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Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

Complaint against Maggie Chapman MSP



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Contents

Introduction	1
The Complaint	2
Background: requirements for MSPs to register and declare interests	3
Registration of interests	3
Declaration of interests	3
Decision of the Committee	6
Conclusion	9
Annexe A - Written representations from Maggie Chapman MSP	10
Annexe B - Report from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland	15
Annexe C - Complaint made against Maggie Chapman MSP by Melissa Titus provided by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life	16
Annexe D - Minutes	17

Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

To consider and report on the following (and any additional matter added under Rule 6.1.5A)—

- (a) the practice and procedures of the Parliament in relation to its business;
- (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;
- (d) matters relating to public appointments in Scotland; and
- (e) matters relating to the regulation of lobbying.
- (f) matters relating to local government elections, Scottish general elections, implementation of the Referendums (Scotland Act) 2020 and Freedom of Information and open government falling within the responsibility of the Minister for Parliamentary Business.

2. Where the Committee considers it appropriate, it may by motion recommend that a member's rights and privileges be withdrawn to such extent and for such period as are specified in the motion.



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Introduction

1. The Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee (“the Committee”) met on 20 April, 27 April, 4 May and 11 May 2023 to consider a report from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland (“the Commissioner”) on a complaint from Melissa Titus about Maggie Chapman MSP.
2. The Commissioner reported to the Committee on the complaint and the Committee has considered his report. Annexe B to this report contains the Commissioner’s report and appendices.
3. The Committee requested a copy of the full complaint made against Maggie Chapman MSP by Melissa Titus from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life (“the Commissioner”) and this is attached at Annexe C.

The Complaint

4. The complaint was that Maggie Chapman MSP failed to make a declaration in respect of her registered interest as Chief Operating Officer of Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre at the meeting of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee on 31 May 2022 when it took evidence from Rape Crisis Scotland on the Gender Recognition Reform Bill.
5. The Committee received representations in writing from Maggie Chapman MSP (see Annexe A) as well as hearing from her in person at a meeting of the Committee on 27 April 2023.

Background: requirements for MSPs to register and declare interests

Registration of interests

6. The Code of Conduct for MSPs states that: “The types of financial interest which must be registered are those which might be thought to influence a member’s actions, speeches or votes in the Parliament.”ⁱ Responsibility for ensuring compliance with the requirements of [the Interests of Members of the Scottish Parliament Act 2006](#) and the [Code of Conduct for MSPs](#) lies with the individual member, although if they are uncertain about how the rules apply, they can seek advice from the Standards Clerks.
7. Section 2, paragraph 2, of the Code of Conduct for MSPs requires that remuneration received from the date of return as an MSP must be registered. A registered entry under the remuneration section of a Member’s register cannot become a ceased interest during that session. Section 2, paragraph 20 of the Code states that. “A member may not cease an interest that consists of remuneration. Such interests will therefore remain on the register for the duration of the session.”

Declaration of interests

8. The provisions relating to the declaration of interests in the 2006 Act are made further to section 39 of the Scotland Act 1998 on members’ interests. Section 39(2)(b) obliges the Parliament to make provision (by or under an Act of the Scottish Parliament), “requiring that any member of the Parliament who has a financial interest (including benefits in kind) in any matter declares that interest before taking part in any proceedings of the Parliament relating to that matter.”
9. Section 12 of [the Interests of Members of the Scottish Parliament Act 2006](#) defines a “declarable interest”:
 - (1) In this Act a “declarable interest” means a declarable financial interest.
 - (2) A member has a declarable financial interest in any matter if that member has, or had, a registrable financial interest in that matter which is registered in the entry relating to that member.
 - (3) A member has a financial interest for the purpose of paragraph (b) of section 39(2) of the 1998 Act if that member has a declarable financial interest
10. Section 13 sets out the requirements for the declaration of declarable financial interests. It provides that:
 - (1) Any member who has a declarable interest in any matter shall declare that interest before taking part in any proceedings of the Parliament relating to that

ⁱ Section 1, paragraph 3 of the Code of Conduct for MSPs.

matter.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), a member shall declare an interest by making, in such circumstances as the Parliament may determine, either an oral or, as the case may be, a written declaration of that interest.

