



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Official Report

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE

Tuesday 17 April 2012

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE

7th Meeting 2012, Session 4

CONVENER

*Mary Fee (West Scotland) (Lab)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Stuart McMillan (West Scotland) (SNP)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)

*Annabel Goldie (West Scotland) (Con)

*Siobhan McMahon (Central Scotland) (Lab)

*Dennis Robertson (Aberdeenshire West) (SNP)

*Jean Urquhart (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)

*attended

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Douglas Thornton

LOCATION

Committee Room 4

Scottish Parliament

Equal Opportunities Committee

Tuesday 17 April 2012

[The Convener *opened the meeting at 14:04*]

Subordinate Legislation

Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 [Draft]

The Convener (Mary Fee): Good afternoon everyone and welcome to the Equal Opportunities Committee's seventh meeting in 2012. I remind everyone present, including members, to turn off all mobile devices. We have received no apologies for this meeting.

To my left are the clerking, research and official report staff. Around the room, we are also supported by broadcasting services and security. I welcome the observers in the public gallery.

I am the committee convener. I invite the committee members to introduce themselves.

Stuart McMillan (West Scotland) (SNP): I am an MSP for West Scotland and deputy committee convener.

Dennis Robertson (Aberdeenshire West) (SNP): Good afternoon. I am the MSP for Aberdeenshire West.

Siobhan McMahon (Central Scotland) (Lab): I am an MSP for Central Scotland.

Jean Urquhart (Highlands and Islands) (SNP): I am an MSP for the Highlands and Islands.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (SNP): I am an MSP for the Highlands and Islands.

Annabel Goldie (West Scotland) (Con): I am an MSP for West Scotland.

The Convener: Agenda item 1 is subordinate legislation. On 1 May we will take ministerial evidence on and debate a draft Scottish statutory instrument—the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Scotland Regulations 2012. A briefing and written submissions are provided in papers 1 to 3. We are asked to note the submissions that have been received and to consider whether to take any action in advance of the evidence session on 1 May.

Are members content with the submissions?

Members *indicated agreement.*

The Convener: Excellent. Thank you.

Petition

Access to Justice (Environment) (PE1372)

14:06

The Convener: Agenda item 2 is on petition PE1372 on access to justice. I remind everyone that feedback was sought from the Scottish Government and the Law Society of Scotland following a further submission from the petitioner. Responses have now been received. The committee is invited to note both letters and to consider the following options: to close the petition; to await publication of the current consultation's outcome in late 2012 before resuming consideration of the petition; or to take another course of action.

John Finnie: I note that the letter from the Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs mentions a planned meeting between officials and Friends of the Earth Scotland on 19 April. We should await the outcome of that meeting before doing anything.

The Convener: I agree.

Stuart McMillan: I was going to suggest the same thing.

The Convener: It seems sensible to wait until we get feedback from that meeting before we make any other decisions.

Are members agreed?

Members *indicated agreement.*

The Convener: Excellent. Thank you for your co-operation.

Inquiry Witness Expenses

14:08

The Convener: Agenda item 3 is on inquiry witness expenses. In line with usual practice, members are invited to delegate to me, as convener, responsibility for arranging for the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body to pay—under rule 12.4.3—any expenses of witnesses in the committee's inquiries into Gypsy Travellers and care; where Gypsy Travellers live; and having and keeping a home: steps to preventing homelessness among young people.

Are we agreed?

Members *indicated agreement.*

The Convener: Thank you. That concludes the formal meeting. Our next meeting will take place on Tuesday 1 May and will include ministerial evidence and a debate on subordinate legislation.

Meeting closed at 14:08.

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