

Greens warn against moves to turn Holyrood into a Westminster “circus”

The Scottish Parliament must guard against any attempt by the Tories turn Holyrood into a Westminster style circus, warn the Scottish Greens.

A number of female politicians are also actively considering what to do over the “increasingly worrying” culture of mostly men repeatedly shouting them down and or abusing points of order during parliamentary business, they revealed. Scottish Greens business manager Gillian Mackay said the most recent attempts by the Tory group to filibuster the debate on gender recognition reform showed “utter contempt” for the parliament and parliamentarians.

Ms Mackay said: “Scotland should be proud of its parliament and of all the good work that goes on as we have seen for almost quarter of a century. It is modern, it is progressive and the complete antithesis of the broken husk of democracy Westminster has become.

“But all these efforts are being undermined by the baying provocation and quite frankly misogynistic behaviour coming from mostly within the Scottish Tory ranks.

“Many female politicians, including myself, have found the culture in the chamber intimidating and disrespectful and we are trying to find the best way forward in addressing this increasingly worrying development.

“Sometimes it is almost impossible to follow what is happening because of their bellowing. It is as if they are trying to turn the chamber into a Westminster style circus and none of us should have to accept that.”

She added: “Their attempts to frustrate the democratic process as they did by prolonging the debate over GRR was also thoughtless and even cruel on those with caring responsibilities, disability needs and on all the parliamentary staff and their families impacted.

“Above all, it is unfair to the Presiding Officer and her team who are performing miracles every day in ensuring we get through things. They are there to ensure the efficient progress of business, not to keep supposed grown ups in check.

“The Tories may well shake their fists in faux outrage at this, but anyone who witnessed their most recent behaviour leading up to recess will have seen for themselves the increasingly toxic nature of their comments and utter contempt for proceedings.

“Douglas Ross has either finally lost all control of his MSP group, or he is the architect of this outrageous behaviour. It must stop, otherwise the consequences for politics in Scotland and the reputation of our parliament could be very damaging indeed.”



Parliament begins the Stage 3 Proceedings of the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill. After an hour delay due to time tabling amendments. 20 December 2022 Pic-Andrew Cowan/Scottish Parliament