The Committee will meet at 2 pm in Committee Room 4.

1. **Area Tourist Board Review**: the Committee will take evidence from:

   **Panel 1**
   - Peter Taylor OBE, Vice Chair, Scottish Tourism Forum;
   - Alan Rankin, Chief Executive, Scottish Tourism Forum;
   - Ian Gardner, Director, Scottish Tourism Forum;

   **Panel 2**
   - Councillor Sandy Park, Highland Council;
   - Ken Wardrop, Economic Development Manager, City of Edinburgh Council;
   - James Fowlie, Policy Manager, COSLA;

   **Panel 3**
   - Robin Shedden, Chair of the Scottish Area Tourist Board Network and Chair, Kingdom of Fife Tourist Board;
   - Carolyn Baird, Chair of Perthshire Tourist Board;

   on progress on the implementation of the Area Tourist Board review.

2. **Subordinate Legislation**: the Committee will consider the following negative instrument –


3. **Work programme**: the Committee will consider its work programme for the period January to December 2005.

   Stephen Imrie
   Clerk to the Committee
   Ext. 0131 348 5207
The following meeting papers are enclosed:

**Agenda Item 1**

Submission from the Scottish Tourism Forum \( \text{EC/S2/04/26/1} \)

Submission from COSLA – *paper to follow* \( \text{EC/S2/04/26/2} \)

Submission from the Area Tourist Board Network Chairs \( \text{EC/S2/04/26/3} \)

**Agenda Item 2**

SSI Cover Paper including:

The Scottish Network 2 Tourist Board Scheme Amendment Order 2004, (SSI/2004/465) – *hard copy only*  \( \text{EC/S2/04/26/4} \)

**Agenda Item 3**

2005 work programme  \( \text{EC/S2/04/26/5} \)
Enterprise and Culture Committee Inquiry  
Evidence given on the Review of Area Tourist Boards  
Submission by the Scottish Tourism Forum on 23 November 2004

1. The Scottish Tourism Forum welcomes the opportunity to give evidence to the Enterprise and Culture Committee Inquiry on the Review of Area Tourism Boards

2. The Scottish Tourism Forum (STF) is the trade representative body for Scottish tourism industry. STF has a broad spectrum of members made up from individual businesses and trade associations. With a membership of 100 organisations STF through its network is in regular contact with over 3500 businesses. STF is heavily involved as project managers of the emerging Pride and Passion initiative and the influential Tourism Innovation Group.

3. STF does not intend to go over the reasons why change was considered essential. Tourism went through a demoralising protracted period of indecisive debate, and STF welcomes the positive proposal now being implemented.

4. STF supports the establishment of an integrated tourism network, and believes that - if given a fair chance by all stakeholders - it can deliver real improvements for Scottish tourism and most importantly contribute towards the achievement of the 50% growth targets set to the industry.

5. Scotland is a small country competing in a global market. An integrated focused marketing and support structure is essential.

6. STF wants to see several positive results from this major re-organisation:-

- Improved and ongoing meaningful engagement with businesses within the industry

- To undertake a continual plan of meaningful engagement with non-mainstream tourism businesses

- Improved levels of consultation with industry groups to enshrine the principle of VisitScotland being a support body for the tourism industry

- Effective and sustainable partnerships with local authorities

- A sustained, improved relationship between VisitScotland and industry bodies and organisations, such as STF, People 1st, Pride and Passion and the trade associations

- Engagement and motivation of staff during the transition and ensuring that a ‘one team’ culture is established throughout the developing new network
➢ Equality of skills, training and career opportunities for all network staff throughout Scotland

➢ Look to increase the resources allocated to the innovative and much welcomed challenge fund initiative

