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Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee
Comataidh Eaconomaidh, Dreuchdan is Obair
Chothromach

Economy, Jobs and Fair Work
Committee: Annual Report 2017-18



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Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee

To consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work.



<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/economy-committee.aspx>



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Committee Membership



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Kezia Dugdale
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Scottish Conservative
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Scottish Conservative
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Gordon MacDonald
Scottish National Party



Fulton MacGregor
Scottish National Party



Gillian Martin
Scottish National Party



Andy Wightman
Scottish Green Party

Introduction

1. During the parliamentary year (from 9 May 2017 to 8 May 2018), the Committee met 35 times. Six meetings were held entirely in private and 29 were partly in private. Of the 29 meetings where some or all of the items were in private, this was to consider draft reports or to discuss approaches to inquiries or review evidence heard.
2. During this period, the Committee has conducted five inquiries and considered various forms of legislation.

Membership changes

3. Previous Members of the Committee during the reporting year:
 - Bill Bowman 18 January 2017 to 28 June 2017
 - Gil Paterson 14 June 2016 to 16 November 2017
 - Ash Denham 14 June 2016 to 16 November 2017
 - Richard Leonard 14 June 2016 to 23 November 2017
 - Daniel Johnson 23 November 2017 to 9 January 2018
 - Tom Arthur 16 November 2017 to 19 April 2018

Inquiries and reports

Gender Pay Gap

4. The Committee completed its inquiry into the gender pay gap, exploring the effect of the gender pay gap on the Scottish economy.
5. The Committee published its report on [26 June 2017](#) . Recommendations focused on measuring the underlying causes, analysis of the economic benefits, greater support for female entrepreneurs and that all roles advertised by Scottish Government, its agencies, and the Scottish Parliament are flexible, agile or part-time. The Cabinet Secretary responded on [3 October 2017](#) , the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body responded on [26 October 2017](#) . The Committee's report was debated in the Chamber on [4 October 2017](#) .

Draft Energy Strategy

6. The Committee scrutinised the [Draft Scottish Energy Strategy](#) , which sets out the Scottish Government's vision for the future energy system in Scotland, to 2050. The Committee agreed to look at the [Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme](#) (SEEP) and [District Heating](#) .
7. The Committee met with ECCI and Community Energy Scotland at the [Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation](#) . The Committee visited the [Levenmouth Community Energy Project](#) , [ORE Catapult](#) and University of St Andrews, [Guardbridge Energy Centre](#) .

Committee visit to the Levenmouth Community Energy Project, ORE Catapult and Guardbridge Energy Centre.



8. In June 2017, the Committee wrote to the [Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy](#) and the Minister replied in [August 2017](#).
9. The [Scottish Energy Strategy](#) was published in December 2017.

Scottish Government's Draft Budget 2018-19

10. The Committee considered Scottish Government spending that fell within its remit. The late publication of the [Draft Budget 2018-19](#) severely restricted the time available for scrutiny.
11. Over three sessions the Committee undertook pre-budget scrutiny, with evidence from Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Enterprise and West Lothian Chamber of Commerce. After the publication of the budget the Committee took evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work and Scottish Government officials. The Committee received 14 written submissions.
12. Using the time available the Committee focused its scrutiny on spending on enterprise agencies.
13. The Committee submitted its response to the Finance and Constitution Committee on [11 January](#). The Cabinet Secretary responded on [28 February](#).

Economic Data

14. The underlying aim of the inquiry was to encourage a debate about the quality and coverage of our data while highlighting the value of the quantitative approach – one based on the provision of credible, timely, useful statistics – for both decision-making and accountability.
15. The Committee issued a call for written views, receiving 30 submissions and heard from 22 witnesses over five meetings.
16. The Committee published its report on [12 February](#). Recommendations were made to the Scottish Government, the Office for National Statistics, HMRC, and the Scottish Fiscal Commission.
17. The Office for National Statistics responded on [10 April](#) and the Scottish Government responded on [18 April](#).

Scotland's Economic Performance

18. The Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee is holding an inquiry into Scotland's economic performance: trends, challenges and future developments. The inquiry is focussing on the following areas: GDP growth and productivity; inequality and labour market issues, and inclusive growth.
19. Over the course of 11 meetings the Committee has heard from 66 organisations and received 36 written submissions. Committee members also visited four companies across the country.
20. The Committee held a series of eight focus groups in November and December, two each in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Jedburgh. The groups included between five and eight members of the public, a professional facilitator and at least one MSP. A summary of the focus groups was published on [7 March](#).
21. The Committee intends to report before summer recess.

