

REQUEST FOR INTERPRETATION INTO POLISH FOR A MEMBERS' DEBATE

Executive summary

1. This paper seeks the approval of the SPCB to provide interpreting services for a number of Polish-speaking constituents who wish to attend a forthcoming Members' business debate being led by Christine Grahame MSP.

Issues and Options

2. The Public Information and Publications Team has received a request from Christine Grahame MSP for some assistance with facilitating access by Polish-speaking constituents to her proposed Members' business debate likely to be scheduled in the autumn. The relevant motion is:

Motion S4M-03061: Christine Grahame, Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale, Scottish National Party, Date Lodged: 28/05/2012

The Great Polish Map of Scotland

That the Parliament recognises the historic significance of The Great Polish Map of Scotland in the village of Eddleston in the Scottish Borders, designed and built as a labour of love by a group of young Polish geographers from the Jagellonian University of Krakow in 1975 at the request of General Maczek, former Polish wartime Commander of the 1st Armoured Division, and the war veteran, Jan Tomasiak; notes that this commemorates the vital role of Polish forces in the defence of Scotland in the Second World War and is a token of thanks to the people of Scotland for the hospitality and friendship given to the Polish people not only during the war years but also in the decades that followed; considers that this 50 x 40 metre, three-dimensional outdoor 1:10,000 scale model of Scotland, complete with mountains, landscape, flowing rivers, estuaries, coasts and seas located is a remarkable example of topographic landscape modelling of a complete country, with a design and layout involving pioneering survey and construction techniques with dynamic representation of major river basins using a gravity-driven water supply; further congratulates Mapa Scotland, a voluntary group established to protect and restore this unique three dimensional representation, reminding Scots of the historical heritage linking Poland with Scotland, and considers that this project deserves support.

Supported by: Graeme Pearson, Jamie McGrigor, Humza Yousaf, Roderick Campbell, Joan McAlpine, Drew Smith, Jim Hume, Patricia Ferguson, Bill Walker, Gordon MacDonald, Mike MacKenzie, Dennis Robertson, Kevin Stewart, Annabelle Ewing, Adam Ingram, Anne McTaggart, Richard Lyle, Jamie Hepburn, Hugh Henry, Bob Doris, Mark McDonald, Mary Scanlon, David Torrance, Gil Paterson, Dave Thompson, Margaret Burgess, George Adam, Colin Keir, Paul Wheelhouse, Stewart Maxwell, Stuart McMillan

Current Status: Achieved Cross Party Support

3. Ms Grahame believes that there are a number of Polish-speaking people in her constituency (and elsewhere in Scotland) who could find it difficult to engage with the debate if the Parliament did not make some effort to provide Polish interpreting of the debate. Her request is therefore focused on engagement/outreach issues rather than the use of Polish by MSPs when speaking in the Chamber.

4. What could be envisaged (subject to technical issues) is providing simultaneous interpreting of the Members' debate and putting this out as a separate feed from the website. Additionally, the Media Relations Office and the Outreach team could be asked to provide some assistance to promote this debate amongst the Polish-speaking community.

Resource Implications

5. The Public Information and Publications Unit estimates that this would cost an additional £500 to provide. There is an existing contract for interpreting and its contractors will be able to supply Polish interpreters. The explanation why it may cost up to £500 is because the work is intensive - simultaneous interpreting for an hour will require 2 staff – and they work 20 minutes turns and charge a half day minimum.

Dependencies

6. The implementation of this request would depend on the successful procurement of an external interpreter and any technical issues in using our systems.

Governance issues

7. In relation to equalities, it could be argued that the provision of interpreting services would be beneficial in facilitating access for the Polish-speaking community.

Publication Scheme

8. It is recommended that this paper should be published in line with the SPCB's Publication Scheme. There are no specific timing issues in relation to publication, except that the paper should be published only after the Parliament has formally agreed the relevant slot for Members' business.

Next steps

9. If agreed, the Public Information and Publications Unit will take forward the necessary arrangements to procure a Polish interpreter and liaise with Ms Grahame. MRO will also work on raising awareness.

Decision

10. The SPCB is asked to authorise the necessary expenditure to provide Polish interpreting for Christine Grahame's forthcoming Members' business.

Stephen Imrie, Head of the Business Team, Chamber Office
Linda Orton, Head of Public Information and Publications
September 2012