

LETTER FROM STEWART ARGO, MEDIA MANAGER, CITY OF EDINBURGH
COUNCIL, TO THE PUBLIC AUDIT COMMITTEE, 17 NOVEMBER 2010

Please see below and the four enclosed emails for my response to your letter of 11 November 2010.

The detailed chain of events and my recollections of them are covered below. However, to answer your questions in summary:

- I did attend the meeting in Councillor Dawe's office shortly after 2pm on Wednesday 14 October to discuss the news release prepared by the Scottish Government.
- I have no recollection of being told to change the wording relating to DEMA taking on the private sector debt nor any recollection of there being substantive discussion around that point. Accordingly, I took no action to amend that part of the text, other than to correct the name of the company as advised by Norman Springford, the then Chair of DEMA.
- I received oral changes and approval from Councillor Cardownie via Councillor Tom Buchanan and oral approval from Councillor Dawe. I received no responses from Mr Aitchison or Mr Inch.
- I believed that the key points of the release and the timing of its issuing had been largely agreed between the Scottish Government and the Council before the meetings at the Scottish Government and Councillor Dawe's office on 14 October (notwithstanding the changes that I was clear later on were required to the Scottish Government's draft.)
- I had oral approval from Councillors Dawe and Cardownie (the latter via Councillor Buchanan) and email approval from Dave Anderson, the Council's Director of City Development, who I believed had been given delegated authority at the meeting in Councillor Dawe's office to agree it on behalf of officers. I also had emails from Norman Springford. I was also aware that Greg Ward, the Council's Head of Economic Development and Isabell Reid, the Council's Head of Communications, had read the release. I had no communication from Mr Aitchison or Mr Inch.
- As there were no further substantive changes to the text seen by the individuals above, I therefore considered that the essence of the release was sound and could be issued. The timing was discussed at the meeting in Councillor Dawe's office and was not countermanded.

Meeting at the Scottish Government

My involvement began when Ms Reid called me late that morning to ask me to accompany her to a meeting at St Andrew's House on Wednesday 14 October. The

meeting was at 12noon and was attended by representatives of the Scottish Government, the First Minister, EventScotland and VisitScotland.

At that meeting, Ms Reid and I were briefed to the effect that:

- There was an imminent prospect of the company being forced into administration through the action of creditors.
- If the company went into administration, it would discredit the whole initiative and mean that repeat events could not be held.
- The Scottish Government and the Council had agreed an approach that would see DEMA taking on the Gathering, including its debts, in order to secure the future of the event.
- Mechanisms to implement this were still being discussed between the Council and the Scottish Government to ensure that the debt would not fall on the Council.
- The BBC had been pursuing a story about the prospective liquidation for several days, and had been stalled up until that point, but that it would probably run the story on the following day.
- It was therefore essential that the news release was finalised that day and issued generally the following day confirming that a rescue package was in place in order to reassure creditors and prevent the company from going into liquidation.
- Given that the BBC had been pursuing the story, it should get the news first (i.e. that evening, in time for a good run on Good Morning Scotland). (There was a subsequent discussion during the meeting that the Evening News should also be briefed that evening as a general news release the next day would be too late for them, and it was felt their support was important.)

Most of the discussion at this meeting was around presentation and handling. It seemed very clear from the outset that the high-level planning for the announcement had all been concluded elsewhere. However, Ms Reid, in particular, was concerned at the unconventional proposal to support the Gathering in this way, the fact that it appeared there was to be no Council decision, and the manner in which it was communicated to us (i.e. Council officers being briefed by another organisation on decisions taken - and consequent action required - relating to a major initiative involving the Council).

Ms Reid phoned Mr Inch during the meeting, in the meeting room itself, to try to confirm what we were being told. I was not able to hear what was said in the conversation but I recall there being nothing emerging from that conversation which changed the course that we seemed to be on.

Meeting in Councillor Dawe's office

Ms Reid remained concerned, particularly around the extent to which Councillor Dawe had been involved. (I recall that there had been mention of Councillor Cardownie being party to discussions but no mention of Councillor Dawe).

We both went directly to Councillor Dawe's office in the City Chambers. Ms Reid asked to speak to Councillor Dawe in her office. I was not there but the upshot was that a

meeting was arranged almost immediately with Councillors Dawe, Cardownie and Buchanan, and Mr Aitchison, Mr Inch and Mr Anderson. Ms Reid and I also attended. That meeting took place shortly after 2pm in Councillor Dawe's office.

