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Am Prìomh Mhinistear
First Minister of Scotland



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Our Reference: 202300371840

6 September 2023

Dear All

Thank you for your letter of 11 August 2023 on behalf of Alcohol Focus Scotland, Scottish Recovery Consortium, SHAAP, Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs, Scottish Alcohol Counselling Consortium and the European Alcohol Policy Alliance. I would also like to thank you and your colleagues for attending the roundtable on 31 July. I valued your time and considered discussion. I know you already have good working links with my officials and hope that this good working relationship continues.

We discussed Alcohol and Drugs Partnerships, and the importance of sending a clear message to partnerships on the pressing and ongoing need for services to address alcohol harm. I am pleased to be able to update that the Minister for Drugs and Alcohol wrote to all Chairs and Co-ordinators of Alcohol & Drugs Partnerships on 11 August on this issue. The letter stressed my personal commitment to addressing both alcohol and drug harms and to link the efforts being made to address both of these public health priorities.

The need for that greater integration is a key part of why I expanded the ministerial portfolio, so we now have a Minister for both Alcohol and Drugs Policy. The letter restates this and sets out that the majority of funding allocated to ADPs is intended to deliver both drug and alcohol services and we need to ensure the momentum that partnerships have worked hard to achieve to tackle the rise in drug deaths and harms is mirrored in our work to address alcohol specific deaths and harms.

I am determined to do all I can to reduce alcohol-related harm and I know ADPs and the third sector are already working together to do so, funded by the substantial investment in this area through National Mission funding.

We also discussed alcohol marketing, and as you know the consultation responses are being analysed to understand the views and perspectives of those that responded. We will publish both the roundtables and the consultation findings later this year, which will inform the potential content and scope of any policy proposals and our consideration of appropriate next steps with this work. These next steps must include further detailed consultation on

Tha Ministearan na h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus an Rùnaire
Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered
by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

specific proposals. I am committed to this including engagement with families and others with direct lived experience of alcohol harm.

I know we collectively recognise the harms alcohol still causes far too many people and families in Scotland, and that we need to do more to reduce that harm. I am clear that children need to be protected from alcohol marketing which can be too accessible. I am happy to support your campaign, as my Ministers have done, and my office will follow up to find a suitable date.

Finally, thank you for the information you have shared on how other countries have approached the issue of conflict of interest across sectors. My officials are following up with their counterparts in Ireland to learn from their approach. Within government, I can reassure you that officials across relevant Directorates from health to economy to food and drink are fully aware of, and regularly engage on, the care needed to ensure engagement with industry is appropriate.

As my Minister for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work & Energy said when he wrote to the NCD Alliance on this issue in June, we do fully recognise that these are areas where all governments need to exercise acuity and good judgement. As part of our commitment on the New Deal for Business, we will engage at an early stage in the process to work with business (and a range of other key stakeholders) to ensure that the impact of policy proposals on businesses is fully understood and that policy implementation is effective and proportionate, while still delivering the beneficial outcomes for population health that we are seeking. This is distinct from guiding the content and development of that policy in the first instance which we understand and agree is not appropriate for all sectors.



HUMZA YOUSAF

1. Alcohol summit

1.1 Transcript of handwritten notes from summit

Note: various scored out words were not readable during the transcription, and largely reflect spelling corrections.

Note one

[Redacted]

Thank you for engaging & keen to meet in person. Apology for delay, [scored out word] set out impacts alcohol across society. Grateful for PHS also in attendance. Also thank you for those with lived experience. Express sympathy for those personally impacted.

Set out our [crossed out word] ways of dealing with alcohol harms in policy in Scotland.

PHS work with MUP. Strong evidence base here and impact MUP is having specifically in areas of deprivation. Also no [scored out word] evidence of impacts (neg) to industry.

Highlighted that work ongoing MUP and won't prejudice outcomes, confident in policy that works and suite of interventions.

Note two

"Part2

covered new deal and the reset deal with business. [Redacted]. Want to hear impacts to business later. PH business this will not be on policy in health. Mitigations eg when developing [scored out word] health implications of implementation.

Opportune moment for asks as this over summer gives us time for horizon scanning. PFG and budget issues and help to inform discussions. Keen to keep dialogue on-going, schedule in more convos, expect some things can do & some things will need further help.

MsW: Nice to meet stakeholders some not met before. Thanked for MUP round tables. Also recognised support for evaluation of MUP & support from PHS. Outlined approach for MUP & work to timescales to sunset clause. Can't go into detail of MUP but space to raise issues here.

Highlighted the alcohol marketing consultation work and response to supporting need to reduce alcohol marketing to children. Outlined the next steps on alcohol marketing including publication of results. [Redacted]

-need to be led by evidence & robust evidence

-[Redacted]

[Scored out word – wrong word] ADP should have funding to support treatment."

Part 3

"Restated commitment to alcohol & drugs work on-going to support families & to stop people becoming addicted in first place

Awaiting ATG and targets, highlighting work that [Redacted] is chairing

Highlighted work ongoing on stigma & ABI, where role is to support work on treatment.

Work collaboratively with stakeholders, including how to make local areas accountable addressing blockers to support reducing harms from alcohol.

Reiterated safe space & how to take forward next steps.

FM: Agree prioritised NM for drugs but not to detriment of alcohol.

- alcohol specific death rate is real concern
- understanding why 40% decrease in treatment

[Redacted] really +ve for the priorities given to alcohol, consensus in health and recovery community for addressing alcohol harms. Know what works, previous FM's approach welcomed [crossed out word – wrong word] to alcohol harm. Welcome to be part of solutions [Redacted]

Part 4

"could be achieved, this could knock on effect on economy, NHS -> knock on wider economy effects as alcohol harms increases

[Redacted] international standing still high, quality of evaluation is good & letter in Lancet soon on this. May not be at top of table now with Ireland 65 ppu-> written review 3 years then every 18 months then recognise review needed. Wales & Jersey also have. Ireland have structural separation in part response to broad youth brand awareness, branding at pitches and legal mandatory warnings, EU no barriers to this introduction.
-not so much recently & momentum down
-conflict of interest policy

Mortality -> gap narrowed across UK, Scotland & NE & NI close to one another."

