

STANDARDS, PROCEDURES AND PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Tuesday 2 October 2007

Session 3

£5.00

© Parliamentary copyright. Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body 2007.

Applications for reproduction should be made in writing to the Licensing Division,
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 RR
Donnelley.

CONTENTS

Tuesday 2 October 2007

	Col.
INTERESTS	1
CONVENER	2
DEPUTY CONVENER	2
CROSS-PARTY GROUPS	3
DECISION ON TAKING BUSINESS IN PRIVATE	4

STANDARDS, PROCEDURES AND PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

1st 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)

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Jennifer Smart

SENIOR ASSISTANT CLERKS

Mary Dinsdale

Jane Sutherland

ASSISTANT CLERK

Catherine Fergusson

LOCATION

Committee Room 5

Scottish Parliament

Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

Tuesday 2 October 2007

[THE OLDEST COMMITTEE MEMBER *opened the meeting at 14:15*]

Interests

Dave Thompson (Oldest Committee Member): Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. We cut it fine, but we managed to start the meeting at bang on a quarter past 2.

Welcome to the first meeting of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee, in the third session of the Scottish Parliament. I ask members to switch off their phones—I will switch mine off first—so that we are not interrupted during our proceedings. We have received no apologies.

Item 1 is declarations of interests. I am a trade union member and a member of various charities and other bodies that have no impact on the committee's work.

Cathie Craigie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (Lab): I have no interests to declare that would affect my work as a member of the committee.

Keith Brown (Ochil) (SNP): I have declared various interests in the register of members' interests and I have nothing to add to them.

Christina McKelvie (Central Scotland) (SNP): I have no interests to declare that would impact on the committee's activities.

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

Hugh O'Donnell (Central Scotland) (LD): I am not aware of any relevant interests that would impact on my work in the committee.

Convener

14:17

Dave Thompson: Item 2 is the choice of a convener. The Parliament has agreed that only members of the Scottish National Party are eligible to be nominated as convener of the committee. I seek nominations for the position.

Cathie Craigie: I nominate Keith Brown.

Dave Thompson: No seconder is needed.

Keith Brown was chosen as convener.

Deputy Convener

14:18

The Convener (Keith Brown): This is very unexpected. I am taken by surprise, but I will do the best that I can.

The next item is the choice of a deputy convener. The Parliament has agreed that the deputy convener'ship is open to members of the Labour Party. I invite nominations for the position.

Marlyn Glen: I nominate Cathie Craigie.

The Convener: No seconder is required.

Cathie Craigie was chosen as deputy convener.

The Convener: Congratulations, Cathie.

Cathie Craigie: Thank you.

Cross-party Groups

14:19

The Convener: Item 4, on cross-party groups, relates to the standards element of our work. The committee is to consider applications for recognition from five proposed cross-party groups.

Cathie Craigie: Before we consider the item, I draw members' attention to the fact that I am a member of the cross-party group on deafness. With the committee's approval, I will be the group's convener.

The Convener: I draw members' attention to the cross-party group on renewable energy and energy efficiency. The committee may wish to seek clarification from the convener of the proposed group, Robin Harper, on two aspects of the registration form. The first issue is the source of funding for the design and maintenance of the group's website. The second issue is whether the subscription that the proposed group will charge will apply to all its members. Are members happy to seek clarification from the group on those two matters?

Members indicated agreement.

The Convener: I will write to seek the views of the group on those two points.

The group has arranged to meet on 3 October, which is tomorrow, pending recognition by this committee. However, under rule 6.2.3 of the code of conduct for members of the Scottish Parliament, groups should not meet between submitting an application and being awarded recognition, unless they are authorised to do so by the committee. Given the decision that we have just taken, I suggest that we grant authorisation for the planned meeting to go ahead, pending the clarification that we are seeking from the group. Are members happy with that?

Members indicated agreement.

The Convener: Are members happy to approve all the groups mentioned in the paper?

Members indicated agreement.

Decision on Taking Business in Private

14:21

The Convener: We come to item 5. There has been a fair bit of discussion about taking items in public or private. I should have told the clerks before the meeting that Dave Thompson made a suggestion about that to me before we came into the room. We would normally discuss the work programme in private, but it has already been discussed in private by our predecessor committees.

Dave Thompson (Highlands and Islands) (SNP): I wonder whether we need to take item 6 in private, given that we have discussed the basis of our work programme twice already. I do not think that there is anything in the paper on our work programme that requires to be discussed in private. Do other members agree?

Cathie Craigie: I want to raise a couple of points on the work programme, so I suggest that we discuss it in private. The practice of the committees has been that, until we agree the work programme, housekeeping issues are discussed in house, if you like, after which the relevant papers are made public. I suggest that we take item 6 in private.

The Convener: Are there any other views on that?

Hugh O'Donnell: I am conscious of the fact that we discussed the paper on the work programme in private previously. Broadly speaking, much of its content is the same as it was when it was discussed by the predecessor committees. However, given that another member wants to raise issues about the paper, and given that I am cautious about setting a precedent, I am inclined to support Cathie Craigie's proposal to discuss item 6 in private.

Dave Thompson: I tend to veer towards wanting as much openness as possible. That is the way that I intend to be in all the work that I do in the Parliament. However, if Cathie Craigie feels that there are a couple of points of which I am not aware that would be better raised in private, I am happy to go along with that.

The Convener: Thanks, Dave. With that in mind, do members agree to take in private the rest of our business, including discussion of the work programme?

Members indicated agreement.

The Convener: I will put on record our reasons for taking agenda items 7 and 8 in private. Item 7 relates to correspondence from the Scottish

Government on whether to include the Scottish Parliamentary Standards Commissioner within the scope of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. As members have not had the opportunity to consider that issue before, the paper on the agenda might not reflect the committee's final views. Of course, the committee's formal response to the Scottish Government will be made public.

Under item 8, we will consider our approach to the report CPA/2007/02 by the Commissioner for Public Appointments in Scotland. As this is the first time that such a report has been referred to the committee, the committee's paper may not reflect members' final views. At this stage, the committee is only considering its approach. As with agenda item 7, the committee's response will be published in due course.

14:25

Meeting continued in private until 15:17.

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, Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh EH99 1SP. Suggested corrections in any other form cannot be accepted.

The deadline for corrections to this edition is:

Wednesday 10 October 2007

PRICES AND SUBSCRIPTION RATES

OFFICIAL REPORT daily editions

Single copies: £5.00

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.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS weekly compilation

Single copies: £3.75

Annual subscriptions: £150.00

Standing orders will be accepted at Document Supply.

Published in Edinburgh by RR Donnelley and available from:

Blackwell's Bookshop

**53 South Bridge
Edinburgh EH1 1YS
0131 622 8222**

Blackwell's Bookshops:
243-244 High Holborn
London WC1 7DZ
Tel 020 7831 9501

All trade orders for Scottish Parliament documents should be placed through Blackwell's Edinburgh.

Blackwell's 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
0131 622 8283 or
0131 622 8258

Fax orders
0131 557 8149

E-mail orders
business.edinburgh@blackwell.co.uk

Subscriptions & Standing Orders
business.edinburgh@blackwell.co.uk

Scottish Parliament

RNID Typetalk calls welcome on
18001 0131 348 5000
Textphone 0845 270 0152

sp.info@scottish.parliament.uk

All documents are available on the Scottish Parliament website at:

www.scottish.parliament.uk

Accredited Agents
(see Yellow Pages)

and through good booksellers