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*Minutes of Inaugural Cross-Party Group on USA meeting*

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**Location: Scottish Parliament**  
**Date: Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019**  
**Time: 6.00pm – 7.30pm**

**Attendees:**

Dean Lockhart, MSP  
Liam Kerr, MSP  
Margaret Mitchell, MSP  
Ellen Wong, Principal Officer, U.S. Consulate General in Edinburgh  
Andrew Liddle, Programs and Engagement Manager, U.S Department of State  
Beatrice Morrice, Head of Public Affairs, Scotch Whisky Association  
Scott Johnstone, CEO, Scottish Lifesciences Association  
Alexia Haramis, Head of International and Corporate Development, ECC  
Kate Nowakowska, Corporate Executive, ECC  
Stuart Hamilton, Scottish Chambers of Commerce  
Allan Hogarth, Director, The Scottish North American Business Council  
Russel Dalgleish, Founder and Managing Partner, Scottish Business Network  
Tessa Bell, Regional Manager, Americas, University of Edinburgh  
Marc Strathie, Policy Analyst, Scottish Council for Development and Industry  
Alan Johnston, University of Edinburgh  
Olivia McLaren, Principal Attorney, Olivia McLaren Ltd  
Board member, American-Scottish Foundation, Inc.  
Nicole Lombardo, Policy Officer, Napier University  
Tom Sneddon, Account Manager, United Airlines  
Kenneth Shand, Partner, Dentons  
William Stirling, Director, Refuge Productions and Trojan Women Scotland CIC  
Lesley-Anne Campbell, Parliamentary Assistant to Dean Lockhart MSP at The Scottish Parliament  
Thomas Heald, Head of Office- Office of Dean Lockhart MSP at The Scottish Parliament  
James Trolland, Founder & CEO at Ridrum Group

**Apologies:**

Alexander Burnett MSP	Sandy Kennedy
Jackie Baillie MSP	Sara Cook
Murdo Fraser MSP	Emma Watsonmack
Julia McIntyre	Iain Hall
Richard Lockhart	Luke Skipper
Hannah Ormston	Jodie Gordon
Adam Bowie	Gillian Murray
Martin Bell	

Professor George Boyne  
Donella Beaton  
Richard Wells  
Duncan Wood  
Neil McInnes  
Aidan Kerr  
Cat Hay

Rebecca Groundwater  
Alan Saloniovka  
Caroline Welsh  
Professor Neville Wylie  
Jo Graham  
Calum Moultrie  
Richard Wells  
Russell Borthwick  
Donella Beaton

### **Speakers**

- Ellen Wong, Principal Officer of the U.S. Consulate General in Edinburgh
- Beatrice Morrice, Head of Public Affairs, Scotch Whisky Association
- Scott Johnstone, CEO, Scottish Lifesciences Association
- Alexia Haramis, Head of International and Corporate Development, ECC

### **Facilitator**

Dean Lockhart, MSP Mid Scotland and Fife

#### **1. Welcome and introductory remarks**

Dean Lockhart MSP (DL) welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the Cross Party Group on the USA.

DL welcomed the Principal Officer of the U.S. Consulate General in Edinburgh, Mrs Ellen Wong (EW).

DL suggested going round the table so the attendees could introduce themselves.

DL suggested to everyone to join the CPG USA group on LinkedIn.

#### **2. Guest Speaker**

##### **2.1 Ellen Wong, Principal Officer of the U.S. Consulate General in Edinburgh (EW).**

EW thanked the attendees and the representatives of the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce for agreeing to take on the secretariat role for the group.

EW began the discussion highlighting the potential for growth and economic development for both Scotland and USA.

EW shared key statistics:

- USA is the number one investor in Scotland and Scotland's top international trading partner
- 34% of FDI in Scotland is from USA
- Of the 9 biggest FDI projects in 2018, 6 were US projects
- Almost 600 US companies are currently operating in Scotland
- 5.5 billion exports to USA in 2018

EW spoke about the increase of US tariffs on some sectors for exports and the US President wanting to enhance and make a trade deal with the UK. Also with regards to the USA being an attractive market for Scottish Businesses as it is so diverse and the consumption rates and household spend are the highest in the world.