1.2 Notes from alcohol harm summit

[redacted] - original vision was how alcohol links with family life and wider society. Seeing harms increasing without further intervention then concerned. 2018 framework not made as much swift progress on some items, what priority does SG give to alcohol and how stakeholders can support

FM - space of analysing consultation responses, large number 3000 and will come back to parliament with solid proposals, particularly in reference to children. Know need to have actions on the back of the consultation. Really important to think about the whole family approach and the engagement that was done around youth parliament

Finances are constrained and there has been investment in ADPs and more work needs to be done to show funding for both and that drugs shouldn't be at the detriment of alcohol

[Redacted]

[redacted]- treatment - wanting for having a better feel on the ground, people are presenting later with more serious harms. Some one recently presented in late 50s with long history, three months treatment and in and out of hospital, sober 3 months and died because harms were so significant. Fully supportive of NM, unintended consequences that ADPs are very focused on this on drugs and seeing this issue around Lothian.

Ew - do you think this has changed as used to be easier to get alcohol treatment vs drugs?

[redacted]- yes that is fair, at the moment ADPs stretched to deliver on drugs and so detriment to alcohol. Need to see if can put more into alcohol as the energy and enthusiasms for drugs read over to alcohol.

EW - see targets being expanded to both in 2024, do you think that will help to reset the balancing for drugs and alcohol

[redacted]- don't have the same joined up feeling in alcohol that there is drugs

FM - this is why we consolidated alcohol and drugs under one minister. Something we can do more formally with ADPs in general. Funding is an issue and note there has been underspend in recent years [Redacted]

[redacted]- key entry point for alcohol is GP. This first level has fallen down since pandemic. Need to recognise alcohol treatment is a small part of recovery journey. Many people will have a limited amount of formal treatment compared to across community support. There is not a lot of wider funding for this area. Treatment will only tell so much and not about sustaining recovery.

EW - Recognise the role in community and the wider support and how to mainstream so people can access.

[redacted]- When treatment and recovery communities work together this is where it makes a huge difference

FM - National Mission - large focus on drugs - recognise that when budgets are tight then local third sector funding can be pulled

[redacted]- confusing on ADPs over where funding can be used for both alcohol and drugs. Could this be an action for SG to progress to facilitate spending.

EW - Need to understand what is preventing people from accessing treatment and how services are connected

[redacted]- recognition within communities that recovery can read across to other addictions and not limited on alcohol

[redacted] - Agree with treatment and the MAT targets is to the detriment of alcohol. If were to listen to the alcohol industry and all about addiction and treating alcohol dependency, which is important. However people are dying with wide range of alcohol-related issues (alcohol-related 3x higher than -specific). Want to limit impacts from alcohol is a whole population approach. Want to make two points - welcome effectively in MUP and discussions on uprating MUP, when and how this would be done. Ask would be to 65ppu, which is a minimum and level with what MUP is currently are. Pressures in health services and is creaking, need to reduce people needing to access the system. Recognising that is it political hard but population measures and MUP uprating.

[redacted]- alcohol targetted and is having a positive effect on health inequalities. Cost of living crisis, know hard to make the case under the current financial system - however this has inequalities and can provide support

Alcohol Levy – [Redacted] There is a model from the Public Health Supplement that we had previously. Renewal and uprating, how do we automate it.

[redacted]- alcohol marketing - concern about the messaging to go back to the noticeboard. Letter was generic and practically no time to discuss here. We need to have confidence that the evidence is robust and welcome to have further conversations around the impacts on marketing on harm, consumption. The issue with the environment and alcohol marketing is everywhere, especially when in recovery. Perception from families that SG has changed attitude to alcohol marketing.

Easy things could implement outdoor and public space, retail space and promotions and sponsorship.

Scotland has been a world leader and we are falling behind in marketing.

Specific question - are you still planning to legislate in this parliament, what do you think is convincing and what are more issues - how do you give voice to the families

FM - welcome further conversations. Number of range of issues are the subjects of disinformation and media commentary. [Redacted]

Families, one for us to take back and we can look to see how can engage more visibly before come back on the consultation response.

Question if you could reach out to build consensus with your links as well. Happy to engage in more detail.

EW - what evidence can be disseminated across Scotland including parliament to show mis information and biased information, which is getting a lot of traction. For example such as the international evidence that we can draw on.

[redacted]- Lithuania moved forward a ban 3 years ago. Need to work on building a coalition on this. You Gov polling are supportive with general public (ACTION to get). When people are directly asked they understand the reasoning and public understand.

FM - DRS is popular with public but UKG still challenged. Welcome support from stakeholders around the table to push issue.

[redacted]- dealing with ONS over the question on evaluation and we have no concerns on robustness. Willing to work with partners over where there is strongest evidence. PHS response looked at where alcohol marketing could be done around children. Also welcome to help around implementation on robust implementation of standards for alcohol. Happy to be used and make connections with stakeholders. Recognise that more action needs to be done, highlighted the burden of disease and increasing over time. Only by changes in alcohol urgently can this change the current direction.

FM - good example on lung disease, which has done this.

[redacted]- people that use the services and 40% gap and 65% use the services will never be known to other clinical services and so if these services reduce with increased gap in services. Not everyone uses recovery communities.

Was once 32 councils on alcohol services and now reduced to 7 [Redacted]

Capacity is an issue and need people in their services. How this can be done in ADPs and there are common themes around number of people accessing services.

MM - discussion around MUP - took 2 attempts to get through. Strong and consistent message from government, stakeholders in the room and wider practitioners. Consistency of message and why important to tackle key areas. Alongside independent modelling work. This clear focus and central purpose of policy allowed us to cut through those who opposed it. Going forward we need to achieve a consensus that are the key issues to take forward on alcohol and how to tackle issues of alcohol misuse. We then need strong consistent messaging around this to push forward. If can get to point to clear agenda and evidence based on areas prioritising will support on how we deal with the challenges that will be seen.

JM - Importance of removing stigma. Visited a hub in Dunoon, which supports wide range of issues and is at centre of community. Importance of community, connectivity and collectivity. Don't

always find where there is alcohol. The local profiles from AFS are really useful and how does the government use this information going forward and approach from a public health perspective.

[redacted]- Developing a conflict of Interest policy [Redacted] Role industry presents in this area. Development of a conflict of interest policy is critical across different areas of health and clear evidence base why industry cannot be involved in the development of public health policy. Correct industry engaged In implementation but not development. Now stepping into the space of the scale of problem and treatment options. See it also in tobacco and food. COI is important.

