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**4th meeting of the Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Social Enterprise in The Scottish Parliament**

***Scotland’s national policy forum for social enterprise***

***#SocEntCPG***

**Wednesday 25 September 2019, 12:00 - 13:45**

**Please note change of venue to: Holyrood Macdonald Hotel, Salisbury Suite 2, 81 Holyrood Road, Edinburgh, EH8 8AU.**

Tom Arthur MSP, Scottish National Party (SNP), Convener

Rachael Hamilton MSP, Scottish Conservatives and Andy Wightman MSP, Scottish Greens, Joint Vice Conveners

Secretariat provided by Duncan Thorp, Social Enterprise Scotland

***Social Enterprise Census 2019 - What do the results mean to you?***

This 4th meeting of the CPG will provide you with an opportunity to share your views about the newly released [Social Enterprise Census 2019](http://www.socialenterprisecensus.org.uk) results.

View the summary and full results of Social Enterprise Census 2019 before the meeting - go to [www.socialenterprisecensus.org.uk](http://www.socialenterprisecensus.org.uk) and scroll down the page to view the 2019 results, as well as previous reports.

What do you think about the latest figures? What do they mean for our social enterprise community? What do they mean for your business? How can we use and promote the new figures to help social enterprise development?

We'll be joined on the day by Aileen Campbell MSP, The Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary responsible for social enterprise.

You can share your views about the Census and the CPG on Twitter now using: #SocEntCPG and #SocEntCensus19

**Agenda**

12:00 Arrival at Holyrood Macdonald Hotel.

12:15 Introduction by CPG Convener, Tom Arthur MSP.

12:20 The Scottish Government perspective: Aileen Campbell MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government, The Scottish Government.

12:35 Questions and discussion with attendees - share your views about Census 2019. What do the results mean to you?

13:35 Any other business and general questions about the CPG.

13:45 Meeting ends.

If you need further information or have questions please email: [duncan.thorp@socialenterprise.scot](mailto:duncan.thorp@socialenterprise.scot)

*Cross-Party Groups (CPGs) provide an opportunity for members of all political parties, outside organisations and members of the public to meet and discuss a shared interest in a particular cause or subject. The Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Social Enterprise in The Scottish Parliament is Scotland's social enterprise policy forum. You can see details of the group, MSP involvement and the external member list etc. on The Scottish Parliament website* [*here*](http://www.parliament.scot/msps/social-enterprise.aspx)*.*

**Purpose of the group**

* To give Scottish social entrepreneurs a strong, united voice and help them influence policy-making
* To pro-actively raise awareness and understanding of social enterprise among MSPs and the public
* To help drive forward the growth and success of the social enterprise economy in every community
* To increase the role of social enterprises in designing and delivering public services
* To open up private sector business opportunities to social enterprises
* To tell the inspiring stories about the human and environmental impact of social enterprises

**Background to the Social Enterprise CPG**

Social Enterprise Scotland was the founder of and secretariat to the previous CPG on Social Enterprise that ran in Parliamentary Session 4.

The CPG had a high level of engagement and turnout. It discussed issues of importance to MSPs, our society and economy, including: public service reform, local government and social enterprise, public sector procurement, the Commonwealth Games and more.

Information and minutes of previous CPG at: [parliament.scot/msps/97764.aspx](http://www.parliament.scot/msps/97764.aspx)

Social Enterprise Scotland has now re-established the CPG due to popular demand within the social enterprise community.

The relaunched CPG has been approved by The Scottish Parliament, with the support of MSPs, information on The Scottish Parliament website: [parliament.scot/msps/social-enterprise.aspx](http://www.parliament.scot/msps/social-enterprise.aspx)

Tom Arthur MSP of the SNP has been elected as Convener by founder MSPs, with Rachael Hamilton of the Scottish Conservatives and Andy Wightman of the Scottish Greens as Vice Conveners. Dean Lockhart MSP and Alex-Cole Hamilton MSP have also given their support to the CPG as founding members.

The new CPG builds on the success of the previous national policy forum. Open to all, the group will be an opportunity for social entrepreneurs to connect with MSPs and drive forward the development of social enterprise policy.

