



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

**The Presiding Officer**

Martin Whitfield MSP  
Convener  
Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee  
By email

31 October 2023

Dear Convener,

Thank you for the invitation to contribute to your evaluation of the Scottish Parliament's temporary proxy voting scheme.

The Bureau considered your letter and the operation of the proxy voting scheme pilot at its meeting on 24 October.

In general, the Bureau considers that the Proxy Voting scheme is working well and does not have any concerns about the operation of the scheme.

The Bureau is content with the current eligibility criteria that are included in the scheme and considers that the inclusion of criteria in the scheme rather than in the rules provides flexibility in the future for additional criteria to be added.

The Bureau would note that it is now possible for a proxy vote to be exercised in the Chamber in future using the digital voting system so it should no longer be necessary to rely on Points of Order being made by the Member exercising the proxy vote.

The Bureau is supportive of the SPPA Committee's intention to make permanent Standing Orders Rule changes based on the current temporary rule, and for that to be complemented by the Presiding Officer's scheme. The Bureau considers this provides flexibility for the future by providing for changes to be made both to the criteria and to the practical arrangements for applying for a proxy vote.

Yours sincerely

**Rt Hon Alison Johnstone MSP**  
Presiding Officer