



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Minute of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) meeting held on Thursday 18 November 2021 at 09.00hrs (hybrid)

Present:

- Alison Johnstone MSP (chair)
- Claire Baker MSP
- Jackson Carlaw MSP
- Maggie Chapman MSP

Apologies:

- Christine Grahame MSP

In attendance:

- David McGill
- Michelle Hegarty
- Janice Crerar
- Sara Glass
- Lis Craig
- Lynsey Hamill
- Susan Duffy
- Judith Morrison
- Veronique Malcolm
- Huw Williams
- Mark Brough
- Eric MacLeod
- Lisa Creamer
- Judith Proudfoot, Secretary

Previous minutes

1. The SPCB agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2021.

Matters arising

2. The SPCB had dealt with the following items by correspondence since the previous meeting:

- SPCB (2021) Paper 67 – the SPCB noted the Electoral Commission's draft 5-year Corporate Plan.
- SPCB (2021) Paper 68 – the SPCB agreed pay arrangements for officeholders for the year 2021-22.
- SPCB (2021) Paper 69 – the SPCB noted the Scottish Biometrics Commissioner's strategic plan and agreed officials should contact the Scottish Government about amending the dates of the plan to align with financial years.
- SPCB(2021) Paper 73 – the SPCB noted correspondence received from the Minister for Children and Young People and agreed ongoing funding for the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's in relation to the development and implementation of a child friendly complaints process would be included in the SPCB's from 1 April 2024.

Chief Executive's Report

3. The report covered activity since the summer recess and included the quarter 2 finance and performance reports. The Chief Executive highlighted that expenditure was back on track within the target variance range but that this would continue to be monitored closely. Chamber Desk services continued to be under pressure, partly due to the significant increase in urgent questions being lodged. This was being addressed in the medium term by reallocation of resources to the office and would be discussed further as part of the 2022-23 budget discussion.
4. The SPCB discussed recent events, reflecting in particular on the Kirking service at St Giles' Cathedral and the 2021 Festival of Politics.
5. The SPCB noted the report.

SPCB Budget 2022-23 – SPCB (2021) Paper 70

6. The SPCB discussed the high level planning and budget assumptions for 2022-23 and the 2023-24 indicative budget. Officials set out the process and context for the bid; the priorities for 2022-23; and a look ahead to session 6 in the medium term. The key elements focused on staffing; indexation; and security.
7. As part of the overall budget discussion, the SPCB also considered SPCB (2021) Paper 71 which related to officeholder contingency requests. The SPCB agreed contingency requests for the Scottish Information Commissioner and Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland. The SPCB also agreed that the Scottish Human Rights Commission should be invited to participate in a review to enable it to present independent evidence to the SPCB to support a request for additional staff.

8. A further discussion was planned for the next meeting. Once formally agreed, the budget bid for 2022-23 and indicative forecast for 2023-24 was due to be presented to the Finance & Public Administration Committee on 21 December 2021.

Crèche service

9. The SPCB discussed the Parliament's on-site crèche service in the context of its original primary purpose of supporting public engagement with, and participation in the business of Parliament. Its role had expanded in recent sessions to include a limited childcare service for passholders. The SPCB acknowledged that it was important to consider how engagement and participation had changed in the last 20 years before considering any future service.
10. The SPCB noted the limitations around what service could be provided at Holyrood under current regulations and guidelines as advised by the Care Inspectorate, particularly the inability to provide a full day care service due to the lack of adjacent outside space for play. The SPCB requested that officials engage further with Members and staff to gauge the most effective way for the SPCB to provide support to those with childcare responsibilities and help promote a balance of family and work life.

Annual Procurement Report – SPCB (2021) Paper 72

11. The Annual Procurement Report recorded progress and achievements in the delivery of the SPCB's Procurement Strategy in what had been a challenging year for the procurement team. Some of the achievements included:
 - Increased focus placed on opportunities to increase the sustainability of goods and services through procurement and contract management.
 - Initial steps taken to start assessing scope 3 emission of selected purchased goods.
 - Over 75% of the total estimated value of contracts awarded in the period went to Small and Medium Enterprises.
 - Continued efforts to engage with third sector and not for profit organisations.
 - Comprehensive engagement with contractors to address emerging supply chain risks associated with the pandemic and Brexit.
 - Excellent progress towards professional qualification of purchasers, procurement knowledge development and increased focus on staff mental wellbeing.

12. The SPCB thanked the procurement team for its comprehensive and useful report back on the work and achievements over the past year. The SPCB noted the report ahead of its publication.

Date of next meeting

13. The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 2 December 2021.

SPCB secretariat

November 2021