The format of the meetings are a roundtable discussion, with plenty of time for questions and debate. Future meetings will have guest speakers and specific themes.Meetings are open to anyone with an interest in social enterprise.

SES provides secretariat support and development for the CPG. Questions about any aspect of the CPG to Duncan Thorp: 0131 243 2650 / [duncan.thorp@socialenterprise.scot](mailto:duncan.thorp@socialenterprise.scot)

**Report from the 4th meeting of the Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Social Enterprise in The Scottish Parliament**

CPG Convener, Tom Arthur MSP, welcomed and thanked attendees and gave an introduction to the topic.

Aileen Campbell MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government, The Scottish Government: I spent the summer visiting social enterprises, all different but united around doing social good. They are achieving the ambitions in Scotland’s National Performance Framework - which is not just about GDP but about well-being. Scotland has a great social enterprise reputation internationally with the Social Enterprise Action Plan. The Census shows changes, emerging trends and where we may need to take action. It shows the economic impact and jobs plus rural statistics and emerging areas like Tayside and the South of Scotland. Challenges include how we represent all of Scotland, ethnic minorities and young people in particular. Also the very small size of social enterprises and issues with sustainability, as well as burnout issues for social entrepreneurs. Rural areas are filling gaps in market failure. Also how do we support the Fair Work agenda in social enterprises? There’s been a dip in confidence in social enterprises too and what about Brexit and other future challenges?

Tom Arthur MSP: Social enterprise is an antidote to Brexit. It plays a key part in the bigger picture, measuring success using well-being. What are the comments, thoughts and reactions from the audience?

Aidan Pia, Senscot: The eco system is held in high regard and where we are is good enough but we hear about how small and fragile social enterprises are. We really need to make a difference with the next Action Plan. How do we reach communities in both urban and rural Scotland? Be bolder, pilot new ideas. Not much change has happened in three to five years.

Aileen Campbell MSP: How do we hear the voices of those not being heard? How can we tackle risk aversion? To hold on to our top spot we need to work hard and really understand where the issues are.

Aidan Pia, Senscot: The way money is used e.g. the Investing in Communities Fund. This can be accessed by social enterprises but it is all disconnected in government.

Aileen Campbell MSP: We hear that. Duplication exists and work is already going on to streamline this. Procurement etc. could provide opportunities.

Simon Francis, Campaign Collective: Could The Scottish Government have a ‘social enterprise first’ policy, including NHS, schools etc?

Aileen Campbell MSP: Derek Mackay [Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work] has had discussions around this and exploring e.g. the Preston Model [keeping government spending within the local community], a place approach to procurement and smaller contracts. Good example in North Ayrshire and place-making.

Helene Van Der Ploeg, The Broomhouse Centre: There’s great value in collaboration. The process for the Investing in Communities Fund not conducive to collaboration. How can we change this? There’s competition for funding not partnership.

Aileen Campbell MSP: Interesting to hear, we need to hear this feedback. What more can be done to work collaboratively?

Neil Hay, Cyrenians: We need support for smaller organisations, the bigger ones can manage the process better.

Alex Stobart, Mydex CIC: In the Scottish procurement regulations, a threshold is allowed before the regulations need to be used.

Aileen Campbell MSP: There could be risk adversity in the system.

Jennifer Robertson, CVS Falkirk: Small organisations lack the ability to apply for funding. There’s also a gap in support for medium sized enterprises, between start ups and the big social enterprises.

Craig Sanderson, Edinburgh Poverty Commission: Housing associations haven’t done enough to measure their big social impacts. There are Scotland-wide benefits as a result of Scottish Government funding. There’s a difference in the culture of social housing in Scotland.

Aileen Campbell MSP: The National Performance Framework means things need to be done differently. How do we lift the ‘softer’ things into the mainstream as the core things to measure [instead of e.g. just GDP]? There are ways to capture the great work of social enterprises. We have the biggest investment in social housing since devolution and therefore don’t have the same issues as England.

