



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Conveners Group

Agenda

1st Meeting, 2024 (Session 6) Wednesday 31 January 2024

The group will meet at 12.45pm in Committee Room 3.

1. **Minutes**
2. **Conveners Group strategic priority – Supporting Members as Parliamentarians:** The Group will consider training or support that would be beneficial for Members in fulfilling their roles as Parliamentarians.
3. **Conveners Group strategic priority – Participation, diversity and inclusion strategy. Payment for participation:** The Group will consider a draft payment for participation policy for committee work.

CG/S6/24/1/A

The papers for this meeting are as follows –

1. Minutes of last meeting CG/S6/23/9/M(P)
2. Supporting Members as Parliamentarians CG/S6/24/1/1
3. Participation, diversity and inclusion- draft Payment of Participation policy CG/S6/24/1/2(P)

Committee debates this Parliamentary year

1	21/09/2023	Criminal Justice Committee	Tackling online child abuse, grooming and exploitation
2	26/10/2023	Citizen Participation & Public Petitions Committee	Embedding Public Participation in the work of the Parliament
3	7/11/2023	Net Zero, Energy & Transport Committee	A Modern and Sustainable Ferry Service for Scotland
4	16/11/2023	Constitution, Europe, External Affairs & Culture Committee	Culture in Communities: The challenges and opportunities in delivering a place based approach
5	28/11/2023	Health, Social Care & Sport Committee	Female participation in sport and physical activity
6	12/12/2023	Equalities, Human Rights & Civil Justice Committee	Asylum Seekers in Scotland
7	09/01/2023	Constitution, Europe, External Affairs & Culture Committee	How is Devolution Changing Post-EU
8	14/03/2024	Social Justice and Social Security Committee	Addressing Child Poverty through parental employment
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Contact details for the clerk

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Conveners Group
Wednesday 31 January 2024
1st Meeting, 2024 (Session 6)

Supporting Members as Parliamentarians: Continuous Professional Development for Members

Introduction

1. This paper invites the Conveners Group to consider what training or support would be beneficial for Members in fulfilling their roles as Parliamentarians.

Background

2. Supporting Members as Parliamentarians is the fourth of the Conveners Group's strategic priorities agreed at the start of session. The purpose of this strategic priority is to consider how Members can be best supported in their scrutiny role, through the provision of training, support and other continuous professional development (CPD).
3. A number of induction and training sessions have been organised for new Members since they were returned in May 2021. Further CPD has also taken place over the session. More details are set out in Annexe A.
4. There is also a [page on the Parliament's intranet](#) which sets out various training that different offices offer.
5. CG has not had the opportunity to consider this strategic priority and reach a view on what CPD would be most beneficial to support Members. This is mainly because CPD is a thread which runs through all of the Group's strategic priorities.
6. Action plans for each of the other strategic priorities have now been produced and so this is the opportunity for Conveners Group to look at what CPD would best support the delivery of the objectives in the action plans, as well as whether there is other more general support which would be helpful for Members.

Further detail

7. Conveners have a wealth of experience of parliamentary business both individually and collectively. We have the opportunity to use this experience to inform how best to support Members in carrying out their scrutiny role.
8. To date, challenges experienced in delivering a programme have included the capacity of Members to participate in CPD offered. Members' time is finite and so in order to make efficient use of time available for CPD, it would be beneficial to hear the views of Conveners on what the priorities for the provision of CPD should be.

9. It would be helpful to also include consideration of the delivery method. For example, it may be of most benefit to offer CPD on an individual, committee or party group basis. CPD can also be delivered in different formats such as in person or online.
10. Conveners are therefore invited to provide a view on what they consider to be their CPD priorities as well as the method and format of delivery.
11. This is not exclusively a committee exercise. Members' roles as Parliamentarians applies equally in the context of the chamber and the scrutiny that is carried out in that setting. It is therefore proposed that once we have Conveners' views, the Bureau is invited to consider what kind of CPD for members would be beneficial in supporting Members in participation in other areas of business.
12. The outcome of this process will inform Conveners Group's approach to developing an action plan under the strategic priority of Support for Members as Parliamentarians and the provision of CPD for members.

