

Annex A – Meeting note

ENGAGEMENT REPORT	
Minister	First Minister
Type of engagement	Bilateral meeting with Irish Ambassador the EU
Date	28 June 2023
Attending Official(s)	Martin Johnson, EU Director
Who	Tom Hanney, Ireland’s Permanent Representative to the EU
Key Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FM stressed Scotland feels itself a European country and is keen to stay close to the EU and closely aligned with EU laws. He had felt real warmth to Scotland on this trip. FM stressed Scotland’s offer to the EU, including our renewable energy potential. <i>(22 words redacted under section 32)</i> FM noted the strong, enduring links between Scotland and Ireland at all levels. • <i>(40 words redacted under section 32)</i> • <i>(90 words redacted under section 32)</i> • TH understood that the UK was seeking to open new channels between Ministers and Commissioners (in effect somewhere ‘between’ the TCA Partnership Council level and the TCA Specialised Committees led by officials). <i>(61 words redacted under section 32)</i> • <i>(236 words redacted under section 32)</i>

Annex B – Briefing

28.6.2023 - TOM HANNEY, IRISH AMBASSADOR TO THE EU

Key messages	<p>Scotland deeply values its ties to close friend and partner, the Republic of Ireland. Engagement with Ireland is always valuable, as both a key member of the European Union and our closest EU neighbour.</p> <p>Useful to hear the your perspective on prominent EU topics and on as well the from the General Affairs Council (26 and 27 June) and the upcoming European Council (29-30 June).</p> <p>Scotland and Ireland are fostering a promising level of cooperation on energy and FM is keen to see this develop.</p> <p>In advance of your retirement, I'd like to thank you personally for the friendship and support you've shown Scotland.</p> <p>Noting too amongst your previous roles you were Ambassador to Austria and to the International Organisations based in Vienna from 2017 to 2020, and I know you discussed your links to Austria with Angus Robertson our Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture.</p>
What	Bilateral meeting [Gift tbc – Tom Hanney is retiring]
Why	To discuss matters of mutual importance, such as the dual green and digital transition – with a focus on hydrogen and renewables – as well as business and economic development with an Ambassador of an EU member state of key strategic interest to Scotland.
Who	Tom Hanney, Irish Ambassador to the EU
Where	SHB
When	28 June 2023, 08.30-09.15
Likely themes	UK-EU relations; and Energy.
Media	Tweet for @ScotGovFM/ScotGovBrussels
Supporting official	Martin Johnson, SG EU Director
Attached documents	1. Summary 2. Agenda 3. Biography

	4. Top lines 5. Ireland Scotland Joint Bilateral Review background 6. Rockall 7. Country profile
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1. Summary

A meeting with a key EU Ambassador, representing an EU member state close to Scotland

2. Agenda

No formal agenda agreed – energy and economic development mentioned in meeting invite.

3. Biography

<p>Tom Hanney</p> 	<p>Ireland’s Ambassador to the EU</p> <p>Ambassador Hanney has been in post since April 2020. Prior to his current role, he served as Ambassador of Ireland to Austria and Permanent Representative to the International Organisations in Vienna for three years and as Deputy Permanent Representative of Ireland in Brussels, from September 2011 to December 2016.</p> <p>Cabinet Secretary Angus Robertson met with Ambassador Hanney during his visit to Brussels in June 2022. The discussed sanctions against Russia, the Northern Ireland protocol ad Scotland's hydrogen offer to Europe.</p> <p>The Lord Advocate met Ambassador Hanney in November 2022 and discussed UK-EU relations, particularly the difficulties around the Northern Ireland Protocol.</p>
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4. Top lines

UK / EU relations

- I am aware that developments surrounding the Northern Ireland Protocol has created a degree of disruption in dealings with the EU institutions over the last year; but that there is cautious optimism for improved relations following the Windsor Framework agreement. **I am interested in your current assessment of the UK-EU relationship?**
- **What do you think the scope for development of the TCA is?** Particularly as we approach the review of the TCA, you will be aware of the key Scottish interests at play.

Big picture EU themes and developments

- The EU has changed significantly since the UK left, in part due to that departure, but also due to the changing world. Noting the war in Ukraine, the climate emergency and geopolitical challenges around the US-China relationship, I'd appreciate your reflections on the EU's direction of travel.