FM - summarising - ADPs. Considering doing a debate in September around MUP, send a clear signal our intention to take action on marketing going forward. How we message this so that families know they are being listened to.

Overarching theme and how government can engage collectively on whole population approaches, especially in the context of MUP.

Request to continue inform us on evidence base as it develops and collectively work as stakeholders to engage wider government on this issue.

FM reiterated commitment to develop work on alcohol harms.

2. Celtic Forum

2.1 Engagement Report

FRANCE ENGAGEMENT REPORT	
Minister	Shona Robison Deputy First Minister
Type of engagement	Celtic Forum, Round Table
Date	03 August 2023
Who	Loig Chesnais-Girard , President of Brittany Region Rt Hon Mark Drakeford AM , First Minister for Wales Niall Burgess , Irish Ambassador to France Jesús Gamallo Aller , Representative from Galicia Councillor Linda Taylor , Representative from Cornwall Maria Belarmina , Representative from Asturias
Key points	<p>It was agreed that the Forum can help the participants work on the challenges that they have in common but also help each other on individual challenges. The Forum is a <i>Laboratoire unique</i> enabling us to build new pathways.</p> <p>The Forum had three thematic sessions that focused on; renewable energies and the potential of the oceans and seas; youth and mobility as a way to open young people's eyes and increase their understanding of the world; and culture including languages, identity, and artistic cooperation.</p> <p><i>Each partner presented their challenges and opportunities for each of the themes.</i></p> <p>Renewable Energy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The challenges are considerable. There is a need for a new collective ambition. • The ocean and seas connect us all. Wind is a great asset, which we are all developing rapidly. Marine space is also seven times the size of our land mass.

- We can either compete or cooperate. It was agreed we cannot develop this effectively without working together.
- The pace of technical change is rapid and it is crucial that we keep up.
- It was agreed there are possibilities to learn from each other, such as:
 - Social acceptability. There were thoughts on how we work with key players (e.g. fishermen and local communities), explain the need for renewable energy and ensure that the value created remains in those communities.
 - Industry and construction. This discussion focused on jobs and skills for building, maintaining and then transforming.
 - A possibility for coordination of Celtic ports and to consider applying jointly to calls for tender.
 - Realignment on education and work based training.
 - Green skills – It was noted that urgency here is needed due to short supply, especially in the fields of retro- fitting, and offshore Wind. The point was made that there is a need to think about how we can develop these transferable skills and develop common standards for skills.
- The discussion also focused on how to balance the needs of the economy and environment. Some examples included: Scotland's experience of gas and coal, Cornwall's lithium deposits and geo thermals, Galicia's observatory Wind turbines and industry/community engagement, Ireland's Celtic interconnectors, Wales data on tides.

Youth / mobility

- Participants talked about the challenges notably since the UK left the EU and ERASMUS.
- Each delegation set out their current programmes.
- The participants discussed COVID and the impact it has had on young people. This discussion included the value of cultural exchange programmes on mental health and mobility.
- **Participants talked about practical ways of working together:**
 - Building on existing university links and connections, including sport.
 - That opportunities need to go beyond higher education and reach young people in other ways, such as youth service level, trade union movement, youth movements, language communities and youth parliaments.
 - We need to use new methods of digital communications to link in with young people and bring them together.
 - The role of school councils and forming alliances with similar bodies.
 - University and research collaboration, including mapping connection across our regions.
 - Mapping the direct links between our regions.

Culture

- Participants recognised that there had been a renaissance in language and music, which is being driven by young people.
- The Forum discussed practical suggestions, such as
 - How we promote our culture together
 - Community twinnings as a powerful way for cultural dialogue and cooperation. We could share best practice on twinning.
 - Sport could be used as a cultural communicator, such as in a Celtic Games.
 - Galicia/Asturias and others have a cultural framework, the participants discussed if this could be replicated with this Forum.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There exists a physical connection between Celtic nations which is the way of St James. There is a possibility to leverage this through partnerships.
Comments	Despite the postponement – [Redacted] - the event itself was a useful opportunity to exchange on issues of genuine common interest. There were useful opportunities for discussion in the margins [Redacted]. This was also the first time we have been able to engage with these particular Spanish autonomous communities. However, the real value of the forum will only be evident in terms of subsequent follow up.
Attending officials	[Redacted] Scottish Government France Office [Redacted] Scottish Government France Office [Redacted] Private Secretary to DFM

2.2 Bilateral between Deputy First Minister and Welsh First Minister

FRANCE ENGAGEMENT REPORT	
Minister	Shona Robison (SR) Deputy First Minister
Type of engagement	Bilateral
Date	03 August 2023
Who	Mark Drakeford (MD) First Minister of Wales
Key points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both talked about the possibilities and opportunities of the Celtic forum and how it is a way of showing that we are open and outlooking nations. [Redacted] • Both spoke about constitutional relationships, noting that Devolution needs to be at the forefront of the UK's workings, rather than something to consider at the end. • [Redacted] • Ambitions for achieving Net Zero – Environment and Climate Change was discussed, noting the importance of keeping the momentum going, [Redacted]
Comments	This was DFM's and FM's first official bilateral. Both shared their enthusiasm about the upcoming Celtic Forum, and, with Wales having an MoU with Brittany for almost 20 years, it is clear that we can learn from them and their lessons learnt over the decades. Both reiterated the commitment of our ongoing work on climate and environmental issues.
Attending officials	[Redacted] Scottish Government France Office [Redacted] Scottish Government France Office [Redacted], Private Secretary to DFM

4. US Ambassador

4.1 Briefing for meeting with US ambassador

BRIEFING FOR THE FIRST MINISTER

Meeting with US Ambassador Jane Hartley

4 August 2023

Key message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relationship between Scotland and the US is hugely important to us, with deep and long-standing ties reflected by the strong economic, cultural and personal links of our citizens.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scotland is an strong and reliable partner for the US, and a responsible member of the international community, as evidenced by our leadership on climate and renewable energy.
What	Meeting with US Ambassador and a brief, escorted tour of the V&A Tartan and Scottish Design Galleries.
Why	US Ambassador Jane Hartley requested the meeting on her first visit to Scotland since the First Minister took up his post.
Who	<p>Jane Hartley - United States Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland</p> <p>Jack Hillmeyer - Consul General at the U.S. Consulate General in Edinburgh</p>
Where	V&A Dundee, 1 Riverside Esplanade, Dundee DD1 4EZ
When	<p>4 August 2023</p> <p>Meeting: 12:15 – 12:45</p> <p>Exhibition viewing: 12:45</p>
Likely themes	Scottish/US links across portfolios, in particular US Scottish relationships, trade, energy security and wider diplomatic relations.
Media	FM Comms to Advise
Supporting official	[Redacted]
Attached documents	<p>Annex A – Briefing for FM/Ambassador Meeting</p> <p>Annex B – Key Biographies</p> <p>Annex C – Policy Background Briefing</p> <p>Annex D – US / Scotland Key Achievements</p>

Meeting Summary Page

The meeting is an opportunity to build relations with the most senior representative of the US Government in the UK. Ambassador Hartley requested the meeting herself, on her first visit to Scotland since the First Minister took up his post.

