

minutes

Meeting: Cross Party Group on Scotch Whisky
Location: Committee Room 6, Scottish Parliament
Date Held: Thursday 30 May 2013
Present: **MSPs:** Mary Scanlon, Annabelle Ewing, Jamie McGrigor, Hugh Henry, Murdo Fraser, Claudia Beamish

Other attendees: Andy Bruce, (Scottish Government), Sarah Currie (Alcohol Focus Scotland) Campbell Evans (SWA), Douglas Meikle (SWA), James Mildred (Office of Murdo Fraser), Beatrice Morrice (SWA), Douglas Ross (Assistant to Mary Scanlon), Diane Thomson (Alcohol Focus Scotland), Graham Rose (Assistant to Murdo Fraser), Jason Rose (Scottish Green Party), Jennifer Ross (Assistant to Liam McArthur), Devin Scobie (Caledonia Consulting), Fraser Sutherland (Office of Marco Biagi), Aileen Weurman (Assistant to Mary Scanlon).

Apologies: Bruce Crawford, Rhoda Grant, David Stewart, Gordon MacDonald, Jack Gemmell (Chivas) and Andy Rosie SEPA

	Action
<p>Mary Scanlon, Chair of the meeting, welcomed attendees.</p>	
<p>1. Minutes The group approved the minutes from 14 March (circulated 22 March 2013).</p>	
<p>2. Election of officials The election of officials took place as part of the Annual General Meeting. The joint conveners are Mary Scanlon and Annabelle Ewing. David Stewart and Gordon MacDonald are the joint deputy conveners of the cross party group.</p>	
<p>3. Scottish Government Alcohol Industry Partnership Andy Bruce, Head of Tobacco, Alcohol and Diet, Scottish Government and Douglas Meikle, Alcohol Policy Manager SWA, gave a presentation on the work of the Scottish Government Alcohol Industry Partnership (SGAIP).</p>	
<p>The presentation provided information on the history of SGAIP, past initiatives i.e. Alcohol Awareness Week, sponsorship guidance, Fife Alcohol Partnership Project and current work streams that include: Best Bar None, campaigns (Drinkaware and Drop a Glass Size) and the National Licence Advisory Group. In addition, the group has received 16 enquiries to date regarding local initiatives to tackle under-age drinking through Community Alcohol Partnerships. These are currently being considered. Andy Bruce underlined the need to consider planning timescales and to engage local stakeholders for success. The annual report of the group will be published in the summer. This will be circulated to the CPG.</p>	SWA
<p>Following the presentation, members were invited to ask questions. These covered a range of issues including confirmation that:</p>	

- SGaip works with the off-trade as well as the on-trade. Its members include the Scottish Retail Consortium, the Wine Spirits Trade Association, Scottish Grocers Federation who are all involved across the work streams.
- Evaluation of the initiatives is important. The report on the Fife initiative, on which the CPG received a presentation last year, will be circulated to the CPG. The concept of re-visiting the Fife project areas one year on will be considered.
- Alcohol consumption is decreasing due to a package of measures.
- SGaip funding is distributed through the work streams and the group is happy to speak directly with organisations that have ideas on local initiatives.
- The issue of older people and alcohol misuse is covered by other aspects of the Government's work.

SWA

4. Update on Scotch Whisky industry

Campbell Evans highlighted that a number of new distilleries and sites are being built or re-opened across Scotland. These include Chivas's Glen Keith site that opens on 14 June, a new malt distillery near Alness and warehousing in Fife near Kirkcaldy from Diageo that are being built. There are over 20 more distilleries than there were 10 years ago.

Campbell stated that the first quarter statistics for 2013 Scotch Whisky exports show a volume increase of 7% and value increase by 10% compared to the same period last year.

He also informed the group that the SWA gave evidence to the Rural Affairs Climate Change and Environment Committee on 29 May on the Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Bill.

5. Scotch Whisky exhibition in Glasgow

The group received information that the Scotch Whisky Association's exhibition that was at the Scottish Parliament, will be on display at the Mitchell Library, Glasgow from 31 May to 31 July.

6. Date of next meeting and any other business

Beatrice stated that the SWA would be happy to arrange visits to sites during recess for members. An email will be sent shortly highlighting the opportunity to all MSPs.

SWA

Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the CPG on Scotch Whisky is being held on Thursday 12 September 2013 in Committee room 2.