

SCOTTISH COMMISSION FOR PUBLIC AUDIT

1st Meeting, 2021 (Session 6), Wednesday, 1 September 2021

Declaration of interests, Choice of Chair and Deputy Chair

Introduction

1. The Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 (PFA Act) says that “the Commission may determine its own procedure.” While the SCPA is not a committee it does share similarities and has therefore has previously agreed to adopt certain practices common to parliamentary committees.
2. This paper therefore invites SCPA members to declare any relevant interests, choose a chair; and to then choose a deputy chair in accordance with the procedure used at first Committee meetings in Session 6.

Declaration of Interests

3. In relation to Parliamentary Committees MSPs are also required to “declare” these interests at committee meetings in certain circumstances. The requirements to declare interests apply at every committee meeting.
4. If you have an interest that is—
 - (a) registered in your Register of Interests, **and**
 - (b) relevant to an item being discussed at the committee meeting,then you must “declare” that interest before participating in a Committee meeting.
5. Interests in the voluntary category of your Register of Interests do not need to be declared at Committee meetings. There is also no need to make a declaration in relation to any matters which are not registrable interests and are not, therefore, registered in you Register of Interests.
6. The Code of Conduct for MSPs advises MSPs, as good practice, to declare any business or personal relationships with advisers or witnesses to a committee.

7. In declaring an interest members may wish to be sufficiently informative to enable a listener to understand the nature of your interest.
8. **Commission members are invited to declare any interests relevant to the SCPA remit.**

Choice of Chair and Deputy Chair

9. Standing Orders oblige all committees to choose a Convener at their first meeting with the 1st meeting chaired by the Oldest Committee Member until a Convener is chosen. The “Oldest Committee Member” is defined as the oldest member of the Committee present at the meeting and who has indicated to the Clerk that they agree to chair the meeting.
10. The PFA Act says “The Commission may appoint one of its members to preside at its meetings” but it does not specify how they should be undertaken. As such it is proposed to adopt the same approach as with Parliamentary Committees. There is however, no Parliamentary agreement on what party the Chair and Deputy Chair should represent although members may wish have regard to party balance.
11. The Oldest Committee Member will therefore invite a nomination from members for the post of Chair. There is no requirement for nominations to be submitted in advance of the meeting or to be seconded.
12. SCPA members will then be invited to appoint the nominated person as Chair.
13. On being chosen, the Chair will immediately preside over the rest of the meeting beginning with the choice of Deputy Convener. The procedure for choosing a Deputy Chair is the same as that for the Chair.
14. **Commission members are invited to choose a Chair and then a Deputy Chair using the above procedure.**

**Secretary to the SCPA
27 August 2021**