11. Section 3, paragraph 4 of the Code sets out the responsibility of a member in relation to the decision on whether they have a declarable interest relating to the proceedings:

4. Before taking part in any proceedings of the Parliament a member should consider whether they have a 'declarable interest' in relation to the particular matter being addressed in those proceedings. The onus is on individual members to decide.

12. Section 3, paragraph 6 includes the following provision in relation to oral declarations of interests:

6. Where a member has a declarable interest in any matter, the member must make an oral declaration of that interest before speaking in any meeting of the Parliament relating to that matter. This includes initiating, contributing to or intervening in any debate whether —

- during a meeting of the Parliament; or

- during a meeting of a Parliamentary committee (or a joint committee meeting or sub-committee meeting).

13. The [Guidance on the Code](#) includes the following paragraphs on the responsibility of the member in relation to declarations:

Responsibility of the member

1. Where a member has a declarable interest in any matter, the member is required to make an oral or written statement declaring the nature of the registrable financial interest before taking part in Parliamentary proceedings relating to that matter. Responsibility for ensuring compliance with the rules on declaration of interests lies with the individual member. Since declarations are required by the Code of Conduct and are also a legal requirement under the Interests of Members of the Scottish Parliament Act (2006), members are advised to err on the side of caution. For example, a member who had received and registered a benefit or remuneration from a particular company would have to make a declaration before participating in any proceedings in relation to that company, but the member should also consider whether or not to declare it before participating in any proceedings relating generally to the industry to which that company belongs.

2. If a member is uncertain about how the rules apply, the member may ask the Standards clerks for advice.

14. The following paragraphs of the Guidance cover procedure in committees and sub-committees:

6. *It is established good practice for members of a committee (including committee substitutes) to declare interests relevant to the remit of that committee at the first meeting they attend or on the first occasion on which they address the committee, irrespective of the business before the committee at that meeting. The same applies to any MSPs who, although not members of the committee (or committee substitutes) expect to attend its meetings regularly.*

7. *Thereafter, a member must make a declaration at committee meetings whenever a 'declarable interest' is sufficiently relevant to particular proceedings.*

8. *The following procedures must be followed in declaring interests at committee meetings—*

- *Where a member has an interest relevant to the proceedings, the member must make an oral declaration of interest at each meeting of a committee in which that member participates.*
- *The declaration should be made at the start of the relevant agenda item or as soon as the member is able to make the declaration, but before otherwise participating in those proceedings.*
- *A declaration must be made whether a committee meets in private or public. Where a relevant matter is discussed in both private and public at any single committee meeting, the declaration should, as good practice, be made during the public session even if it has already been made in private session.*
- *Where a committee is taking evidence from witnesses a member should, as good practice, ensure that declaration of an interest is made in the presence of those witnesses even if the declaration has been made earlier at that meeting of the committee. The declaration must be made at each meeting whether or not the member believes the witnesses are already aware of the member's relevant interest.*
- *Where the member does nothing more than attend the committee meeting or vote at it, or both, no oral declaration is required, providing the interest appears in the member's entry in the Register. Parliament has determined that the member's entry in the Register is sufficient declaration of that interest.*
- *Although such relationships are not registrable members should, as good practice, also inform the committee of any business or personal relationships they might have with any advisers or witnesses to the committee. This should be done in advance of the witness addressing the committee. In the case of an adviser, and where the identity of any potential adviser is known to committee members, a member should advise the clerk to the committee of the relationship prior to the appointment of the adviser so that this can be brought to the attention of the committee. If the committee subsequently decides that the adviser be appointed, there is no need for the member to inform the committee again about this relationship.*