I was clear in my mind that the meeting was convened because of the prospect that we were going to be briefing the BBC that evening and issuing a news release generally the following day confirming the details that had been given to us in the meeting at the Scottish Government. Copies of the draft news release and Q and A, prepared by the Scottish Government, were provided to each person in the meeting.

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Dawe. There was a discussion on how the current situation had been reached. The meeting also was briefed by Ms Reid on the discussion that we had attended earlier, along with an explanation of the papers that they had in front of them. Ms Reid and I, along with Dave Anderson, the Director of City Development, were asked to draw up the amended news release based on the version produced by Scottish Government.

As to specific changes required, the main one was to make clear that there would be no liability to the Council itself. In this regard, there was significant concern, particularly from Councillor Dawe, over the first paragraph of the Scottish Government's draft and any other text which might give rise to the view that the Council would incur any financial liability for the Gathering. I have no recollection of being asked to change the text around DEMA taking on the Gathering; indeed, had that been the case, there would have been no 'news' in the news release. Any other changes that I understood were necessary to reflect the views I had received from that meeting were incorporated into that draft.

After the meeting, I returned to my desk in Councillor Dawe's outer office and began work. At this point most of the other meeting attendees were still in Councillor Dawe's office. On leaving the meeting, Councillor Cardownie stopped briefly at my desk and gave some indication of the points he wanted covered in his quote.

On discussion with Ms Reid and Mr Anderson, I undertook to produce the next draft for comments, which was then circulated at 15.57, around 45 minutes after the meeting concluded. In terms of a timeline of events immediately after this it is difficult to be exact on every aspect as there were discussions with several individuals, and consequent changes to the release, taking place in parallel and in a very short timescale.

I believe Councillor Cardownie left the City Chambers after speaking to me because his other contributions were phoned in via Councillor Buchanan. From memory, there were two further iterations of his quote, and some other minor changes from Councillor Buchanan, such as reversing the words 'public-private' in the description of DEMA in the first paragraph.

The oral approval from Councillor Dawe came shortly before I left her office at 5.15pm (I continued my work on this at home.) As she was in the midst of preparation for Council

it was a very brief conversation. The version she approved would have been the one circulated at 15.57, although as it was continually being worked on it is possible there had already been some minor changes by that point.

Approvals for content and timing

My view throughout the process was that the whole rationale for issuing a news release at all, and issuing it in such a tight timescale, was that a story was likely to break the next day which would precipitate liquidation proceedings against the Gathering. That was also the reason for hosting such a short-notice meeting with the Council's most senior councillors and officers. Without the proposal for DEMA to take on the company, and therefore the debts, there was no purpose in issuing a news release and no need for a meeting.

As to the timing, it was my view that this was understood. The situation with the BBC had been explained at the 2pm meeting. My email of that evening containing the final news release and details of the handling, which the Audit Committee already has, made reference to the 'BBC reporter pursuing the story'. This point was not explained further in the email because it had already been covered at the meeting. I worked throughout the evening to produce the finished version and ensure the agreed media were briefed. I only did this because I believed I was required to work to an agreed, urgent timescale.

Although I had not received written approvals from all the individuals involved, and not necessarily on every word of the release, I considered it sufficient in these exceptional circumstances that the following had either explicitly approved the release, commented on it and/or had not raised any significant concerns: Mr Anderson, Mr Springford, Ms Reid, Councillor Cardownie and Councillor Dawe.

My understanding of the situation at the time was that the future of the Gathering was in doubt unless a news release could be issued to stave off negative media reports and action by creditors. Had the news release not gone to the BBC that evening, I had been informed that there was a serious risk of the news the following day being about the Gathering having to go into administration. The belief I had was that the participants in this process were determined to avoid this, underlined by the fact that there had been discussions at very high levels between the Council and the Scottish Government.

Post-release communications

I had no communication from anyone specifically about the news release after it had gone out, until 27 November. In the meantime, there were various discussions about follow-up enquiries, but these were still on the basis that DEMA was taking over the company and the event.

