

CULTURE, TOURISM, EUROPE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS INQUIRY

SUBMISSION FROM Angus Council

- **What principles should inform the focus of the Scottish Government's external affairs policy with regard to the European Union?**

Since Scotland voted to remain a member of the EU it is important that we align closely to the principles and policies of the EU. Inevitably should the UK leave the EU then our relationship with Europe shall change in context but we can still choose to closely follow the policies of the EU and in areas where there is devolved responsibility this will be easier to achieve.

We would also wish that Scottish Government facilitate the continuation of rural development projects' potential to engage in cooperation actions with similar projects across EU states, based on the existing LEADER model.

- **Are there examples of best practice for ways in which nations / regions from non-EU Member States engage with and influence the EU?**

There are many models which can be examined but this is difficult to properly explore until there is more clarity at a UK level over matters such as if we are to leave in what way, who our PM is, likelihood of a further general election etc. A lot of work has already gone on to look at alternate models and until there is further clarity it seems too early to look in anymore detail.

We would like to support the continued engagement of Scottish Rural Development sector with similar arrangements in EU states, as currently undertaken by Scottish Rural Network (SRN) with for example, European Network for Rural Development ERDN

- **What should be the focus of the business plans for the Scottish Government Innovation and Investment Hub offices in Berlin, Brussels, Dublin, London and Paris be?**

As far as possible we need to have we're still open for business approach. We need to offer and look for any collaboration opportunities. In the event that the UK has left the EU we need to set out clearly what our offer is – the opportunities for EU citizens and businesses to do business with Scotland in all our spheres, so from studying, R & D, cultural and tourism. There could be alignment within our city deal and regional deal strategies to build on opportunities under each of these headings – each of these deals are unique and represent unique opportunities for our EU partners to take part in.

- **How can the Scottish Government Innovation and Investment Hub offices best support the Scottish Government's external affairs policy?**

By making it simple for our city and region deal boards to be involved in co-designing any growth opportunities. The Hub Offices are our public face in Europe – we need

central core messages that we are still open for business with many opportunities available.

- **How can the Scottish Government's Innovation and Investment Hub offices be evaluated effectively?**

Annual reporting with clear key performance indicators – case studies demonstrating achievements.

- **How should the Innovation and Investment Hub offices most effectively engage with other Scottish organisations such as Scottish Development International and Visit Scotland?**

True collaboration is necessary – there could be agreed joint themes/ priority areas for targets with each agency.

Engagement with the rest of the world

- **What principles should inform the Scottish Government's international engagement? For example, should economic priorities be the key priority or cultural / 'soft power' priorities?**

They should still mirror the domestic aims which include building the economy, tackling poverty and inequality, affordable healthcare and education, promoting affordable and clean energy and ensuring a sustainable environment. These are long term goals and relevant on a global basis. They also encompass both economic and 'softer' priorities. It isn't necessary to constantly change priorities and approaches provided that they are updated and reported on.

- **How should the Scottish Government prioritise its international engagement – for example, should the locations prioritised be based on a geography or policy focus?**

- **What should be the key aims of the Scottish Government's international offices in Beijing, Ottawa, Toronto and Washington DC?**

Our aims align with the strategic objectives as set in Scotland's International Framework and continue to strengthen our external relationships and networks. Building on Scotland's international reputation and attractiveness to ensure that Scotland remains an attractive county to invest.

- **Currently, the Scottish Government has international engagement strategies with Canada, China, India, Pakistan and the USA. Do these strategies and their geographic focus remain appropriate post-Brexit?**

Again, it is too early to tell until we have more clarity at a UK level.

- **How can the Scottish Government's international engagement be evaluated effectively?**

Reporting against key performance indicators.

- **How should the Scottish Government's international offices most effectively engage with other Scottish organisations such as Scottish Development International and Visit Scotland?**

No difference to the European methods.