

**MINUTE OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY CORPORATE BODY  
(SPCB) MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20 JANUARY 2010 AT 10.30  
AM IN ROOM Q1.03**

**Present:** Alex Fergusson MSP (Chair) Mike Pringle MSP  
Alex Johnstone MSP Tricia Marwick MSP  
Tom McCabe MSP

**In attendance:** Trish Godman MSP  
Paul Grice  
Ed Murray, Audit Advisory Board member  
Lynda Towers  
Ian Leitch  
Bill Thomson  
Stewart Gilfillan  
Derek Croll  
Huw Williams  
Jackie Giulianotti  
Robert Rae  
Roy Devon  
Tom Wheeler  
Eric MacLeod  
Myer Cohen  
Alli Williams  
Jonathan Orr  
Judith Proudfoot, Secretary

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

1. The SPCB agreed the minutes of the meetings held on 9 and 15 December 2009.

**MATTERS ARISING**

Issues by correspondence

2. The SPCB noted the following issues had been considered by correspondence since the previous meeting:

2.1 SPCB(2010)paper 8: Parliamentary Travel – the SPCB approved the details of the travel as outlined in the paper.

2.2 Public Services Reform (Scotland) Bill – the SPCB agreed the terms of a response to correspondence from John Swinney MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth.

- 2.3 The SPCB noted that, in response to a request from a Member Sir Neil McIntosh had agreed to release the legal advice he had received during his examination of the Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme in relation to the employment of family members. The SPCB agreed, with Sir Neil's consent, that a copy of the advice would be issued to all Members directly affected by the recommendations relating to this issue.

## **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

3. The SPCB noted the report.

## **REIMBURSEMENT OF MEMBERS' EXPENSES SCHEME: IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS – SPCB(2010)Paper 1**

4. The SPCB agreed to work commencing on the implementation of the recommendations contained in Sir Neil McIntosh's Report on the Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme. A draft resolution would be brought to the SPCB in February with the aim of putting it to Parliament in March and it coming into effect from 1 April 2010.

5. The SPCB also agreed to propose an amendment to the virement provisions in the Scheme. In order to provide greater flexibility to Members, the SPCB agreed to propose an increase in the number of times virement could be undertaken from the Office Cost provision to the Staff Cost provision from once to twice per financial year and for the limit to be raised from one third to one half of the total of the Office Cost provision.

## **REIMBURSEMENT OF MEMBERS' EXPENSES SCHEME: APPLICATION – SPCB(2010)Paper 2**

6. The SPCB considered an application under Section 7, para 7.2.1 of the Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme. The SPCB agreed the application in relation to the contractual rent and utilities commitment based on its previous commitment that no Member would be disadvantaged during the transition period to 2011. The SPCB agreed that no additional funds would be provided as a contingency.

## **REIMBURSEMENT OF MEMBERS' EXPENSES SCHEME – SPCB(2010)Paper 3**

7. The SPCB considered correspondence relating to a possible breach of the rules and principles governing the Members' Expenses Scheme. In coming to a decision, the SPCB considered all aspects of the case.

8. The SPCB was satisfied that there had been no intention on the part of the Member to submit claims which did not conform with the rules and principles of the Expenses Scheme. However, duplicate claims had erroneously been submitted and the SPCB agreed that the Member should be asked to repay the sum of £60. The Member would also be advised to be careful in future in the way expenditure was recorded and the information submitted to the Allowances Office.

9. The SPCB agreed that it would not be appropriate in this case to submit a formal report to the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee.

#### **SCOTLAND'S FUTURES FORUM: 2010 WORK PROGRAMME - SPCB(2010)Paper 4**

10. Following a discussion on the range of topics proposed and the duration of projects, the SPCB noted the work programme as agreed by the Forum's Board of Directors.

#### **FILMING/PHOTOGRAPHY AT PARLIAMENTARY EVENTS - SPCB(2010)Paper 5**

11. The SPCB agreed that external organisations wishing to carry out filming/photography at an event in the Parliament must first submit a request to the SPCB. Requests should be submitted to the Events and Exhibitions Team by the sponsoring MSP. Approval would be conditional on receipt of an undertaking signed by the organisation to comply with the SPCB's conditions for filming.

12. The SPCB asked officials to ensure that all organisations, MSPs and their staff were made aware of the new policy arrangements.

#### **MAJOR EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS PROGRAMME 2010-11 - SPCB(2010)Paper 6**

13. The SPCB agreed the Major Events & Exhibitions Programme for 2010-11. The SPCB also agreed that, in order to enable the existing events to be delivered effectively, no further major events or exhibitions would be added to the Programme for April to September 2010. Any requests for major events or exhibitions during recess periods would require SPCB approval.

14. The SPCB approved criteria for Presiding Officer sponsored receptions/events.

## **FUTURE RESOURCE PLANNING - SPCB(2010)Paper 7**

15. This paper set out, in broad terms, the elements which make up the SPCB's budget and invited a high level discussion of the approach to be taken to meeting the challenges of anticipated budget restraint in future years. The SPCB provided officials with initial views as a basis for taking forward a planning exercise. It was noted that a more detailed paper would be brought back to a future meeting and that the Audit Advisory Board would be invited to attend that meeting.

### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

16. The next SPCB meeting was scheduled to take place on 10 February 2010.

**SPCB Secretariat**  
21 January 2010