7. Should these eight policy strands be successfully adopted, STF will wholeheartedly support the new tourism structure

8. STF does consider that there are some serious issues still to be resolved – such as

   • How will the new VisitScotland expanded network integrate fully with Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise at local and regional levels,
   • There is a need to review the geographic spread of tourism business centres (Hubs) as they at present do not offer a fair coverage of the country.
   • Maintaining a sustainable financial plan of the new network when considering local authority and trade sourced revenue income.
   • Development of a financial plan that will represent absolute best value towards marketing and service provision to visitors
   • Delivery of a clear communications plan ensuring decisions during the project implementation phase are made available in a regular and accessible manner

9. The issues specified above highlight what the industry considers essential for tourism growth.

10. STF is always also very conscious of the consumer. Ongoing research and surveys are needed to identify changes in customer attitudes and expectations. Resulting reports will assist VisitScotland to identify trends and to improve customer engagement.

Scottish Tourism Forum
17th November 2004
FUTURE OF SCOTLAND’S TOURISM – COSLA COMMENTS

Introduction

The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) welcomes this second opportunity to contribute to the Enterprise and Culture Committee’s consideration of the Scottish Executive’s proposals for the future of tourism in Scotland.

This written response will be complemented by evidence that will be presented to the Committee by COSLA’s delegation, led by our Economic Development and Planning Spokesperson, Councillor Willie Dunn on Tuesday 23 November 2004.

Background

COSLA contributed to the Enterprise and Culture Committee’s previous inquiry in April 2004.

We would remind the Committee that as well as having the lead role in community planning partnerships, Local Government is a major provider of tourism support – for example it is the largest provider of visitor attractions nationally, and is responsible for the largest share of visitors to attractions throughout Scotland. As well as support for festivals and events, and visitor support infrastructure and regulation. We know from first hand experience how much economic benefit and employment tourism can generate locally.

Add to this the fact that funding from local authorities has been crucial to the operation of Area Tourist Boards (ATBs). 33% of ATB funding comes directly from Local Government, and 10 of the ATBs have local authorities as their greatest revenue funder, providing up to 60% of revenue funding.

There can be no doubting that Local Government has been and remains committed to tourism in Scotland.

The Scottish Executive’s long awaited announcement on the future of tourism in Scotland earlier this year, even with its tight timetable for implementation was welcomed by Local Government. We particularly welcome the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport’s sustained and explicit identification of Local Government as a key stakeholder. However, we noted in April that much remains unclear from the Minister’s initial announcement in terms of how the new structure will look and operate across the country. Unfortunately, there is still uncertainty, despite the recent publication of the Tourism Network Implementation Framework document.

We are not opposed to change and have long argued for a more ‘joined up’ approach to tourism. Our belief has always been that such an approach relies on local democratic accountability to give it legitimacy. We therefore welcomed the opportunity to be directly involved in some of the project teams charged with developing the future structure for the tourism industry across Scotland. We have undertaken throughout the whole process to work in the spirit of constructive partnership with the Executive and VisitScotland. It has not always been easy but we do now believe we have the basis for a structure that can work subject to the adequate operational resourcing of the new Integrated Network to take forward the proposals outlined in the implementation framework. Our frustration is that it has taken this long to reach this point and we are still not in a position to know for sure what the structure will look like, particularly at the local level.
The new organisation still has no business plan, making it very difficult to ascertain what it will and will not provide. Until this business plan is in place it will be very difficult for local authorities to take forward meaningfully the development, with VisitScotland and others, of local strategies and activities.

National Engagement

At the national level we are pleased with the Minister’s offer to augment the VisitScotland board to enable a member with local authority experience to contribute, in a way that is compatible with the Nolan protocol. However it is apparent that this will not be possible until the primary legislation which will set up the Board is amended. The Tourism Network Implementation Framework document states that this is scheduled for 2006. We welcome this but have some concerns as to whether, having put VisitScotland and the ATB network through considerable reorganisation over the last year, the Scottish Executive will continue to see such legislation as a priority only a year or so later.

