



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Minute of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) meeting held on Thursday 30 April 2020 at 9.00am, via video conference

Present:

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

In attendance:

- David McGill
- Michelle Hegarty
- Lynsey Hamill
- Tommy Lynch
- Lis Craig
- Mairi Pearson
- Joanne McNaughton
- Huw Williams
- Eric MacLeod
- Graeme Donoghue
- Judith Proudfoot, Secretary

Previous minutes

1. The SPCB agreed the minutes of the meeting held 16 April 2020.

Matters arising

2. The following items had been dealt with by correspondence since the previous meeting:
 - 2.1. The SPCB noted the new bereavement policy which set out the support and assistance available to MSPs, their staff and SPCB staff.
 - 2.2. The SPCB agreed redeployment arrangements for a member of staff of the Scottish Human Rights Commission.

COVID-19 briefing

3. The SPCB received an update from the Presiding Officer on the proposed business programme for the coming weeks. He highlighted the intention to run a virtual meeting of Parliament the next week in which all MSPs would be able to participate and a hybrid meeting the following week, i.e. one where there would be some MSPs attending in the chamber and others participating remotely. Work continued on facilitating remote, electronic voting. The parliamentary service was now able to support up to 16 fully remote virtual sessions' each week including committees and plenary, which exceeded demand. The Presiding Officer would be issuing a letter to all MSPs with further information about the programme and arrangements later that morning.
4. The SPCB then noted an update from officials including:
 - The continued suspension of public engagement activities until the end of the summer recess.
 - Discussion of the Scottish Governments new guidance on the expansion of its testing programme and the wearing of face coverings.

Chief Executive's report

5. The Chief Executive introduced his Report. Not surprisingly, the focus of work across the organisation over the period had been the welfare of all those working in and for the Parliament, including out in local offices, and ensuring parliamentary business continued to be supported during the covid-19 crisis. This would continue to be the case for some time to come.
6. The Chief Executive again highlighted the response of staff and their efforts during this difficult and challenging time. The SPCB also wished to record its thanks and appreciation of staff's efforts.
7. The SPCB noted the Report.

Reimbursement of members' expenses scheme – SPCB(2020)paper 20

8. The SPCB agreed that the working from home allowance for MSPs' staff should be met from the Incidental and Ancillary Employment provision of the Scheme. It was noted that no additional funds would be required due to savings in other budget areas such as local office running costs and travel costs.

Staff cost provision – SPCB(2020)paper 21

9. The SPCB undertook a review of the Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme (the Scheme) in 2019/20 to ensure it was fit for purpose in Session 6. A key

recommendation from that work was to review the level of staff cost provision (SCP) provided by the Scheme to support Members in carrying out their role. The SPCB discussed and agreed a remit for the review.

10. A paper would be brought to the SPCB for consideration later in the year. Any recommendations for changes to the provision would require to be approved by Parliament and the aim, where possible, would be to implement them for the start of the new session.

AOB

SPS staff pay

11. The SPCB agreed the terms of an interim approach to the 2020/21 cost of living award for SPCB staff.

Date of next meeting

12. The next meeting of the SPCB was scheduled for Thursday 14 May 2020.