

**Scottish Parliament
Cross Party Group on China**

Tuesday 29 September 2015

Draft MINUTES

Convener

Graeme Pearson MSP

MSPs

Mary Fee MSP

Anne McTaggart MSP

Gil Paterson MSP

Speakers

Dr Alasdair Allan MSP, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages

Timothy Clissold, Britain China Education Association Ltd

In Attendance

Tim Simons, Head of the Curriculum Unit, Learning Directorate, Scottish Government

Secretary

Dr Judith McClure CBE

Members and Guests

Wendy Alexander, Vice-Principal International, University of Dundee

Eric Balish, Convener, CSBF, Director, Barclays Trade and Working Capital

Jeanna Brady, Convener, Scottish Parent Teacher Council

James Brodie, General Manager and Business Adviser, CBBC Scotland

Denise Caldwell, committed parent with China experience

Thompson Chau, Asia Scotland Institute and United Nations Association Scotland

Janis Claxton, Artistic Director, Janis Claxton Dance

Sam Clissold, University of St Andrews

Vincent Chung, Trainee Solicitor, Thorntons Law LLP

Dr Roger Collins, Honorary Fellow, University of Edinburgh

Connor Cloughley, UG Mandarin and Russian, University of Edinburgh; Tianjin Scholar

Daihong Dai, Entrepreneur Spark (Ayrshire Hatchery)

**Adrien Von Ferscht, The Chinese Silver & Metallurgy Research Hub at Scottish Centre for
China Research, University of Glasgow; Centre for Business History, University of Glasgow;
Beijing Normal University – Academic Cttee Member**

Callam Fletcher, CEO, Asia Scotland Institute

Helen Ford, former Teacher in China

John Fulton, John Fulton, Partner, Anderson Strathern LLP

Gary Gillon, PhD Student, School of Business and Enterprise, UWS

Poppy Holt, University of St Andrews

Natalie Hotchkiss, UG; Tianjin Scholar
Dr Meryl James, Professional Development Officer, CISS and SCILT
Winnie Johnstone, Edinburgh Chinese Community School
Janette Kelso, SCILT, University of Strathclyde
Deirdre Kinloch Anderson, Director, Kinloch Anderson Limited
Douglas Kinloch Anderson, Executive Chairman, Kinloch Anderson Limited
Simon Macaulay, University of Aberdeen; SCEN Field Worker
Jim McColm, Vocational Education and Petrochemical Specialist
Brian Mcleish, Stakeholder Relations, Scottish Enterprise
David Moore, Founder & Director, Eastmoore Consulting Limited
Iain Nicol, Compensation Lawyers (Scotland) Limited
Ruairidh Nicolson, Teacher of Modern Studies, Musselburgh Grammar School
Margy Ogilvie-Stuart, Crown and Stone
Yong Ong, Chairman of St Andrews Pan-Asian Careers Forum
Fiona Pate HMI, former National Languages Specialist and education consultant
Harry Phillips, Holmes Miller Ltd
James Poots, Head of Modern Languages, Lasswade High School, Midlothian
Dr Fraser Quin, Chief Executive, Eric Liddell Centre
Sandie Robb, Senior Education Officer, Royal Zoological Society of Scotland
Alan Salonika, China Project Officer, The Royal Society of Edinburgh
Dr Jim Scott, University of Dundee, SCSSA
Christian Shepherd, Financial Times, Beijing Bureau
Marion Spöring, Senior Lecturer (Languages and European Studies), Project Director
Chinese Language and Culture, Chair University Council for Modern Languages Scotland
(UCMLS), School of Humanities, University of Dundee
Sean Sproull, PGDE Mandarin, Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh
Ruth Taylor, Stewart Investors
Graham Thomson, Chairman, The Blackford Trust
Dr Paul Thomson, Rector, Jordanhill School, Glasgow
Wang Yuchen, doctoral student, University of Edinburgh
Christine Vivier, committed parent with China experience
Hans Waitl, BCCA
Anna Zeng, Chinese Edinburgh

1 Welcome and Introductions

Graeme Pearson MSP, Convener of the Cross Party Group on China, welcomed Dr Alasdair Allan MSP, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages, Mary Fee MSP and Anne McTaggart MSP, Guest Speaker Timothy Clissold, and all Members and Guests.

