

From: Presiding Officers
Sent: Tuesday, July 12, 2016 12:19 PM
Subject: Parliamentary Liaison Officers

Dear Convener,

As you may already know, the Scottish Government has recently replied to an inspired parliamentary question lodged by Bill Kidd MSP on the appointment of parliamentary liaison officers (PLOs). I attach a copy of the question and the answer.

The appointment of PLOs was raised in the Chamber on 8 June 2016 by Patrick Harvie MSP and was subsequently discussed by Business Managers at the meeting of the Parliamentary Bureau on Tuesday 14 June. The main concern raised was about accountability and any possible conflict of interest where a Member sits on or convenes a parliamentary committee that holds to account the Minister who appointed them to the role of parliamentary liaison officer.

The Bureau agreed that no further action was required but that it might be helpful in the interests of transparency for us to draw your attention to the attached question which sets out the list of Members appointed as PLOs and the portfolio to which the Member is linked. For the same reason you might also be aware that I am asking PLOs to identify themselves in the chamber, at the start of the first occasion where they are participating on business related to the portfolio of their relevant Minister. Some Members have already done so.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

KEN MACINTOSH
Presiding Officer

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN ANSWER

14 June 2016

Index Heading: Strategy and External Affairs

Bill Kidd (Glasgow Anniesland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many parliamentary liaison officers have been appointed; to which ministers, and what their responsibilities are.

S5W-00723

Joe FitzPatrick:

The First Minister has appointed 13 parliamentary liaison officers (PLOs), listed as follows, to assist in developing and maintaining a positive and constructive relationship between the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government and to take account of the views of the Parliament and of Scotland as a whole. PLOs are unpaid, are not members of the government and are not, therefore, bound by collective responsibility.

Parliamentary Liaison Officer	Portfolio
Ben Macpherson MSP Gail Ross MSP	Office of the First Minister
George Adam MSP Mairi Evans MSP	Communities, Social Security and Equalities
Ash Denham MSP	Culture, Tourism and External Affairs
Ivan McKee MSP Gillian Martin MSP	Economy, Jobs and Fair Work
Jenny Gilruth MSP	Education and Skills
Angus McDonald MSP	Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform
Kate Forbes MSP	Finance and Constitution
Tom Arthur MSP	Health and Sport
Fulton MacGregor MSP	Justice
Emma Harper MSP	Rural Economy and Connectivity

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