

Cross-Party Group on Space

Wednesday 13 December, 12:45 – 13:45

Minutes

Present

MSPs

- Colin Beattie MSP
- Jamie Halcro Johnston MSP
- Ivan McKee MSP
- Carol Mochan MSP

Non-MSP Group Members

- Craig Clark
- Malachy Devlin
- Julian Dines
- Emily Dingle
- Andrew Fournet
- David Geen
- Keith Grandison
- Lewie Haar
- Derek Harris
- Yvette Hopkins
- Ramsay Jones
- Grant Lewis
- Douglas Lyons
- Colin Macleod
- Warrick Malcolm
- Angela Mathis
- Jonathan Orr
- Sharon Parker-Lines
- Keith Robson
- Nic Ross
- David Sandy
- Kristina Tamane
- Alan Thompson
- Luke Vanstone
- Joanne Wheeler
- Karen Wilson

Apologies

- Peter Anderson
- Martin Coates
- Penny Godfrey

Agenda item 1: Guest speaker – Scott Hammond, SaxaVord Spaceport

Scott Hammond from SaxaVord gave a presentation on Shetland spaceport. The spaceport should be completed by the end of July. The CAA license for the spaceport is imminent. The license will allow 30 launches a year, both orbital and suborbital. Roads leading to the spaceport are all 8 metres wide to cater to the rockets aiming to launch from the site. The aim is to build three launchpads on the site, which is 87 hectares. All hazardous operations contained within the boundary of the site. The site will be connected with fibre optic cables. The launch range will be up to 350km. Lowest launch insurance premium in the UK.

Scott took questions from CPG members on licensing and the timeline for first launch.

Slides were shared with the group.

Agenda item 2: AGM – election of office bearers

AGM chaired by Carol Mochan MSP.

Elections for convenor, deputy convenor and secretary.

Jamie Halcro Johnston MSP nominated Colin Beattie MSP to continue as convenor of the CPG.

Colin Beattie MSP nominated Carol Mochan MSP and Beatrice Wishart MSP to continue as deputy onvenors, and Jamie Halcro Johnston MSP to become a deputy convenor.

ADS will continue the secretariat function.

All nominations confirmed. AGM complete.

Agenda item 3: Approval of minutes from last meeting

Minutes approved without objections.

Agenda item 4: Discussion of the CPG's priorities

The CPG discussed priorities for the sector in Scotland going into the new year, and how Scottish Government can support these. Topics discussed included deep tech, workforce and skills shortages and challenges and diversity within the sector. The group discussed the work industry has been doing to alleviate skills challenges and get young people interested in space. There are challenges around educational qualifications and bringing in foreign talent following Brexit.

Graeme Dey, the Scottish Government Minister for Higher and Further Education, will be invited to the next meeting to discuss skills and education.

Frank Strang and Ramsay Jones to update on event planning at the next meeting.

Colin Beattie MSP to review David Geen's contribution on ground-based space infrastructure.