2 Apologies

Colin Keir MSP, Deputy Convener
 Jackie Baillie MSP
 Chic Brodie MSP
 Margaret McDougall MSP
 Margaret Alcorn, Convener of SELMAS
 Nigel Archdale, Anthony Millard Consulting
 Richard Clason, g7 Consultants
 Hope Craig, Anderson Strathern LLP
 Robert Dalzell, North Lanarkshire Council
 Janice Dickson, Chairman, Scotland China Association
 Peter Finlay, Global Combustion Systems
 Linda Fu, HBJ Gateley
 Professor Natascha Gentz, Assistant Principal (China), University of Edinburgh
 Professor Tariq Durrani, Vice President International, The Royal Society of Edinburgh
 Roddy Gow, Asia Scotland Institute
 Jessica Guo, EEB Consulting
 Cathy Gu and Peter Kwok, Co-Directors, Young Chinese Professionals
 Ewan Hastings, Trusts & Corporate Fundraiser, Waverley Care
 Edmund Hoffie, Eden English Language School and Eden Investments, Nanning, Guanxi
 Kam Leung Ng (Tommy), Life Time Honourable President of the Wu Clan's Association UK
 Jamie Kerr, Thorntons Law LLP
 Catriona Llanwarne, Burness Paull LLP
 Councillor Maureen McKay, East Ayrshire Council
 Judith McKerrecher, Professional Development Officer, SCILT and CISS
 Wing-Sie Ng, Individual Interpreter
 Wing-Yan Ng, University of Aberdeen
 Neil Phillips, Positive Solutions (Glasgow)
 Victoria Pyle, Edinburgh College
 Dr Jin Ri (Richard), Co-Director of the Confucius Institute for Scotland, University of Edinburgh
 Dr David Tann, Assistant Dean (International), University of the West of Scotland
 Edward Tsang, Chairman, AACCEE

3 Minutes of the Meeting of 9 June 2015

(a) Minutes of Annual General Meeting

The Minutes were approved.

(b) Minutes of Meeting following

The Minutes were approved.

4 Matters Arising

(a) Question to the Scottish Government by Graeme Pearson MSP in the Scottish Parliament, 17 June 2015

The parliamentary record of the question to the Scottish Government on China (Cultural Links) by the Convener, answered by Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs on 17 June 2015, had been circulated to Members. The Convener suggested that anyone who would like to receive a copy should be in touch with the Secretary.

(b) Glasgow Chinese New Year Celebration 2016

See important update at the end of this section

Anne McTaggart MSP explained that she is an Honorary Member of the newly established **Scottish Chinese Festival Association**. She said that the main aim of the group is to organise, raise funds and provide a spectacular first-ever Chinese New Year Celebration and Parade between Glasgow's City Chamber and George Square on **7 February 2016**. 3,000 Chinese people are currently living in Scotland and Glasgow is renowned for its hospitality and welcoming culture; thus this will be an opportunity to celebrate one of the main Festivals in Chinese culture.

Anne McTaggart MSP said that the event will start outside the Bank of China on Sauchiehall Street at 11.30 am, and a parade to George Square will follow, with a full programme of activities for all age groups. She invited Members to join in the celebrations; she hoped to involve as many people, communities and businesses involved in the organisation. A Facebook page would be established but she encouraged Members to contact her if they have any questions or comments:

Anne.Mctaggart.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

Or to contact the Secretary, who will forward emails.

The Convener said that the organising group in Glasgow was drawn from all over Scotland, and intended their celebration to challenge any China event in the UK. There would be opportunities for students at University or College to be welcomers and to explain Scots and Chinese music, poetry and literature. Glasgow City Council would offer support and he was sure that the Scottish Government would do likewise. At the opening discussion, 600 people had been present, 80% of them Chinese. It was hoped that every interest would be met in a really exciting event. He was asked about food and answered that there would be plenty, both Chinese and Scottish.