Ireland and Scotland

- Ireland is a priority country for Scotland to engage with, and I'm delighted to see Scotland and Ireland's relationship go from strength to strength through delivery of the Bilateral Review.
- I know progress to date has been strong, and that the Tánaiste and Cabinet Secretary for External Affairs will soon meet to discuss where we should prioritise collaboration in the future.

Net Zero

- There is huge potential for Ireland and Scotland to work more closely together on the transition to net zero.
- I know that discussions are underway on this, and it would be of huge value for Scotland and Ireland to work in partnership as we both scale offshore wind, create hydrogen export opportunities, develop wave and tidal technologies, and share learning on residential retrofit programmes.

Education

- Further, I am pleased to hear that work is progressing in developing a joint degree programme to encourage student mobility. It is important that this work continues at pace so we can establish a joint degree as soon as possible.

Child Poverty

- Since becoming First Minister, I have set a critical mission for Scotland in advancing equality through tackling poverty, particularly child poverty.
- I know that this is a priority for the Taoiseach, and I believe there is much for both Governments to learn from another on this.

5. Ireland Scotland Joint Bilateral Review

- The Review commits to delivering on recommendations for increased collaboration and cooperation on diplomacy, business and the economy, diaspora, culture, research and education, and rural and island communities.
- At the time of the last ministerial review in March 2022, strong progress had been made on almost 60% of the Review's 41 recommendations.
- Cabinet Secretary Robertson is due to meet with the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs (Micheál Martin) in July for the next ministerial review to judge progress over the past year and agree areas for future collaboration.
- Regular engagement is underway at an official level on a wide range of policy issues.
- This includes sharing learning on providing accommodation to Ukrainian refugees with officials visiting Ireland in May to look at modular housing being built.
- Discussions are taking place on marine spatial planning as there is a strong appetite in Ireland to learn from Scotland on the designation of marine areas for offshore wind.
- Early conversations are underway on hydrogen. Ireland is expected to publish its hydrogen strategy in June 2023 and we expect future engagement to focus on infrastructure which would allow Ireland and Scotland to export hydrogen to mainland Europe.
- An agreement in principle has been reached at an official level on how an undergraduate joint degree programme between Scotland and Ireland might work.
- While it is important that agreement is reached at an official level before recommendations are put to Ministers, it is important that both Governments continue to develop proposals quickly as there is high demand from Scottish and Irish institutions for increased student mobility.

- Scottish Government child poverty policy officials are now in contact with the Irish Government's new Child Poverty Unit to discuss approaches in addressing child poverty.
- Officials are looking to build on engagement across four nations in the UK on child poverty by including Ireland in this. This is particularly considering that the next BIC in November is expected to focus on child poverty.
- Scottish Government officials are in close contact with the authorities managing the PEACE + programme on how Scottish stakeholders might help in delivery and retain our close links with both NI and RoI counterparts.

6. Rockall

Key messages

- *(360 words redacted under Section 32).*
- Our position has always been that there is no ambiguity under international law as to the status of Rockall as an uninhabited island within the UK Exclusive Economic Zone, and the UK's corresponding right to establish territorial waters around it.

7. Ireland – Country profile

Head of State – President Michael D Higgins

Prime Minister – Taoiseach Leo Varadkar (FG) (since December 2022)

Government – Fine Gael, Fianna Fail and Green coalition

Foreign Minister and Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) – Micheál Martin (FF)

Ambassador to UK – Martin Fraser (since September 2022)

UK Ambassador – Paul Johnston (since September 2020)

Consul General – Jerry O'Donovan – start date February 2023

Residents in UK (+ residents in Scotland) – 395,000 (22,952: Census, 2011)

Key Links with Ireland

- Irish citizens one of Scotland's largest diasporas, almost 23,000 living here (2011 census).
- We have fifteen Global Scots based in Ireland and are proactively recruiting more.
- Ireland is Scotland's closest international trading partner and 6th largest export market with exports worth £1.24 bn going to Ireland in 2018. This represents 3.6% of Scotland's total international exports (Source: Export Statistics Scotland).
- There are 120 Irish investors in the Scottish economy, with 265 local units employing 5380, with a turnover in Scotland of £2.97 billion.
- The top 5 Scottish export sectors to Ireland are: Food and drink, Technology, Digital and Media, Wholesale and Retail, Life and Chemical Sciences, Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing.