

CROSS PARTY GROUP ON WOMEN IN ENTERPRISE

Minutes of Meeting held Wednesday 21 May 2019

Scottish Parliament Committee Room 5

ATTENDEES

Gillian Martin MSP; Chrissy Mackay WESA, + guests Camila & Cynthia; Jennifer Robertson WESA, Evelyn McDonald ES, Wendy Edie WESA, Dawn Shand, SIE, Monica Martins, Women Being; Mairi Macleod; Maggie, Mags Inspires; Nicole Diamond, Bill Bowman MSP, Sarah Hazzard, EY, Kay Greenshields, EY, Lisa Wardlaw, YES, Jackie Baillie MSP, Laura Galloway, HWU, Wendy Crawford, House of Bluebell, Sally Ann Hunter, Jackie Brierton, GrowBiz and WES vice chair, Carolyn Currie WES, Lynne Cadenhead, WES, Susan Love FSB, Mairi Spowage Fraser of Allander Institute; Mark Mitchell, Fraser of Allander Institute.

We were also joined by the visiting group of Parliamentarians from Pakistan.

APOLOGIES

Paula Ritchie, RBS; Criona Courtney, RBS; Jo Chidley, Beauty Kitchen; Jock Millican, Equity Gap; Pamela Stephenson, Fife Council; Karen Moore, Executive coach and mentor; Laura Birrell, Sticky Heels; Julie Grieve, Criton; Susan Harkins, Business Gateway; Anne Meikle, WES;

1. Gillian Martin welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular, the speakers, who were attending to speak on the key theme of, 'Internationalisation and Brexit'. A warm welcome was also extended to the visiting group of Parliamentarians from Pakistan.
2. Mairi Spowage from the Fraser of Allander Institute made a presentation on the economic impacts of Brexit including–
 - Statistics on exports and the link to jobs supported by exports
 - The importance of EU member nations as top Scottish export destinations
 - Numbers of EU nationals residing in Scotland
 - The range of Brexit options
 - The role of Ireland in Brexit as a UK land border
 - Key areas of consideration when planning ahead
3. Susan Love from the Federation of Small Businesses then gave a presentation on Internationalisation and Brexit from a SME perspective detailing -
 - importance of SME's to the Scottish economy
 - areas most likely to impact SME's – trade, people, regulation and funding
 - economic contribution to Scotland by immigrant-led SME's
 - level of preparation activity undertaken by SME's
 - impact on SME's from Brexit and the ongoing uncertainty
 - need for action on critical areas such as trade, immigration and access to staff
4. General discussion raised the following –

- The lack of detail available and the ongoing uncertainty.
 - The lack of any gendered insights and detail on the impact of Brexit for women.
 - Impacts for the education system including talent drain and issues for foreign students.
 - The polarised situation with some businesses continuing to trade well but others being impacted by a holding back of activity and investment until post Brexit
5. Gillian Martin closed the meeting by thanking all present and in particular the speakers whom had given detailed presentations.

WES

May 2019