Important Update, 12 November 2015

The Convener has asked me to tell you that the organisers of the Chinese New Year celebrations in Glasgow have agreed that in 2016 they will focus on events in and about George Square. This will mean the procession, lion dance etc will take place entirely within the confines of the Square to avoid complications in respect of traffic management.

There will be a stage created in the Square and it is anticipated stall will be enabled in the area to allow various groups to promote their China/ Scotland credentials.

Anne McTaggart, MSP is the Group's link to the event. Some members have been in touch with her already. If anyone wishes to seek to play a part,

Graeme encourages them to make contact with Anne McTaggart now to secure a successful outcome.

5 Update on Progress with Scotland's China Strategy Working with China and on the Teaching of Chinese in Scottish Schools

The Convener welcomed Dr Alasdair Allan MSP, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Schools. Dr Allan thanked the Convener and said that his presentation on progress with Scotland's China Strategy would focus on education, but he was glad to respond to wider questions. He was very pleased to see developments in the teaching and learning of Chinese and about China, and also the celebration of Scotland's relationship with China.

Dr Allan said that the Cross Party Group on China had raised several issues, including the uptake in Chinese Language qualifications. In the session 2014-2015, there had been a real increase in passes at SCQF levels 3-7, from 292 – 329, 13%. Highers had showed a small drop and it was clear more needed to be done to encourage pupils to learn Chinese.

Dr Allan pointed out that the flexibility of Curriculum for Excellence meant there was a wide range of models offered now from S3, including other types of learning that did not necessarily lead to qualifications through examination. This included master classes, and Languages for Life and Work awards. Pupils in over 200 schools in Scotland were now able to learn about China and its language. The session 2013-2014 had seen the introduction of new National Qualifications, and many schools had chosen different senior phase models and hence it was too early to fully assess the impact of these on National Qualifications uptake.

Dr Allan acknowledged that the low number of teachers registered with GTCS to teach Mandarin was a constraint. However, Mandarin was being supported in other ways: Hanban had offered to pay 50% of the salaries of registered teachers of Mandarin, CISS had been crucial in negotiating this and in increasing the number of Confucius Classroom Hubs. The First Minister had met Mme Xu Lin, the Director of Hanban, in July, and had thanked her for Hanban's support.

Dr Allan said that he was confident that the Scottish Government's 1+2 Languages policy (whereby young people learn a second language in P1 and a third from P5) would eventually increase the numbers of those studying for National Qualifications in all languages, including Chinese. He emphasised that the Scottish Government was committed to ensuring that work with Chinese partners would continue to make Chinese language and culture available to young people.

The Convener reminded members that they could ask questions of the Minister on educational progress but also on other areas of Scotland's China Strategy.

Ian Nicol asked whether there was scope for remote learning. Dr Allan referred to GLOW, and to connections supported by CISS and by British Council Scotland

with schools in China. Tim Simons added that Confucius Classroom Hubs in Scotland were twinned with schools in Tianjin. He mentioned a Glow Meet concerning the Giant Pandas and said support like this would continue be given to assist the learning of Chinese in Scotland. Dr Allan said that the *Beyond the Panda* programme led by the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland had a big online presence; he commented too on the visits to China by Scottish school pupils. Sandie Robb, Senior Education Officer at the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland and leader of the *Beyond the Panda* programme, commented on its online lessons and the outreach being achieved through the China Mobile Library.

Dr Jim Scott commended the Minister on his 1+2 Languages initiative. He asked about National Qualifications in Mandarin, saying that after their start in 2008, 200 candidates took courses at levels 3-5 by 2010. However, by 2010-2015, numbers had wobbled.

Dr Allan said that the fall was in Higher uptake rather than earlier. He accepted that numbers were relatively small and that there were constraints in terms of the number of teachers and of secondary schools participating. He believed that the 1+2 Plan would help in the longer term. It was important now to give confidence to Primary School teachers. Dr Scott agreed that 1+2 would address the issues in the future.

