

# **PROCEDURES COMMITTEE**

Tuesday 26 June 2007

Session 3

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## PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

### 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting 2007, Session 3

#### OLDEST COMMITTEE MEMBER

\*Dave Thompson (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

\*Keith Brown (Ochil) (SNP)

\*Cathie Craigie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (Lab)

\*Marlyn Glen (North East Scotland) (Lab)

Jamie McGrigor (Highlands and Islands) (Con)

\*Christina McKelvie (Central Scotland) (SNP)

\*Hugh O'Donnell (Central Scotland) (LD)

#### COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTES

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (LD)

Alasdair Morgan (South of Scotland) (SNP)

\*attended

#### CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Jennifer Smart

#### SENIOR ASSISTANT CLERK

Mary Dinsdale

#### LOCATION

Committee Room 4



# Scottish Parliament

## Procedures Committee

*Tuesday 26 June 2007*

[THE OLDEST COMMITTEE MEMBER *opened the meeting at 14:16*]

### Interests

**Dave Thompson (Oldest Committee Member):** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the first meeting of the Procedures Committee in session 3. I ask everyone to switch off their mobile phones, please. I have received an apology from Jamie McGrigor, but everyone else is here—I am sure that no one will apologise for being present.

Agenda item 1 is declarations of interests. Members have received information on that. In accordance with section 3 of the “Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament”, I invite members to declare interests that are relevant to the committee’s remit.

I am a member of the GMB trade union and of a number of charities and other voluntary organisations, as per my entry in the register of members’ interests.

**Keith Brown (Ochil) (SNP):** As I declare in my entry in the register of members’ interests, I was recently a full-time officer with Stirling Council, and I am a member of Unison—not Amicus, as it says in the minutes of the first meeting of the Standards and Public Appointments Committee. I refer members to my entry in the register.

**Hugh O’Donnell (Central Scotland) (LD):** I have no registrable interests in relation to the remit of the committee, as far as I am aware.

**Christina McKelvie (Central Scotland) (SNP):** I have no registrable interests, as far as I am aware.

**Marlyn Glen (North East Scotland) (Lab):** I have no relevant interests.

**Cathie Craigie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (Lab):** I have no interests relevant to the work of the committee.

## Convener

14:18

**Dave Thompson:** Item 2 is the choice of convener. The Parliament agreed that members of the Scottish National Party are eligible for nomination as convener of the Procedures Committee. I invite nominations.

**Christina McKelvie:** I nominate Keith Brown.

*Keith Brown was chosen as convener.*

**Dave Thompson:** I congratulate Keith Brown and hand over the chair to him.

**The Convener (Keith Brown):** Thank you.

I welcome former colleagues from Stirling Council, who are in the public gallery. Most of them are involved with procedures and standards one way or another—as committee clerks, for example. That explains the sudden upsurge of interest in the Procedures Committee.

## Deputy Convener

14:18

**The Convener:** I invite nominations for the post of deputy convener. The Parliament agreed that members of the Labour Party are eligible to be chosen as deputy convener.

**Marlyn Glen:** I nominate Cathie Craigie.

*Cathie Craigie was chosen as deputy convener.*

**The Convener:** We are making quick progress.

## Work Programme

14:19

**The Convener:** Agenda item 4 is the committee's approach to developing a work programme. The process has started, in so far as the Standards and Public Appointments Committee clerks have sent out invitations. Given that the Standards and Public Appointments Committee and the Procedures Committee may merge, there could be a joint away day. Are there any other issues that we must consider? There seems to be little point in having two separate away days if it is agreed to merge the two committees. Do members agree that there should be a joint away day?

**Members indicated agreement.**

**The Convener:** Are members happy to delegate to me and the clerks the finalising of the date of, and venue for, the away day? Obviously, we will take into account interests that members express to the clerks.

**Members indicated agreement.**

**Cathie Craigie:** I ask the clerks to remember that I am a member of the Justice Committee, which will usually meet on Tuesday mornings—this morning, I asked that committee to remember my other responsibilities. It is likely that the Justice Committee will arrange an away day for the final week of the recess.

**Hugh O'Donnell:** I am in a similar situation with the Equal Opportunities Committee.

**The Convener:** That committee will also meet on Tuesday mornings, will it not?

**Hugh O'Donnell:** That is correct.

**Christina McKelvie:** The Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee will meet on Wednesday mornings. I think that it has agreed to have an away day on 20 August, overnight until 21 August, although that is still to be confirmed. However, that date seems to suit everyone.

**The Convener:** The clerks will find out when members cannot go on an away day and will try to find a suitable date. We have already seen an e-mail from the clerks about venue suggestions.

## Committee Merger

14:22

**The Convener:** Agenda item 5 is the proposed merger of the Procedures Committee with the Standards and Public Appointments Committee. Jennifer Smart may want to say something about the background to the proposal in paper PR/S3/07/1/4, which the clerks have produced.

**Jennifer Smart (Clerk):** The paper, which includes a copy of a letter from the Parliamentary Bureau, is self-explanatory. It is for members to consider the proposed merger that is outlined in paragraph 8.

**The Convener:** Obviously, to facilitate matters, the parties have ensured that the committees have the same membership. Do members have any views on the proposals in the paper?

**Marlyn Glen:** The idea seems to be perfectly sensible. We support it.

**Cathie Craigie:** I suggest that we agree to the recommendations in paragraph 11 of the paper.

**The Convener:** Members seem to be happy to go with the proposals. Do members agree that, to start the process, I should liaise with the clerks to prepare a draft report for consideration at the committee's next meeting, which will be after the recess?

**Members indicated agreement.**

**The Convener:** Do members agree that the draft report should be considered in private? That is the normal practice.

**Members indicated agreement.**

**The Convener:** I would have gone through the background to the proposal, but members have read the paper, so we can take it as read that they know about it.

There is no other business. I think that we have beaten the record that was set last week by the Standards and Public Appointments Committee—the meeting has lasted only six or seven minutes. I thank everybody and hope that you have an enjoyable recess.

*Meeting closed at 14:23.*

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