

**Cross-Party Group on China  
Minutes of Meeting  
Date: 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

**Attendance**

**MSP Members**

**Annie Wells MSP – Vice-convener**

**Colin Smyth MSP**

**Dean Lockhart MSP**

**Neil Bibby MSP**

**Jackie Baillie MSP**

**Members**

**Daniel Cairns – Secretary**

**David Valentine MBE**

**Joe Brown - Economic Development Scottish Government**

**Janice Dickson - Ian Dickson Travel Service**

**Barney Paton - Morton Fraser LLP**

**Orchid Liu - UK Chinese Times**

**Colin Mitchell - Lasswade High School**

**Rosemary Mithcell - Lasswade High School**

**Jessica Guo - EEB Consultancy Ltd**

**Savanna Kenny – Individual**

**James McColm – Individual**

**Jane Grant – Edinburgh College**

**Margie Ogilvie Stuart – Individual member**

**Peter Budd – Individual Member**

**Apologies**

**Dr Carole Couper - inCouperated Limited**

**Edmund HOFFIE**

**Sandie Robb - THE ROYAL ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND**

**Judith McClure – SCEN**

**Roger Collins – SCEN**

**Eric Balish – Bank ABC**

**Fiona Pate – Individual**

**Robert Dalzell – North Lanarkshire Council**

**John Fulton - Anderson Strathern**

**Lindesay Low - Scotch Whisky Association**

**Elaine Logan – Glenalmond College**

**James Brodie**

**Ross Haston - Hamilton & Inches Ltd.**

### **1 Welcome and Apologies**

Welcome was delivered by Annie Wells MSP who was standing in for Mary Fee MSP as she could not attend at short notice.

### **2 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising**

Minutes from the previous meeting were circulated to the group and agreed to without any amendments.

### **3 AGM**

Annie Wells MSP started the meeting by conducting the AGM as required by the rules for Cross Party Groups, set out by the Standards Committee of the Scottish Parliament.

Mary Fee MSP was nominated by Annie Wells MSP and seconded by Neil Bibby MSP to be elected Convener of the CPG. There were no other nominations and she was elected unanimously.

Annie Wells MSP was nominated by Jackie Baillie MSP for the position of Vice Convener of the group. There were no other nominations and she was elected unanimously.

Daniel Cairns was nominated by Annie Wells MSP to the position of Secretary of the Group. There were no other nominations and she was elected unanimously.

Therefore, Mary Fee MSP was elected as Convener, Annie Well MSP as Vice Convener and Daniel Cairns as Secretary.

#### **4 Presentation from David Valentine MBE on Scottish China Business Links**

David Valentine MBE gave a presentation on his experience of Scottish China Business links. The Presentation focused on his career and his experience of conducting business in China. David explained that communication, friendship and understanding, especially of culture, were key for building business links between Scotland and China.

David detailed his experience Leading economic development for Angus Council where he was responsible for a portfolio of services including business support, international trade and tourism as well as environmental health and consumer protection. He led Angus Council's "Angus in China Initiative" and "Sister City" links with Yantai, Shandong Province. He also detailed the successful twinning tourist sites of Glamis Castle and the Great Wall of China in 2006.

Since leaving Angus Council David detailed how he has continued to maintain links with China through his roles as Vice President of Dundee and Angus Chamber of Commerce and a member of Scottish Chambers of Commerce International Sub-Group. Finally, David set out his own business links with China through Valentine International Business Connections.

The meeting then moved onto a question and answer session with Dave Valentine.

Question and answer session –

How can we make more connections between Scotland and China?

Dave Valentine responded saying that the number of Chinese companies he deals with has grown exponentially in the past ten years. Networking is important. However, for starting new connections and making contacts he sees educational partnerships as being vital. This can put influential people who can help in the same room together. If the number of courses and links through universities can grow, then this can help grow Scotland's network with China and lead into business opportunities. However, there is a lot of mapping to do in this area.

How do we engage Scottish business and communities in this?

We should be keen to find the best route and practice in Scotland to let individuals and SME's know that market/relationship with China can be obtained. Local Confucius institutes can help lead the way as well promoting and publicising Scotland's relationship with China. This is an area where we need to make a huge step forward.

Is there scope for a business ambassador type role?

Dave Valentine detailed that already fills this role for the Scottish Chamber of Commerce and has been working with the Scottish Government and other key stakeholders to investigate this. Through this he is trying to build connection throughout Scotland and China. In this scope he is working with the Scottish Development international and third sectors organisations.

Where can MSP's and the Scottish Parliament provide support?

The key role they can play is to help local areas/authorities cultivate relationships with regions in China. China is too big a place for Universities, SME's and Local Authorities to deal with in its entirety. We must cultivate relationship such as the twinning between Angus and Shangdong. The Parliament and MSP's can help support more connections as China is hungry for knowledge and help.

In Shanghai nine British Universities set up links and it has been a fruitful relationship both culturally and economically. The links has brought in around £80 million for the Universities involved. Can universities do more?

Scottish Universities already have great connections to China, it is again a geographical and size issue and also getting interest from Scottish students to go to China.

What about dealing with different cultures in different regions and areas of china? How can we give businesses support for this?

This where we need a link between universities and Scottish business to help them with this challenge of conducting business across cultures.

## 5 AOCB

No AOCB

**Date of Next Meeting: 25 January 2018 (This meeting was subsequently cancelled and rescheduled for a later date)**