It is an opportunity to reflect on Scotland/US relations and explore priority discussion areas. The US Consulate Edinburgh will have a photographer at the meeting and V&A tour, which will also generate attractive social media.

Suggested Agenda

The US Consulate has suggested the following topics for conversation. Relevant top lines can be found below and in annex B.

- Promoting US/Scotland people-to-people ties
- Climate and clean energy transition; US/Scotland Economic Links
- Russia/Ukraine: Support for refugees, European Energy Security
- External Engagement: FM visit to Brussels, potential visit for New York Climate Week

Points to make

- Welcome Ambassador to Dundee and wish her well for her onward travels to Edinburgh. Delighted to meet for the first time and hope this is the first of many productive discussions during her time as Ambassador. Pleased she is visiting during the festival again, which plays host to over 160 artists, creatives and company members from the US or working with the US based companies.
- We have an excellent relationship with the US which is going from strength-to-strength: the US is our largest source of inward investment and biggest export market; and we have deep cultural, people-to-people and education links.
- We have had an office in Washington DC for over 20 years to promote Scotland's interests through political, cultural and economic diplomacy. The office works on building relationships at the federal, congressional and state-level. It supports Scotland's cultural relationships, promotes Scotland's higher education institutions and collaborates with Scottish Development International to position Scotland as a leading business location.
- Scotland's strengths in key sectors such as renewables, financial technology, space and data science make us an ideal partner for expanding US markets and inward investment.
- The US Scottish diaspora is over 10m and relations are strong. It is not just historic - 4,145 US students studied in Scotland in 2019/20. The USA is Scotland's third biggest market for non-EU international students in Scotland, after China and India.
- The US Consul General's office have been very engaged with events in Scotland, including St Andrew's Day and Burns Night. The Ambassador would be most welcome to return to Scotland to celebrate these events with us.

US/Scotland Relationship

- US/Scotland engagement is stronger than ever following COP26 and recent visits to the US by the Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture (April 2023), the Minister for Environment, Biodiversity and Land Reform (September 2022) and former First Minister (FFM) (May 2022). I look forward to visiting in the coming year.
- The US is Scotland's biggest source of inward investment with over 650 US businesses having a base here, and the US is Scotland's biggest export market: £6bn in 2019, an increase of £500m from £5.5bn in 2018.
- Scotland enjoys modern cultural ties with the US, with growing links to the film sector in our studios (FirstStage and Wardpark). I understand that the Ambassador has indicated an interest in developing T&I opportunities within the Culture sector, this is a good moment to do that with Scotland. The Economic Value of Screen Report in June 2022 found that turnover on film and TV production in Scotland was £403m, and development of production of screen content alone has added £319m (GVA) to the Scottish economy.
- Upcoming Ministerial visits to the US are in development. This will help us build on our strong relationships, and we commit to sharing information with your Edinburgh staff on this.

Investment Opportunities in Scotland

- The EY Attractiveness Survey again puts Scotland as the most attractive location for financial services foreign direct investment outside of London.
- Given our strengths (universities, ecosystem and probably under-valued companies – given the small VC sector) there would be merit in looking to work together on more trade delegations bringing US capital to Scotland.

Visiting Delegations

- I look forward to welcoming Special Presidential Envoy John Kerry to Scotland later this month, to discuss shared climate and environmental priorities ahead of key climate moments this year.
- The Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture recently welcomed the US Congressional Committee on Transport and Infrastructure to Scotland. They visited Spire Global's satellite manufacturing facility in Glasgow.
- I would be delighted to see more CoDels and Staff Delegations visit Scotland, and will always do my best to make sure a ministerial colleague meets them if my team are alerted in time to the visit.
- Most of what the delegations wish to see in Scotland is within devolved competencies, and US policy makers and businesses should be meeting the people with responsibility for policy in Scotland: Scottish Ministers and officials.

Policy Background Briefing

Visits

- The US may be keen to discuss FM international travel and external engagement plans, including potential visit for New York Climate Week. Officials are currently exploring upcoming opportunities and will update US Consulate colleagues in due course.

Scottish Connections Framework

- The Scottish Government recently launched our “Scottish Connections Framework” which aims to engage Scotland’s global diaspora, which we believe is upwards of 40 million people, dwarfing Scotland’s current population.
- The US is home to our largest diaspora community. Tartan Week in New York is a huge celebration of our ties, and I am delighted that the Scottish Government continues to support these events.
- I would welcome your Embassy and Consulate’s support in identifying and helping us engage Scotland’s diaspora across the United States, all year round.
- We have taken a broad and welcoming definition of diaspora, to include not only those born in Scotland or with Scottish ancestry, but also those who studied here, or who have a strong cultural, business, educational or any other affinity with our country.
- Our work will include addressing more difficult chapters in our history, including engaging African American Scots whose ancestors suffered so awfully as a result of the transatlantic slave trade, and the impact of Scottish migrants on indigenous communities. We have committed to working with academic partners in Scotland and the US to better understand these issues.

