

## Minutes - Cross-Party group on France - 29 septembre 2015

MSP in attendance: Attendees : Christian Allard MSP, Richard Baker MSP, Malcolm Chisholm MSP,

Other attendees: Consul general Emmanuel Cocher, Michael John de la Haye, Tom Wight, Christine Jones, Adèle Mortier, David Lusseau, John Riley, Brigitte Guénier, Franck Arnold, Niall MacDonald, Sheena Cleland

### 1. Welcome and introductions

The meeting was opened by Christian Allard MSP, convener of the CPG on France, who welcomed everyone and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

### 2. Apologies

Cameron Buchanan MSP

### 3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

### 4. Talk by Consul General of France and director of the Institut français d'Ecosse, M. Emmanuel Cocher

The new consul general of France Emmanuel Cocher introduced himself to the members of the CPG. He spoke of his career and his projects as a new consul general and director of the French institute in Scotland.

**See biography attached.**

- Changes at the consulate: significantly downsized, the consulate will be relocated in the French Institute offices. Some consular services will be transferred to the consulate general in London. The visa section will close in November.

- Relocation: one of the main projects of the coming months is to relocate the French institute. EMC says he will take any ideas: buy a new building, working in partnership with another organization...

- EMC wants the involvement of the French Institute in the Fringe festival to continue.

- He would like to work more with Scottish institutions on a cultural program and not only in Edinburgh. He wants to put more emphasis on the French community and French talents.

Richard Baker MSP encourages the consul general in his idea to build cultural partnerships outside Edinburgh.

Christian Allard MSP asks EMC to keep the CPG updated on the changes at the consulate. EMC agrees and says the new organisation will be implemented next summer, probably in July, after the departure of the deputy consul Emeline Javierre.

To find new buildings is a priority. A team at the consulate is working on a chart at the moment and EMC offers to send this chart to members in case they would be able to help on the search. Members agree.

5. Any other business

The consul general invites members of the CPG to a Christmas dinner, at the residence, in December. Adèle will be in touch to organise the event.

Christian Allard MSP, convener of the CPG on France, closed the meeting.