

STANDARDS, PROCEDURES AND PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Tuesday 24 June 2008

Session 3

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STANDARDS, PROCEDURES AND PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

† 10th Meeting 2008, Session 3

CONVENER

*Keith Brown (Ochil) (SNP)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Cathie Craigie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (Lab)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Marlyn Glen (North East Scotland) (Lab)

*Jamie Mc Grigor (Highlands and Islands) (Con)

*Christina McKelvie (Central Scotland) (SNP)

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

*Dave Thompson (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTES

Trish Godman (West Renfrewshire) (Lab)

Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (LD)

Alasdair Morgan (South of Scotland) (SNP)

Elizabeth Smith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

*attended

THE FOLLOWING ALSO ATTENDED:

Bob Doris (Glasgow) (SNP)

John Park (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Gillian Baxendine

SENIOR ASSISTANT CLERKS

Mary Dinsdale

Jane Sutherland

ASSISTANT CLERK

Catherine Fergusson

LOCATION

Committee Room 5

† 9th Meeting 2008, Session 3—held in private.

Scottish Parliament

Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

Tuesday 24 June 2008

[THE CONVENER opened the meeting at 14:16]

Cross-party Groups

The Convener (Keith Brown): I am sorry that we are starting a wee bit late. Welcome to the 10th meeting this year of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee. I ask members of the public to switch off mobile phones and BlackBerry's. No apologies have been received.

I seek the committee's agreement to the establishment of two cross-party groups that have not previously been active. As members know, in considering whether to approve a proposed cross-party group we must take account of a range of matters, such as the group's purpose and whether it has been formed on the basis of public interest.

The first group that we will consider is the proposed cross-party group on skills, which is represented by John Park. Do you want to comment at this stage, John?

John Park (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab): No, but I will be happy to answer members' questions.

The Convener: The registration form indicates the financial benefits that the group has accrued while being set up. Do you expect to receive similar levels of benefits to support the group's work in future?

John Park: I think so, convener. The individual who is providing the secretariat for the group is from the Chartered Institute of Bankers in Scotland and over time they will organise meetings, ensure that papers are issued, write up minutes and liaise with members of the group in and outwith the Parliament. I will not put a figure on that work, but the individual suggests that they might spend a day or two a week on such work—it will depend on how busy they are. We do not envisage a great number of meetings, but we hope that there will be wider activity around the group in the Parliament.

The Convener: If the clerks do not think that that presents any issues for the committee, and if members have no further questions, do we agree to approve the establishment of the cross-party group on skills?

Members indicated agreement.

The Convener: I thank John Park for attending. I am sorry that we could not detain you longer.

The second group for our consideration is the proposed cross-party group on racial equality in Scotland. The group is represented by Bob Doris. Do you want to comment?

Bob Doris (Glasgow) (SNP): No, but I am content to answer questions.

The Convener: The registration form indicates an intention to charge members a subscription. Have you agreed a level?

Bob Doris: No, but we have decided that the subscription should be minimal and should perhaps just cover the group's secretarial costs.

The Convener: You also indicate that you intend that an individual will make use of a parliamentary pass. Has the person been issued with a pass yet?

Bob Doris: We have yet to go through that process. We decided that it would be good for the individual who provides secretarial support to have a strong dialogue with members of the Parliament who are active in the cross-party group, so it would make sense for them to have a parliamentary pass. The pass has not yet been issued.

Cathie Craigie (Cumbernauld and Kilsyth) (Lab): Is it the group's intention to employ staff?

Bob Doris: No, it is not. You have given me an opportunity to thank the Glasgow Anti Racist Alliance, whose staff member, Ashay Ghai, will provide secretarial support for the group free of charge. We will not employ anyone.

The Convener: If there are no further questions, do members agree to approve the establishment of the cross-party group on racial equality in Scotland?

Members indicated agreement.

The Convener: I thank Bob Doris for coming.

14:20

Meeting continued in private until 17:05.

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