



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Official Report

INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday 18 December 2013

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INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT COMMITTEE
27th Meeting 2013, Session 4

CONVENER

*Maureen Watt (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Adam Ingram (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Jim Eadie (Edinburgh Southern) (SNP)

*Mary Fee (West Scotland) (Lab)

*Mark Griffin (Central Scotland) (Lab)

*Alex Johnstone (North East Scotland) (Con)

*Gordon MacDonald (Edinburgh Pentlands) (SNP)

*attended

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Steve Farrell

LOCATION

Committee Room 2

Scottish Parliament

Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee

Wednesday 18 December 2013

[The Convener opened the meeting at 10:02]

Decision on Taking Business in Private

The Convener (Maureen Watt): Good morning, everyone. I welcome you to the 27th and final meeting in 2013 of the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee. I remind everyone to switch off their phones et cetera, as they affect the broadcasting system, although it is possible that some members may use a tablet to consult their papers. Alex, are you still using your tablet?

Alex Johnstone (North East Scotland) (Con): Not at the moment.

The Convener: So no one will use an electronic device to look at the papers.

Agenda item 1 is a decision on taking business in private. I seek the agreement of the committee to take items 3, 4 and 5—consideration of our approach to the Housing (Scotland) Bill and the national planning framework 3, and of our response to the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee's inquiry on European Union rules—in private. Is that agreed?

Members indicated agreement.

European Commission Work Programme

10:03

The Convener: Agenda item 2 is consideration of our priorities as regards European issues. I ask Jim Eadie, our European rapporteur, to make some introductory remarks on the committee's paper.

Jim Eadie (Edinburgh Southern) (SNP): Thank you, convener.

The relevant paper—ICI/S4/13/27/1—has been circulated in advance of the meeting. As members will be aware, the role of the European rapporteur is to monitor proposals in the European Commission's work programme—ably assisted by the clerks—to identify subject areas for the committee's consideration and to ensure that any issues that are identified are aligned with the Scottish Government's policy agenda and the Parliament's legislative programme.

The purpose of the paper is to allow the committee to consider and to agree its priorities in the Commission's work programme for the coming year, building on the committee's work in 2013. The committee is invited to continue to monitor progress in a number of policy areas in the Commission's work programme, which are set out in the paper. They include public procurement and the state aid guidelines for broadband networks, the impact of relevant initiatives, such as the joint European support for sustainable investment in city areas, which is known as JESSICA, and the Scottish partnership for regeneration in urban centres—SPRUCE—fund, and European structural funds.

As well as monitoring the impact of developments in those areas, the committee is asked to consider the interrelationship between them and the Scottish Government's infrastructure investment plan. It is also asked to consider the long-term investment funds that form part of the Commission's work programme. The committee is also asked to monitor developments in relation to the Commission's digital infrastructure initiatives and to liaise with Commission officials to pursue the possibility of a meeting with Robert Madelin, the director general for communications networks, content and technology at the Commission, to coincide with his visit to Scotland in May 2014.

The committee has received representations from the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities on its priorities in relation to the European agenda, which it has asked us to consider and to include in our priorities for the coming year. The key issue to highlight is the EU's urban mobility package. The

committee may wish to consider adding that to its list of priorities.

The committee is asked to consider the recommendations for monitoring the various EU policies as set out in the paper and to agree such other actions as it may deem appropriate, including pursuing a meeting with Mr Madelin.

The Convener: Thank you very much, Jim.

Does anyone have any comments on what Jim Eadie has said or on the paper?

Are you recommending that we add the EU's urban mobility package to our list of priorities?

Jim Eadie: That is for the committee to decide, but it would appear to be a good idea.

Alex Johnstone: I agree that it is a good idea. We should take the urban mobility package into account.

Jim Eadie: I draw members' attention to the papers from COSLA that were circulated in

advance of the meeting. Paragraph 21 of the paper entitled "COSLA European Policy Initiatives for 2014" sets out the background to the EU's urban mobility package.

The Convener: It mentions congestion charging. I wonder whether that is coming back on to the agenda.

Is everyone content with the recommendations in the five bullet points on page 3 of paper ICI/S4/13/27/1? Are members happy to add the urban mobility package to the list? Do we also agree that we will try to meet Robert Madelin, if we can?

Members indicated agreement.

The Convener: We now move into private, as previously agreed.

10:07

Meeting continued in private until 10:35.

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