

Minutes: Cross Party Group on Beer and Pubs
Details: Room Q1.03 of the Scottish Parliament at 1pm on 12 January 2017

Chaired by Patrick Harvie MSP

1. Welcomes and apologies for absence
2. Election
3. Declaration of interests
4. Purpose of the group
5. Upcoming meetings and events. Set the date for the next meeting.
6. Upcoming consultation into the tied pubs model - Neil Bibby MSP
7. AOB

1. Welcome and Apologies

Patrick Harvie MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited introductions.

MSP Attendees:

Gordon Macdonald MSP
Patrick Harvie MSP
Neil Bibby MSP
Rachael Hamilton MSP
Graham Simpson MSP
John Mason MSP

Non-MSP attendees:

Faye Grima, Campaigns Manager, CAMRA

Ray Turpie, Volunteer Chair of Public Affairs Committee, CAMRA

2. Election

The following positions were elected:

Patrick Harvie MSP – Convener
Co-conveners and Treasurer: Gordon Macdonald MSP and Graham Simpson MSP
Secretary: CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale (Contact faye.grima@camra.org.uk)

3. Declaration of interests

Rachael Hamilton MSP declared that she owns a pub. No other declarations were made.

4. Purpose of the group

It was agreed that the purpose of the group would be to:

Further the appreciation of good quality beer that is locally and independently brewed in Scotland. It also recognises the importance of pubs and licensed bars to community life, particularly those based in rural areas. The group will provide a forum to discuss policies that will impact on the beer and pub sector and affect beer drinkers and pub-goers across Scotland.

Other items discussed within the purpose of the group:

Detail on why the proposed group is in the public interest

- There are now 4,600 pubs and 120 breweries in Scotland. The brewing industry is an emerging sector in

Scotland and there is currently no overlap with any other existing cross party group.

- The group provides an opportunity for MSPs and industry bodies to come together to discuss items related to the beer and pubs industry which have a direct impact on key government agendas such as tourism and the economy.
- To inform MSPs of the issues and challenges facing pub owners and consumers and to highlight the impact pubs have on our economy and local communities - particularly in rural areas.
- The group will bring together key stakeholders in the pubs industry and aim to influence Government policy
- Guest speakers from the industry (such as tied tenants) may be invited to the Cross Party Group to discuss how specific policy areas may affect them.
- Constituency specific issues may be raised, and there will be opportunity for MSPs to hear how they can support the beer and pubs sector in their patch.

Proposed discussion points

- Pubco Reform in Scotland
- The importance of pubs to communities
- Community pub ownership - with a guest talk from the Plunkett Foundation
- The impact pubs have on people's personal wellbeing
- The emergence of new breweries in Scotland - guest speaker to include a brewer

Industry representatives

Following discussion, it was agreed that CAMRA would remain the only industry representative on the official CPG register – and that other stakeholders would be invited to meetings only when it deemed appropriate and relevant to do so. For example, stakeholders and industry representatives will be invited to events and as guest speakers to specific discussions.

5. Upcoming events and meetings

- A first initial event will be organised in March. CAMRA to follow up on a specific date with the Events team.
- The next CPG meeting will be scheduled following the group presenting the aims and purpose of the group to the Standards Procedures Committee.

Other ideas for forthcoming events include:

- A gallery in Holyrood with a focus on brewing and beer. A “meet and greet” with brewers could be organised
- Question Time style event on beer and pubs with a focus on two key topics
- Best new brewer of 2017 competition
- Pub Champion of the Year award
- External brewery trip to the “brewery of the year”

6. Upcoming consultation into the tied pubs model - Neil Bibby MSP

Neil Bibby MSP discussed an upcoming consultation into the tied pubs model. The proposal calls for the introduction of a statutory Code and Adjudicator to govern the relationship between tenants of tied pubs and their owners. The purpose of this consultation is to provide a range of views on the subject matter of the proposed Bill, highlighting potential problems, suggesting improvements, and generally refining and developing the policy.

Neil said that introducing a statutory code and adjudicator centres around key main issues:

- Fairness
- Choice
- Jobs

There is currently no date for when the consultation will be launched, but Neil will keep members of the CPG informed. A meeting with Paul Wheelhouse MSP (Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy) has been scheduled to discuss this further.

7. AOB

None noted