



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE

### MINUTES

15th Meeting, 2017 (Session 5)

Thursday 14 September 2017

Present:

Michelle Ballantyne  
Angus MacDonald (Deputy Convener)  
Brian Whittle  
Johann Lamont (Convener)  
Rona Mackay

Also present: Finlay Carson (PE1657) and Alexander Burnett (PE1662)

The meeting opened at 9.00 am.

1. **Declaration of interests:** Michelle Ballantyne declared that she is a local authority councillor for Scottish Borders Council.
2. **Consideration of new petitions:** The Committee considered the following new petitions—

[PE1655](#) by Christine Metcalfe on behalf of Avich & Kilchrenan Community Council on Scotland's National Scenic Areas and took evidence from Christine Metcalfe, Alan Mitchell, Community Councillor, Avich and Kilchrenan Community Council, and Douglas Wynn. The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage and COSLA.

[PE1657](#) by Donald McHarrie on behalf of A77 Action Group on A77 upgrade, and took evidence from John Campbell and Willie Scobie, Co-Founders, A77 Action Group. The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government, and to invite the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work to give evidence at a future meeting.

Brian Whittle noted that he had been working with the A77 committee and encouraged the stakeholders to submit the petition.

[PE1662](#) by Janey Cringean and Lorraine Murray on behalf of Tick-borne Illness Campaign Scotland on Improve Treatment for Patients with Lyme

Disease and Associated Tick-borne Diseases, and took evidence from Janey Cringean and Lorraine Murray. The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government, the UK Government, Scottish Natural Heritage, Lyme Disease UK, Lyme Disease Action, NICE, NHS boards, the Royal College of General Practitioners, the British Veterinary Association, National Farmers Union Scotland and Scottish Land and Estates.

[PE1664](#) by Harry Huyton on behalf of OneKind on Greater protection for mountain hares, and took evidence from Harry Huyton. The Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Land and Estates, the James Hutton Institute and the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust.

3. **Consideration of new petitions:** The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the following new petitions until its next meeting—

[PE1659](#) by Bill Tait on Local authority complaints body;

[PE1660](#) by Bill Tait on Scottish Legal Complaints Commission review;

[PE1661](#) by Melanie Collins on Reform of regulation of the legal profession in Scotland;

[PE1663](#) by Leslie Wallace on Driven grouse shooting study;

[PE1665](#) by Mark McCabe on Common law of blasphemy; and

[PE1666](#) by Ian Davidson on Scottish Parliament electoral cycle.

4. **Consideration of continued petition:** The Committee considered a continued petition—

[PE1593](#) by Paul Quigley on behalf of Fans Against Criminalisation on A full review of the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012. The Committee agreed to close the petition under Rule 15.7 of Standing Orders on the basis that the action called for in the petition is reflected in the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Repeal) (Scotland) Bill, introduced by James Kelly MSP, and the Parliament will have the opportunity to vote on the bill in due course, and that the issue is also being addressed through the Scottish Government's hate crimes review.

The meeting closed at 11.30 am.

Catherine Fergusson  
Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee  
Room T3.40  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
Tel: 0131 348 5186  
Email: [petitions@parliament.scot](mailto:petitions@parliament.scot)