

Ministerial Changes – Impacts on Parliamentary Business

Introduction

1. Following the new allocation of ministerial responsibilities, the Bureau is invited to consider the possible impacts of the changes on Portfolio Questions. Should there be any impacts on committee remits, a further paper will be brought to a future meeting.

Portfolio Questions

2. As the Bureau is aware, Portfolio Questions are currently scheduled on a 3-weekly cycle, with two portfolios on Wednesday and one on Thursday. The link to the current schedule of portfolios through until the summer is available here: [Portfolio Questions Rota to Summer 2024 \(parliament.scot\)](#)
3. Portfolio Questions in the weeks commencing 19 and 26 February have been scheduled by the Parliament based on the previous Cabinet Secretary portfolios. Subject to the Parliament's approval of ministerial appointments, the Bureau is invited to consider a new cycle of Portfolio Questions based on the new portfolios. In doing so, Business Managers will note that due to the lead-in time for Portfolio Questions (random draw of names and the deadline for lodging questions), the first week from which any new cycle could and would need to take effect following the ministerial changes would be for the week beginning 4 March 2024.
4. In considering a new cycle for Portfolio Questions, the Bureau may wish to note that, as before, there are nine Cabinet Secretary roles. Subject to the ministerial changes being approved, the Bureau is invited to consider the changes to the 3-weekly cycle that are shown in the table below (with new elements in red and deleted elements shown in strikethrough):

	Portfolio 1 (Weds)	Portfolio 2 (Weds)	Portfolio 3 (Thurs)
Week 1	Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work Net Zero and Energy	Finance and Parliamentary Business	Transport, Net Zero and Transition
Week 2	Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands	NHS Recovery, Health and Social Care	Social Justice
Week 3	Constitution, External Affairs and Culture	Justice and Home Affairs	Education and Skills

5. In addition, the Bureau should note that the Scottish Government has now published updated information on Cabinet Secretary and Ministerial remits [Cabinet and Ministers - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#). This will inform what questions can be accepted in relation to the portfolios, in particular where a minister reports to different Cabinet Secretaries.

Recommendation

6. The Bureau is invited to agree a new 3-weekly cycle of portfolio questions commencing from the week beginning 4 March 2024.

Parliamentary Business Team
February 2024