

Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

**1st Meeting 2023 (Session 6), Thursday
19 January 2023**

Correspondence from Graeme Dey MSP on parliamentary motions

Introduction

1. The Committee has received that letter attached at Annexe from Graeme Dey MSP. In the letter he raises concerns about the number of parliamentary motions lodged to congratulate individuals or organisations.

Committee consideration

2. The Committee is invited to consider the issue raised by Graeme Dey and whether there is any further information it wishes to gather prior to preparing a response.

**SPPA Committee Clerks
January 2023**

Annexe – Letter from Graeme Dey MSP

Martin Whitfield MSP Convenor

Standards, Procedures & Public Appointments Committee The Scottish Parliament
9th November 2022

Dear Martin,

Recognising your committee's workload, I have thought long and hard before writing to you. However, the issue I wish to raise has been troubling me for some time, and that concern continues to grow.

In essence, what I am seeking is an understanding of any current guidance (if such exists) covering members' lodging of Parliamentary Motions congratulating organisations or individuals - and whether the Committee might consider this a matter worthy of its consideration. To explain, I am greatly concerned by the changing nature of Parliamentary Motions lodged by members across the Parliament and what, in my view, is the resultant devaluing of this means of marking very significant achievements.

When I first entered Parliament in 2011, such motions in practice were only lodged to celebrate genuinely notable matters - achievements of national or international stature, major anniversaries or standout contributions to constituency or Scottish life. Upon returning to the backbenches earlier this year, I was surprised to see how Motions had "evolved".

That evolution has continued over recent weeks to the point where Parliamentary Motions are now being lodged to mark not only the winning of local competitions but even being shortlisted for these. We are seeing birthdays noted, as well as retirals and fundraising which, though worthy, has generated relatively small sums. I am not sure that is entirely iri keeping with the original intent or spirit of this mechanism.

The volumes - in part due to some members marking the outcome of competitions by raising a motion congratulating the winner of each individual category - are also contributing, I suspect, to a slow turnaround time from the Chamber Desk. In summary, I am wondering:

1. Is there guidance around what should be lodged as a Motion?
2. If there is, does it perhaps, _in the view of your committee, require updating?
3. If there is not, then is this something the Parliament/Committee might wish to address?

I very much appreciate your consideration of my letter.

Kind regards,
Graeme Dey MSP

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MSP for Angus South Constituency

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