EW informed on many services that are available to support trade between Scotland and USA like US Commercial Services in London, SelectUSA, Council of American States in Europe (CASE) and Global Entry. A document summarising the support available on how to navigate the US market was circulated to the attendees.

The USA are ready to discuss a trade deal with the UK after Brexit.

## **2.2 Beatrice Morrice, Head of Public Affairs, Scotch Whisky Association (BM)**

BM highlighted the USA as a crucial market for Scotland, but also expressed her concern over the 25% tariff on single malt Scottish whisky and liqueur. BM noted that bourbon saw a 20% drop after EU tariffs and that smaller companies will be mostly affected, as the larger companies will be able to absorb these costs. SWA wants to encourage the UK and USA to continue the dialogue, in order to establish a post-Brexit free-trade agreement.

## **2.3 Scott Johnstone, CEO, Scottish Lifesciences Association (SJ) and Alexia Haramis, Head of International and Corporate Development, ECC (AH)**

AH updated the group on the Edinburgh Chamber's plans to take a trade mission out to Philadelphia in collaboration with the SNABC (Scottish North American Business Council) 23-25<sup>th</sup> March 2020. AH explained that this visit will be part of the International Trade Partnership programme of activities which are open to attend by any company across any sector in Scotland and will provide site visits and B2B meetings in-market. Allan Hogarth (AH) from the SNABC will be leading this mission and spoke about the programme in-market and the market awareness event which will take place on the 27<sup>th</sup> November.

David Ross (DR) updated the Group on the international work being carried out by the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, including an inbound Trade Mission from Portland, Oregon, outbound mission to Portland in 2020 and the memorandum of understanding with the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce.

Scott Johnston (SJ) highlighted that common issues and shared goals are very beneficial for trade, same size of the market (Scotland and selected state) as well as funding issues are common grounds. Case studies are essential. SJ said that regulations and political situations can be problematic and are for both governments to take on-board to facilitate open trade.

## **3. Open discussion on fostering business and trade relations between Scotland and US**

DL opened up the discussion on trade.

The group members discussed the potential and opportunities of the relations.

Allan Hogarth (AH) explained that on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> November there is a visit from CASE, Council of American States in Europe to Edinburgh and some representatives from the CPGUSA will be meeting with the President and representatives of states on the 26<sup>th</sup> November. The following states will be represented: Florida, Kentucky, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Virginia.

Kenneth Shand (KS) noted that good practical local networks, local advice on tax and legal aspects as well as awareness of state by state and federal regulations are crucial to enter the US market. Russell Dalgleish (RD) noted Scottish businesses under-utilise London as a transport hub and a channel for trade and highlighted that trade doesn't necessary need to be direct. EW agreed there is lack of awareness of available support. The group agreed SDI and DIT are useful means of support and that DIT must be a central platform for businesses to use. SH suggested that collaboration is key to produce results, sharing information across platforms and groups is essential.

EW spoke about trade shows in USA and how they are a useful for networking, EW will share the calendar of tradeshows and offered help with social media content. DL will arrange a dedicated contact from DIT for this group.

#### **4. Closing remarks**

RD expressed that extensive research must be made before Trade Missions and collaboration with universities should be fundamental. EW and AJ both agreed that linking the networks of students studying abroad (both American students in Scotland and Scottish in US) must be used for further connections and building trade links.

DL stated that the next meeting will be focused around Tourism, Sports and Education.

#### **5. Actions**

- All members to join USA CPG Group LinkedIn group and share with other contacts
- Alexia Haramis to share information on USA Trade Missions and information on USA events on the 27<sup>th</sup> Nov, 2019
- Stuart Hamilton to share a joint calendar of events
- Ellen Wong to share trade shows calendar
- Dean Lockhart to introduce a DIT contact for the group
- Alexia Haramis to invite Visit Scotland to the next meeting

#### **6. AOB**

DL thanked all for attending the meeting.

#### **7. Date of the next meeting**

The date of the next meeting will be during March 2020. The date will be communicated by the Secretariat of the group.