Scotland’s Energy Strengths

- Scotland has the skills, talent and natural resources with which to become a global renewables powerhouse. Our draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan sets out our vision for an energy system that delivers affordable, resilient and clean energy supplies.
- As hosts of COP26, Scotland has demonstrated commitment to helping other countries and regions meet global ambitions on renewable energy in a just way. We stand by to assist the US however best we can.
- Establishing hydrogen production from onshore wind and the development of regional hydrogen production hubs linked to offshore wind are part of the critical path towards achieving our ambition of at least 5GW of renewable and low carbon hydrogen by 2030 and 25GW by 2045.
- The Hydrogen Action Plan is supported by a £100m programme of capital funding, designed to accelerate and maximise the production of renewable hydrogen in Scotland.
- Scotland’s natural resources, skilled offshore workforce, excellent port structure and strong innovation hub, make Scotland one of the best places in the world to develop offshore wind and its supply chain.
- With Scotwind and INTOG leasing rounds combined – subject to planning and consenting decisions and finding a route to market - we have a current reported potential pipeline of over 38 GW of offshore wind projects, on top of the 2.2 GW already operational in Scotland.

International Climate Change

- The twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss are amongst the biggest global challenges of our time.
- The Scottish Government believes that the best way to successfully tackle the global climate emergency is for all nations to work together to exchange ideas and agree shared actions.
- As European Co-Chair of the Under2 Coalition, Scotland is committed to working with members – including our close partner North American Co-Chair California – to support them in the delivery of their climate ambitions.
- As an engaged global citizen, Scotland will attend New York Climate Week and COP28, making the case for further integration of non-Party governments into international climate processes while working with our international partners to help secure a global transition to a net zero and resilient future in a way that is fair and just for all.
- We are designing a COP28 programme that builds on our progressive international influence and achievements at COP27 and previous COPs, such as being the first developed country to provide financial support for loss and damage and ensuring non-party governments' important role is recognised.

Energy Security

- Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine and their resulting use of gas supply as a weapon of war created a supply shortfall that impacted the energy landscape.
- Security of electricity supply is a reserved matter and is delivered by the National Grid as Electricity System Operator (ESO) across the whole of Great Britain under regulation from Ofgem.
- My officials have been in regular contact with both organisations and the UK Government, who have advised us that they are confident our requirements will be met in full. However, we remain engaged to plan for any challenging scenarios that might emerge for this winter.

Russia / Ukraine Conflict

- The Scottish Government has repeatedly condemned Russia's illegal war against Ukraine and is shocked and appalled at the violence and humanitarian crisis this has caused.
- We welcome the Biden administration and US Congress directing over \$75 billion dollars in assistance towards Ukraine.
- Scotland stands for democracy, human rights and the rule of law at home and abroad. We have offered our unqualified support for Ukrainian sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.
- We all wish a speedy victory for Ukraine and a resolution which restores peace and ensures Ukrainian sovereignty, democracy, independence and territorial integrity.
- Providing support and sanctuary for displaced people from Ukraine will continue to be a priority for the Scottish Government as people in Scotland would expect.

Ukrainian resettlement

- Scotland's Super Sponsor Scheme has been overwhelmingly popular, with local authorities, the third sector and local communities responding in partnership.
- Since the war against Ukraine began over 25,100 people sponsored by an individual in Scotland or the Scottish Government have arrived in the UK.
- Almost 20,100 of these arrivals are through the Scottish Government's successful Super Sponsor Scheme.
- I am proud of how Scotland has responded to this humanitarian crisis and grateful to all of those who have opened up their home to displaced Ukrainians fleeing the war.
- The Scottish Government has provided £11.2 million of funding to Local Government to increase the capacity of resettlement teams.

JANE HARTLEY

Jane Hartley was sworn in as the United States Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 27 May, 2022. She served as Ambassador to the French Republic and the Principality of Monaco from 2014-2017. Hartley was Chief Executive Officer of Observatory Group, an international economic and political advisory firm. Before founding the Observatory Group, she was Chief Executive Officer of the G7 Group, a premier research firm providing macroeconomic and political analysis to global clients.

Hartley currently serves as a member of the Visiting Committee of the Kennedy School at Harvard University, as well as the Executive Committee and the Dean's Council of the Kennedy School. She is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Previously, Hartley was a Member of the Board of Trustees of Heidrick & Struggles and a Presidential appointee to the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service. She was Vice Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Economics Club of New York and held positions as Vice President at both Universal (MCA) and Westinghouse Broadcasting.

Hartley served at the White House in the Carter Administration and earned a B.A. at Boston College (Newton College).

JACK HILLMEYER

Jack arrived in Edinburgh in August 2021 after serving as Deputy Consul General in Karachi, Pakistan.

He previously served at the U.S. Mission to NATO in Brussels as Political and Public Affairs Advisor from 2015 to 2019. He was Spokesperson at the U.S. Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa from 2012 to 2015. He also served as the Executive Secretary at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan from 2011 to 2012 and at the U.S. Consulate General in Milan, Italy from 2008 to 2011.

From 2005 to 2008, he worked at State Department headquarters in Washington, D.C. He has also been posted to the U.S. Consulate General in Durban, South Africa, and the U.S. Embassy in Libreville, Gabon.

Before joining the Foreign Service, he was a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Kyrgyz Republic and studied at Southern Methodist University and Georgetown University. Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, he is a proud member of Cardinal nation and is married with four children.

US/Scotland Key Achievements

The US is Scotland's most important international trading partner and holds key opportunities for growth, as identified in A Trading Nation. It is both our largest inward investor, and our largest international export destination.

The US is also home to a huge Scottish diaspora, with estimates ranging from 10-25 million who identify as having Scottish ancestry, including 34 Presidents who claimed Scots or Scots-Irish heritage.

The Scottish Government's **Scottish Affairs Office** in Washington DC, exists to enhance our reputation and promote Scotland in the US as well as build on key relationships in-country.

Scotland's Engagement Strategy with the US focuses on the key themes of:

- Trade & Investment
- Education
- Public diplomacy & governmental exchanges
- Diaspora engagement
- Research, innovation & entrepreneurship

Scottish (direct) exports to the US:

- **£6bn – 2019** (Export Statistics Scotland)
- **£5.5bn – 2018** (Export Statistics Scotland)
- **The US market receives 16% of all Scottish exports**
 - The US is the top export market for Scotch Whisky, with £789.8 million exported in 2021 (75% of all Scottish food and drink exports). This is up £60.9 million (+8.4%) on 2020 exports but down £279.1 million (-26.1%) compared to 2019.
 - The industry estimated that over £600 million worth of whisky sales were lost as a result of 25% tariffs on single malt whisky being applied by the US between October 2019 and March 2021.
 - Scottish salmon exports reached **£193m**, almost one third of all salmon exports.