Kate Darrah, The Ridge: There’s potential from procurement e.g. moving people out of prison and into construction industry. The law is there but it’s not translating into reality. Fear and misunderstanding on the ground and within local authorities. Social enterprises do life-changing work with big ripple effects but not enough impetus to recognise this.

Aileen Campbell MSP: We need to hear these issues, including about procurement and issue faced by smaller organisations. We need to use the available money better.

Aidan Pia, Senscot: Developing markets contract has been involved in procurement. Commissioners take the safe option. National policy doesn’t translate to local policy. There are also capacity issues in the sector.

Aileen Campbell MSP: The National Performance Framework should be uniting around this - what are we asking local government to do etc? How are they assessing success? There has to be a far deeper process and focus on social impact, place and people.

Pamela Redpath, Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Chamber: There is real trouble financing retrospective funding.

Chris Holloway, Resilient Scotland: The Census claims that there is only a 20% reliance on grants and 79% trading. We should discuss access to markets not funding. We shouldn’t measure ourselves against Westminster.

Aileen Campbell MSP: There’s a narrative that housing is a problem at Westminster, we should shout about housing success.

Alistair Grimes, AGC Ltd: We’ve come a long way since the valuing social economy report. Housing associations distort the picture of social enterprise but we should look at it separately. I’m sceptical about reforming procurement. The problem is it’s run by procurement professionals. If not public services then where are the markets? Freedom Bakery and credit unions are good examples of success. Affordable credit is not accessible to those in need and people are not going to credit unions. Financial services statistics in Census are not clear. Who? What? Need more focus on market opportunities not grants.

Aileen Campbell MSP: We’re looking at the credit union issue, a strategic approach to credit unions and affordable credit.

Elizabeth Docherty, Glasgow Social Enterprise Network: There will always be criticism of the Census methodology but it’s good to have it. It’s acknowledged as a work in progress. We used it to develop a Glasgow specific report. The Action Plan has been good and we’ve benefited from local connection with national strategy. We need national/local strategies connections.

Simon Lynch, Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Chamber: Census not perfect but good. 33% of social enterprises are in rural areas but with just 10% of the population. Smaller organisations struggle with capacity. We need ‘how to’ public sector training for social enterprises. No time to spend on consortia, need help to build capacity.

Aileen Campbell MSP: We need to look at this, similar issues for any small business. Need to look at barriers to access support, particularly in rural areas.

Helene Van Der Ploeg, The Broomhouse Centre: Statistics don’t celebrate social enterprise enough - we need to hear about social impact, case studies and stories.

Neil McLean, Social Enterprise Academy: Too difficult to do that in terms of this particular study, this was discussed at the steering group meetings.

Aileen Campbell MSP: We can look at this, it’s been done really successfully in the sports sector. Quantifying social impact, storytelling and lives transformed - can’t fit this in an infographic.

Simon Francis, Campaign Collective: We fund news website The Rooftop, we look for any positive stories. What work is being done with VisitScotland and Scottish Development International?

Aileen Campbell MSP: We have looked at this, to make sure we have alignment. Extra value in e.g. tourist gifts and social enterprise. Steve Dunlop [Scottish Enterprise CEO] and Scottish Enterprise have a new strategy that aligns with social enterprise.

Claire Pattullo, Edinburgh Social Enterprise: Third Sector Interfaces have gathered views but we need further detail and in-depth measurement. What are we trying to measure? What about business failure? Impact measurement is quite weak. Need more depth. Where can policy be changed?

Aileen Campbell MSP: Not just a government thing, we need to work in partnership. The door is open and we want to listen. If things aren’t working then we need to understand what would. What is Glasgow drilling down in to?

Elizabeth Docherty, Glasgow Social Enterprise Network: It’s a local version of the national study. We need more information and there does require a drill down in detail.

Aidan Pia, Senscot: DTAS [Development Trusts Association Scotland] is doing work on tourism with VisitScotland and the Tourism Social Enterprise Network.

Aileen Campbell MSP: We shouldn’t be complacent. It’s not just about the Census. We need to go beyond the social impact and join with the National Performance Framework. Lots of actions to take forward for the next Action Plan.

**END**