

News story: Chief Secretary meets Fife businesses to hear growth plans

Today (14 February 2017) the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, David Gauke met with Fife-based companies to discuss opportunities and challenges, and hear their future plans to grow and boost Scotland and the UK's economy.

Sectors driving growth in the Fife economy – including insurance, manufacturing, accounting, banking, higher education, distilling and brewing – were all represented at the roundtable, held at Handelsbanken Dunfermline.

The latest meeting of the Chief Secretary with the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland Finance Ministers also took place today in Edinburgh. The ministers discussed the economic outlook and the upcoming UK government Budget.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury, David Gauke said:

Fife's businesses have ambitious plans for the future. The UK government is focusing on raising productivity and creating the right environment for Scottish businesses to flourish.

The UK government and devolved administrations must continue to work together to maximise opportunities to boost the UK economy and support businesses across the country. I was pleased therefore to meet my ministerial counterparts today to look ahead to Budget and discuss our economic priorities.

Fife is playing a key part in developing two city deals in Scotland: Edinburgh and South East Scotland; and the Tay Cities. The UK government, working with the Scottish Government and local partners, remains on track to agree a city deal with all 7 of Scotland's great cities.

The Chief Secretary will later visit the Edinburgh Gin Distillery in the city's West End. Some 70% of the gin consumed in the UK is made in Scotland, while the UK is the world's largest gin exporter, with more than 200 million bottles being sent to overseas markets each year. He also met with the Scotch Whisky Association to discuss how the UK government can continue to support the Whisky industry in the UK and in export markets.

Business roundtable attendees:

- Peter Southcott, Director, Corgi Homeplan Ltd
- Alan Mitchell, Chief Executive, Fife Chamber of Commerce
- Jim Donnelly, Branch Manager, Handelsbanken Dunfermline
- Carol Grant, Customer Service Manager, Reel Service Ltd
- David Marriott, Finance Director, Smith Anderson Group
- Derek Watson, Quaestor and Factor, University of St Andrews

- Andrew Croxford, Partner, Thomson Cooper Accountants
- Paul Miller, Founder and Owner, Eden Mill Distillery & Brewery