

Item 8 - Question Time

To the Leader of the Council

“On 30th October 2014 the Council agreed the policy *Appointments to major external bodies and arms’ length organisations*. The policy, as agreed, is without limit of time and can only be revoked or amended by a decision taken at full Council by all Members. Officers have confirmed there have been no formal meetings of any Members, at any time, to amend this policy and no other mechanisms exist that would allow the policy to be changed, other than with the agreement by Members at full Council. Consequently, the conclusion must be that the policy as agreed on October 2014 remains in place, therefore appointments to all outside organisations cited in the policy document must be made in accordance with the current policy. The policy also recommends that appointments to other external organisations should be made in accordance with the policy.

At the last meeting of the full Council, the Convener stated in the Chamber "there is no appointments panel, that was in the previous Council and it was not taken forward into this Council".

If the Leader of the Council agrees with the Convener's statement above, can the Leader provide Members with details of the meeting, including minutes, of any meeting where a decision to depart from the policy in question Highland Council policy was taken behind closed doors, or if no such meeting has taken place, does the Leader agree that the policy should have been followed?"

Response to Mr K Gowans

The decision to establish an Appointments Panel was taken by the previous Council. In order to continue with this practice a decision would have had to have been taken by the new Council following the elections in 2017 to establish/reinstate an Appointments Panel.

In the absence of such a decision when considering appointments to external organisations at the June 2017 Council, the Role Profile and Skills Set of the various individual appointments were circulated to all Members with the agenda papers.

In this respect, the policy has not changed in that all such appointments have always been and continue to be decided at meetings of the Highland Council.