I spoke very briefly to Councillor Cardownie by phone on the Thursday morning, in between pre-meetings for the Council meeting, to discuss him doing an interview for Good Morning Scotland at around 8.30am (referenced in the email from me to multiple

recipients at 8.19am on 15 October). I also spoke to him a short while afterwards to arrange a BBC TV interview at around 9.30am (the Council meeting was at 10am). We had one further conversation on the Friday morning, which is related in the enclosed email to Jane Robson of the Scottish Government.

On 27 November I received independent requests from Andy Nichol (Councillor's Dawe's Business Manager) and Mr Inch looking for an audit trail of how the release was produced. This is enclosed. I have received no feedback on the news release audit trail.

Enclosures

I am aware that you already have a considerable volume of material from various sources, but as these emails are referred to above I have included them in my response for your convenience.

- Email from Stewart Argo to various recipients on 15 October 2009 referring to interview by Councillor Cardownie.
- Email from Stewart Argo to Jane Robson of the Scottish Government on 16 October 2009 relating a conversation with Councillor Cardownie.
- Email from Andy Nichol to Stewart Argo on 27 November 2009 requesting audit trail of news release approval.
- Email from Stewart Argo to Andy Nichol and Jim Inch on 27 November 2009 providing an audit trail of the news release approval.

Email from Stewart Argo to various recipients on 15 October 2009 referring to interview by Councillor Cardownie

From: Stewart Argo

Sent: 15 October 2009 08:19

To: Stewart Argo; Tom Aitchison; Jenny Dawe; Jim Inch; Steve Cardownie;

Lynn McMath; Lindsay Taylor; Isabell Reid; Dave Anderson; Tom

Buchanan; Jane Robson; Greg Ward

Subject: RE: Gathering DEMA final news release and update

Cllr Cardownie is likely to be doing a brief telephone interview with Good Morning Scotland shortly. One of the GMS producers told me there was a brief report earlier in the programme but I wasn't in a position to hear it (and neither was he!) so I don't know what it said.

Stewart Argo | Media Manager | Communications Service | The City of Edinburgh Council |

From: Stewart Argo

Sent: 14 October 2009 21:27

To: Tom Aitchison; Jenny Dawe; Jim Inch; Steve Cardownie; Lynn McMath; Lindsay Taylor; Isabell Reid; Dave Anderson; Tom Buchanan; Jane Robson; Greg Ward
Subject: Gathering DEMA final news release and update

Please see attached. (Tom/Dave/Greg - for your reassurance, I spoke to Norman directly last night on the addition of the sentence about preparing a detailed business case.)

At the time of writing, the BBC reporter pushing for this story is not returning calls. There remains the possibility of a late-evening flurry of activity.

For reasons to do with deadlines and the likelihood of the story breaking in one form or another, the Evening News has been briefed this evening for tomorrow's edition on the usual no-approach basis. It is likely to be the lead item on page 10.

The release will be issued generally around 10am tomorrow.

Regards

Stewart

Email from Stewart Argo to Jane Robson of the Scottish Government on 16 October 2009 relating a conversation with Councillor Cardownie

From: Stewart Argo
Sent: 16 October 2009 13:55
To: Jane Robson
Subject: FW: Follow-up questions on The Gathering

Spoke to Steve. He passed on anxieties at DEMA about the pressure they're under from journalists on how they're going to fund the £300k debt (I paraphrase!).

Because of that, and because it's not strictly related, I was going to cut the first sentence anyway. However, Steve wondered about having some form of words that clearly indicate that DEMA (and the Council) will not have to bear the burden, e.g. the Scottish Government is looking at mechanisms for ensuring it can pay, via DEMA, the private sector debts, much of it to local businesses.

Proposed statement by our finance director:

"As part of a recent agreement the financial responsibilities of the Gathering, including discharging the private sector creditors of the Gathering, are to be taken on by DEMA. There are limited sums outstanding due to the Council which will be the subject of further discussions between DEMA, the Council and the Scottish Government. No sums have yet been written off by the Council."

I would confirm the amount to Brian and explain that we stood to get nothing if the Gathering went into administration. In any conversations I have with people about this I'll be keen to stress that there's a lot of work to be done on the detail!

Thanks
Stewart

Stewart Argo | Media Manager | Communications Service | The City of Edinburgh Council

Email from Andy Nichol to Stewart Argo on 27 November 2009 requesting audit trail of news release approval

From: Andy Nichol
Sent: 27 November 2009 11:07
To: Stewart Argo
Subject: NEW FUTURE FOR GATHERING

Stewart

We spoke briefly in the passing earlier in the week about this news release. Could you set out the clearance that this one went through (it's for background, not for finger-pointing).

