

PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU

PROPOSED CORONAVIRUS (RECOVERY AND REFORM) (SCOTLAND) BILL: TIMETABLE AND PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Introduction

1. The Coronavirus (Recovery and Reform) (Scotland) Bill was introduced by the Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery, John Swinney MSP on 25 January 2022.
2. This paper invites the Bureau to:
 - recommend to Parliament the designation of a lead committee at Stage 1,
 - recommend to Parliament the designation of secondary committees, and
 - note a proposed timetable for considering the Bill.

COMMITTEE DESIGNATION

3. The Bill's provisions:
 - Provide for regulation-making powers to respond to any future public health threats (Parts 1 and 2);
 - Make permanent small-scale changes (predominately relating to electronic communications) to miscellaneous services both in the public and private sectors (Part 3);
 - Make permanent changes to tenancies in respect to evictions (Part 4);
 - Continue temporary justice measures which were originally put in place in previous Coronavirus legislation (Part 5 and schedule).
4. The following Committees have the foremost interest in this Bill

COVID-19 Recovery

The remit of the COVID-19 Recovery Committee includes to consider and report on matters relating to COVID-19 falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for COVID Recovery. Parts 1 and 2 of the Bill pertain put in place measures in response to any future public health emergency.

Criminal Justice

The remit of the Criminal Justice Committee includes to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans. Part 5 of

the Bill pertains to this remit in terms of temporary provisions especially in regards to court proceedings.

Local Government, Housing and Planning

The remit of the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee includes to consider and report on matters relating to local government, housing and planning falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government. Part 4 of the Bill pertains to this remit in terms of tenancies and eviction grounds.

Education, Children and Young People

The remit of the Education, Children and Young People Committee includes to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. Part 2 of the Bill pertains to educational establishments and school consultations. The remit of the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills includes school standards, quality and improvement and school infrastructure and staffing.

Social Justice and Social Security

The remit of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee includes to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government, excluding matters relating to local government, housing and planning. The Cabinet Secretary's remit includes social justice, tackling inequalities, poverty action measures, third sector and social economy, human rights and equalities. Elements of Part 3 and 4 would engage this remit.

5. It is considered that the COVID-19 Recovery Committee has the primary interest in this Bill.

6. It is understood that Criminal Justice Committee and Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee wish to consider the Bill and it is recommended that they be designated as secondary committees. Such designation does not, however, require that the Committees consider the Bill.

7. Lack of a formal designation does not prevent any committee whose remit is engaged by the from considering the Bill if it so wishes.

8. The Bureau is invited to consider recommending to the Parliament by motion that it agrees, under Rule 9.6.1, to designate—

- The Covid-19 Recovery Committee as the lead committee for consideration of the Coronavirus (Recovery and Reform) (Scotland) Bill, and
- The Criminal Justice Committee and Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee as secondary committees.

9. Draft motion can be found in **Annex A**.

PROPOSED TIMETABLE

Parliamentary procedure

10. Part 5 of the Bill pertains to justice measures, which have been put in place by various emergency coronavirus legislation to respond to the pandemic and ensure the courts are able to address the backlog of court cases. These measures currently apply until September 2022 under the terms of the Coronavirus (Extension and Expiry) (Scotland) Act 2021.

11. The Bill intends to further extend these provisions until 30 November 2023, with regulation-making powers to extend again but no later than 30 November 2025.

12. In order to ensure the Bill receives Royal Assent before the current expiry point of September 2022, the legislative scrutiny of the Bill would need to be completed by the end of June 2022.

Timetable for consideration

13. Subject to the Parliament's agreement, the following timetable is proposed—

- a. The Stage 1 debate on the afternoon of Thursday 12 May 2022;
- b. Stage 2 being taken by the COVID-19 Recovery Committee on:
 - i. the morning of Thursday 9 June 2022;
 - ii. the morning of Monday 13 June 2022;
- c. Stage 3 on the afternoon of Wednesday 29 June 2022.

14. There is no requirement to vary or suspend Standing Order Rules in order to accommodate this timetable.

15. Due to the June bank holiday in 2022 (2 and 3 June), the Covid-19 Recovery Committee will be required to meet on Monday 13 June in order to accommodate their second day of Stage 2 proceedings.

16. The Bureau is invited to note the proposed timetable for consideration of this Bill. Relevant motions will be brought forward for the Bureau's consideration in due course.

Parliamentary Business Team
January 2022

ANNEX A

Draft Parliamentary Bureau motion on the Coronavirus (Recovery and Reform) (Scotland) Bill:

Designation of Lead Committee- That the Parliament agrees that the Covid-19 Recovery Committee be designated as the lead committee, and that the Criminal Justice Committee and Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee be designated as secondary committees, in consideration of the Coronavirus (Recovery and Reform) (Scotland) Bill at Stage 1.