

Minutes of the Cross Party Group on the Caribbean

Meeting date: Tuesday 25th June at 1pm

Attendees: Margaret Mitchell MSP; Linda Fabiani MSP; Jamie McGregor MSP; Annabel Ewing MSP; Professor Geoff Palmer; Janice Hogarth, Secretary of the Scottish Passenger Association; Ian Gittens; Carol Anderson, The Business PR; Duncan Turnbull, Terry Foods; Rachel Douglas, Glasgow University; Siobhan Hazlett, Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI); Jane Gotts, Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI); Kate Wane, office of Margaret Mitchell MSP; Tom Waterton-Smith, office of Margaret Mitchell MSP

Apologies:

Paulette Simpson, Senior Manager Corporate Affairs and Public Policy Jamaica National Building Society; Caroline Donaldson, Head of Long Haul Marketing, Barrhead Travel; Victoria Lee, Glitterbeach; David Williamson, Scotch Whisky Association; Siobhan Paterson, Scotch Whisky Association; Beverly Johnson, JLB International Limited; Michael Kane, JLB International Limited; David Coyne, Glasgow City Council; Stuart Patrick, Glasgow Chambers of Commerce; Alison McRae, Glasgow Chambers of Commerce.

1. Mrs Mitchell welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending.
2. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
3. In regards to matters arising Mrs Mitchell stated that it was good to have seen so many High Commissioners at the last meeting. She then proceeded to read a letter from Andrew Rosindell MP (member of several Caribbean related All Party Groups at Westminster) regarding the proposed rise in Air Passenger Duty. It was agreed that Margaret would respond to Andrew Rosindell MP thanking him for his offer of support and joint working on the issue of APD which the group confirmed it was happy to do. It was also agreed that Janice Hogarth would send information on 'Fair Tax on Flying' campaign and matters relating to Virgin Atlantic to Mrs Mitchell to help inform the content of the reply letter.
4. Following the AGM Mrs Mitchell was elected convener of group while Linda Fabiani MSP and Prof. Geoff Palmer were elected vice conveners. Carol Anderson was elected as the group secretary and Prof. Geoff Palmer was named treasurer for the group. Mrs Mitchell thanked Ian Gittens for his contribution to the Group over the years.
5. Mrs Mitchell reminded the group of its purpose. This is to 'promote trade, investment and tourism between the Caribbean and Scotland'. She then mentioned that the group should be aware of forthcoming events such as the Commonwealth Day (March 10th 2014) and the 2014 Commonwealth Games. She suggested that the High Commissioners should be invited to the Commonwealth Day event. It

was proposed that sports could be added to the remit of the group and that appropriate contacts would be made to promote this addition. In particular cricket was highlighted by Jamie McGregor MSP as an area in which Scotland and the Caribbean have a common interest. It was also considered that the group could contact the 2014 Commonwealth Games organisers to see what they had planned to help promote the nations competing in the games and the legacy of Glasgow 2014 to see if the CPG could compliment any of these efforts.

6. It was noted that Jampro is in the process of securing a 'Jamaica House' venue for the Commonwealth Games in 2014, as highlighted by the Jamaica High Commissioner at the group's meeting in March. It was suggested that other countries may be interested in a similar activity. Mrs Mitchell invited Jane Gotts and Siobhan Hazlett from SCDI to give a presentation at the next meeting about the potential for this and that when writing to the High Commissioners we could highlight the SCDI's willingness to help them set up similar enterprises.
7. It was suggested that Shona Robinson MSP, Humza Yousef MSP and the Chief Executive Officer of the 2014 Games could be invited to the next meeting to discuss matters relating to the Commonwealth Games, sport and external relations. This was agreed.

With regard to the Commonwealth Games, it was reported that the Queens Baton Relay would leave Holyrood Palace in October and return to the Games after travelling through the deleted Commonwealth Countries. The group intends to find out more about the baton relay and its route.

8. Mrs Mitchell reported on her visit to the Cayman Islands where she acted as an independent observer of the election process. She was also able to meet informally some government officials.
9. Carol Anderson reported back on the success of the 2013 Celtic Festival Barbados.
10. In any other business, issues regarding Haiti such as forced evictions and the high levels of Cholera were raised. It was suggested that although these were important and harrowing issues, they fell outside the remit of the group. It was suggested that these issues could form part of the work which of other Cross Party Groups such as the CPG on Human Rights Group or the CPG on International Development are involved in. Kate stated that she would forward on the relevant contact details.
11. A separate issue was raised on the possibility of using Scottish legal expertise with regard to advice on corruption practices. It was also suggested that business contacts between Scotland and the Caribbean should focus on small businesses instead of only on large business operations.

12. The date of the next meeting will be October 2013