Cheers

Andy

15 Oct 2009 09:25
NEW FUTURE FOR GATHERING

A repeat of one of the most successful visitor events in Scottish history is now a real possibility with the news that the private-public organisation Destination Edinburgh Marketing Alliance (DEMA) is to take over The Gathering 2009 Ltd.

An independent economic impact assessment carried out by EKOS Ltd shows that the Gathering attracted 47,000 people. It also generated £10.4m in revenue for Scotland and £8.8m in Edinburgh. The report highlights that 73 per cent of visitors would be likely or very likely to visit a future Gathering within the next four years.

Norman Springford, as chair of DEMA, said: "The board of DEMA views this as a really exciting development for us and our city, and will see us build on our successful working with the Scottish Government and the Council which led to Edinburgh Inspiring Capital being entered into the Clipper Round-the-World yacht race. Such private and public

partnerships have enormous potential for promoting the capital and the nation to people across the globe. We are delighted and honoured to accept this new responsibility and we will now move towards more detailed discussions with the Scottish Government and other partners on the investment in, and delivery of, this project.”

Cllr Steve Cardownie, the city’s Festivals and Events Champion said: “This is a wonderful opportunity for the city, following on from the fantastic event held in July as part of the Homecoming celebrations. I’m very pleased that we’ve been able to lend our support in facilitating the quick action to secure a longer-term arrangement for this event. Future gatherings promise to be even greater and a much welcome boost to the city’s economy, and the next event in 2012 will further underline the many reasons to visit Edinburgh in Olympic year.”

DEMA will take on The Gathering 2009 Ltd’s remaining private sector obligations and, with the Council and other public sector organisations, will develop the assets and intellectual property rights to organise future events. A key next step for DEMA will be to begin preparing a detailed business case considering the options for a 2012 event.

Although a success in terms of visitor numbers and economic impact, the private company that ran the Gathering 2009 has encountered financial difficulties. This deal will ensure creditors are paid as well as securing the event for the future.

Co-Director of the Gathering 2009, Lord Sempill, said: “We are proud to have delivered an event that was such a great success for Scotland and delighted that future Gatherings are a real prospect. Our dream was to secure an event that would prove, as we have always believed, that there is a great public appetite for occasions that celebrate Scotland’s history and heritage. Unfortunately, due largely to events outwith our control including an unprecedented global financial crisis, our income streams were lower than we expected and we have been unable to satisfy all of our creditors.”

Scottish Government Culture Minister Michael Russell said: “The Scottish Government, along with EventScotland and VisitScotland, is fully supportive of this agreement to secure the future of the Gathering, which has proved itself to be a new and exciting way of celebrating our culture, heritage and shared links around the world. At this time of economic recovery, it is vital all Scottish interests now pull together to capitalise on that international interest and build on the success highlighted in the independent economic impact report.”

Notes to Editors:

The independent economic assessment of the impact of Gathering 2009 from EKOS (available at eventscotland.org) shows that 47,000 people – 51 per cent from outwith Scotland - attended with a high level of satisfaction on their experience in Edinburgh, and overall the Gathering generated £10.4 million of revenue for Scotland on a ratio of £21 for every £1 of public investment.

The Scottish Government has agreed not to seek the recovery of a loan of £180,000 to The Gathering 2009 Ltd, in order to secure the future of The Gathering as an event and the associated economic benefits. For the same reason, Historic Scotland and other public bodies have decided that they will not seek to recover the amounts that they are owed.

Relevant links:

www.clangathering.org

www.edinburgh-inspiringcapital.com

Image credit: C McAteer

Email from Stewart Argo to Andy Nichol and Jim Inch on 27 November 2009 providing an audit trail of the news release approval

From: Stewart Argo

Sent: 27 November 2009 12:28

To: Andy Nichol; Jim Inch

Cc: Isabell Reid

Subject: Gathering / DEMA news release sign-off

Attachments: Gathering release - DEMA redraft; Gathering DEMA final news release and updateTom Aitchison; RE: Gathering release - DEMA redraft

As requested by you both.

Stewart

Edits between first draft and final release (both attached)

Para 1

Materially unchanged from first draft.

