

DISPENSATION

Member of the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel

Following receipt of a request from the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel, the Standards Commission granted a dispensation to allow one of its members to take part in the discussion and any decision-making on items concerning fuel poverty (including any concerning the provision of advice and guidance to the current Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Energy, and any scrutinising Ministers' progress towards fuel poverty targets), without having to declare an interest and recuse herself. This is despite the Member in question having a friendship with the current Minister's partner.

In deciding to grant the dispensation, the Standards Commission acknowledged that the Member was in post before the Minister was appointed to his role. It further noted the testimony about how much the Member's input and expertise is valued and considered that the work of the Panel would be diminished if they were not able to continue as a member.

The Standards Commission was pleased to note that the Member had been proactive in flagging the potential conflict and had clearly given serious consideration as to how to manage and minimise any associated risk. The Standards Commission was satisfied that safeguards would be put in place to mitigate against any potential conflict of interest, should one arise. In particular, the Standards Commission noted that the Member would declare an interest and recuse herself from any discussions where it was believed that there could be an explicit, additional conflict of interest, most notably in respect of any scrutiny of the Minister's performance. They further noted that the Member had undertaken to refrain from discussing matters relating to fuel poverty if in contact with the Minister in a personal capacity.

Lorna Johnston
Executive Director

15 September 2026