Decision of the Committee

15. The Committee has carefully considered the Commissioner's report on the complaint made against Maggie Chapman MSP and is unanimous in the conclusions and decision reached.
16. The Committee is of the view that Maggie Chapman's registered financial interest – remuneration received by virtue of her employment as the Chief Operating Officer of Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre - was relevant to the proceedings of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee of 31 May 2022.
17. The Committee considers that it is a matter of fact that Maggie Chapman has had a registered financial interest in the remuneration category of her register since the beginning of this parliamentary session. This registered financial interest is the remuneration she received by virtue of her employment as Chief Operating Officer at Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre until 30 June 2021. As this registered interest is in the remuneration category, in accordance with the Code of Conduct, it must remain in her register throughout the current session even though she is no longer employed by Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre, although it has been amended to the past tense.
18. Under the 2006 Act, a registered financial interest is a declarable financial interest and a member who has a declarable interest in any matter shall declare that interest before taking part in any proceedings of the Parliament relating to that matter.
19. The Committee has concluded that this declarable financial interest was declarable in the context of the meeting of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee on 31 May 2022 because the proceedings of that Committee were related to that financial interest.
20. The Committee notes the Commissioner's findings on the similarities in the support provided by Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre and Rape Crisis Scotland and the link between these two organisations. The Committee considers it is relevant that Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre is one of the network of 17 independent rape crisis centres with which Rape Crisis Scotland works and that Maggie Chapman MSP referred to "Rape Crisis Scotland network members" at the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee on 31 May 2022.
21. The Committee also notes the Commissioner's findings that Rape Crisis Scotland and Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre "are in the same "industry" and have as organisations, the same general aims", and that Maggie Chapman MSP considered her declarable interest to be relevant to the remit of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee and for that reason declared it at the first meeting of that Committee on 23 June 2021.
22. While the Committee notes the Commissioner's findings that the two organisations had the same general aims and were part of the same network, the Committee considers that it is relevant that one of the witnesses that the Equalities Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee was taking evidence from on the Gender Recognition Reform Bill on 31 May 2022 was the Chief Executive of Rape Crisis Scotland. In her written representations to the Committee, Maggie Chapman MSP

states that Rape Crisis Scotland and Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre are completely separate entities and have distinct governance, employment and funding arrangements.

23. The Committee is of the view that in keeping with the principles that underpin the Code, the Member should not just take into account their own view in the assessment of whether a declaration relates to committee proceedings, but also consider whether a fair minded and impartial observer would consider that the declarable interest could influence the member or give the appearance of prejudicing that member's ability to act impartially. The Committee considers that a person watching or reading the proceedings might reasonably consider there to be a connection between the two organisations.
24. More particularly, in the question that Maggie Chapman MSP addressed to the Chief Executive of Rape Crisis Scotland during the evidence session, the Committee notes that she referred to the work of that network as having been trans-inclusive for 15 years and invited the Chief Executive to say a bit more about how the medicalisation of trans identity had been dealt with if it had come up in services provided either the Chief Executive or Rape Crisis Scotland network members had experienced.ⁱⁱ
25. The Committee considers that the question asked by Maggie Chapman MSP related to the matter in which she has a declarable interest, namely the remuneration she had received by virtue of her employment as Chief Operating Officer at Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre. The 2006 Act requires a declarable interest to be declared before the member takes part in any proceedings relating to that matter. The Committee is of the view that even if Maggie Chapman MSP made an assessment that her declarable interest was not sufficiently related to the Gender Recognition Reform Bill which was the subject of the agenda item at the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee meeting, a declaration should have been made before pursuing a line of questioning that referenced the network of rape crisis centres which includes Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre. The Committee is of the view that her line of questioning brought the proceedings in closer relation and proximity to her declarable interest.
26. The Committee notes that central to the Members' interests regime are the principles of transparency in relation to matters that could be thought to influence a member's actions, speeches or votes in the Parliament and the need to assess whether an interest could reasonably be considered to influence or to give the appearance of influencing the ability of the member to participate in a disinterested manner in any proceedings of the Parliament.
27. The Committee believes that for those watching or reading the proceedings of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee of 31 May 2022, a declaration by Maggie Chapman MSP of her declarable interest would have provided the transparency and openness that the standards regime requires in relation to Members' interests.
28. For these reasons, the Committee concludes that Maggie Chapman MSP breached the following provisions:

ii Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee meeting 31 May, 2022, Official Report.

- Section 13(1) and (2) of the Interest of Members of the Scottish Parliament Act 2006 (the “2006 Act”), following the definitions and conditions of having a declarable interest in section 12 of the 2006 Act.
 - Section 3 (paragraphs 6 to 8) of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament, 8th Edition, dated 6 May 2021 (the “Code”)
29. The Committee agrees with the Commissioner’s finding that there was a failure to declare a declarable financial interest in this case and the Commissioner’s conclusion that Maggie Chapman MSP’s conduct in not declaring a declarable financial interest breached the 2006 Act and the Code.