Para 2

Minor changes from first draft - addition of extra information from study.

Para 3 - Norman Springford quote

Significant changes from first draft received on behalf of Norman from Tom Buchanan and Greg Ward in course of afternoon.

Para 4 - Steve Cardownie quote

Changed from first draft following conversation with Steve; approved via Tom Buchanan in course of afternoon.

Para 5 - DEMA taking on private sector obligations...

Original text unchanged from first draft except correction to company name and addition of sentence on developing business case agreed directly by me with Norman on phone

during evening.

Para 5b - "Although a success..."

Was not in original Council draft but a form of it was in original text by Scottish Government. Was inserted at request of Scottish Government late afternoon and was part of the version circulated for final approval.

Paras 6 and 7 - Jamie Sempill and Mike Russell quotes

Unchanged from those supplied by Scottish Government, with exception of minor cuts to latter for length reasons.

Notes to editors

Minor changes to text agreed with Scottish Government on references to study conclusions.

Approvals

- * Dave Anderson, Isabell Reid and myself remitted at meeting chaired by Jenny to produce news release at around 3pm.
- * Draft release circulated to Dave, Steve, Jenny, Isabell, Jim, Tom Buchanan and Scottish Government (Jane Robson) at 4pm.
- * Oral approval from Jenny, Steve (via Tom Buchanan), and Tom Buchanan while I was in Leader's office during the afternoon.
- * Approval on behalf of Norman Springford came via Tom Buchanan, Greg Ward and Ritchie Somerville (I know approval via Ritchie was on Norman's quote only); subsequent approval on business case mention came directly from Norman on phone to me.
- * Email from Dave Anderson approving release (attached), though subsequent changes were made to the version he approved (see above).
- * Approvals on behalf of Scottish Government and agencies came via Jane Robson at Scottish Government, mostly on phone during evening.
- * No other comments that I can recollect.
- * Final version circulated at 9.30pm, indicating an issue time of 10am next morning. Release circulated to Tom Aitchison, Jenny, Jim, Steve, Isabell, Dave, Tom Buchanan, Greg and Scottish Government. No comments were received in the morning.
- * No record of comments received on the release or the coverage it prompted in the days subsequently.

Attached email trail on clearing of final news release

From: Stewart Argo

Sent: 14 October 2009 15:57

To: Jane Robson; Dave Anderson; Steve Cardownie; Jenny Dawe; Isabell Reid; Jim Inch; Tom Buchanan

Subject: Gathering release - DEMA redraft

Attachments: Gathering news release DEMA redraft.doc

Importance: High

Have limited the circulation for expediency's sake, and I don't have all the email addresses anyway! But please forward to anyone you think must see a copy. Dave/Tom
- I will need to speak to you about getting Norman's approval.

Jane - I had to cut the Minister's quote slightly for space / proportion reasons.

Thanks
Stewart

From: Dave Anderson
Sent: 14 October 2009 18:30
To: Isabell Reid
Cc: Stewart Argo
Subject: RE: Gathering release - DEMA redraft

Isabell Great work by you and Stewart to turn this around. Much more positive and better balanced.
Thanks Dave

From: Isabell Reid
Sent: 14 October 2009 16:57
To: Stewart Argo; 'Jane Robson; Dave Anderson; Steve Cardownie; Jenny Dawe; Jim Inch; Tom Buchanan
Subject: RE: Gathering release - DEMA redraft

Minor suggested changes. Stewart, DEMA has an electronic template for their press releases and I will forward it to you. Lindsay Taylor of DEMA has been briefed

From: Stewart Argo
Sent: 14 October 2009 15:57
To: 'jane.robson@scotland.gsi.gov.uk'; Dave Anderson; Steve Cardownie; Jenny Dawe; Isabell Reid; Jim Inch; Tom Buchanan
Subject: Gathering release - DEMA redraft
Importance: High
Have limited the circulation for expediency's sake, and I don't have all the email addresses anyway! But please forward to anyone you think must see a copy. Dave/Tom
- I will need to speak to you about getting Norman's approval.

Jane - I had to cut the Minister's quote slightly for space / proportion reasons.