We broadly welcome the interim solution of a Chair’s Committee and are delighted to have secured seven places for Local Government on it. However, we must emphasise that this in no way undermines our commitment to full augmentation of the VisitScotland Board as soon as possible. Also, we await details of how this Chair’s Committee will operate in practice and what its status will be with reference to the full Board. It is essential that this Chair’s Committee is up and running now at the earliest possible date.

We also welcome the promise of a National Convention on Tourism to discuss strategic issues, which will consist of the VisitScotland Board and representatives from all 32 local authorities. Again, we await details of how this will operate and how it will meaningfully contribute to addressing strategic issues.

Local Democratic Accountability

We indicated to the Committee in April that Local Government was concerned with the apparent lack of democratic accountability present in the new network as proposed at that time. The then Minister, Frank McAveety MSP, recognised the validity of our concerns and we are delighted that steps have been taken to address them.

We were presented with three models for engagement at the local level. These three local options can be briefly stated as:

- Through the existing community planning structure;
- Through the local economic forum; and
- Through a local group specifically set up by the appropriate tourism network hub to oversee the development of an area tourism strategy, and the associated budgetary considerations.

COSLA set up a small reference group to consider matters arising with regard to the reorganisation of ATBs. The group considered that the best means to integrate these three options was through engagement through all these mechanisms but most specifically through, what is now described in the Framework document as, an Area Tourism Partnership. Local authorities must be the lead agency in this body, given that they have local democratic accountability and a responsibility to promote community well being. However, the new partnerships must also include other key stakeholders, such as local tourism businesses, the local tourism network office, the Enterprise Network, and as appropriate, other public bodies with local tourism interests.
The remit of Area Tourism Partnerships will include:

- Drawing up and overseeing the implementation of Area Tourism Partnership Plans;
- Inputting to the National Tourism Strategy and review of local alignment on an ongoing basis;
- Securing resources for the Area Tourism Partnership Plan from partners;
- Monitoring performance of all partners; and
- Acting, when appropriate, as a lobbying body to further the interests of local tourism, leisure, and hospitality industries.

In addition we believe that it is essential that the Area Tourism Partnerships shape and define the business plan for the new Network and monitor performance against this business plan.

It is welcomed that administrative and secretarial support will be provided by the local Network office. Flexibility around the above model will be possible if agreed locally.

We are pleased with this, and believe it will allow the new network to be more responsive at the local level. Work is now required on developing this partnership working.

**Partnership Agreements**

According to the Implementation Framework document; the above is a framework for partnership agreements between the Network and Scotland’s 32 local authorities. These agreements will offer greater accountability for the investment local authorities make in the network and will move towards linking payments to agreed tangible and measurable deliverables and outcomes. These deliverables and outcomes will be closely related to the area tourism partnership plans and the new national tourism strategy that is proposed.

There has been much work on a template for partnership agreements but this has yet to be finalised. We remain surprised that work on the partnership agreement continues to be formulated prior to the Business Plan, as the agreement in it current form does not give local authorities any indication as to what services are available to buy into. While, of course, the whole point of the area tourism partnership framework detailed above is to allow local flexibility and partnership working, local authorities need to be aware of what they can and can’t expect from what will be a new organisation.

**Special Purpose Vehicles for Business Tourism activity in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow**

COSLA welcomes the special provision being made for business tourism or Convention Bureau activity in the three major cities which account for 95% of international association business. In addition to the VisitScotland’s 50% voting rights in these new SPVs appropriate financial support to their operation is also vitally important. Clear definition of the role and remit of the Business Tourism Unit within VisitScotland and relationship with the 3 new SPVs is also critical. The VisitScotland Business Tourism Unit has a primary role in profiling Scotland as a destination while the SPVs will apply their local knowledge and expertise to competitively sell their cities. For the SPVs it is vital that they maintain the existing financial support of their stakeholders and the proven added value they currently achieve. The local authorities have recognised the need to work with VisitScotland to get the SPVs up and running as quickly as possible to fit in with the transfer timetable of staff and resources to the appropriate new Network Tourist Boards which come into existence from 1 December 2004.