For discussion

13. The questions for discussion are: **what kind of CPD should be prioritised in order to support committee scrutiny? and how we should go about implementation?**
14. The table in Annexe B sets out possible CPD options under each strategic priority.
15. To inform how to target CPD resources it would be helpful to hear Conveners' priorities. Conveners will therefore be invited to consider whether any of the support outlined in Annexe B will meet their needs and which they would like to prioritise. This list is not exhaustive and so any views on other learning and support would also be welcome.
16. Members' reflections on how they would find it most useful for any CPD to be delivered would also be very helpful, for example, in small groups; on a party basis; by Committee; on an office basis, with their staff.
17. **In advance of the meeting, Conveners are invited to consider what would be their Top 3 areas of CPD based on the information provided in the table in Annexe B or in any other areas not covered.**

Recommendation

18. **The Conveners Group is invited to consider and prioritise what CPD for Members would be of most benefit.**

**Conveners Group clerking team
January 2024**

Annexe A - CPD sessions offered to date

Induction and orientation programme for new Members:

- Chamber session on voting, PO-led session on how to be a parliamentarian, sessions on participating remotely and voting in the Chamber, the Code/registration, GDPR and Members' responsibilities as employers.
- Chamber Desk - provided one-to-ones on request with new Members
- Legislation Team – overview of the legislative process followed by individual CPD sessions starting on 16 June 2021 and going through to summer recess and then available on demand
- NGBU - 5 sessions on Members Bills
- Introduction to SPICe
- Culture of Respect training
- 5 speechwriting courses for new Members with an external provider
- The Web and Social Media team provided more than 10 sessions on social media training, with more offered at a later date due to demand
- IRO - 4 sessions on International Engagement offered
- Sessions on sustainable development and Climate Change were offered
- MRO – sessions on handling the media in September with an external provider

CPD offered during the course of the session

- Question-technique training for Committees and chairing training for individual Conveners
- Sessions on the Scottish Budget, economic and fiscal matters offered by SPICe with external speakers
- Training on changes to legislation relating to named persons (“whistleblowing”)
- Security training on external actors
- Ongoing programme of SPICe breakfast seminars (coordinated by SPICe)
- COVID-19 briefing by the National Clinical Director
- SPICe key issues sessions in September 2021 (updated in January 2024)
- SCHR session for Equal Opportunities and Human Rights Commission
- Use of exhibition space to present work of key offices (post-Covid opportunity for face-to-face contact with Members)
- PO sessions in Holyrood room with “stalls” for offices to explain work

Annexe B - Conveners Group strategic priorities

Options for CPD for members

Strategic priority	CPD options	Other information	Format options
Post-EU scrutiny	SPICe briefings on post-EU issues, such as— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic law after Brexit • Common frameworks • Internal Market Act • EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement • International Trade Agreements • Alignment with EU law 	SPICe will also continue to support post-EU scrutiny CPD through breakfast seminars etc.	Individual MSP and/or their staff Party Groups Committee briefing
	Committee briefings on the bigger picture issues in the post-EU landscape tied to EU tracker.	Focused on committees most likely to be considering post-EU issues (NZET, RAIC, EFW, CJC, EHRCJC) This would be delivered at a committee meeting when the committee is already looking at an EU-exit related item of business (eg EU-exit related LCM, or an SI notification). This could coincide with, or informed by, the publication of the EU law tracker report	Committee briefing

Strategic priority	CPD options	Other information	Format options
	Committee briefings on post-EU landscape for other committees who wanted a similar briefing.	Focused on committees less impacted by post-EU issues. In some cases, it may not be possible to tie it to a pre-existing item of business, so time would need to be found in the work programme to do this.	Committee briefing
Net zero scrutiny	Variety of resources, activities and learning available to MSPs to support their scrutiny of climate change across different areas of work.	<p>Resources—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPICE subject researchers • the Specialist Adviser (SA) on climate change and net zero (who works with the NZET Committee, as well as other committees to support them to embed climate change scrutiny in their own work) • the Knowledge Exchange Manager – Climate Change Scrutiny (who works to improve the availability of relevant research to MSPs, including improved academic engagement) • the Senior Analyst – Climate Change Scrutiny (who supports delivery of Conveners Group strategic priority) • the Project Manager (who provides focused project management support to the Conveners Group as part of the Scrutiny Pillar of the wider Sustainable Development Programme) 	Range of formats

Strategic priority	CPD options	Other information	Format options
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two strategic leads for the Conveners Group strategic priority on climate change and net zero (Head of Research and Sustainable Development Scrutiny, SPICe, and clerk to the NZET Committee) <p>Activities and Learning—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPICe seminars and Futures Forum events • the facilitated Sustainable Development Impact Assessment (SDIA) tool • e-learning available on Learning Pool through the Sustainability Team • written and multimedia guidance from the Sustainability team 	
	<p>CPA course on Parliamentary Action on Climate Change in Small Jurisdictions.</p>	<p>This course explores the basics of climate change and how it impacts small jurisdictions in particular. It focuses on the science of climate change, disaster risk management and the importance of international frameworks. In addition, it looks at how to mitigate against and adapt to the effects of climate change as well how to engage with the local community.</p>	<p>Individual MSP - online, self-paced</p>

