

**Minutes of the meeting of the Cross Party Group on the Caribbean
Meeting date 10th June 2015 in the Scottish Parliament**

Attendees: Margaret Mitchell MSP (Chair), Stewart Maxwell, MSP, (Vice Chair) Felicity Hollands, (SP), Marianne Paton (SP), Carol Anderson The Business, Duncan Turnbull, Ian Gittens – Chairman Business Friends of Barbados, Professor Sir Geoff Palmer, Michael Kane - Isochon, visitors – Iona McIntyre and Nicola Firth from University of Edinburgh.

1. Welcome – Margaret Mitchell MSP Convenor and chair of the meeting welcomed everyone.

AGM

2. Convenors report – Margaret Mitchell read out a report about the work of the CPG over the last 12 months. Three meetings had covered an update on the Twinning process between Oistins Barbados and Millport on the Isle of Cumbrae from Vicki Lee. She also updated the group on the progress of Stoma bags delivered with training to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Bridgetown. We had also had an update on APD.

At the meeting on 5th November 2014, Dr Paul Sutton, a consultant on the West Indies and Scotland, had made a presentation about Barbados and Dominica.

At our meeting on 5th March 2015, Gerry McKenna had made a presentation about his building project in Jamaica. He also credited meeting with JamPro via the Scottish Parliament and their assistance in making this happen. We welcomed Stewart Maxwell MSP to the committee at that meeting and he was appointed Vice Convenor. A planned event for the Caribbean High Commissioners had been postponed as only the HC from Belize had confirmed attendance.

3. The minutes of the last AGM on 11th June 2014, were circulated and approved by Ian Gittens, and Professor Sir Geoffrey Palmer.

4. Treasurers Report –Professor Sir Geoff reported a healthy bank balance of £40 to cover the costs of tea and coffee at our meetings in the Parliament. We agreed in future that members of the Group would each contribute £10 per annum to this. Cheques payable to” Elrec” via Prof. Sir Geoff.

5. Election of Office Bearers:

Margaret Mitchell MSP was re-elected as Convenor – Proposed by Carol Anderson, Seconded by Ian Gittens

Carol Anderson was re appointed as Secretary – Proposed by Sir Geoffrey and Seconded by Margaret Mitchell

Sir Geoff was re appointed as Treasurer – Proposed by Duncan Turnbull and Seconded by Michael Kane.

Stewart Maxwell MSP – Vice Convenor - Proposed by Carol Anderson and Seconded by Margaret Mitchell.

AGM and ordinary CPG meeting minutes...

6. Work Programme for 2015/16

Prof. Sir Geoff mentioned an event planned during the Edinburgh Festival in the Scottish Parliament, with himself and Sir Tom Devine "Slavery in the Caribbean" -Prof. Sir Geoff to advise dates.

Margaret Mitchell MSP explained that the Scottish Parliament would shortly break for summer recess and in March 2016, the Scottish Parliament would be dissolved ahead of the elections in May 2016. Therefore the CPG has limited time to achieve our objectives by March 2016.

Agreed that with the limited time, unlikely we could have a High Commission event by then. The event had achieved considerable success in 2013 as it was tied to the Commonwealth Day in the Parliament. This was the main attractor.

Suggested speakers for future events included Chef Paul Wedgwood of Wedgwood Restaurant based on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh who has invested in business in Barbados. It was agreed Carol would invite him to the 30th September event. And that maybe a relevant business Minister would be invited to this event as well.

Louise Welsh of Empire Café event was suggested as a future speaker at one of the CPG meetings, as well as committee member Michael Kane of Isochon who does business in Jamaica.

Agreed that the Secretary would write to all the High Commissioners and invite them to join our meetings if they happen to be in Scotland at the same time as one of the CPG future meetings or if they are planning a visit to Scotland for us to welcome them to a special meeting, individually.

Then we enjoyed presentations from Iona McIntyre and Nicola Firth from the University of Edinburgh, Spanish and French departments who talked about their work and the university links with these countries and with the French and Spanish Caribbean.

Iona and Nicola talked about a future event 5th – 7th Nov, Reparations about the past and the future and will touch on colonial history and slavery at the University of Edinburgh. This year is the 150th anniversary of the 13th Amendment in the USA...in 1865.

8. Business arising

We congratulated Prof. Sir Geoff on the news that he is to receive an Honorary Degree from the University of the West Indies, which has come through his position as Emeritus Professor at Heriot Watt University.

9. Date of Next meeting

30th Sept 2015 at 1pm in the SP.