener:** Item 4 is consideration of an adviser. Members have a paper that asks them to consider whether we wish to appoint an adviser to assist in our inquiry, given the wide remit that we must cover, the time in which we have to report and the complexity of the issues that we must consider. Do members agree to appoint an adviser?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

**The Convener:** Do members agree to the role and specification for the adviser that is outlined in the paper?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

**The Convener:** We need to agree to proceed by correspondence, partly to save time. If we are to select an adviser, we must propose that to the Parliamentary Bureau and, once it has taken a decision, the sub-committee must ratify that at a later meeting. Are members happy to do as much of that by correspondence as possible?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

## Witness Expenses

10:03

**The Convener:** We are rattling through the agenda. Under item 5, members are asked to consider whether to delegate to me responsibility for arranging, under rule 12.4.3 of standing orders, for the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body to pay any witness expenses that relate to the inquiry. Do members so agree?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

## Item in Private

10:04

**The Convener:** Item 6 is to ask members whether they are willing to take item 7 in private.

**Jeremy Purvis:** I appreciate that elements of the discussion need to be in private, but I am not entirely sure why we should discuss in private the broad outline or our approach.

**The Convener:** In the papers that are before us, individuals are named and witnesses are suggested. To discuss such matters in public is not normal committee practice. I take your point that elements of the papers could be discussed in public, but I am sure that we will have an opportunity to do that later. The reason for taking the item in private is that potential witnesses are named. Are members satisfied with that?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

**The Convener:** I ask the member of the public who has just arrived to leave, as we are to move into private session—I assure him that it is nothing personal, but the committee needs time to deliberate.

10:05

*Meeting continued in private until 11:03.*



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