Key areas of export include:

- Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing
- Food and Drink
- Financial and Business Services
- Technology, Digital and Media
- Energy

Market Access

- SDI has **four** offices in the US (Boston, Chicago, Houston, San Jose).
- SDI delivered 509 projects in the US in 2019/20.

Scottish companies based / doing business in the US include:

- Financial Services: **Aberdeen, Martin Currie (now owned by US HQ'd Legg Mason), Baillie Gifford, RBS (Citizens).**
- Energy: **Maritime Development** and **Neptune Subsea** have both opened within Houston incubator facility; MOU between the **Business Network for Offshore Wind** and the **Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group** (April 2018).

Investment

- There are **655** US owned enterprises (around **25%** of total foreign-owned) in Scotland in 2020, employing **114,220 people**, and a turnover of **£35.5bn**.

American companies based / doing business in Scotland

- Largest employer: **Amazon** has close to 3,000 staff over four sites in Scotland.
- **Morgan Stanley** employ 1,100 in Glasgow
- **Hewlett Packard** has been based in Erskine for 25 years and employ c550 employees and contractors.
- Others examples: **JP Morgan** (1900), **State Street** (775), **BlackRock** (700), **Morgan Stanley** (1400), **Citigroup** (300), **IBM** (2050), **General Electric** (1074), **Thermo Fisher Scientific** (700), **Halliburton** (1,100), **Oceaneering** (1,000), **National Oilwell Varco** (1,420), **Starwood** (300)

Higher Education

- **4,145** US students studying in Scotland in 2019/20.
- USA is Scotland's third biggest market for non-EU international students in Scotland, after China and India.
- Scotland's **Saltire Scholarships** for incoming students were launched in 2009. Nearly **250** American students have received these awards, now worth £8000 each, since 2009.
- 16 Scottish HEIs have 82 unique links with the USA, including staff and student exchange, research collaborations, and presence in country. Harvard is the single biggest collaboration partner with Scottish Universities worldwide – and thousands of joint publications between Scottish and USA universities every year.

4.2 Note of meeting between FM and US Ambassador
Meeting Note of First Minister Meeting with US Ambassador Jane Hartley
4 August 2023 – V&A Dundee

Attendees:

US Ambassador H.E. Jane Hartley, Jack Hillmeyer (US Edinburgh Consul General) [Redacted] (US Consulate)
First Minister, Colin McAllister (Chief of Staff) [Redacted] (International Division)

The First Minister (FM) welcomed Ambassador Hartley to Dundee and thanked her for her invitation to meet. The Ambassador noted her fondness for Scotland and her pleasure at returning during the Edinburgh Festivals. She outlined that she was interested to discuss how Scotland and the US could work together across a broad range of areas, and the meeting focussed primarily on green energy.

Scotland's Energy

Ambassador Hartley praised the number of wind farms she had seen in Scotland, noted President Biden's work on the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the Green Agenda and said that we must all work together on climate. FM agreed and noted that Scotland has an abundance of energy, including wind and tidal. The Ambassador was keen to learn more about tidal energy, FM explained it had been in development in Scotland for many years, and the Scottish Government would welcome Ambassador Hartley to visit sites in Orkney to learn more. (**Action:** DEXA to pick up with policy colleagues and share possible programme with US Embassy/ Consulate Colleagues.)

FM set out the objectives for energy in the coming years: focus on developing the strategic pieces of infrastructure required, noting challenges ahead, and that this was not all within the Scottish Governments' devolved competences. Ambassador Hartley referenced the economic potential of Carbon Capture activity in Peterhead, and that Scotland's geography was an advantage. FM noted there was keen interest in Scotland's energy export potential in terms of geography, alongside Norway and the Republic of Ireland on his recent visit to Brussels.

Areas of Collaboration

[Redacted] On other areas for development, FM offered that Scotland is keen to work with international partners on retaining heat in buildings. Capturing energy is one key aspect of decarbonising.

Mobilising Capital

The Ambassador reflected on the work of President Biden, Presidential Envoy on Climate, John Kerry, and on her years working with John Kerry on COP21 in her role as Ambassador to France. She spoke about the commitment of HRH King Charles to climate issues, and referenced how much more prominent investment was becoming in climate talks. (**Comment:** *Ambassador Hartley recommended climate finance is on the agenda for FM's meeting with John Kerry later this month, which FM agreed.*)

Conclusion

The conversation returned to the strong links between Scotland and the US, including between our peoples, exemplified by events like Tartan Week which is Scotland's largest diaspora organised event. FM raised his formative experience in the US with the State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP).

The meeting closed with a broad discussion of domestic and world politics and both nations' shared commitments to upholding democracy. Following the meeting, the Ambassador and FM took a short tour of the V&A's Tartan Exhibition, escorted by V&A Dundee Director Leonie Bell.

Ends.

5. Meeting with Australian High Commissioner
- 5.1 Briefing for meeting with Australian High Commissioner

BRIEFING FOR THE FIRST MINISTER

«Meeting with Australian High Commissioner»

«9 August 2023»

Key message	Scotland enjoys strong links with Australia. I want to continue developing our relationship, building on the deep diaspora and cultural ties already in place.
What	Meeting with the Australian High Commissioner to the UK
Why	Officials recommend where possible the First Minister sees fully accredited Ambassadors and High Commissioners, [Redacted]
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Australian High Commissioner, Stephen Smith• [Redacted], Australian High Commission
Where	First Minister's Office, St Andrew's House
When	13:30-14:00 - 9 August 2023
Likely themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthening of Scotland/Australia relations, covering diaspora, culture, FTA, T&I and energy.
Media	
Supporting official	[Redacted]

Attached documents

Annex A: Summary
Annex B: Top lines/background
Annex C: Biography
Annex D: DITI Core Brief

Summary

Annex A

The Australian High Commissioner (HC) is paying his first official visit to Scotland, where he will host a reception celebrating Australian creativity and culture at the Fringe. This is an opportunity to understand Australia's priorities in Scotland and identify areas for further collaboration, specifically in diaspora, culture and climate.

[Redacted]

Climate is front and centre on the policy agenda, so there is opportunity here to discuss shared aims and ambitions, and identify opportunity for sharing best practice.

