

# **ENTERPRISE AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE**

Wednesday 8 December 1999  
*(Morning)*

© Parliamentary copyright. Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body 1999.

Applications for reproduction should be made in writing to the Copyright Unit,  
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 The  
Stationery Office Ltd.

Her Majesty's Stationery Office is independent of and separate from the company now  
trading as The Stationery Office Ltd, which is responsible for printing and publishing  
Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body publications.

---

# CONTENTS

Wednesday 8 December 1999

	Col.
TOURISM REVIEW .....	409

---

## ENTERPRISE AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting

### CONVENER :

\*Mr John Swinney (North Tayside) (SNP)

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

\*Fergus Ewing (Inverness East, Nairn and Lochaber) (SNP)

\*Miss Annabel Goldie (West of Scotland) (Con)

\*Mr Nick Johnston (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

\*Marilyn Livingstone (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)

\*George Lyon (Argyll and Bute) (LD)

\*Ms Margo MacDonald (Lothians) (SNP)

\*Mr Duncan McNeil (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)

\*Dr Elaine Murray (Dumfries) (Lab)

\*Elaine Thomson (Aberdeen North) (Lab)

\*Allan Wilson (Cunninghame North) (Lab)

\*attended

### THE FOLLOWING MEMBER ALSO ATTENDED:

### WITNESSES:

### COMMITTEE CLERK:

Simon Watkins

### SENIOR ASSISTANT CLERK:

David McLaren



## Scottish Parliament

### Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Committee

*Wednesday 8 December 1999*

*(Morning)*

[THE CONVENER *opened the meeting at 10:06*]

**The Convener (Mr John Swinney):** Good morning. I open the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Committee.

As part of a dangerous plot by Margo MacDonald, I now have the throat lurgy. I appeal to members not to require me to impose much shouting and bawling today, as that would be outwith my capability.

Our agenda today comprises two items, one of which will be taken in public and one in private. At the end of the first item we will move into private session and I will ask members of the public to leave.

### Tourism Review

**The Convener:** The first agenda item is the paper that has been circulated in Simon Watkins's name on consideration of the tourism review and inquiry case studies.

A fortnight ago, we discussed the offer by Henry McLeish, the Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning, to give the committee the opportunity to consider the tourism review. He proposed that we consider the document prior to publication and we suggested to him that we do so at our meeting on 12 January. I seek the committee's agreement to holding that meeting in private, because the document will not have been published. I expect that the committee would hear evidence from the minister responsible, Alasdair Morrison, and from representatives of the Scottish Tourist Board. We would then formulate our input to the tourism review and communicate that to the minister. We would reserve the right to hold further public hearings on the tourism review once it is published, probably in early February.

I appreciate the minister's initiative in making the document available to the committee prior to publication, which sets a useful precedent. All members will be required to respect the confidentiality that will be necessary if the minister makes the document available to us. We are all aware of the importance of the confidentiality of committee papers and of committee discussions that are held in private—we are entitled to hold

such private discussions if the committee so decides.

However, I make it clear to members that there would be two consequences if the confidentiality of the tourism review document were breached. First, we would never again be given the opportunity to consider a pre-publication document, which would be a matter of regret but an understandable position for the Executive to adopt. Secondly, we would have to identify the person who had released the document and, as convener, I would pursue that vigorously, because the committee cannot operate if those ground rules are broken.

Other material was put forward in relation to case studies. It was proposed that the committee should undertake four case studies. We planned to examine business development services in Renfrewshire, Ayrshire and Tayside and the provision of lifelong learning services in Fife. The paper includes the names of the reporters who would be responsible for those areas. The clerking team would support members in the preparation of the programme of the inquiries.

**Marilyn Livingstone (Kirkcaldy) (Lab):** I will be involved with the Tayside case study so I should declare an interest: my husband works for one of the business shops in Tayside.

**The Convener:** That will be noted.

**Allan Wilson (Cunninghame North) (Lab):** The minister's initiative—in telling the committee in private session about the proposals for the tourism review prior to their being published—is to be welcomed. It meets the concerns that we expressed at our previous meeting and is a result of the professional way in which the committee has addressed its remit, especially when compared with other committees.

**Ms Margo MacDonald (Lothians) (SNP):** Hear, hear.

**Allan Wilson:** Thank you for that vote of confidence, sister.

I hope that that level of professionalism can be maintained and that the minister's action proves to be infectious—although I hope that your sore throat does not, John.

