ECONOMY, ENERGY AND TOURISM COMMITTEE

AGENDA

8th Meeting, 2010 (Session 3)

Wednesday 3 March 2010

The Committee will meet at 9.30 am in Committee Room 5.

1. **Evaluation of the Homecoming Scotland 2009 initiative**: The Committee will consider whether to commission research to assist in its evaluation of Homecoming Scotland.

2. **Subordinate legislation**: The Committee will discuss the procedure for consideration of the draft Census (Scotland) Order (SSI 2010/draft).

3. **The way forward for Scotland’s banking, building society and financial services sector (in private)**: The Committee will consider a draft report.

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Clerk to the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee
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The papers for this meeting are as follows—

**Agenda item 1**

Note by the clerk

**Agenda item 3**

PRIVATE PAPER
Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee

8th Meeting, 2010 (Session 3), Wednesday, 3 March 2010

Homecoming Scotland – commissioning research

Background

1. As part of the Committee’s meeting on 27 January 2010, members agreed a forward work programme until summer 2010. This work programme contained an item to evaluate the success of Homecoming Scotland in due course (probably spring 2010), including the management and aftermath of The Gathering 2009 event. The work programme that was agreed to suggested that this may include the Committee questioning the Scottish Ministers, VisitScotland etc as well as commissioning SPICe or an external expert/adviser to provide some detailed analysis of, or commentary on, any research produced by the consultants that have been contracted to evaluate Homecoming.

2. As an annex to this paper, SPICe has provided an update on the research commissioned by VisitScotland to provide a formal review of the Homecoming Scotland initiative. It is expected that this research will be completed by the end of May. Consequently, any subsequent analysis by the Committee of the research commissioned by VisitScotland and wider issues would probably take place in late May/early June.

3. As indicated in the paper from SPICe, an analysis of the research undertaken by VisitScotland’s consultants could be carried out for the Committee by the new Financial Scrutiny Unit within SPICe. Alternatively SPICe suggests that a consultant in the tourism sector could be invited to do this analysis via a short-term competitively-bid research contract.

Action/decision

4. The Committee is invited to discuss how it wishes to proceed in relation to commissioning research to assist it to evaluate the analysis provided to VisitScotland by its consultants on the success of Homecoming Scotland, lessons to be learnt and policy proposals for the future. In particular, the Committee is asked if it would prefer this research to be done by SPICe or via an external consultant.

Stephen Imrie
Clerk to the Committee
February 2010
ANNEX

Evaluation of Homecoming Scotland

Homecoming Scotland 2009 was a Scottish Government initiative to encourage more visitors to Scotland and increase spending by visitors. The initiative was managed by EventScotland in partnership with VisitScotland and included more than 400 events with associated publicity and marketing. The target was to increase visitor numbers by 100,000 and revenues by £44m. A budget of £5.5m was provided.

An extensive evaluation of Homecoming is underway with performance being evaluated against the four core aims of the project. These are

- To deliver additional tourism visits and revenue for Scotland (Note: additional is relative to the numbers if Homecoming Scotland had not taken place)
- To engage and mobilise the Scottish Diaspora
- To promote pride in Scots at home and abroad
- To celebrate Scotland’s outstanding contributions to the world

Findings will be derived from 3 sources, all independently evaluated.

- Economic Impact Assessment undertaken by EKOS, an independent economic evaluation company. All funded events are required to submit Event Outcome Reports. The outcome reports will evaluate a number of key aspects including the economic impact of the Homecoming events programme. For some of the bigger events, findings from the Outcome Reports will be supplemented with some fieldwork. Partner events (non-funded events) will also be evaluated in the context of the economic impact assessment.
- Conversion Studies being worked on by TNS, a market research consultancy. Campaign respondents (international as well as domestic) have been asked whether they actually visited Scotland during the campaign period and the extent to which the marketing materials they received influenced their decision to visit (during 2009 and/or made them more likely to visit in the future).
- Media Coverage evaluation by Media Measurement looking at reach, value, quality, tone of messages.

During 2009 VisitScotland monitored performance against a number of criteria including

- consumer response to TV advertising - awareness, likeability, engagement
- awareness, approval and propensity to attend events
- a variety of web metrics (user sessions, page views etc) which convey levels of engagement with Homecoming Scotland
- database additions
- response rates to e-communications
- media coverage
- feedback from event organisers

The results of the evaluation are expected by the end of May.

The Committee has indicated that it would like to examine the evaluation report and would wish a briefing. SPICe (Financial Scrutiny Unit) would be willing to provide such a briefing. Alternatively a consultant in the tourism sector could be invited to do so.

Jim Dewar
Scottish Parliament Information Centre