

Written evidence submitted by Alison Nimmo, Chief Executive, The Crown Estate

Follow up to Scottish Affairs Committee session, Tuesday 3 December 2013

I write to thank you for the opportunity to answer Committee members' questions and queries at the session held in Inverness earlier this month. The session was very comprehensive and I hope that you and your colleagues found it useful in informing the Committee's work. I also hope that The Crown Estate team's commitment to Scotland, in particular to strengthening stakeholder relationships, was evident.

We committed to coming back to you on two points.

Firstly, I can confirm that The Crown Estate offered to develop a protocol with Marine Scotland to formalise working relations.

However, on further discussion, both parties agreed that an exchange of letters was more appropriate. This agreement outlines how the respective organisations work together, focussing on communication and collaboration to further the growth of the offshore low carbon energy industry.

It has been agreed in principle and we expect a formal exchange to take place in the near future. However, I'd stress that in lieu of that exchange of letters, cooperation and collaboration with Marine Scotland are excellent and The Crown Estate staff have strong working relationships with different teams across the directorate.

Secondly, you requested the Terms of Reference of the Inter-Ministerial Strategic Group. These are to be discussed at the first meeting of the Group and I will ensure that they are provided to the Committee once they have been formally approved.

Finally, during the session in Inverness members raised concerns expressed by Clir Angus Campbell, who had attended the session on Monday 2 December, on behalf of Western Isles, Orkney Islands and Shetland Councils.

Colleagues and I met with representatives from the Islands campaign in September and we had a broad-ranging discussion. During this we outlined our efforts in local engagement and in working to deliver initiatives of long-term, strategic value such as the Pentland Firth & Orkney Waters programme.

We are keen to maintain dialogue with the Islands and to that end, our Scottish Commissioner Gareth Baird has written to Clir Campbell to request a meeting. We hope that this discussion can result in an arrangement or agreement that addresses concerns and signals clear progress in strengthening relationships.

I hope this further information is helpful and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

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