

STANDARDS, PROCEDURES AND PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Tuesday 8 September 2009

Session 3

£5.00

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Printed and published in Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body by
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STANDARDS, PROCEDURES AND PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE 10th Meeting 2009, Session 3

CONVENER

*Gil Paterson (West of Scotland) (SNP)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Marilyn Livingstone (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Robert Brown (Glasgow) (LD)

*Aileen Campbell (South of Scotland) (SNP)

*Nanette Milne (North East Scotland) (Con)

*Peter Peacock (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)

*Dave Thompson (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTES

Alasdair Morgan (South of Scotland) (SNP)

Mary Mulligan (Linlithgow) (Lab)

Mike Rumbles (West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine) (LD)

Elizabeth Smith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

*attended

THE FOLLOWING GAVE EVIDENCE:

David Cullum (Scottish Parliament Chamber Office)

CLERKS TO THE COMMITTEE

Gillian Baxendine

Alison Walker

SENIOR ASSISTANT CLERKS

Mary Dinsdale

Jane Williams

ASSISTANT CLERK

Catherine Fergusson

LOCATION

Committee Room 4

Scottish Parliament

Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

Tuesday 8 September 2009

[THE CONVENER opened the meeting at 15:02]

Decision on Taking Business in Private

The Convener (Gil Paterson): I welcome everyone to the 10th meeting in 2009 of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee. I am sorry that we are starting a little late; the whole committee has been at a briefing elsewhere.

I propose that we take a number of items in private. As you know, the committee previously agreed to consider in private items on the Interpretation and Legislative Reform (Scotland) Bill and on section 2 of the code of conduct for members of the Scottish Parliament. I suggest that we also consider in private item 4, on the committee's work programme, item 5, on the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Bill, and item 6, on the Scottish Government's response to the committee's report on the accuracy of contributions in parliamentary proceedings.

Robert Brown (Glasgow) (LD): What is the rationale for taking item 6 in private?

The Convener: We have not yet had an opportunity to discuss the matter in private, which is our normal process. We would normally have a chat about such a matter before deciding what to do about it.

Robert Brown: Okay.

The Convener: Are members happy to take items 4, 5 and 6 in private?

Members indicated agreement.

Hybrid Bills

15:03

The Convener: On 25 June the Parliament agreed to changes to the standing orders in relation to hybrid bills. The committee is asked to approve the guidance that will support the rule changes. The guidance is based on the standing orders and relevant parts of the guidance on public and private bills.

David Cullum, Sarah Robertson and Alison Wilson from the non-Executive bills unit, which is also responsible for hybrid bills, are here to answer members' questions. I apologise for keeping you waiting; I am sure that you understand what the committee was up to—although I certainly did not. Do members have questions for the officials?

Robert Brown: Are there matters about which we should be particularly concerned? The guidance document is very large and technical, as was the procedural document on hybrid bills, and it is not easy to draw anything terribly significant out of it. Are there any issues of concern that did not arise during our earlier discussions on hybrid bills?

David Cullum (Scottish Parliament Chamber Office): There is nothing about which members should be concerned. I will set out some background about how the document was put together. It is an amalgam of guidance on public bills and guidance on private bills. There is probably only one novel part, which is the reference to the new rules requiring codes of construction practice and noise and vibration policies to be mandatory documents that accompany bills. It would be trite to describe the guidance as a cut-and-paste job, because Alison Wilson and Sarah Robertson have worked on it all summer and their job has not been easy, but in essence it is copied from existing guidance.

The Convener: Are members happy to approve the guidance?

Members indicated agreement.

The Convener: I apologise again to the officials for keeping them waiting, especially given that this item has been so short. Thank you for attending.

That concludes the public part of the meeting.

15:06

Meeting continued in private until 16:34.

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