

PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU

PARLIAMENTARY CALENDAR: OFFICE OF THE CLERK AND CHRISTMAS RECESS

Christmas recess

1. The Parliament has previously agreed that—
 - the Christmas recess begins this year on Saturday 23 December 2023 and ends on Sunday 7 January 2024 ([Motion ref. S6M-04616](#)); and
 - the Office of the Clerk is closed on Friday 22 (pm), Monday 25 and Tuesday 26 December 2023 and Monday 1 and Tuesday 2 January 2024 ([Motion S6M-06203](#)).
2. Since 2000, the Bureau has additionally proposed that the Office of the Clerk be closed between Christmas and the New Year. The Bureau is therefore invited to agree to propose to the Parliament that the Office of the Clerk be closed this year on Wednesday 27, Thursday 28 and Friday 29 December 2023 as shown in Annexe A. Questions, motions and amendments cannot be lodged when the Office of the Clerk is closed and the impact of the proposal on some of the deadlines for lodging are discussed below.

Impact on deadlines – Parliamentary questions

3. This has an impact on some of the deadlines which would normally apply on a Monday (the deadlines for submission of names for the ballots for Portfolio and General Questions and the associated deadline two days later for the lodging of questions). Proposed deadlines which take this and recess dates into account are set out below and shown at Annexe B.

Topical Questions – Tuesday 9 January 2024

4. The deadline for lodging a question would be 12 noon on Monday 8 January 2024 (this is the usual arrangement).

Portfolio Questions – Wednesday 10 and Thursday 11 January 2024

5. For Portfolio Questions on 10 and 11 January 2024, names to be entered into the draw should be submitted no later than noon on Monday 18 December 2023, with questions being submitted no later than noon on Wednesday 20 December 2023. This follows the pattern in previous sessions.

General Questions – Thursday 11 January 2024

6. Deadlines for the submission of names and questions for General Questions are the same as those for Portfolio Questions (above).

First Minister's Questions - Thursday 11 January 2024

7. The deadline for lodging a question would be 12 noon on Monday 9 January (this is the usual arrangement).

Portfolio Questions – Wednesday 17 and Thursday 18 January 2024 and General Questions – Thursday 18 January 2024

8. For Portfolio Questions on 17 and 18 January 2024, names to be entered into the draw should be submitted no later than noon on Monday 8 January 2024, with questions being submitted no later than noon on Wednesday 10 January 2024.

9. Deadlines for the submission of names and questions for General Questions are the same as those for Portfolio Questions (above).

Impact on deadlines – motions and amendments

Motions for debate – Tuesday 9 January 2024

10. If a debate on Tuesday 9 January requires a motion, the deadline for lodging the motion would be 10.00am on Monday 8 January and for lodging amendments to that motion would be 4.00pm on that Monday (these are the usual arrangements).

Motions for debate – Wednesday 10 January 2024

11. The deadline for lodging motions for debate on Wednesday 10 January would be 4.00pm on Monday 8 January and for lodging amendments to these motions would be 4.00pm on Tuesday 9 January 2024 (these are the usual arrangements).

Conclusion

12. The Bureau is invited to—

- agree to propose to the Parliament by motion that the Office of the Clerk be closed on Wednesday 27, Thursday 28 and Friday 29 December 2023; and
- consider the proposed deadlines set out above.

**Parliamentary Business Team
November 2023**

Proposal to close the Office of the Clerk

December 2023/January 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
18	19	20	21	22 (pm)
25	26	27*	28*	29*
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12

	Recess
	Office of the Clerk is closed on these previously agreed days
*	Proposal to close the Office of the Clerk on these days

Parliamentary week and Chamber Desk deadlines w/c 18 December 2023, 1 January and 8 January 2024

<p>Monday 18 December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TQs for 19 December and FMQs for 21 December - no later than 12 noon • Names for the ballot for Portfolio Questions to be answered on 10/11 January – no later than 12 noon • Names for the ballot for General Questions to be answered on Thursday 11 January – no later than 12 noon 	
<p>Tuesday 20 December</p>	<p>Chamber business to include Topical Questions (if selected) Members' Business Decision Time</p>
<p>Wednesday 20 December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions for Portfolio Questions to be answered on 10/11 January – no later than 12 noon • Questions for General Questions to be answered on 11 January – no later than 12 noon 	<p>Chamber business to include Portfolio Questions Members' Business Decision Time</p>
<p>Thursday 21 December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motions/amendments and written questions – no later than 4.30pm 	<p>Chamber business to include General Questions First Minister's Questions Decision Time</p>
<p>Friday 22 December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motions/amendments and written questions – no later than 12.30pm 	<p>Recess: Office of the Clerk is closed from 12.30pm.</p>
<p>Monday 25 December – bank holiday – Office of the Clerk is closed</p>	
<p>Tuesday 26 December – bank holiday – Office of the Clerk is closed</p>	
<p>Wednesday 27 – Friday 29 December: proposed closure of Office of the Clerk</p>	
<p>Monday 1 January – bank holiday – Office of the Clerk is closed</p>	
<p>Tuesday 2 January – bank holiday – Office of the Clerk is closed</p>	
<p>Wednesday 3 January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motions/amendments and written questions – no later than 3.30pm 	<p>Recess: Office of the Clerk is open</p>
<p>Thursday 4 January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motions/amendments and written questions – no later than 3.30pm 	<p>Recess: Office of the Clerk is open</p>

<p>Friday 5 January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motions/amendments and written questions – no later than 2.30pm 	<p>Recess: Office of the Clerk is open</p>
<p>Monday 8 January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motions for Tuesday 9 January debate – no later than 10 am • Amendments to motions for Tuesday 9 January debate – no later than 4.00 pm • Motions for Wednesday 10 January debate – no later than 4.00 pm • Topical Questions for answer on 9 January – no later than 12 noon • First Minister's Questions to be answered on 11 January – no later than 12 noon • Names for the ballot for Portfolio Questions to be answered on 17/18 January – no later than 12 noon • Names for the ballot for General Questions to be answered on 18 January – no later than 12 noon. • Other motions/amendments and written questions – no later than 4.30 pm 	
<p>Tuesday 9 January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to motions for Wednesday 10 January debate – no later than 4.00pm • Motions for 11 January debate – no later than 4.00pm • Other motions/amendments and written questions – no later than 4.30 pm 	<p>Chamber business to include Topical Questions (if selected) Members' Business Decision Time</p>
<p>Wednesday 10 January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions for Portfolio Questions to be answered on 17/18 January – no later than 12.00 noon. • Questions for General Questions (to be answered on 18 January) – no later than 12.00 noon. • Amendments to motions for 11 January debate – no later than 4.00pm. 	<p>Chamber business to include Portfolio Questions Members' Business Decision Time</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other motions/amendments and written questions – no later than 4.30pm. 	
<p>Thursday 12 January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motions/amendments and written questions – no later than 4.30pm. 	<p>Chamber business to include General Questions First Minister's Questions Members' Business Decision Time</p>
<p>Friday 13 January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motions/amendments and written questions – no later than 3.30pm 	