**Funding**

Expecting local authorities to buy into this does not sit easily with Local Government’s commitment to Best Value. We appreciate the difficulties which VisitScotland have in terms of a potential deficit, however councils must be able to justify any spending.
We feel particularly that the implication that the level of redundancies and the future of TICs within the new structure is solely dependent on the maintenance of local government funding is a misleading oversimplification. Whether funded from Local Government or not, it would seem likely that the integration of VisitScotland and the existing ATB structure and the move away from ATBs being member organisations will result in some loss of jobs. Additionally, as stated above, it is for the new organisation to provide a service that local authorities would wish to purchase or provide financial support to. This is after all the way that the new commercially orientated organisation has been portrayed to us from the start.

Given that area tourism plans are not yet developed, the Minister has proposed that 2005/6 should be a transitional year and that core level of funding to the network should be continued at not less than 2004/5 levels during the coming year.

Local Government will play its part and is committed to working with VisitScotland at the national and local level to develop arrangements that councils can sign up to. However given the combination of local accountability to the electorate, pressures to make efficiency savings and getting best value for the public pound, local authorities must be satisfied that the new arrangements and services on offer meet local needs, provide quality and value for money.

**Future Legislation**

Overall we are unclear, given the Minister and wider Cabinet’s clear commitment to implementing successfully the integration process why primary legislation is not being utilised to take this forward as a priority during the coming parliamentary session. While we realise this takes time, it would demonstrate a clear commitment to a stable, long term solution.

We note the position has been that this will happen “*when parliamentary time permits*”, and more recently, from the Implementation Framework document, “in 2006”. However, as stated above, we are perplexed as to why a Tourism Bill was not introduced in tandem with the integration project allowing the industry to undertake the upheaval simultaneously.

As it stands the new network will have a transient feel to it and lack the stability of permanence, which may impact on the lasting success of the reorganisation. Additionally, it should be considered that the longer the two interim Network ATBs remain in existence, the more likely they become accepted as part of the new structure – a new structure that is not designed to include them.

**Conclusion**

COSLA has worked hard over the last few months to deliver arrangements workable at the local level and which ensure local democratic accountability. We believe that we now have the basis for this. However the above shows that work is still required. We are fully committed to working with other key stakeholders to address these issues over the next few months. We believe that outcomes acceptable to all can be achieved and, as a result, the tourism product can be improved, visitor numbers can increase and even more money can be generated for the Scottish economy.

**For further information please contact:**

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10 November 2004
1. Area Tourist Boards continue to share the ambition for a 50% increase in the value of Scottish tourism by 2015. We continue to believe that the ambition is achievable and want to make an active contribution towards achieving it.

2. However, at the moment there is still no overall VisitScotland business plan that outlines how the new network and the industry will work together to achieve the ambition. Remarkably, staff structures are being approved and appointments made before the new organisation’s business plan is completed written. Surely the business plan must come first and it should drive what the structure looks like – not vice versa.

3. We urgently need a business plan that sets out priorities and areas of operation, decides what market segments need to be targeted, and outlines the budgets and staffing resources that will be needed to deliver the ambition. One specific point relates to the city ATBs, who feel that the marketing role for local network offices, as laid out in the announcement made on 3 November, was wholly inadequate. The city ATBs warn that the private sector in the cities might not respond positively to a local marketing role involving nothing more than brochures and websites. A specific role for VisitScotland network offices in defining and determining marketing campaigns, in partnership with the private sector, is requested by the cities.

4. We must insist that ATBs are, from now on, brought into the project on a genuinely inclusive basis so that we can feel a real sense of ownership of the new structure and “sell” it at local level. To date, that has not happened. Although it is history now, there was completely inadequate consultation with ATBs about the detailed proposals which were announced on 3 November. No time at all was given to us for proper consideration and discussion of proposals and options that will affect 14,000 tourism businesses and 1050 tourist board staff. We continue to be asked to accept many verbal assurances and commitments on trust without being clear on how they will be delivered.
5. Our principal concern, however, relates to funding. One of the major justifications for this whole reorganisation was the need to introduce funding stability at local level. We do not see how the proposals for the new structure will provide this. Indeed, we fear that there is a real risk of things getting worse in the short and medium term as membership income ceases with no guarantee that the shortfall will be covered through additional commercial income.