Thanks
Stewart

From: Stewart Argo
Sent: 14 October 2009 21:27
To: Tom Aitchison; Jenny Dawe; Jim Inch; Steve Cardownie; Lynn McMath; Lindsay Taylor; Isabell Reid; Dave Anderson; Tom Buchanan; Jane Robson
Subject: Gathering DEMA final news release and updateTom Aitchison
Attachments: DEMA Gathering news release final.doc

Please see attached. (Tom/Dave/Greg - for your reassurance, I spoke to Norman directly last night on the addition of the sentence about preparing a detailed business case.)

At the time of writing, the BBC reporter pushing for this story is not returning calls. There remains the possibility of a late-evening flurry of activity.

For reasons to do with deadlines and the likelihood of the story breaking in one form or another, the Evening News has been briefed this evening for tomorrow's edition on the usual no-approach basis. It is likely to be the lead item on page 10.

The release will be issued generally around 10am tomorrow.

Regards

Stewart

LETTER FROM THE PUBLIC AUDIT COMMITTEE TO STEWART ARGO, MEDIA MANAGER, CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL, 11 NOVEMBER 2010

The Public Audit Committee received a briefing from the Auditor General for Scotland (AGS) on his report entitled "The Gathering 2009" at its meeting on the 23 June.

A copy of the AGS report can be accessed at the following link.
http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/docs/central/2010/nr_100623_the_gathering.pdf

The Official Reports on the Gathering 2009 are attached at the following links:
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/publicAudit/meetings.htm>

At its meeting on 3 November 2010, the Public Audit Committee took oral evidence from Councillor Dawe, Councillor Cardownie, Mr Tom Aitchison and Mr Jim Inch, from The City of Edinburgh Council. At that meeting these witnesses explained the circumstances which led to the press release titled “New Future for Gathering” being issued on 15 October 2009, by the City of Edinburgh Council on behalf of DEMA Ltd (hereafter referred to as the “press release”).

The Committee had previously received written evidence from the City of Edinburgh Council which included copies of emails seeking comment on the draft press release which were exchanged prior to the issue of this press release. The Committee discussed these email exchanges with the above witnesses all of whom confirmed that, although they had initially met to discuss broad changes to the initial press release, they had not agreed the content of the final press release or agreed to its issuing. They explained that this was contrary to the City of Edinburgh Council’s usual practices for considering and agreeing press releases for issue.

The Committee noted that you were one of the people identified in the email exchanges and therefore agreed that it would be helpful to seek your views on the clearing and issuing of the press release. In particular the Committee would welcome your response on the following matters:

- Whether you attended the meeting in the Council Leader’s room at noon on Wednesday 14 October to discuss the press release drafted by the Scottish Government; and if so
 - Could you confirm whether you were clear that any text confirming that DEMA Ltd would take on the private sector liabilities or obligations of The Gathering 2009 Ltd should be removed or altered to reflect that this was not the view of the Council or DEMA Ltd;
- What action, if any, you took to remove or alter the text which remained within the subsequent drafts of the press release (and which confirmed that DEMA Ltd would take on the private sector liabilities or obligations of The Gathering 2009);
- Whether you received any response (written, email or verbal) from Councillor Dawe, Councillor Cardownie, the Chief Executive and Mr Inch, to the exchange of emails issued following the above meeting and prior to the press release being issued;
- Who you cleared the final press release with, and who authorised its issuing;
- Whether you were content that the Council Leader, the Deputy leader, the Chief Executive and Mr Jim Inch had agreed the final press release and the timing of its issue;
- Why the press release was issued containing a statement confirming that DEMA Ltd would take on the private sector liabilities of The Gathering 2009 Ltd when this text was rejected at the meeting in the Council leader’s office at noon on Thursday 14 October.

It would be helpful if you could provide your response by Wednesday 24 November 2010. Please do not hesitate to contact the clerk should this deadline pose you any difficulty.

The Committee hopes to resolve this matter by correspondence although it may seek oral evidence from you, at a later date, should that prove necessary.

Our normal practice is to publish relevant evidence that is sent to us on our website and we may also include it in the hard copy of any committee report. **Therefore, if you wish your evidence to be treated as confidential, or for your evidence to be published anonymously, please contact the Clerk to the Committee, before you submit your evidence.** Further information on the publication of written submissions is contained in the enclosed policy on the treatment of written evidence by committees. **Please take time to read this policy.** We welcome written evidence in English, Gaelic or any other language.

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact the Clerk, Jane Williams on 0131 348 5390 or by email at pa.committee@scottish.parliament.uk.