

PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU

LEGISLATIVE CONSENT MEMORANDUM - BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE BILL (UK LEGISLATION)

Introduction

1. Under Rule 9B.3.5, the Parliamentary Bureau is required to refer any legislative consent memorandum (LCM) that has been lodged with the Parliament to the committee within whose remit the subject matter of the relevant provision falls.

British Sign Language Bill

2. The British Sign Language Bill is a Private Members' Bill that was introduced in the House of Commons on 16 June 2021. It concluded Commons Committee stage on 23 February 2022.

3. An LCM was lodged by Shirley-Anne Somerville, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, on 9 March 2022.

4. The Bill recognises British Sign Language (BSL) as a language of England, Wales and Scotland. It places a duty on the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to report on the promotion and facilitation of the use of BSL by UK Government departments. It also places a duty on the Secretary of State to issue guidance on the general promotion and facilitation of BSL.

5. The LCM indicates that the Scottish Government intends to lodge a motion seeking the Scottish Parliament's consent to the UK Parliament legislating on devolved matters in this Bill.

Designation of lead committee

6. The LCM engages the remit of two committees:

- The LCM was lodged by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. The remit of the Education, Children and Young People Committee includes "*to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills*". The remit of the Education, Children and Young People Committee is therefore engaged.
- The Bill is concerned with the encouragement of equal opportunities in relation to BSL. The remit of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee includes to consider and report "*on matters relating to equal opportunities*". The remit of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee is therefore engaged.

7. It is considered that the Education, Children and Young People Committee has the main interest in the LCM.

8. The LCM will also be considered by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee in regard to any provisions in the Bill conferring powers on the Scottish Ministers to make subordinate legislation.

Recommendation

9. The Bureau is invited to consider recommending to the Parliament by motion that it agrees, under Rule 9B.3.5, to designate the Education, Children and Young People Committee as the lead committee to consider and report on the LCM.

10. A draft motion is provided below.

**Parliamentary Business Team
10 March 2022**

Draft Parliamentary Bureau motion on the British Sign Language Bill (UK Legislation):

Designation of Lead Committee – That the Parliament agrees that the Education, Children and Young People Committee be designated as the lead committee in consideration of the legislative consent memorandum in relation to the British Sign Language Bill (UK Legislation).