

Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

17th Meeting 2022 (Session 6), Thursday 8 September 2022

Cross-Party Group Applications

Introduction

1. In accordance with the provisions on Cross-Party Groups (CPGs) set out in section 6 of the Code of Conduct (the Code), proposals for the establishment of CPGs in the Scottish Parliament must be submitted to the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee (the Committee) for its approval.
2. There are two proposed Groups for the Committee's consideration.

Proposed CPG on Nature and Climate

3. The registration form submitted by the proposed Group is attached at Annexe A to this note.

Consideration by the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

4. Paragraph 18 of Section 6 of the Code states "...one of the proposed Group's MSP office bearers (usually the Convener) will be invited to attend a meeting of the Committee to explain the justification for the proposed Group." Mark Ruskell MSP has been invited to the meeting to discuss registration of the proposed Group.

Purpose

5. Paragraph 19 Section 6 of the Code states "the Committee will pay particular attention to a proposed Group's purpose. If the Committee considers that a proposed Group is not in the public interest but is intended, for example, to further particular commercial interests, the proposed Group will not be accorded recognition. The Committee will also consider whether the purpose of a proposed Group overlaps the remit of an existing Group. If there is any overlap proposed Groups are asked to provide justification as to why their aims could not effectively be achieved within an existing Group".
6. The stated purpose of the proposed Group —

- A forum to discuss the interconnected crises of nature loss and climate change, and to influence government policy.
- The CPG Nature & Climate will be unpacking the twin crises of nature loss and climate change and creating a cross-party and cross-stakeholder collaborative space to explore both challenges and solutions to these interlinked issues.
- There are no other CPGs with an overlapping purpose, although we suspect CPG Food, CPG Animal Welfare, and CPG on Sustainable Upland Management may bring forward topics of interest to CPG Nature & Climate. We will be keeping a close eye on these CPGs to ensure that we use our space to elevate any debate on overlapping issues of interest through the lens of nature loss and climate change.

Membership

7. Paragraph 8 of Section 6 of the Code requires group membership to include at least five MSPs, with at least one MSP from each of the parties or groups represented on the Parliamentary Bureau. The Committee has previously agreed that there should be a general waiver of this Rule in the current Session and Groups are now required to have five MSPs from the majority of parties represented on the Parliamentary Bureau. The proposed Group meets this requirement.

8. The MSP membership (by party) of the proposed Group is as follows—

- Finlay Carson MSP and Megan Gallacher MSP - Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party
- Monica Lennon MSP and Mercedes Villalba MSP - Scottish Labour Party
- Mark Ruskell MSP - Scottish Green Party
- Paul McLennan MSP - Scottish National Party
- Beatrice Wishart MSP - Scottish Liberal Democrats

9. Paragraph 9 of Section 6 of the Code entitles groups to contain members from out with the Parliament. The proposed Group has listed no non-MSP members in the individual category and six in non-MSP member organisations.

Office Bearers

10. Paragraph 10 of Section 6 of the Code requires one MSP to be Convener of the Group and there to be at least one other MSP office bearer. The proposed Group meets this requirement: Mark Ruskell MSP is the Convener of the proposed Group and Finlay Carson MSP is the Deputy-Convener.

Financial Benefits and Subscription

11. The registration form indicates that the Group will receive no financial benefits
12. The registration form also indicates that members of the proposed Group will not be charged a subscription.

Proposed CPG on Families Supporting Children's Learning

13. The registration form submitted by the proposed Group is attached at Annexe B to this note.

Consideration by the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

14. Michael Marra MSP has been invited to the meeting to discuss registration of the proposed Group.

Purpose

15. The stated purpose of the proposed Group is—

To support families and parents/carers in their central role as primary educators by:

- Providing a forum for parents/carers, families, parents' organisations, MSPs, and other interested parties to discuss and debate matters which affect the links between families and the education system
- Raising awareness of the positive impact of partnerships between home and school across Scotland

16. The proposed Group considers there may be overlap with the Children and Young People CPG which focuses on the child rather than the role of the family/parents, and the Shared Parenting CPG which focuses on the issues effecting shared parenting responsibilities. The CPG explains there is no Cross-Party Groups solely dedicated to supporting the role of families/parents in children's learning and education. There may also be occasional overlap with other CPGs which focus on specific issues which effect families, such as learning disabilities, and on these occasions, this CP will seek to work with these groups.

Membership

17. The proposed Group meets the requirement in relation to MSP membership which is as follows —

- Oliver Mundell MSP, Meghan Gallacher MSP and Stephen Kerr MSP - Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party
- Ross Greer MSP Scottish Green Party
- Michael Marra MSP - Scottish Labour Party
- Fulton MacGregor MSP - Scottish National Party.