We understand that the marketing opportunities that will be offered to the industry in 2005 will be broadly similar to those offered in 2004. Therefore, how will they be able to generate additional income in excess of £2 million to cover the loss of membership income?

Furthermore, there are no guarantees that local authority funding will be sustained at its current levels, not any indication about how restructuring costs will be financed.

In summary, we fear that sustainable funding at local level is a crisis in waiting that is simply not addressed by the current proposals.

6. We have repeatedly raised concerns about the need to address the corporate culture of the new organisation. We want a genuine one-team approach.

However, the existing management style at VisitScotland is centralist and hierarchical in nature rather than participative, devolved and lateral-working. We are not convinced that the proposed “matrix management” structure that has been presented to us addresses this issue sufficiently. We seek an assurance that ATBs are not simply being grafted on to an existing organisation which has no ability to meet local needs.

If we had a genuinely non-centralist approach, we could, for example, have locally-based marketing teams leading national initiatives.

For example, why should Scottish golf tourism not be promoted by a team of specialists based in Ayrshire, or adventure holidays by a team based in Perthshire? Why can’t the organisation’s staff training function be handled by our existing, highly-successful Tourist Board Training Ltd company? We see no evidence that such an approach is even being considered.
7. Local authorities have, rightly, made much of the so-called “democratic deficit” inherent in the new structure. But it isn’t just local authorities who will no longer be involved in the operations of their local tourism body: there is an equal democratic deficit on the business side. A growing number of trade associations and private businesses are expressing their concerns about the lack of representation, influence and participation they will have in the new system – and the corresponding lack of accountability of the new network. They are also very unhappy about the lack of involvement in the Project up until now.

For example, the British Holiday Parks Association – representing the caravan sector, which in some parts of Scotland accounts for 20% of all tourism – has just expressed its dismay that no-one from the whole caravan sector has been even peripherally involved in the Project planning. Further efforts must be made to ensure that formal mechanisms are put in place to enable the private sector to influence and hold to account the new network.

8. Finally, there still appears to be lack of clarity about the extent to which the new network will be commercially oriented. There have been conflicting and changing messages about the degree to which commercial imperatives will drive the new network. Can there be a definitive statement which will recognise that at local level, VisitScotland network offices will undertake many valuable, but non-revenue-earning, tasks, and that, accordingly, performance measurements and targets for the hubs will not be based solely on income generation or similar financial indicators?

ROBIN SHEDDEN
CHAIR, SCOTTISH AREA TOURIST BOARD NETWORK
17 NOVEMBER 2004

The statement above represents the views of Scottish Area Tourist Boards and Tourist Board Training Ltd. It should be noted, however, that Highlands of Scotland Tourist Board is not a signatory to this statement and Greater Glasgow and Clyde Valley Tourist Board was not present at the meeting at which it was drafted.
Introduction

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 1\textsuperscript{st} November 2004 and is attached at Annex A:

the Scottish Network 2 Tourist Board Scheme Amendment Order 2004, (SSI/2004/465)

Purpose of the instrument

This Order amends the Scottish Network 2 Tourist Board Scheme Order (SSI/2004/397) to substitute references to certain local government areas and also corrects a typographical error.

This Order is a negative instrument which is subject to annulment by way of a resolution of the Parliament. This Order is due to come into force on 1 December 2004.

Subordinate Legislation Committee report

The Subordinate Legislation Committee considered the Scottish Network 2 Tourist Board Scheme Amendment Order 2004, (SSI 2004/465) at its meeting on 9\textsuperscript{th} November. The Subordinate Legislation Committee had no recommendations to make to the Parliament on this instrument.

