

Minutes of the meeting of the Cross Party Caribbean Group on the Commonwealth Caribbean

Meeting date: 5th November 2014

Attendees: Margaret Mitchell MSP (Chair) , Annabelle Ewing MSP, Felicity Hollands (SP), Marianne Paton, (SP), Duncan Turnbull, Ian Gittens, Carol Anderson (Secretary) Sir Geoff Palmer, Michael Kane Isochron, Alastair Stirling, Dr Paul Sutton guest speaker.

Apologies: Janice Hogarth, Stephanie Whittle, SCDI, David Jessop Caribbean Council London, Linda Fabiani MSP, Dr Simpson MSP.

1. Welcome

Margaret Mitchell welcomed everyone and ran through the apologies. The group introduced themselves to each other.

2. Minutes of last meeting

These were circulated and approved.

3. High Commissioners Event

Sir Geoff Palmer reported to the Group on sub groups progress. He has written to all the Caribbean High Commissioners to flag up the date in their diaries, and had positive responses from Belize, and Jamaica.

Full list of addresses to be forwarded to Margaret Mitchell's office along with draft text for an invitation letter to go from her to the High Commissioners. Carol to forward address list, from notes from Sir Geoff.

Margaret Mitchell repeated that she thought SE business links and CBI etc should be invited

Venue would be the Scottish Parliament, date agreed 18th March Wednesday and event would be an evening reception downstairs in the garden lobby/café area – 6pm – 8pm. (further debates afterwards but we could do something before that just for the Committee with the High Commissioners)

MSPs might attend evening reception as there is business that day. Committee to talk to Sodexo who do catering ref. whisky/rum reception. Agreed theme might be "Caribbean - Open for business" – and involve tourism/technology themes. No speeches, but Sir Geoff to talk about rum and tasting.

Duncan reported that Harvey Nash, global recruitment firm keen to sponsor – some issues with only one sponsor and this needs clarification.

Nothing formal. Ian Gittens offered sponsors he knew – Margaret Mitchell asked not to approach just yet but to tell the sub group.

Next meet of the sub group in January

Constituency MSPs' should also be invited

Maybe also London CPG –Margaret Mitchell in London next week with Flic and would gauge support there.

4. Treasurer

Sir Geoff has received £50 from Duncan, £45 from Ian and a further £30 in the fund.

5. Presentation

Dr Paul Sutton, a professor and academic expert on the Caribbean made a short presentation on Scotland and mentioned that Dominica has a offshore medical school training USA doctors.

6. Next meeting date:

Tbc Jan 2015 sub group only

16th March event with HCs