**Miss Annabel Goldie (West of Scotland) (Con):** Allan Wilson made a good point. Perhaps you could convey his sentiments to the conveners committee, John.

**The Convener:** I am rapidly becoming the pariah of the conveners committee, owing to the number of requests for initiatives that emanate from this committee. I suspect that I acquired a bad name at yesterday's meeting.

We now turn to the recommendations on page 3 of the paper. I seek the committee's agreement to

discuss in private the tourism review at our meeting on 12 January 2000.

**Members indicated agreement.**

**The Convener:** Does the committee agree to invite the minister responsible—that would be Alasdair Morrison—and representatives of the Scottish Tourist Board who are involved in the review?

**Members indicated agreement.**

**The Convener:** Does the committee agree that all members will be bound not to release any of the information contained in the review or the basis of the committee's discussion, or to comment on it publicly prior to publication?

**Members indicated agreement.**

**The Convener:** Does the committee agree to undertake the four case studies outlined in the paper?

**Members indicated agreement.**

**The Convener:** Does the committee agree on the names of the reporters and members who will participate in the studies, and that the reporters will report back to the committee on 26 January?

**Allan Wilson:** Would it be in order for those who are conducting the case studies on business development services to use their discretion to examine examples of workplace training? I am thinking of the examples of Michelin Tyres in Dundee and United Distillers in Renfrewshire. That would help us to incorporate the issue of workplace training into the wider issue of business development services.

**The Convener:** I would not want to be prescriptive about the way in which members conduct the case studies. The only stipulation that I require, in relation to this inquiry, is that we follow the committee's remit, which must guide the direction of each case study. However, I would not want the study to be compartmentalised and not to consider other issues that have an impact on our remit.

10:15

**George Lyon (Argyll and Bute) (LD):** From a practical point of view, how do we envisage setting up the visits, identifying the key players and accessing the customers in an area? The last thing that I want to do is to listen to all the interest groups that deliver the service telling us what a wonderful job they do in Ayrshire, that they can operate in partnership and all the rest of it. I want to get out there and find out, at the sharp end, the customers' views; that is what this committee has been trying to do. I want to identify how we can do that, and what the process will be after that.

**The Convener:** As I said earlier, each reporter will be supported by the clerks in formulating the programme. I invite Simon Watkins to say a few words on those preparations.

**Simon Watkins (Committee Clerk):** I propose that each group has a lead member of staff from the clerking side, who would sit down with the reporter—and the other group members, if they were available—to work out in detail what they wanted to do. Each group would be reasonably autonomous in choosing whom it invited and in deciding the best value from speaking to people on the ground.

**Miss Goldie:** Simon, if it were not too burdensome for the clerks, would it be possible for them to prepare a modest briefing pack with a wee map of the area and a list of the local authorities, enterprise trusts and local enterprise companies? It was discussed at our sub-committee meeting that we need such factual information.

**Simon Watkins:** We are in the process of preparing a pack for each group, which will include all the submissions that have been received from the area plus the element of the gridwork that we are in the process of commissioning, which will outline each authority's responsibilities. That will be the starting point for discussion of whom the groups might want to talk to.

**Miss Goldie:** For my benefit, could we have a map? I like maps. [*Laughter.*]

**The Convener:** We will not get into that. I suspect that, if we get into the specification of Ordnance Survey scale, I shall be in even more trouble at the conveners committee.

**Ms MacDonald:** As I am to be sent out of Edinburgh, I shall need a map.

In my previous job, if I embarked on a project such as this, I would do a bit of asking around. Constituency and list members must have opinions on, and experience of, the various organisations and the way in which they work. We could initiate informal discussion with those members, to build up a picture with the clerk. It would take a long time to do that if we consulted anybody who is anybody. We should try to think of some folk first. A wee flow chart that outlined what we would do would be a good idea, as well.

**The Convener:** The clerks will give each team the support that is required. George Lyon's point underpins our outlook on the inquiry and the point that we have reached so far. We want to get beyond the usual suspects, to the real people who use the services. That should underpin a lot of our reports.

The committee agrees the case studies, the members and the reporters. We will hear those reports on 26 January. The committee also

confirms the revised schedule of meetings, as outlined in the paper.

