

Cross Party Group on Taiwan Meeting – Annual General Meeting
3rd of March 2015, 6pm
Scottish Parliament

Attendee list

MSPs

Colin Keir MSP (Co-convener)

Margaret Mitchell MSP (Co-convener)

Other Attendees

Su Jen Chung

Peter Chen

Selena Chang

Leon Thompson

May Livsey

Caroline Chen

Ian Irvin

Mike Robbins

Pat Reid

Joe Goldblatt

Binng Ismahason

Yosifu Kacaw

Wing Ng

Ching-yi Huang

Allan Davidson

Hsinyen Lai

AGM Business

Colin Keir MSP (Co-convener) welcomed attendees and members to the meeting. The meeting agreed to reappoint the Co-convener (Colin Keir MSP, Margaret Mitchell MSP & Richard Simpson MSP) and to appoint Hsinyen Lai as the CPG secretary.

Presentation from Leon Thompson, Visit Scotland

The guest presentation by Mr Leon Thompson, Government and Parliamentary Affairs Manager, VisitScotland, on the subject of the tourism exchange between Scotland and Taiwan. In his presentation, Leon mainly places the ties between Scotland and Taiwan within a bigger picture of the connection between Scotland and the Far East in recent years. At the outset of the presentation, Leon gives a review of

the major projects and achievements launched by VisitScotland in 2014, especially in international marketing. This year witnesses more communication between Scotland and the emerging market, i.e. the Middle East, via the new air line launched by Turkish Airline in March. In addition to Qatar airway, Etihad and Emirates, Taiwanese tourist tourists have more options to communicate between Scotland and the Far East via connection hubs like Doha, Dubai and Istanbul. Compared to other countries, Taiwan might not be a huge market for Scottish tourism but it could be expected to see more Taiwanese visit Scotland in the future along with the realisation of projects just mentioned.

For having more influence and connections in the world, Leon introduces a global strategy of VisitScotland called 'Global Scots'. This project aims for coordinating with senior and influential Scots working and living abroad in order to fortify the connection of Scottish tourism to the world. Now, as Leon notes, VisitScotland has three global Scots in Taiwan.

In conclusion, Leon focuses on the connection between Taiwan and Scotland. As mentioned earlier, although Taiwan has not been a big market to Scotland, VisitScotland is still working regularly with Taiwan in leisure, business and some other major events like fringe and festival in summer. He is optimistic toward more exchange will be realised and created more opportunities for collaboration in the coming years.

In the feedback section, our member raised a couple of questions on improving the connection between Taiwan and Scotland in tourism. One of the questions is about whether VisitScotland has been working with education sectors since Taiwanese students in Scotland could be assets for promoting mutual ties. For this question, as Leon says, VisitScotland has been keen to work with education sectors and would like to see that Taiwanese students who have ever studied in Scotland could be potential Global Scots. The other question is about whether private agency in both Taiwan and Scotland could be sources to promote tourism in both countries. As Leon says, this is also a workable idea but the current issue for VisitScotland is to raise awareness that Scotland is a worthwhile place to visit. This issue seems more challenging when we see other competition cities in England, e.g. London. Also, VisitScotland tries to promote Scotland as tourist destination for the whole year not just for summer. For example, VisitScotland sees 2015 as the year of food and drink, and 2016 as architecture and design. It is continuously working on taking more advantage of whisky, Scottish heritage and landscape to find ways for raising the awareness as

mentioned.

Update from Taipei Representative Office Edinburgh

Director General Jen-Chung Su, Taipei Representative Office in the UK, Edinburgh Office, updates the highlight of current projects for 2015 delivered by the Office. He says that the Youth Ambassador from Taiwan will come to Scotland at the end of August.

Meeting concluded. Date of next meeting to be confirmed.