Conclusion

30. A finding of a breach of the 2006 Act and the Code of Conduct is a serious matter. The Committee notes that Maggie Chapman's written representations make reference to two previous complaint reports investigating complaints that MSPs had breached the statutory and Code requirements relating to the declaration of interests. However, neither of these cases is strictly comparable to the current case: in one case, the Member did not have a registered financial interest and in the other case the Member made a declaration but did not refer specifically to the registered financial interest. In the current case, the Member had a registered financial interest but made no declaration of that interest.
31. The Committee wrote to all Members in January 2023 emphasising the requirements to declare a financial interest in any matter before taking part in any proceedings of the Parliament relating to that matter.
32. The Committee would now take the opportunity to remind all Members of the principles of openness and transparency that underpin the Standards regime. The Consultative Steering Group's report, "Shaping Scotland's Parliament", published in January 1999, stated that: "The Scottish people deserve a Parliament and Members they can trust and respect" and recommended a rigorous Code of Conduct for MSPs." It also recommended a set of nine key principles which reflected the recommendations of the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life. Accordingly, the Committee believes that all Members should respect the Parliament and the people of Scotland by taking their registration and declaration requirements seriously.
33. In her representations to the Committee, Maggie Chapman referenced a perception of custom and practice that may be developing around declarations of interests in the Parliament. However, the requirements in relation to registration and declaration are statutory requirements and are included in the Code of Conduct for MSPs. For this reason, Members should not look to custom or practice or rely on advice from other MSPs in relation to the registration or declaration of interests. The Code very clearly sets out that advice is to be sought from the Standards Clerks and the Committee notes that Maggie Chapman indicated in her oral representation that she did not seek the advice of either the Standards Clerks or committee clerks in relation to the meeting at which Rape Crisis Scotland gave evidence.
34. The Committee takes any breaches of the requirements in relation to the failure to declare a registrable financial interest before taking part in any proceedings of the Parliament relating to that matter very seriously and advises Members to seek advice from the Standards Clerks should they have any questions about any matters relating to the registration or declaration of interests.
35. In relation to the breach in the current case, the Committee has agreed unanimously to recommend the imposition of a sanction of an exclusion from one meeting of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee.

Annexe A - Written representations from Maggie Chapman MSP

12 April 2023 - WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM MAGGIE CHAPMAN MSP IN RESPONSE TO THE ETHICAL STANDARDS COMMISSIONER'S REPORT AND FINDINGS IN FACT

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

I do not dispute the fact that I did not declare my previous employment with Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre at the meeting of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee on 31 May 2022. I do not agree, however, that this represents a breach of the either section 3 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament or sections 12 and 13 of the 2006 Interests of Members of the Scottish Parliament Act.

Summary

I ask that you do not uphold the complaint against me:

- I do not have, nor have I ever had, a declarable financial interest in Rape Crisis Scotland
- Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre (ERCC) is not the same organisation as Rape Crisis Scotland (RCS)
- Neither ERCC nor RCS would benefit financially from any policy decision contained within the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill that was the subject of EHRCJ Committee proceedings on 31 May 2022
- The Interests of Members of the Scottish Parliament Act 2006 (in Sections 2, 12 & 13) and the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament (in Section 3) both consider a “declarable interest” to mean a declarable financial interest (S12.1).

Financial Interest

This complaint refers to a meeting of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice (EHRCJ) Committee on 31 May 2022. The Committee was taking evidence on the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill and heard from the CEO of Rape Crisis Scotland (RCS). I did not declare an interest in the Committee’s proceedings that day as a former employee of Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre (ERCC) as I did not consider there to be any declarable interest relevant to the discussions.

I was employed by Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre (ERCC) until 30 June 2021, as I declared in my Register of Interests shortly after my election as an MSP in 2021 and at the first meeting of the EHRCJ Committee, as is custom and practice. I have never sought to hide or conceal my previous employment at ERCC, and have spoken publicly about my former employment there.

Are RCS and ERCC the same organisation?

RCS and ERCC are completely separate entities. They are third sector organisations that have distinct governance, employment and funding arrangements.

Do I have an interest in RCS under the terms of the 2006 Act or Code of Conduct?

I do not have, nor have I ever had, any financial interest in Rape Crisis Scotland (RCS). I maintain that I do not have a declarable interest in RCS, and this is certainly the case when discussing Gender Recognition Reform legislation.

Do RCS or ERCC have an interest under the terms of the 2006 Act?