18. The proposed Group has listed no non-MSP members in the individual category and one in non-MSP member organisations.

Office Bearers

19. The proposed Group meets the requirement in relation to office bearers: Fulton MacGregor MSP, Michael Marra MSP, and Oliver Mundell MSP (as co-conveners)

Financial Benefits and Subscription

20. The registration form indicates that the proposed Group will receive no financial benefits.

21. The form also indicates that members of the proposed Group will not be charged a subscription.

Next Steps

22. At agenda item 2 the Committee is invited to discuss any aspects of the application for recognition of the proposed Cross-Party Groups on—

- Nature and Climate with Mark Ruskell MSP; and
- Families Supporting Children's Learning with Michael Marra MSP.

23. At agenda item 3 the Committee will discuss whether to accord recognition to the proposed Groups.

Vicky Moyes
Support Manager
Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee
September 2022

Cross-Party Group Registration Form

<p>Name of Cross-Party Group</p>
<p>Cross-Party Group on Nature & Climate</p>
<p>Purpose of The Group and Proposed Discussion Topics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please state the purpose of the Group. 2. Please also provide a brief explanation of the purpose of the Group and why the purpose is in the public interest. 3. Please also provide details of any overlaps with the purpose of existing Cross-Party Groups and an explanation of why, regardless of any such overlap, the Group should be established. 4. Please also provide an indication of the topics which the Group anticipates discussing in the forthcoming 12 months.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A forum to discuss the interconnected crises of nature loss and climate change, and to influence government policy. 2. The CPG Nature & Climate will be unpacking the twin crises of nature loss and climate change, and creating a cross-party and cross-stakeholder collaborative space to explore both challenges and solutions to these interlinked issues. 3. There are no other CPGs with an overlapping purpose, although we suspect CPG Food, CPG Animal Welfare, and CPG on Sustainable Upland Management may bring forward topics of interest to CPG Nature & Climate. We will be keeping a close eye on these CPGs to ensure that we use our space to elevate any debate on overlapping issues of interest through the lens of nature loss and climate change. 4. Topics: Marine Environment, Natural Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Blue Carbon, Farming, Agriculture, Forestry, National Parks, Carbon Credits, Biodiversity Strategy, Peatland Restoration, Land Reform.
<p>MSP Members of the Group</p> <p>Please provide names and party designation of all MSP members of the Group.</p>

Beatrice Wishart MSP, Finlay Carson MSP, Mark Ruskell MSP, Monica Lennon MSP, Meghan Gallacher MSP, Paul McLennan MSP, Mercedes Villalba MSP	
Non-MSP Members of the Group	
For organisational members please provide only the name of the organisation, it is not necessary to provide the name(s) of individuals who may represent the organisation at meetings of the Group.	
Individuals	N/A
Organisations	ScotLINK, RSPB, WWF Scotland, John Muir Trust, Woodland Trust, Scottish Wildlife Trust
Group Office Bearers	
Please provide names for all office bearers. The minimum requirement is that two of the office bearers are MSPs and one of these is Convener – beyond this it is a matter for the Group to decide upon the office bearers it wishes to have. It is permissible to have more than one individual elected to each office, for example, co-conveners or multiple deputy conveners.	
Convener	Mark Ruskell MSP
Deputy Convener	Finlay Carson MSP
Secretary	ScotLINK
Treasurer	N/A
Financial Benefits or Other Benefits	
Please provide details of any financial or material benefit(s) the Group anticipates receiving from a single source in a calendar year which has a value, either singly or cumulatively, of more than £500. This includes donations, gifts, hospitality or visits and material assistance such as secretariat support.	
N/A	
Subscription Charged by the Group	
Please provide details of the amount to be charged and the purpose for which the subscription is intended to be used.	

N/A	
Convener Contact Details	
Name	Mark Ruskell MSP
Parliamentary address	MG12, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP
Telephone number	0131 348 6369

Statement on Compliance with The Code Of Conduct	
I declare that the Cross-Party Group on Nature & Climate is constituted and will comply with the terms of Section 6 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament.	
Signed	Mark Ruskell MSP
Date	28 June 2022