**Fergus Ewing (Inverness East, Nairn and Lochaber) (SNP):** I apologise for being late. I was making a rare television appearance.

In our tourism review, I am concerned that we may face a difficulty unless we have access to the submissions that are made to the Executive by those who have an interest in, and specialist knowledge of, that industry. We may be presented with a set of conclusions that are based on submissions. Would it be possible for the committee to receive from the Executive the documents that will, no doubt, be prepared by the civil service to summarise the content of the submissions? Those documents will be all-important, as they will contain the views of our constituents and people throughout Scotland who have an interest. We must establish what our relationship with the civil service is, in relation to the freedom of information.

**The Convener:** Fergus has raised an interesting point. We are getting access to a pre-publication copy of the review, but members also want to see some of the consultation documents that fed into the exercise. We can request as much information as can be made available to us, with the caveat that we treat it as private, on the same basis as the review document. That would forbid us from commenting on it in public. I cannot give the committee an assurance that the material will be available—that is a matter for the minister and the Scottish Tourist Board, which conducted the review.

Nevertheless, there is an opportunity for us to listen to people's views about the review—I have already had that opportunity. That is an informative process and will help us to understand the issues with which the tourism industry is wrestling. Getting access to private documents may not be the only way in which we can gather information about the concerns that have been raised.

**Fergus Ewing:** Most submissions are not submitted on the basis that they are private. Most organisations would be quite happy for the committee to consider their submissions—they might even expect it. Organisations that make submissions in a consultation process and want them to remain private tend to say so.

I hope that the committee can include in its paper a sixth recommendation, asking to examine submissions on the same basis as the strategy document.

**The Convener:** I can request that we have access to those documents. Ministers are considering making that information available to us. That concludes item 1 of the agenda.

10:22

*Meeting continued in private until 12:45.*





Members who would like a printed copy of the Official Report to be forwarded to them should give notice at the Document Supply Centre.

Members who would like a copy of the bound volume should also give notice at the Document Supply Centre.

No proofs of the *Official Report* can be supplied. Members who want to suggest corrections for the bound volume should mark them clearly in the daily edition, and send it to the Official Report, Parliamentary Headquarters, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH99 1SP. Suggested corrections in any other form cannot be accepted.

The deadline for corrections to this edition is:

**Monday 20 December 1999**

Members who want reprints of their speeches (within one month of the date of publication) may obtain request forms and further details from the Central Distribution Office, the Document Supply Centre or the Official Report.

#### PRICES AND SUBSCRIPTION RATES

##### DAILY EDITIONS

*Single copies: £5*

*Annual subscriptions: £640*

BOUND VOLUMES OF DEBATES are issued periodically during the session.

*Single copies: £70*

Standing orders will be accepted at the Document Supply Centre.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT, compiled by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre, contains details of past and forthcoming business and of the work of committees and gives general information on legislation and other parliamentary activity.

*Single copies: £2.50*

*Special issue price: £5*

*Annual subscriptions: £82.50*

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS weekly compilation

*Single copies: £2.50*

*Annual subscriptions: £80*

Published in Edinburgh by The Stationery Office Limited and available from:

**The Stationery Office Bookshop**  
71 Lothian Road  
Edinburgh EH3 9AZ  
0131 228 4181 Fax 0131 622 7017

**The Stationery Office Bookshops at:**  
123 Kingsway, London WC2B 6PQ  
Tel 0171 242 6393 Fax 0171 242 6394  
68-69 Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6AD  
Tel 0121 236 9696 Fax 0121 236 9699  
33 Wine Street, Bristol BS1 2BQ  
Tel 01179 264306 Fax 01179 294515  
9-21 Princess Street, Manchester M60 8AS  
Tel 0161 834 7201 Fax 0161 833 0634  
16 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GD  
Tel 01232 238451 Fax 01232 235401  
The Stationery Office Oriol Bookshop,  
18-19 High Street, Cardiff CF1 2BZ  
Tel 01222 395548 Fax 01222 384347

**The Stationery Office 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**  
**0870 606 5566**

**Fax orders**  
**0870 606 5588**

**The Scottish Parliament Shop**  
George IV Bridge  
EH99 1SP  
Telephone orders 0131 348 5412

[sp.info@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:sp.info@scottish.parliament.uk)

[www.scottish.parliament.uk](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk)

**Accredited Agents**  
(see Yellow Pages)

and through good booksellers