Key points to raise:

- **Top lines:** The Scottish Government is keen to strengthen our relationship with Australia, including through shared interests around culture, climate and diaspora.
- **FTA** - The Scottish Government is keen to work with Australia for the benefit of both our countries and we welcome the enhanced mobility arrangements triggered by the Australia-UK FTA.
- **Climate** – Renewable energy and climate are priorities for the Australian Government. The High Commission has told us that they are interested in discussing hydrogen and carbon capturing and storage.
- **Diaspora** - You may wish to highlight the publication of the Scottish Connection framework. Scotland and Australia share deep people-to-people connections and we are keen to engage more with Scotland's diaspora in Australia.

Briefing

FTA Top lines

- We continue to engage actively with counterparts in the UK Department for Business and Trade on the implementation and utilisation of the UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in order to maximise opportunities for Scottish industry.
- While we have concerns about the impact of the agreement on Scotland's farmers, crofters and food producers, we recognise that this agreement presents opportunities for trade in services, business mobility and government procurement.
- We welcome the enhanced mobility arrangements triggered by the Australia-UK FTA. These changes will enable more young Scots to enjoy a working holiday in Australia, and more young Australians to live and work in Scotland.
- Likewise, we welcome the introduction of Australia's Innovation and Early Careers Skills Exchange Pilot. This scheme will provide great opportunities for young Scottish professionals to experience work in Australia. We firmly believe that mobility between Scotland and Australia is a good thing. It strengthens the extensive ties between our countries, helps our economies grow and provides our young people with skills for the future.

Background

- The UKG agreed two new FTAs, with Australia and New Zealand in 2021 and 2022 respectively, and these have now entered into force on 31 May 2023. In addition, both countries are members of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). The UK formally signed the protocol of accession to CPTPP on 16 July 2023.
- In the final terms of the FTA, Australia secured significant tariff liberalisation, especially in agri-food, which is a serious concern for Scotland's domestic producers. The agreement provides for a significant year-on-year increase in tariff rate (import) quotas for beef and sheep meat. This provides unfettered access to the UK market after 15 years.
- The Australia-UK FTA triggered enhancements to Australia's working holiday maker program and the UK's youth mobility scheme. Young Scots between the ages of 18 and 35 are now able to apply for the working holiday visa. From July 2024, young Scots will be able to work in Australia for up to three years without having to meet any specified work requirements. Currently, young Scots must work in certain regions of Australia to access a visa extension.

Hydrogen + Carbon capturing/storage lines

- The Scottish Government supports the development of Carbon Capture Utilisation Storage (CCUS) as a common whole-system decarbonisation infrastructure with the flexibility to adapt over time to play a central role across the decarbonisation strategies of key sectors such as heat, industry and power.
- Scotland remains among the best placed nations in Europe to deploy CCUS due to our unrivalled access to vast CO2 storage potential in the North Sea and opportunities to repurpose existing oil and gas infrastructure for CO2 transport and storage.

Scottish Connections (Diaspora)

- Cabinet Secretary Angus Robertson launched our Scottish Connections Framework at the US Tartan week in April. The Framework outlines a cross-cutting approach to diaspora engagement, setting out a series of commitments and ambitions to expand our relationships with, and between, Scotland's global diaspora.
- We know that Australia has a large Scottish ancestral diaspora, but also more recent family ties and many alumni of Scottish universities. We would welcome the High Commission's support in forging closer links with Scotland's diaspora in Australia, which will deepen our two countries' ties across the board. I note, for example, Melbourne's Tartan Festival which saw dozens of traditional and modern events over the month of July.
- [Redacted]

Background

- According to the 2021 Australian census, 130,060 Australian residents were born in Scotland, while 2,176,777 claimed Scottish ancestry, either alone or in combination with another ancestry. Roughly 10% of Australians identify as having a Scottish ancestry, this makes it the 4th most common in the country.

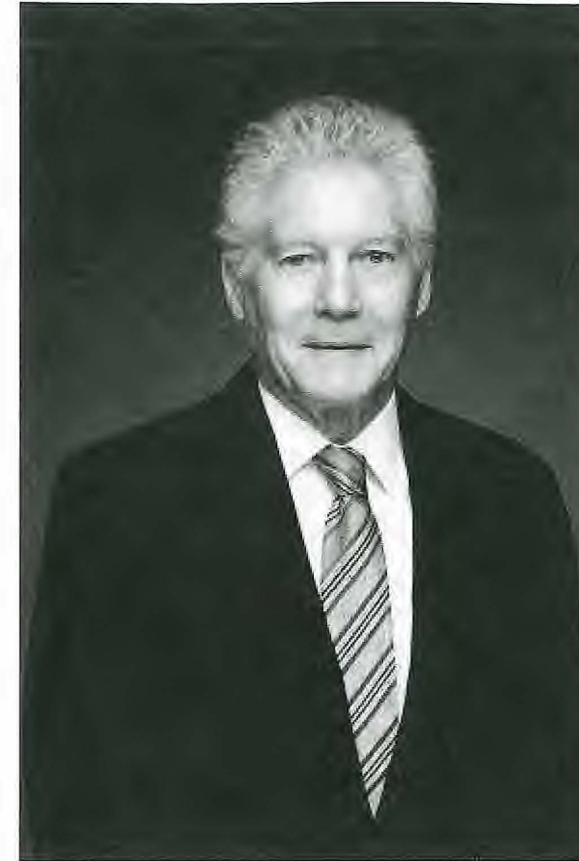
Culture

- Australia is hosting a reception celebrating Australian creativity and culture at the Fringe. This year there are 152 Australian shows at the Fringe Festival.
- Minister Michaels, South Australian Minister for Small and Family Business, Consumer and Business Affairs, and Arts is meeting Cabinet Secretary Angus Robertson on 10 August and on behalf of the Scottish Government re-signing an MOU between Edinburgh Fringe Festival and Adelaide Fringe Festival.

Biography

Annex C

High Commissioner to the United Kingdom The Hon Stephen Smith



The Hon Stephen Smith was a member of the Australian Parliament for 20 years. He served as the Minister for Defence, and prior to that, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Trade. He has also served as one of two Independent Leads of Australia's Defence Strategic Review.

Mr Smith holds a Masters of Laws in Public International Law, London University, 1982, a Bachelor of Arts, 1979, and Bachelor of Laws, 1977, University of Western Australia.

