



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Minute of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) meeting held on Thursday 19 March 2020 at 9.00am, in Q1.03, QH

### Present:

- Ken Macintosh MSP (Chair)
- David Stewart MSP
- Ruth Davidson MSP
- Andy Wightman MSP
- Sandra White MSP
- Liam McArthur MSP – dialled in remotely

### In attendance:

- David McGill
- Michelle Hegarty
- Lynsey Hamill
- Susan Duffy
- Veronique Malcolm
- Jane McEwan
- Steven Bell
- Huw Williams
- Judith Proudfoot, Secretary

### Previous minutes

1. The SPCB agreed the minutes of the meetings held on 5 and 12 March 2020. The SPCB also wished to record its thanks to Dr Catherine Calderwood, Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, for providing the briefing on 12 March.

### Matters arising

2. The following items had been dealt with by correspondence since the previous meeting:
  - 2.1. Ill-health retirements – clarification of roles and responsibilities of SPCB and the Pension Fund Trustees.
  - 2.2. Changes to the Members' Expenses Scheme – a motion by the Corporate Body to amend the Scheme was passed by the Parliament on Wednesday 18 March 2020.

2.3.Appointment of Assistant Clerks – the SPCB agreed a proposal to appoint two existing members of staff as Assistant Clerks.

## Covid-19 briefing

3. The SPCB received an update on actions taken to date and those planned both for the coming days and looking further ahead. Some of the issues discussed included:
  - Need to urgently address contractor staff's arrangements.
  - Guidance for MSP and parliamentary staff on working from home, including health and safety issues and staff well-being.
  - Business, working patterns, etc (recognising the Business Bureau was in the lead on this).
  - Importance of maintaining a functioning democracy.
  - Remote participation in parliamentary business – need to balance the advice being given to others and what MSPs are seen to be doing. • Flexibility of the Members' Expenses Scheme in these extraordinary times.
  - Current MSP levels.
4. The SPCB also reflected on the very useful session for MSPs the previous day hosted by the SPCB members and officials, and looked ahead to the second session planned for later that day. The SPCB noted its thanks to Jason Leitch, Scottish Government Medical Director, for attending the Wednesday session.

## Security: access policy

5. This item was deferred.

## Appointment of a committee adviser – SPCB(2020)paper 15

6. The SPCB approved the appointment of an adviser to support the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee in its work programme for the remainder of the Session.

## Procurement strategy – SPCB(2020)paper 16

7. The SPCB welcomed the draft Strategy which it considered an important element in how it conducted its business. The Strategy continued to build on the work done in previous years. Two key areas highlighted were: increasing transparency and ethics in the supply chain; and responding to climate change.
8. The SPCB agreed the Strategy.

## Improving scrutiny – presentation

9. This item was deferred.

## Climate change & sustainability – briefing

10. Given the planned meeting with the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee had been postponed under the current circumstances, this item was deferred.

## Senior staffing – in private

11. The Chief Executive updated the SPCB on his planned restructuring of his senior staffing team. The matter of succession planning and adequate cover at senior level in extraordinary circumstances was also discussed.

## Date of next meeting

12. The next meeting of the SPCB was due to take place on Thursday 2 April 2020. Options would be investigated to facilitate people participating in this meeting remotely.