Dr Allan went on to say that he hoped take-up of Chinese as L2 and L3 would be encouraged. Tim Simons said that some schools had shown considerable interest in Chinese at L3 (Primary 5 upwards), but this would take time to evolve. The key issue was the number of GTCS registered teachers of Mandarin. The China Strategy had a target to increase this from 12 to 24. In 2015, there were 15. The movement of teachers was an issue and the support offered by Hanban could prove a major step forward.

The Convener said that there was a real desire in Scotland for China to be recognised as a major partner, in terms of trade and human engagement. But there was a perceived frustration at the promotion of Mandarin.

Dr Allan said that there was a crossover between language and wider culture: it was vital to stimulate a desire to learn. All the Scottish and wider UK statistics concerning the teaching of Mandarin derived from a time when other languages did not feature in primary education, as happened elsewhere in countries such as Germany and Denmark. Earlier language teaching in Primary School was a vital factor, as was widening cultural awareness.

Marion Spöring, Chair of the University Council for Modern Languages Scotland, asked whether there was a plan to support language learning in Universities, including Chinese.

Dr Allan said there had been efforts to increase numbers but there was still a need to think creatively about the sources of teachers. He believed it would be

beneficial for students of languages, including Chinese, at Universities to be encouraged to consider teaching.

Ruth Taylor asked how we could generate the view that Chinese is of use in many careers, and whether we were encouraging employers to support this. Dr Allan said that a knowledge of Chinese was very valuable as an employment skill. Skills Development Scotland could do more to relate this to the economic community, and people could see the importance of qualifications in Chinese. He said that he would look into this.

**Action: Dr Alastair Allan MSP, Minister for Learning,
Science and Scotland's Languages**

Dr Jim Scott said one of the complications for the Scottish Government was that one curriculum initiative could interfere with another. Since the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence, enrolments at levels 3-5 had dropped between 50 and 60% across all languages. This was a response by schools and local authorities to the demands of new qualifications. So 1+2 may build up languages in Primary Schools, but Curriculum for Excellence could then cut across this development. Some secondary schools were now offering only 5 or 6 subjects in S4. Given the general parental mind-set concerning core disciplines, languages could simply be dropped: this could also affect Computer Science, Arts and some Technical subjects. Pupils lost to languages in S4 could return in S6. But he asked the Minister how we could ensure the way Curriculum for Excellence is being taken forward by some local authorities does not cut across the intended impact of the 1+2 Languages Plan.

Dr Allan understood this challenge. The issue necessarily differed from place to place, as it was schools who were best placed to decide on the most appropriate model. The aim was that pupils could choose to achieve more qualifications by the end of their education but the number of qualifications was not the most important thing for every child. It was counter-intuitive: if we could get the Broad General Education in S1-3 right, with language skills embedded, then pupils could embark on the right qualifications for them in S5 and S6. He believed it was essential that young people should feel confident in their language learning in S1-3.

Hans Waitl, of the Federation of Small Businesses, said that in the Borders, a Developing the Young Workforce Group was developing as a result of the Wood Report. He asked the Minister whether there was joined-up thinking between employment and school education.

Dr Allan said that the SQA Languages for Life and Work Award would help pupils to work or study in another country. In Europe it had long been realised that not everyone wants to study literature when learning a language.

James Brodie said that in Northern Europe one media channel was in another language, as a means of using television to immerse young learners in other languages. This happened in Scotland with Gaelic.

Dr Anderson agreed: the BBC Charter renewal debate could help in discussing the relationship between education and language-based material. The success of *Borgen* and similar series meant that people were slightly more used to hearing other languages on television.

Dr Meryl James said that CISS was very busy joining up the thinking from Primary to Secondary School, in all languages and especially Chinese. CISS was working with businesses and aiming to get the quality of its work, not simply the quantity, right. British Council research had demonstrated that Primary/Secondary School clusters worked well. 27 teachers from both primary and secondary schools had visited China for a 2-week course to gain insight into Chinese culture and language.

Dr Allan said that local authorities had to address competing priorities in the transition from primary to secondary school. This must not mean that languages should be restricted to French and Spanish: we wanted to value language diversity. There was no hierarchy of languages; research indicated that if pupils in Primary 1 and 2 were aware of other languages, they would be much more comfortable in later life to learn another language. He was a fan of languages and he had met others like him who had moved from Latin to Chinese to Russian. He concluded that we needed diversity of language learning and teaching in our schools.

