



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Published 9 March 2021  
SP 972  
5th Report 2021 (Session 5)

# **Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee**

## **Comataidh Inbhean, Dòighean-obrach is Cur-an-dreuchd Poblach**

### **Code of Conduct - Register of Interests - Gifts threshold**



**Published in Scotland by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body.**

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# Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

The remit of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee is to consider and report on—

- (a) the practice and procedures of the Parliament in relation to its business;
- (ab) a proposal for a Bill relating to the arrangements for financial assistance to non-Government political parties represented in the Parliament;
- (b) whether a member's conduct is in accordance with these Rules and any Code of Conduct for members, matters relating to members interests, and any other matters relating to the conduct of members in carrying out their Parliamentary duties;
- (c) the adoption, amendment and application of any Code of Conduct for members; and
- (d) matters relating to public appointments in Scotland;
- (e) matters relating to the regulation of lobbying; and
- (f) matters relating to Scottish general elections falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations.



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# Committee Membership



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**Neil Findlay**  
Scottish Labour



**Oliver Mundell**  
Scottish Conservative  
and Unionist Party



**Gil Paterson**  
Scottish National Party



**John Scott**  
Scottish Conservative  
and Unionist Party



**Maureen Watt**  
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# Introduction

1. Rules governing MSPs' conduct are set out in the Code of Conduct for MSPs.
2. The Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments (SPPA) Committee is responsible for recommending that changes are made to the Code of Conduct. If the Parliament agrees these changes, they come into force.

# Background

3. The Schedule of the Interests of Members of the Scottish Parliament Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act") sets out the registrable financial interests which MSPs and Scottish Law Officers are required to place on their registers of interests and to declare before taking part in any relevant proceedings in Parliament.
4. Section 2 of the Code of Conduct contains more detailed information which is designed to help members when registering their interests. This Section makes several references to a £300 threshold above which the registration of Gifts which meet the prejudice test is required.
5. This threshold or "specified limit" is set out in the Schedule to the 2006 Act, where it is expressed as "0.5% of a member's salary (rounded down to the nearest £10) at the beginning of the current parliamentary session." It is necessary therefore to update this figure for the start of Session 6.
6. The salary of an MSP at the start of Session 6 will be £64,470. <sup>1</sup> 0.5% of this amount, rounded down to the nearest £10, is £320.

# Recommendation

7. The Committee recommends to the Parliament that each reference to £300 in Section 2 of the Code of Conduct be replaced with £320 as set out in Annexe A.



## **Annex A: Code of Conduct Rule changes**

In Section 2: Categories of Registrable Interest of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament, make the following changes:

In paragraph 33, for "£300" substitute "£320"

In paragraph 34, for "£300" substitute "£320"

In paragraph 41, for "£300" substitute "£320"

In paragraph 47, for "£300" substitute "£320"

# Annexe B: extract from minutes

**6th Meeting 2021 (Session 5), Thursday 4 March 2021**

**Code of Conduct Rule changes (in private):** The Committee agreed a draft report and draft Code of Conduct Rule changes in relation to the Register of Interests.

- 1 MSP salaries from 1 April 2020. Available at: [https://www.parliament.scot/StaffAndManagementResources/MSP\\_and\\_Officeholder\\_salaries\\_as\\_at\\_1\\_April\\_2020.pdf](https://www.parliament.scot/StaffAndManagementResources/MSP_and_Officeholder_salaries_as_at_1_April_2020.pdf)

