

# **ENTERPRISE AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE**

Wednesday 4 April 2001  
*(Morning)*

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## ENTERPRISE AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE

11<sup>th</sup> Meeting 2001, Session 1

### CONVENER

\*Alex Neil (Central Scotland) (SNP)

### DEPUTY CONVENER

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

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

\*Bill Butler (Glasgow Anniesland) (Lab)

Mr Duncan Hamilton (Highlands and Islands) (SNP)

Nick Johnston (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

Marilyn Livingstone (Kirkcaldy) (Lab)

\*Mr Kenny MacAskill (Lothians) (SNP)

\*Mr Kenneth Macintosh (Eastwood) (Lab)

\*Des McNulty (Clydebank and Milngavie) (Lab)

\*Tavish Scott (Shetland) (LD)

\*Elaine Thomson (Aberdeen North) (Lab)

\*attended

### CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Simon Watkins

### ASSISTANT CLERK

Linda Orton

### LOCATION

The Hub



## Scottish Parliament

### Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Committee

*Wednesday 4 April 2001*

*(Morning)*

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

**The Convener (Alex Neil):** Good morning and welcome to the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Committee. I have received apologies from Marilyn Livingstone and Duncan Hamilton, who are away celebrating tartan week in the United States. Unfortunately, Nick Johnston is still ill and will not be joining us. Des McNulty has told me that he has to leave the meeting early.

I welcome Tavish Scott to the committee and congratulate him on his elevation. Tavish Scott replaces George Lyon. Tavish has to leave us around 11 o'clock to attend an event in Glasgow to help to boost tourism in Shetland.

The clerk has reminded me that I should ask Tavish Scott whether he has any interests to declare.

**Tavish Scott (Shetland) (LD):** I have no interests to declare.

**The Convener:** Thank you.

### Item in Private

**The Convener:** Do members agree to take item 3 in private?

**Des McNulty (Clydebank and Milngavie) (Lab):** Are we going to take item 4 in private?

**The Convener:** We agreed previously to take item 4 in private. Do members agree to take item 3 in private?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

## Convener's Report

**The Convener:** I will keep my report on the European visit brief. The purpose of the visit was familiarisation, although I also had the opportunity to meet some people in the European Parliament and the European Commission who are involved in matters that relate to the lifelong learning aspects of our work. In particular, I had a very successful meeting with Michel Rocard, who was Prime Minister of France under Mitterrand and is now the chairman of the European Parliament Committee on Employment and Social Affairs. That committee is about to begin an inquiry into lifelong learning across Europe, which may impinge on our work. We exchanged information and agreed to keep in touch. If there were a possibility of relevant European directives and funding coming through, we would want to take that into consideration during our inquiry.

I also met some people from the Commission, although in typical Commission style, the names and faces changed five minutes before the meetings were due to start. We have received a substantial amount of information from the Commission, which I have asked Simon Watkins to circulate. This morning, I received further information from a member of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs. I will circulate a summary, if not the full text, of all the detailed information on lifelong learning that we have received.

The European dimension is very important. It became clear early on in the visit that it will be important for all the committees of the Scottish Parliament—every committee was represented on the visit—to keep in close touch with developments in the European Union. Both EU funding and EU policy will impinge on our work.

We received a warm welcome. We are in a unique position, given our legislative powers inside the UK. The members of the Commission were as interested to hear from us as we were to hear from them.

I am happy to answer questions if members have any. George Reid has circulated a full report of the visit. At the moment, that report is confined to the conveners group, but I expect that at least a summary will be circulated more widely.

10:10

*Meeting continued in private until 11:50.*



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