Fiona Pate HMI, former Languages Specialist at Education Scotland and member of the National Languages Working Group, said that the picture of language learning in the 1+2 Plan was emerging. She believed that the biggest focus had been on primary education. There were very clear signs where it was working; and as the Minister said, early language learning gave confidence later. Now the focus was moving to secondary schools, with an emphasis on the need for Headteachers to look at language links with cluster schools and at the curriculum, in terms of opportunities for second language study in the BGE and national qualifications and awards for languages in the senior phase. Developing Scotland's Young Workforce was helping the promotion of languages as part of the portfolio of learning and skills that young people needed to achieve.

A story was told about a 6 year-old visiting a family in South Ayrshire: he had been enrolled in the local Council's programme and became interested in learning Chinese. The Convener said that the Glasgow Chinese New Year Celebrations in 2016 were intended to engage more Scots. He then invited a final question from Dr Jim Scott.

Dr Jim Scott said that there was a problem in language learning in S2, S3 and S4, which needed to be addressed. For instance, if S3 could include learning for the first set of National Qualifications, it would be possible to increase the number of qualifications taken in S4, including languages. Some Headteachers were addressing this, but he feared that there were many Headteachers who did not recognise the importance of languages and it was important now to look at the role of S3. In his view, HMIe Reports indicated that 7 subjects could be taken in S4.

The Convener asked the Minister to consider this point and revert to the Group.

Action: Dr Alastair Allan MSP, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages

Dr Allan concluded by emphasising that we should work with the Chinese community in Scotland. Children with another language could teach each other: this was very empowering. It would be important to continue to look at the attitude of the UK Government to Post Study Work Visas, an issue that he knew had concerned the Cross Party Group on China. There was no alternative to Curriculum for Excellence, but he would be happy to look at its implementation. In Scotland we had moved from a 2 + 2 + 2 model in secondary education, in order to achieve more rigour in early secondary and a more meaningful Broad General Education. We needed to see improvements in the transition of languages from Primary School to Secondary school and from the end of the Broad General Education to the Senior Phase.

The Convener thanked the Minister warmly for his presentation and his open response to questions. He said that two issues highlighted by the Cross Party Group on China had not been discussed:

- **Direct flights from Scotland to China** *now to be considered at the meeting of 20 January 2016*
- **Support for SMEs keen to do business with China**

But much had been discussed, and it had been very good to have the Minister's presence. Dr Allan then left the meeting.

Note: after the Chancellor of the Exchequer's visit to China, he promised to contribute £10M to developing the teaching and learning of Chinese in schools in England and Wales. The Secretary was asked to approach the Scottish Government to find out whether there would be an appropriate contribution to Scotland's schools. Tim Simons, Head of the Curriculum Unit, has reported that he had sought advice from DfE and HMT colleagues, and had been told that it would form part of the upcoming Comprehensive Spending Review. He was also informed that the indications were that there would not be any separate Barnett consequentials, as it would form part of overall allocation.

6 Closing the Knowledge Gap on China

The Convener introduced Timothy Clissold of the Britain China Education Association Ltd, author of *Mr China: a Memoir* and of *Chinese Rules: Mao's Dog, Deng's Cat, and Five Timeless Lessons from the front lines in China*.

Tim Clissold said that he had lived in China for 20 years. He could speed read, write and speak Mandarin reasonably well, and he had 2 sons who had learned it. He had been working on a project to introduce an Advanced Level in Chinese Civilisation, to provide a reason to study the language. He recognised that the Scottish education system was different, so he would describe the proposal as it related to England and Wales. He would talk about the knowledge gap, what we have done, and what we could do to strengthen our efforts.

