

Minutes of Cross-Party Group on Japan
Meeting 3: 6pm, Tuesday 24 September 2019
Exploring Cultural Links

Attendees

MSP Attendees

Dean Lockhart MSP (Convener), Alexander Stewart MSP, Bill Bowman MSP, Tom Mason MSP, Liam McArthur MSP, Maureen Watt MSP

Speakers

Mr Nozomu Takoaka (Consul General of Japan), Patrick Hughes (Seafood Scotland), David Whiteford (Scottish Rugby Union)

Non-MSP Member Attendees

Hisashi Kuboyama (Federation of Small Business), Kerry Bryson (University of Stirling), Stuart Hamilton (Scottish Chambers of Commerce), David Birrell (Asia Scotland Institute), Thomas Heald (Office of Dean Lockhart MSP), Lesley-Anne Campbell (Office of Dean Lockhart MSP), Julia McIntyre (Office of Dean Lockhart MSP)

Non-Member Attendees

Ms Masami Fujimoto (Deputy Consul General of Japan), Tom Redford (Consul of Japan), Alan Johnston (University of Edinburgh), Scott Johnstone (Scottish Life Sciences Association), Gavin Donoghue (University of Edinburgh), Takashi Taji (Walter & Scott Partners Ltd), Dr Louise Boyd (National Museums Scotland), Misako Udo (The Scottish Whisky Distilleries), Jenifer Martin (Reza Wood Designs), Ali Fakourpoor (Reza Wood Designs), Sara Cook (Entrepreneurial Scotland), Ruta Noreika (Orkney Japan Association)

AGM

- **Welcome and Introductory Remarks**

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

DL noted that there were five apologies for absence: Jamie Halcro-Johnston MSP, James Withers, David Watt, Ken Sutherland, Antony McCallum and Sandy Kennedy.

- **Approval of minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

- **Election of office bearers**

DL proposed that he continue as Convener with Jamie Halcro-Johnston MSP as Deputy Convener and David Birrell as Secretariat. Bill Bowman MSP seconded.

Maureen Watt MSP was also elected as joint Deputy Convener. Dean Lockhart MSP seconded.

Meeting of the Cross Party Group

- **Speakers**

- *Mr Nozomu Takoaka (Consul General of Japan)*

The Consul General of Japan (CG) spoke of the importance of future trading agreements after Brexit, in particular for salmon tariff agreements.

The CG spoke of the impact of the Rugby World Cup and that the Mayor of Nagasaki has written to him of his pleasure of hosting the Scottish rugby team.

The CG highlighted the V&A Dundee as an example of a great collaboration between Japan and Scotland and the first building in Scotland by Japanese architects Kengo Kuma & Associates. The V&A Dundee has already had nearly 1 million visitors.

The CG spoke of other collaborations including the first anime film festival next month which will see 10 UK premiers in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

The CG said there was to be a feature on Japan in the Edinburgh Life Magazine.

- *Patrick Hughes (Seafood Scotland)*

Patrick Hughes spoke to the CPG about the successful work Seafood Scotland are doing to promote Scottish seafood in Japan. Japan is one of the top five target markets, alongside Europe, North America, the Middle East, and China.

Sales in Scottish seafood have increased from £3.1 million in 2015 to £8.1 million in 2018 and is expected to be around £20 million for 2019.

The strategy uses the Scottish Seafood brand, focussing on people, product and place and using key trade events to gain new customers.

Seafood Scotland also arrange media trips and visits to the North East and West Coast for trade press.

There was a discussion on boosting young people's interest and skills for the food and drinks industry.

- *David Whiteford (Scottish Rugby Union)*

David Whiteford spoke to the group on how Scottish Rugby is capitalising on the Rugby World Cup in Japan, focussing on Nagasaki where the team is based, working with schools and product partners to promote Scotland in Japan.

Open discussion

There was a discussion on the use of tartan in Japanese school uniforms and the importance of using Japanese language guides to boost products on social media. David Birrell said he would examine the possibility of a digital newsletter or digital platform for the CPG.

AOB

DL thanked all for attending the meeting.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 22 January 2020.