

PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU: PUBLIC GALLERY ACCESS

Introduction

1. Business Managers will recall that access to the Chamber and Committee public galleries is currently suspended under the terms of Temporary Standing Order 3. This suspension runs until 24 December 2021 and can be extended by the Parliament on a motion of the Parliamentary Bureau.

Issues for consideration

2. It continues to be the case that capacity in both the Chamber and Committee Rooms is reduced due to the requirement to operate at 1m physical distancing under the current regulations. In relation to the Chamber, Business Managers will recall that it was previously agreed that public gallery would be available for use by Members wishing to observe Chamber proceedings.
3. At its meeting on 2 December, the SPCB agreed that it is content for the period set out in Temporary Rule 3 to be extended to Friday 11 February 2022 (the start of February recess). Should the position on distancing requirements change at any time and the public gallery is no longer needed for Chamber business, the Presiding Officer retains the flexibility to reopen the public gallery.

Decision

Business Managers are invited to agree to lodge a motion to extend the period for which Temporary Rule 3 will apply to 11 February 2022.

**Parliamentary Business Team
December 2021**