Neither RCS nor ERCC has any interest in terms of the 2006 Act in the policy positions contained within the GRR Bill. No policy change that the Bill would bring about would have any financial benefit for RCS or ERCC. And no policy change on GRR would have any financial repercussions for me as a result of my former employment with ERCC or otherwise.

I did not declare an interest at the committee meeting on 31 May 2022 because there is no, and nor has there ever been, financial interest between myself and RCS. In addition to this, there is no way of RCS benefitting from any policy position taken on GRR, the subject of discussion at that Committee meeting.

Under the terms of the 2006 Act regarding Members' Interests, I am convinced that there is no financial interest for myself or ERCC in GRR passing or my involvement in Committee discussions on this matter. Further to this, given it was a different organisation giving evidence to Committee, it is even less clear what financial interest I would have in a session where an organisation I never worked for was giving evidence on a topic that would have no positive financial impact on it. To uphold this complaint would be to suggest that I had an interest in an organisation which I did not, and which did not, in any case have a financial interest in the issue at hand.

While the ERCC position on GRR was (and remains) the same as my own, there was no obligation on me to take this position or to hold this position while I was employed at ERCC. On other policy issues, I disagree with and continue to disagree with ERCC's policy position. This disagreement did not materially or financially impact my employment with ERCC. That is to say, my position on GRR is entirely independent of the fact that I was employed by ERCC. This is further to the fact that ERCC is a separate organisation to RCS. And that neither organisation had an interest, under the terms of the 2006 Act in the matter at hand.

Does this fit with MSP Custom and Practice?

The scope of the 2006 Act and the Code of Conduct for Members clearly pertains to financial interests. This is reflected in the custom and practice of MSPs when declaring interests. It is not custom and practice for every MSP who has worked for an organisation that is, for instance a member of SCDI or SCVO to declare an interest when hearing evidence from other members of those organisations. It is also not custom and practice for every MSP who has worked for a business or a third sector organisation to declare an interest when hearing evidence from SCDI or SCVO. And ERCC is not even a member of RCS: there is no membership fee or arrangement in place between the two organisations. They are simply members of the same network. Therefore it would not be custom and practice for MSPs to declare interests when the relationship between organisations was even looser than the membership relationship between SCDI and SCVO and their members.

It may be the case that complainant was under the misapprehensions that because the words 'rape crisis' appear in the name of the organisation for which I worked and that of

the organisation that was giving evidence they were somehow the same organisation. That is, perhaps, understandable but is not grounds to uphold this complaint.

Context and background information

It is my view that, at the root of this complaint, is a fundamental disagreement on the policy position of Gender Recognition Reform. Opponents of reform were using any means open to them to delegitimise any organisations and individuals who supported the reforms. This included online attacks and suggestions that organisations were being made to tow the Scottish Government line in order to receive funding. I evidenced both of these positions in my submissions to the Commissioner.

The complainant is opposed to gender recognition reform, as evidenced by her submission to the Committee consultation:

https://yourviews.parliament.scot/ehrcj/1e24dbb1/consultation/view_respondent?_b_index=780&sort=submitted&order=ascending&uuld=763595886

The complainant's response to Budget Scrutiny in 2020-21 that indicates her belief that women's organisations adopt policy positions to receive funding is here:

https://archive2021.parliament.scot/S5_Equal_Opps/DBS12_Melissa_Titus_Sub.pdf

This complaint also occurs in a context where some are of the view that Committee members should not hold political positions. The complainant's social media attacks on myself and other Committee members for not being "impartial" are included in my submission to the Commissioner. MSPs are required to scrutinise legislation but are also required to be true to the commitments made in the manifestoes on which they are elected. The manifesto on which I stood was very clear on the commitment to deliver gender recognition reform. As the sole member of the Committee elected on that manifesto, I have an obligation to reflect that commitment in my actions on the Committee.

I believe that this complaint was submitted as part of the wider activities to delegitimise proponents of gender recognition reform, to obstruct my ability to do what I could to deliver the commitments contained within the manifesto on which I was elected, and to deter myself and other supporters of gender recognition reform from arguing for that reform.

Conclusion

There is absolutely no financial interest as defined by both the Interests of Members of the Scottish Parliament Act 2006 and the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament, and nor has there ever been, between myself and Rape Crisis Scotland.

There was no way in which I could benefit financially from my membership of or actions on the EHRCJ committee because of my previous employment with Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre.