Recommendation

The Committee is invited to consider any issues that it wishes to raise in reporting to the Parliament on this instrument.

Stephen Imrie
Clerk
18 November 2004
Enterprise and Culture Committee

Meeting 23 November 2004

Committee Work Programme (2005)

Introduction

This paper sets out proposals for the Committee’s 2005 work programme. It consists of activities that the Committee has already agreed to (e.g. current inquiries), those that the Committee would expect to deal with during the course of a calendar year (e.g. budget scrutiny), proposals put forward by Members for new inquiries, and a proposed approach to scrutiny of EU issues. The Committee will be invited to consider the information presented in this paper and agree a work programme for 2005.

Current state-of-play

The Committee is nearing the completion of its inquiry into Arts in the Community. It has also completed the taking of oral evidence at stage 1 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Bill. It has scheduled evidence-taking on its Area Tourist Board review for the end of 2004 and early 2005. It has also scheduled evidence-taking on the Transport Bill for late 2004. Finally, it will commence with its major Business Growth Inquiry from the end of 2004, subject to agreement of the Committee on 30 November to a remit and terms of reference.

A phased approach

I propose three phases for the Committee’s 2005 work programme, namely:

- January 2005 until the February 2005 recess (12-20 February)
- Post-February recess until June 2005
- September 2005 until December 2005

In each of the three phases, I propose the following as the main items in our work programme.

Phase 1 - January 2005 until the February 2005 recess

- Aim to complete the work on the Area Tourist Board Review
- Aim to complete the reporter’s Football Inquiry
- Take final evidence from Scottish Ministers to follow-up the Renewable Energy Inquiry
- Receive a briefing from Scottish ministers on the state-of-play with regards to their ‘Green Jobs’ strategy
- Complete stage 1 and 2 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Bill
- Complete stage 1 of the Transport Bill as a secondary committee
• Discuss the review of Smart Successful Scotland with Scottish ministers

Phase 2 - Post-February recess until June 2005

• Commence oral evidence-taking for the Business Growth Inquiry, conduct any case-study visits etc. It is expected to complete the oral evidence sessions by about the Easter recess, with a view to finalising a draft report before the summer 2005 recess. This will be followed by the Business in the Parliament Conference (September 2005, tbc)
• Budget scrutiny, likely to be in April 2005
• (subject to completion of the Business Growth Inquiry as above), agree remit and launch new, short and focused inquiry (likely to run from May through June)

Phase 3 - September 2005 until December 2005

• Likely to have to consider approaches to the Bankruptcy Bill during this period
• Consideration of how to approach the work of the Culture Commission
• Potentially a new inquiry

New issues

As indicated above, it may be possible to schedule a new, short and focused inquiry following on from the Business Growth Inquiry and complete this over the period May-June 2005. Three proposals have been received from the Committee Members, namely:

1. Employability – proposal for an inquiry to follow-up the demand-side focus of the Business Growth Inquiry and look at issues from the supply side. These would include the current skills and training infrastructure, the identified needs for supply side support in terms of ‘upskilling’ in work, retraining, or general employability development. The inquiry could look at defining the term ‘employability’, as well as commenting on the priorities, means and infrastructure necessary to achieve goals in this area.

2. Small towns under threat – proposal for an inquiry to look into the work of the Executive on the future of small towns. This would recognise the fact that 33% of the Scottish population live in the 262 small towns across Scotland, more than live in the cities. Following “Building Better cities”, the Executive provided £90million towards growing the 6 cities, but is this having the desired effect?

3. Sport – potentially covering (i) the Executive’s strategy and framework for the development of sports, (ii) the Executive’s strategy for major events and international opportunities to promote Scotland through sports, or (iii) follow-up to the report to be produced by Mr Baker MSP on Scottish football.

European Scrutiny

In March 2004, the Conveners’ Group considered and endorsed the following two documents:
a) “The Role of the Scottish Parliament in Relation to European Matters”, and
b) “The Relationship between the European and External Relations Committee and Subject Committees”, by the Convener of the European and External Relations Committee (EERC).