Tim Clissold asked the Group to imagine a great room, with an assembly of writers, artists, parliamentarians, thinkers, journalists, the President of France, with magnificent chandeliers and exquisite works of art. A man stands up and says:

When I was a young man, I developed a keen interest in French culture and particularly French history, philosophy, literature and art. By reading modern French history, I have gained a better perspective of the laws governing the political and social evolution of human society. By reading Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau, I have deepened my understanding of how progress of the mind propels progress in society. By reading Molière, Balzac and Hugo, I have better appreciated life with all its joys and sorrows. Learning about French culture has also helped me better appreciate both my own culture and the profound nature and rich diversity of human civilisations.

Tim Clissold said that the date of the meeting was 27 March 2014 and the speaker was Xi Jinping, President of China. Mr Clissold did not think this was simply propaganda. He referred to Wen Jiabao's visit to the UK in 2011, with his copy of Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* and his praise of Shakespeare. The Wall Street Journal had reported that Wen Jiabao had recommended the reading of China's literary works and history: *you will learn more about my country and the road it has travelled, including how it became strong and powerful and the great sufferings it has gone through.* The millions of Chinese who studied English did so because they regarded it as an essential, key strategic career asset that had a monetisable economic value and enhanced life opportunities across the whole experience, not just at work. We in the UK must emulate this, he said, but we had a knowledge gap.

Mr Clissold said that the most obvious place to start in closing the gap was to build over the long term in Britain's schools. The recent British Council research on the teaching of Chinese in UK schools gave the opinion that, of the four nations, *only Scotland has a strategy in place which is able to channel investment and resources into activities which are likely to deliver sustainable growth in the number of schools able to offer Chinese teaching.* Over the last 15 years, there had been investment by Hanban and governments in Confucius Institutes and Classrooms and investment by private schools, but the uptake of qualifications in Mandarin at Advanced Level was low and largely by members of the Chinese community. The situation in Scotland was better, but the discussion that had just taken place with the Minister showed the difficulties here too. In Australia, where Mandarin teaching had been promoted since the 1970's, 94% of students

had dropped the subject by the age of 16. There seemed to be four factors in the UK that caused the problem of low take-up:

- The general fall in the learning of languages
- The low number of qualified Teachers of Mandarin
- The lack of progression in learning
- The perception that Mandarin was extremely difficult

Mr Clissold argued that we should be aiming to create a lasting reason for a student to want to learn Mandarin, giving it a real context at a time when young people were most receptive to new ideas and thinking about their direction in life. This had led him to an initiative to create an Advanced Level in Chinese Civilisation, including History, Culture and Society. With a group of 12 Sinologists from some of Britain's leading universities, including Cambridge, London, Manchester, Nottingham, Oxford and Edinburgh, an exam specification had been drafted, which included:

- A broad overview of the development of Chinese civilisation (in Lower 6); with the following options in Upper 6:
- Economics and Reform in China
- Chinese Science and Medicine
- Family and Gender in China
- Mao and the Chinese People's Revolution
- Confucianism and Chinese Thought
- Pre-Modern and Modern Literature
- China's Interaction with the Outside World

Tim Clissold said that the OCR Exam Board had agreed to take on this Advanced Level for courses beginning in 2018. There was an enormous amount still to do: for instance, to get the approval of the regulator (OFQUAL), to commission and write text books, to create CPD for teachers, to set up teaching hubs. He believed that there was a reasonable hope that the introduction of Advanced Level Chinese Civilisation could take place in 3 years, as the first step in developing further teaching of China and Chinese Studies. We needed to be robust about our reasons for studying China: if we wished to influence China's exercising of its new global influence as a true member of the international community, we needed not simply to encourage it to reform in such areas as human rights, corruption and pollution, but to acknowledge the areas in which we could learn too: about conflict resolution, the selection of leaders, early stage economic development, and even the environment. He hoped that in the next 50 years a First Minister from this country might visit China and say to the gathered hosts: *As a young woman, I read Zhuangzi, the Tan Dynasty poets and the Jin Ping Mei.*

The Convener thanked Tim Clissold and emphasised his aim to spread the idea of studying Chinese Civilisation in our schools to and see its relevance in Scotland. Janis Claxton said she thought this was fantastic and asked whether Tai Chi would be included; Mr Clissold thought this a good idea. Sandie Robb agreed strongly about the provision of reasons to study Mandarin; she believed that the RZSS project *Beyond the Panda* contributed to that need. She was pleased to

report that 1043 pupils had used the China Mobile Library that accompanied that project. There was manifest interest and enthusiasm in the Group for considering the implications of Tim Clissold's important initiative for Scotland's schools. He was given warm applause.