**DITI Core Brief
Annex D**

AUSTRALIA CORE BRIEF

GDP \$/£ (2021)

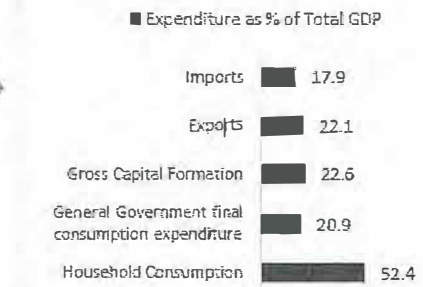
USD\$1,716,218 million

GBP£1,389,728 million

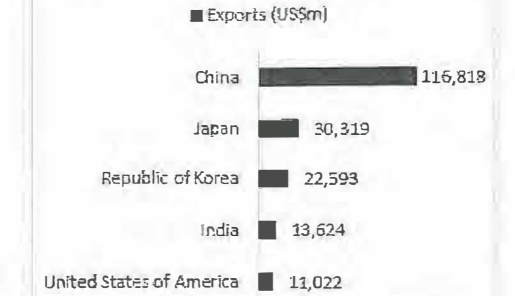
GDP GROWTH

4.64% for 2021

AUSTRALIA GDP BY EXPENDITURE in 2020



AUSTRALIA TOP TRADING PARTNERS in 2021



SDI IN AUSTRALIA

Opening Year	2001
Staff Count	4
Office(s)	3
Office location(s)	Melbourne, Sydney, Perth

AUSTRALIA IN SCOTLAND

There is no Australian consulate in Scotland. An Australian High Commission is located in London.

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

Australia has fared better than most countries through the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the health and economic impacts comparatively minor. Infrastructure spending from state and federal governments continues to be a targeted stimulus at fuelling the post-pandemic recovery. In the energy space, Australia and New Zealand have committed to Net Zero by 2050. The recently elected Australian Federal Labour Government has committed to reduce its emissions by 46 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030, and the New Zealand Government by 50 per cent.

Scotland recognises the importance of Australia's trading links with the UK and SDI's decision to recruit two Australia-based trade specialists in 2020/21 focused on the Science & Tech and Energy & Low carbon transition sectors will help Scottish companies capitalise on the UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement signed in Dec 2021, following the end of the EU transition.

SDI's inward investment approach in Australia is focused on highly mobile investment opportunities and where Scotland has a compelling case as a business location. Scotland's urgent need for green hydrogen production is driving SDI's focus on green hydrogen supply chain investors across Australia. Digital Tech continues to be an area of interest to investors in to Scotland from ANZ.

Trade and investment activities between Scotland and Australia's align well with the principles of a net zero, digitally enabled, wellbeing inclusive economy.

INVESTMENT OVERVIEW

VALUE OF OUTBOUND INVESTMENT FROM AUSTRALIA (2021)

US\$15.22bn
£22bn

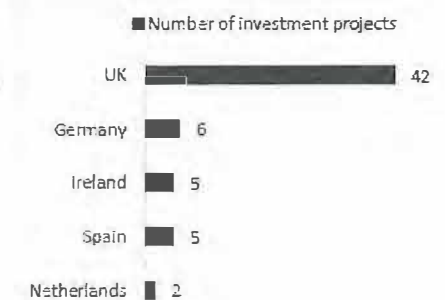
GROWTH OF OUTB

Up 317%

TOP 5 OUTBOUND DIRECT INVESTMENT MARKETS (GLOBAL) 2021



TOP 5 OUTBOUND DIRECT INVESTMENT MARKETS (EUROPE) 2021



5.2 Note of meeting with Australian High Commissioner

1. The First Minister(FM) met the Australian High Commissioner(HC) on 9 August. Also present was [Redacted] from the Australian High Commission.
2. The HC began by congratulating the FM on his appointment and highlighted the House of Oz reception at the Fringe as a key part of his visit. The FM welcomed the HC to Scotland.
3. The HC was keen to discuss economy, and the recent FTA, on which he shared his thanks and appreciation for Scotland's fast work on implementation allowing them to announce during the PM's visit. One of the aspects the HC feels will be most mutually beneficial is the youth mobility scheme, which will allow skilled individuals to travel and stay for up to three years in Australia or the UK. The FM highlighted that whilst he is supportive of the FTA, he noted concerns around aspects of the agricultural agreements, [Redacted]
4. The HC would like to create regional economies, where Australian states would collaborate with Scottish local authorities or regions working together on shared priorities under the FTA agreement, building on existing links such as St Andrew's University, who are already collaborating with a number of universities in Australia. The FM was very interested in this and requested further information via officials.
5. They discussed Australia's migration strategy, having noted both countries are experiencing a skills shortage. Australia is currently undertaking a review of its migration systems. [Redacted]
6. [Redacted] They discussed the strength of the Scotland/Australia relationship and keenness to develop it further, especially on renewables and just transition. The FM encouraged the HC to return to Scotland, with a visit focusing on energy and renewables, and advised officials can support with a full programme of engagement.

Action: Officials to follow up with the Australian High Commission regarding regional economies, [Redacted] and potential follow up visit by the HC focusing on energy and renewables.

[Redacted]

International Relations

Breakdown of costs from festival event - with redactions

Event	All Festivals Reception
Host	First Minister
Venue	The Hub
Date	3rd August 2023
Number of guests	

Final event cost	
Net	£ -
VAT	£ 371.24
Total	£ 2,227.40

Visits & Events contact	[Redacted]
Ext	
Email	visitsandevents@gov.scot

Policy Lead	[Redacted]
Policy Team	Culture and Historic Environment
Division	Engagement
Charged To:	
Cost Centre	352031
Sub Analysis (if needed)	
Programme Code	
Account Code	40101015
Entity	

Notes :

Catering only Paid by EPK

FINAL

Contracted goods / service	Supplier/ Description of goods & services	Net £	VAT £	Total £	PO Number	Account Code
Hospitality						
	Food Canapes x 70 pax			£ 1,050.00		
	Alcoholic Beverages Wine x 15			£ 189.00		
	Non-alcoholic Beverages Cordial x 6					
	Transport & Equipment PE Oven, Glasswear hire			£ 131.60		
	Catering Services Staffing			£ 856.80		
	Total Cost:	£ -	£ -	£ 2,227.40		
Total Event Cost:		£ -	£ 371.24	£ 2,227.40		