



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

# **Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme- Additional Expenses Application By Correspondence**

**Reference: SPCB (2022) Paper 49**

## **Executive summary**

1. The SPCB is invited to consider an application submitted by Liam McArthur MSP to have the translation costs associated with his Members' Bill met under the provisions made at paragraph 8.1.1 of the Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme.

## **Issues and options**

2. The Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme makes provision to meet costs associated with translation and interpretation services to support a Member undertaking their parliamentary duties. Members are required to make an application to the SPCB to have such costs met from the Scheme. The SPCB have delegated approval of such applications to the Head of Allowances within a limit, however the application from Mr McArthur is above this limit.
3. Under the Scheme Members can apply to the SPCB for the costs of:
  - (a) engaging an interpreter for a language other than English or engaging a sign language interpreter who in either case is required for a meeting with members of the public
  - (b) translation services required for correspondence with members of the public, to take part in parliamentary business or for inclusion of other languages in parliamentary funded publications; or
  - (c) any other services required to facilitate equal access to members for disabled persons
4. Mr McArthur's application relates to his intention to bring forward a Members' Bill on assisted dying for terminally ill adults. Mr McArthur has been working with the Non-Government Bills Unit on processing the responses to the consultation with a view to publication after Parliament returns in September. As part of this, Mr McArthur is keen to make sure that the report is as accessible as possible. Mr McArthur has explored the indicative costs for producing both a full translation of the report as well as a summary version and is applying to have the costs for Gaelic, BSL and Easy Read versions of the report summary met from the Members'

Expenses Scheme. The costs to produce such summary versions as follows:

- Easy read - £570 no VAT
- BSL - £ 700 no VAT
- Gaelic - £ 1,045 plus VAT

5. This equates to a total of £2,524 and is based on an approach of using content from earlier videos and information where useful (such as one explaining what the policy behind the proposal for a bill is). Then producing new videos that convey a) a short summary of the responses including key stats b) what happens next in the process and c) how to get in touch for more information.
6. Providing materials in these formats would tie in with what Mr McArthur has already done in terms of translation of materials for his consultation document at a cost of £1,620.

## **Governance**

7. There are no governance issues as the Scheme provides for Members translation costs to be met on application to the SPCB.

## **Resource implications**

8. Should the SPCB determine that the costs should be met it is confirmed that there are funds available within the overall Members budget for 2022-23.

## **Publication Scheme**

9. This paper can be published in accordance with the SPCB's publication scheme.

## **Next steps**

10. Advise the Member of the SPCB's decision and if the SPCB agree costs can be met from the Scheme then the Member will be advised to move forward with the proposed translations.

## **Decision**

11. The SPCB is invited to consider an application from Mr McArthur for the cost of translation costs to be met from the Members' Expenses Scheme as detailed above.

**Allowances Office**  
14 July 2022