Cross-Party Group Registration Form

<p>Name of Cross-Party Group</p>
<p>Cross-Party Group on Families Supporting Children's Learning</p>
<p>Purpose of The Group and Proposed Discussion Topics</p> <p>5. Please state the purpose of the Group.</p> <p>To support families and parents/carers in their central role as primary educators by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a forum for parents/carers, families, parents' organisations, MSPs, and other interested parties to discuss and debate matters which affect the links between families and the education system • Raising awareness of the positive impact of partnerships between home and school across Scotland <p>6. Please also provide a brief explanation of the purpose of the Group and why the purpose is in the public interest.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted just how important good relationships and communication between home and school is to supporting young people's learning. During the lockdowns families were more engaged and involved in their children's learning than ever before.</p> <p>Research shows family influences have a stronger impact on children's achievement and attainment than school factors, (see Closing the Attainment Gap in Scottish Education by Edward Sosu and Sue Ellis, published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Engaging Parents in Raising Achievement- Do Parents Know they Matter? by Professor Alma Harris and Dr Janet Goodall, and the School-Family-Community Partnership Model by Dr Joyce Epstein (John Hopkins University)). This group will allow Parliamentarians to hear from parents, parents' organisations and relevant groups about the realities for families engaging with the system and their children's learning as they move through nursery and school.</p> <p>It will provide an opportunity for MSPs to hear the voices of families who do not (or do not consider themselves to) fit into a particular issue-based group but rather have a wide-sweeping experience across the system.</p> <p>While the focus will be on the interconnection between families and the</p>

education system, this gives a clear opportunity to examine a wide range of topics which impact on the role of the parent and touch on many policy areas beyond education. This gives policy makers across the system an unrivalled and coherent mechanism to redress the silos which often challenge policy making.

7. Please also provide details of any overlaps with the purpose of existing Cross-Party Groups and an explanation of why, regardless of any such overlap, the Group should be established.

While there are groups such as the Children and Young People CPG which focuses on the child rather than the role of the family/parents, and the Shared Parenting CPG which focuses on the issues effecting shared parenting responsibilities, there is no Cross Party Groups solely dedicated to supporting the role of families/parents in children's learning and education. There may also be occasional overlap with other CPGs which focus on specific issues which effect families, such as learning disabilities, and on these occasions, we will seek to work with these groups.

8. Please also provide an indication of the topics which the Group anticipates discussing in the forthcoming 12 months.

Suggested topics:

- Restoring relationships between home and school post COVID-19 pandemic
- Qualification and assessments review
- Supporting positive mental health
- Cost of the School Day – tackling the impact of poverty including school uniform guidance
- Learning pathways and post-school preparation within the context of school life
- Transitions (nursery to primary, primary to secondary, leaving school)
- Food and healthy eating/health and wellbeing
- Community links
- Anti-Bullying
- Social media and digital learning
- Substance misuse/gambling/addictive behaviours
- Cultural diversity
- Sexual health and relationships
- Balancing Children's and parents' rights

MSP Members of the Group	
Please provide names and party designation of all MSP members of the Group.	
Michael Marra MSP (Scottish Labour), Fulton MacGregor MSP (SNP), Oliver Mundell MSP (Scottish Conservatives), Ross Greer MSP (Scottish Greens), Meghan Gallacher MSP (Scottish Conservatives), Stephen Kerr MSP (Scottish Conservatives)	
Non-MSP Members of the Group	
For organisational members please provide only the name of the organisation, it is not necessary to provide the name(s) of individuals who may represent the organisation at meetings of the Group.	
Individuals	
Organisations	Connect
Group Office Bearers	
Please provide names for all office bearers. The minimum requirement is that two of the office bearers are MSPs and one of these is Convener – beyond this it is a matter for the Group to decide upon the office bearers it wishes to have. It is permissible to have more than one individual elected to each office, for example, co-conveners or multiple deputy conveners.	
Convener	Fulton MacGregor MSP, Michael Marra MSP, and Oliver Mundell MSP (as co-conveners)
Deputy Convener	
Secretary	Connect
Treasurer	
Financial Benefits or Other Benefits	
Please provide details of any financial or material benefit(s) the Group anticipates receiving from a single source in a calendar year which has a value, either singly or cumulatively, of more than £500. This includes donations, gifts, hospitality or visits and material assistance	

such as secretariat support.	
Connect will donate admin time to provide secretariate: one day of the Policy and Support Officer's and half a day Executive Director's time per meeting, with three meetings to be held each year.	
Subscription Charged by the Group	
Please provide details of the amount to be charged and the purpose for which the subscription is intended to be used.	
£0.00	
Convener Contact Details	
Name	Michael Marra MSP
Parliamentary address	M1.03 Scottish Parliament Edinburgh EH99 1SP
Telephone number	0131 348 5943

Statement on Compliance with The Code Of Conduct	
I declare that the Cross-Party Group on Families Supporting Children's Learning is constituted and will comply with the terms of Section 6 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament.	
Signed	Michael Marra
Date	20/06/2022