Impact of Bank Closures

22. The Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee launched a short inquiry examining the impact of bank branch closures in Scotland on local businesses, consumers and the Scottish economy to explore what steps can be taken to address the issues identified by the Committee.
23. The Committee received 37 written submissions from its call for written views and launched an online survey, which amassed 734 responses.
24. The Committee has held two focus groups in Mintlaw and Dalmellington; an additional group is planned for June.

Legislation

Legislative consent memorandum

25. The legislative consent memorandum (LCM) process enables the Scottish Parliament to signal whether it agrees to the UK Parliament legislating in matters devolved to the Scottish Parliament or altering the executive powers of the Scottish Ministers.
26. The Committee scrutinised one legislative consent memorandum during this period - [the Financial Guidance and Claims Bill](#).

Subordinate Legislation

27. In this parliamentary year, the Committee dealt with seven Affirmative instruments.
 1. Insolvency (Regulation (EU) 2015/848) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 [draft]
 2. Public Services Reform (Corporate Insolvency and Bankruptcy) (Scotland) Order 2017 [draft]
 3. Renewables Obligation (Scotland) Amendment Order 2017 [draft]
 4. Scotland Act 1998 (Insolvency Functions) Order 2017
 5. Land Registration etc. (Scotland) Act 2012 (Amendment) Order 2017 [draft]
 6. Registers of Scotland (Digital Registration, etc.) Regulations 2017 [draft]
 7. Registers of Scotland (Digital Registration etc.) Regulations 2018 [draft]

Engagement and equalities

Business in the Parliament

28. The Business in the Parliament Conference is hosted jointly by the Parliament and the Scottish Government. It aims to bring Scotland's businesses and politicians together and forms part of a regular and on-going Parliament and Government programme of engagement with business organisations and senior business leaders across Scotland.
29. The theme of the 2017 event was "Leading Scotland: Unlocking our Economic and Business Potential". Over 200 leading business figures gathered at the Scottish Parliament for the 11th Business in the Parliament Conference on the 28 and 29 September 2017. The event saw senior business representatives discuss a range of enterprise-related issues with politicians, among them the First Minister. The event, which was chaired by the Presiding Officer, featured keynote addresses from Nora Senior, CBE, Chair of the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board and Leah Hutcheon, founder and CEO of Appointedd.

Women's Enterprise Scotland

30. In November, Women's Enterprise Scotland gathered their 15 ambassadors, female entrepreneurs who act as role models for other women in business, for two days of training. As part of this training, the Committee (along with the Parliament's Outreach Services) ran an event aimed at increasing awareness of the work of Parliamentary committees and how to engage with the Parliament.

Women's Enterprise Scotland, Training Session



Engagement

Committee visit to Almond Engineering Ltd, Livingston



31. To engage with individuals and organisations unable to provide formal evidence, the Committee visited eight organisations across Scotland as part of its inquiries, and held 10 focus groups – in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Jedburgh, Mintlaw and Dalmellington.
32. To ensure that the Committee received as wide a response as possible for its Bank Closures inquiry the Committee ran an online survey that received 20 times the number of responses the call for written views received.
33. Of the witnesses who gave evidence during the Parliamentary year, 106 were men and 53 women, representing a ratio of 2:1 or 33% of witnesses being women. If Scottish Government ministers and officials are taken out of the count, then 88 were men and 49 women, the percentage is higher, with 36% of witnesses being women, demonstrating the impact of "supply factors." The Committee also engages with organisations and individuals by means other than formal meetings - written evidence, informal visits, focus groups etc. - and the gender breakdown for such events may vary. One focus group for the economic performance inquiry, for example, was attended by 24 men and 26 women.
34. In addition to the Committee's presence on Twitter, the Committee circulates a weekly newsletter covering its current and future work to a range of stakeholders.



Hello everyone, I hope you enjoyed the weekend sunshine as much as we did.
Here's a quick update on what's going on at the EJFW Committee this week.

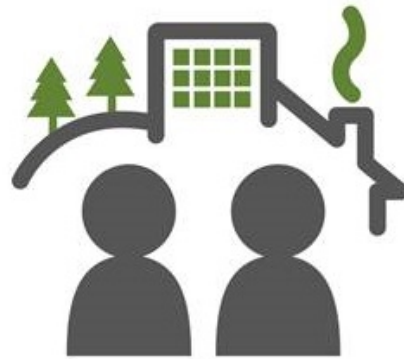
Bank Closure inquiry - 24 April

Infographics



35

Committee meetings



8 Fact finding visits



Inquiries held



Reports published



159

Number of people
who gave evidence



Written evidence
received



SSIs considered



2088 followers

3868 tweets

*as of 8 May 2018



159

Number of people who gave evidence representing **115** organisations



Witnesses who gave evidence