There is no way in which either Rape Crisis Scotland or Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre could benefit financially from my (or any) position on gender recognition reform during Committee discussions or in any other circumstance.

Therefore, the complaint is immaterial on grounds of interest both because Rape Crisis Scotland had, under the terms of the 2006 Act, no financial interest in the terms of the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill passing and because I had no interest in Rape

Crisis Scotland.

I ask that you do not uphold the complaint.

Maggie Chapman MSP

10 May 2023 - FURTHER WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS FROM MAGGIE CHAPMAN MSP

I thank the SPPA Committee for hearing my representations in person on 27 April and for the correspondence sent to me on 4 May informing me of the Committee's finding that I had breached a relevant provision by not declaring a registrable financial interest at the meeting of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice (EHRCJ) Committee on 31 May 2022. I am also grateful for the opportunity to submit this written representation to the Committee before you make a decision as to whether or not to recommend the imposition of any sanctions.

I would ask that you consider the following points.

Declaration of my previous employment with Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre

At no point did I ever try to conceal the fact that I had been employed by Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre (ERCC). It was published on my Register of Interests shortly after my election as a then current employment that would cease on 30 June 2021, and later adjusted to reflect my employment with ERCC had ended on 30 June 2021. I also declared it orally at the first meeting of the EHRCJ Committee, in line with custom and practice on declarations of interest. I had also been open about this employment prior to and after my election in May 2021, both in Parliament and elsewhere.

Financial benefit or interest

As indicated in my previous representations, the complaint against me is not related to any matter from which I could gain any financial benefit. On 31 May 2022, the date of the EHRCJ Committee meeting in question, I had no ongoing financial relationship with either ERCC or Rape Crisis Scotland (RCS). There is no way that I would benefit financially from any of the policy positions being discussed at the EHRCJ Committee meeting that day, or indeed at any point during the scrutiny of the Gender Recognition Reform (GRR) legislation. Similarly, there is no way that RCS or ERCC could benefit financially from the GRR policy positions or legislation, or from my involvement in any of these discussions at EHRCJ Committee.

Political or other influence

As indicated in response to the SPPA Committee Convener's opening comments on 27 April, there is no way that my position on GRR was influenced by either the attendance of the CEO of RCS at the EHRCJ meeting on 31 May 2022 or my previous employment with ERCC. I stood for election in 2021 on a Scottish Green Party manifesto commitment to support GRR, and this was also included in the Bute House Agreement between the Scottish Green MSPs and the Scottish Government, agreed in August 2021. I had also made very clear my views on GRR clear in Parliamentary debates and other forums prior to the EHRCJ scrutinising the legislation. There is no way that my former employment with ERCC could have any influence over my actions, words or votes on this issue.

Conclusion

I am of the view that no possible influence of or financial benefit to myself, RCS or ERCC could have arisen as a result of my previous employment by ERCC or any matters discussed at the EHRCJ Committee meeting on 31 May 2022. I could not gain any financial benefit from RCS' presence at Committee, and my position on the legislation when it came to any votes would not be influenced by RCS' engagement with the Committee. My previous employment with ERCC therefore had no relevant impact or influence on the EHRCJ Committee's proceedings on 31 May 2022.

Annexe B - Report from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland

[Link to the report from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life](#)

Annexe C - Complaint made against Maggie Chapman MSP by Melissa Titus provided by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life

As the Commissioner for Ethical Standards did not include a copy of the complaint made against Maggie Chapman MSP by Melissa Titus, the Committee requested a copy and it can be accessed [here](#) .

Annexe D - Minutes

6th Meeting, 2023 (Session 6) Thursday 20 April 2023

2. Decision on taking business in private: The Committee agreed to take items 4 and 5 in private and any future consideration of the complaint report from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland in private.

5. Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland: The Committee considered a report from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland.

7th Meeting, 2023 (Session 6) Thursday 27 April 2023

Complaint (In Private): The Committee continued its initial consideration of a report from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland.

8th Meeting, 2023 (Session 6) Thursday 4 May 2023

Complaint (In Private): The Committee continued its consideration of a report from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland.

9th Meeting, 2023 (Session 6) Thursday 11 May 2023

1. Complaint (In Private): The Committee continued its consideration of a report from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland.

2. Complaint: The Committee announced its decision at Stage 3 on a report from the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland.

3. Complaint (In Private): The Committee considered and agreed its draft report.