7 Updates from Members

(a) The 50th Anniversary of the SCA

Graham Thompson noted that 2016 is the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Scotland-China Association in 1966. He explained the SCA is planning various special activities and events over the next nine months, including a small exhibition to tell the story of the SCA, and wider Scotland/China connections, alongside the many changes in China itself in the last 50 years; a charity appeal for a suitable project in China, probably a rural community in one of the western provinces; a joint event with the SCEN ambassadors; an SCA element in a Cross Party Group on China meeting in the Spring, with possibly a reception to follow (subject to the CPG's agreement); and special material on its website:

www.scotchina.org

The SCA's 50th National AGM on 11 June 2016, to be held at the Confucius Institute for Scotland at the University of Edinburgh, would include a programme of speakers as well as cultural activities. He asked members to keep visiting the SCA website for more news as plans develop. If other organisations are interested in some kind of joint event or activity with the SCA, Mr Thompson advised that they should contact the SCA Chairman, Janice Dickson:

janice.dickson@scotchina.org

(b) Language Show Live Scotland

The Secretary alerted the Group to the important event Language Show Live Scotland, which would be taking place in Glasgow, 11-12 March 2016.

(c) A New Confucius Classroom at Jordanhill School

Dr Paul Thomson, Rector of Jordanhill High School, Glasgow, was delighted to tell the Group that Jordanhill would become a Confucius Classroom. He said that he was looking forward to working with all partners, including other schools in Glasgow.

(d) SC²ENE

Janis Claxton, Choreographer and Producer, and Artistic Director of Janis Claxton Dance, spoke of the work of her Cultural Exchange Network specialising in Scotland-China. She said that she was particularly interested in cultural exchange projects over time. She was involved in four projects, with artists living and working together for four months. She also offered support to artists in the arts world generally who wanted to work in China: she could be contacted at:

janis@janisclaxton.com

Her talk for British Dance Editions in 2014, focusing on Chaos & Contingency, her work with China in general, can be found at:

<https://vimeo.com/85917677>

There is also an interview with Janis Claxton and Willy Tsao on CCTV about the Beijing Dance Festival:

<http://english.cntv.cn/program/cultureexpress/20120723/115436.shtm>

8 **Any Other Business**

- Callam Fletcher, CEO of the Asia Scotland Institute, encouraged anyone with questions about the work of ASI to be in touch with him:

callam@asiascot.com

- Vincent Chung, of Thorntons LLP, alerted the Group to changes in immigration rules that were due at the end of the years. The Convener invited him to send details and a link to the Secretary, who would circulate them.
- Camellia Huang spoke of the student-led Edinburgh International Asia Conference, which would take place at the University of Edinburgh on Friday 5 February 2015. Further details could be obtained from her and her Co-Director Alistair Fila at:

eiaconferenceinfo@gmail.com

- James Brodie told the Group of the visit of President Xi Jinping to the United Kingdom, 20-23 October 2015. Mr Xi would stay in Buckingham Palace, and would have engagements in London and Manchester.

9 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next Meeting of the Cross Party Group on China will take place in Committee Room 3 of the Scottish Parliament on Tuesday 24 November 2015, 6.00 – 7.30 pm.

There will be two presentations:

The Reverend Alan Miller, chair of the Scottish Churches China Group, on the Group's charitable partnerships in China

Dr Fraser Quin, the new Chief Executive Officer of the Eric Liddell Centre, on the Centre's new China Project

and there will be updates on current China-Scotland initiatives, including the Hong Kong Scotland Education Connection and the Hong Kong Scotland School Improvement Partnership.

The Convener concluded the meeting by thanking the Group for its attendance and lively participation. He invited any further questions concerning the Minister's presentation to be sent to the Secretary; he would collate them and send them to the Minister. He also asked that suggestions for further meetings should be sent to the Secretary. **The meeting concluded with applause from Members and Guests.**