Strategic priority	CPD options	Other information	Format options
	<p>CPA course on The Sustainable Development Goals: A Parliament's Role.</p>	<p>The objectives of this course are to develop knowledge of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the crucial role of Parliaments, as institutions, in implementing the SDGs. The material examines parliamentary action on three levels of implementation: local/constituency, national, and international implementation. It also seeks to highlight how parliaments can work with key stakeholders to promote the SDGs and influence real change within communities. The course delves into key methods of SDG financing, drawing on case studies and positive examples from the Commonwealth and beyond.</p>	<p>Individual MSP Online, self-paced</p>
	<p>En-ROADS - global climate simulator</p>	<p>Simulator that allows users to explore the impact that dozens of policies—such as electrifying transport, pricing carbon, and improving agricultural practices—have on hundreds of factors like energy prices, temperature, air quality, and sea level rise.</p>	<p>Individual MSP or include any number of people Online or in-person 60 minutes or a half day.</p>
	<p>Carbon Literacy Project developed by the Carbon Literacy Trust.</p>	<p>The Carbon Literacy Project has designed Toolkits for specific audiences, including civil servants and elected members in local authorities.</p>	<p>A day (but this can be delivered in separate sections and include some online/ self-paced aspects).</p>

Strategic priority	CPD options	Other information	Format options
		<p>The Toolkit is a flexible and adaptable framework that can be tailored to specific audiences. It includes adaptable sections on how climate change can be integrated into day-to-day decision making and policy, how climate action can be co-ordinated across the civil service, and how elected leaders can mobilise change within their constituency and to communicate climate change effectively to hard-to-reach groups.</p>	
<p>Participation diversity and inclusion</p>	<p>Trauma-informed working</p>	<p>The Conveners Group’s PDI strategy has identified trauma-informed working as a potential area for CPD offered on an as-needed basis in relation to specific forthcoming work.</p> <p>This is something that officials can advise on and ensure that provision is made where the need is identified in relation to specific items of business.</p>	<p>Individual MSP and/or MSP staff</p> <p>Committee</p> <p>Party Group</p> <p>Online/in person</p>
	<p>Training in engaging effectively with children and young people</p>	<p>As part of implementation of UNCRC, Members may find training in this area useful.</p>	<p>Individual MSP and/or MSP staff</p> <p>Committee</p> <p>Party Group</p> <p>Online/in person</p>

Strategic priority	CPD options	Other information	Format options
	Facilitation training	Given the increasing role for members in facilitating public engagement, Conveners may find it helpful to receive some facilitation training	Individual MSP and/or MSP staff Committee Party Group Online/in person
	Gender sensitive scrutiny	As part of the Gender Sensitive Audit, guidance is being developed on gender sensitive scrutiny. Training for Members on this could be offered to complement the guidance itself.	Individual MSP and/or MSP staff Committee Party Group Online/in person
Post-legislative scrutiny	CPD on post-legislative scrutiny (PLS) will most likely depend on the subject matter of the PLS being undertaken and so can be managed on an as-needed basis.	Additional training/CPD programmes that Members could sign up to that are run by external partners are often offered. A current example is this course on post-legislative scrutiny in the context of the climate and environmental emergency.	Individual MSP Online. Each session will be half-day (9.00 – 11.30 AM)

Strategic priority	CPD options	Other information	Format options
		<p>One example is this CPD on climate change in a parliamentary context: New course by the institute for Advanced Legal Studies/ Westminster Foundation for Democracy</p> <p>https://ials.sas.ac.uk/events/2024-course-post-legislative-scrutiny-context-climate-and-environmental-emergency</p>	
	General committee CPD	CPD could be tailored to the needs of particular committee depending on subject matter of inquiry	Committee briefing
Other parliamentary skills	Further training could be provided in areas that have already been provided (set out in Annexe A)	<p>Eg questioning techniques</p> <p>Conveners' views welcome on what other CPD could be provided</p>	Range of options
	Conveners may find training in other areas not yet covered or which could build on what has already been provided	<p>Eg effective budget scrutiny</p> <p>Conveners' views welcome on what other CPD could be provided</p>	Range of options

Strategic priority	CPD options	Other information	Format options
	<p>Other areas</p> <p>This also includes a page on the intranet which sets out training that different offices offer.</p> <p><u>Continuing Professional Development for MSPs (sharepoint.com)</u></p>	<p>Conveners are invited to consider other areas in which it would be helpful for CPD to be provided</p>	<p>Range of options</p>