Both papers are concerned with improving the Parliament’s engagement with European Union (EU) legislation and policy.

Members will be aware that the European and External Relations Committee (EERC) regularly circulates ‘sift’ papers which summarise EU documents relevant to committee remits. The EERC also circulates ‘documents of special interest’, which highlights papers on which committees may wish to focus scrutiny.

The Convener to the EERC has proposed ways in which committees could take a more active scrutiny role as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Monitoring role</th>
<th>Active Engagement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask the Executive to provide a six-month (or less) written statement on its EU activities and priorities (include views on new legislation, its transposition, plans for derogations etc.).</td>
<td>Invite the Scottish Executive minister(s) to the Committee for an oral evidence session on his/her 6-monthly report.</td>
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<td>At the same time (as above), request a written briefing from the relevant European Commission Directorate(s)-General on the six months ahead.</td>
<td>Invite the Director-General or a representative from the European Commission to the same committee meeting, perhaps along with a selection of Scotland’s MEPs.</td>
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<td>Where possible, send a representative (Member or official) along to the 6-monthly meeting hosted by the European and External Relations Committee with a representative of each new EU Presidency.</td>
<td>Invite the Executive to provide a briefing on the implications for the subject Committee of the Executive’s European Strategy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organise a familiarisation visit for the committee or a small delegation to the EU institutions.</td>
<td>Consider whether it is necessary or valuable to appoint a dedicated ‘European Adviser’ to report to the Committee on a regular basis on legislative developments and advise on a course of action.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commission a quarterly review of forthcoming EU issues.</td>
<td>Use committee reporters to initiate scoping papers on the impact of forthcoming EU legislation. This may lead to full scale inquiries.</td>
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<td>Seek a written report from the relevant Executive minister(s) prior to and after each relevant meeting of the Council of the EU.</td>
<td>Contribute to consultations launched by the European Commission on legislative plans, to ensure a Scottish perspective is heard and influence debates early.</td>
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<td>Develop good working relationship and share information with your counterpart in the House of Commons and Lords.</td>
<td>Refer any EU-related inquiry reports to the Chamber for a committee-led debate to increase the profile of such matters.</td>
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<td>Ensure that the committee is provided regularly with an “EU paper/pack”, which provides the information it needs to carry out its scrutiny of the Executive. This could include notes on forthcoming legislation, policy debates in the EU, details of SSIs implementing Community law etc.</td>
<td>Routinely consider whether there may be an EU element to any inquiry or piece of work about to be undertaken, which may have a focus on more domestic issues.</td>
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This Committee already considers the EU dimension in relation to its work programme. Members will recall that the Committee took evidence from a member of the European Commission during its renewable energy inquiry, and members of the Session 1 Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Committee visited Brussels to meet MEPs and Commission official during the Committee’s inquiry into lifelong learning.

I am therefore proposing the following approach to European scrutiny:

a) continue email circulation of European ‘sift’ and ‘documents of special importance’ to all members

b) institute a “light-touch” six-monthly scrutiny process whereby the Executive is requested to provide briefings on current and forthcoming EU activity. Such briefings would be supplemented by information on relevant European Commission and European Parliamentary activity as well as, for example, forthcoming subordinate legislation to transpose and implement Directives.

c) continue to ensure that the EU dimension is taken into account when planning inquiries, legislative scrutiny etc.

Recommendations

The Committee is invited to agree:

1) the proposed three-phase approach for 2005 as identified above;

2) (subject to completion of its Business Growth Inquiry) which of the three new issues identified above could form the focus of a new, short and focused inquiry for the period May-June 2005; and

3) agree the proposed approach to European Scrutiny

As per previous agreements, the Convener and the Clerk will take forward this work programme on a day-to-day basis and be responsible for its implementation. In doing so, they will endeavour to keep Committee Members informed of developments.

Alex Neil MSP
Convener