

Chamber of commerce boss on China delegation

Liz McAreavey the Chief Executive of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce was part of an overseas trade mission to China recently led by a delegation of the Scottish Chambers of Commerce (SCC).

Joined by senior representatives and business people from Aberdeen, Ayrshire, Dundee & Angus, Glasgow, and West Lothian, Ms McAreavey was part of a group who explored new trading opportunities and links with business, education and government organisations.

SCC announced the official opening of a new International Trade Office in the city of Yantai during the visit. The formal opening ceremony was hosted by the Vice Mayor of Yantai city, Madame Zhang Bo, together with senior officials from Yantai Municipal Government.

As part of the event, both parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding for trade engagement and partnership, designed to achieve an effective channel for exchange of business between Scotland and Yantai.

Edinburgh Chamber took part in a series of productive meetings with senior business people, highly influential politicians including Vice Governor Wang Shujian, and local government officials as well as national 'think tanks' bodies in Beijing, Yantai and Jinan in the Shandong Province



Liz McAreavey, Chief Executive, Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce

Liz McAreavey said : "The Chinese economy continues to grow at a faster pace than western economies and the rate of growth

within new cities such as Yantai and Jinan opens up the potential for Edinburgh businesses to promote and sell its goods and services which Chinese businesses and consumers want and need. That demand, together with a more recent policy of 'opening up' to new trading partners and overseas alliances by the Chinese, presents a myriad of opportunities for our local businesses to capitalise on.

"The aim of our mission was to strengthen relationships and increase engagement with existing and new contacts in sectors where there are direct B2B or knowledge-sharing opportunities for Edinburgh companies. Yantai is a city of 7 million and SCC's base in Yantai will enable us to plan a comprehensive approach to exploiting the many opportunities in Yantai and further afield for our members and non-members."

Ms McAreavey also visited the city of Jinan, which is home to one of the first national high-tech business incubators and since its foundation in 2002, it has incubated more than 1,000 small and medium sized science and technology enterprises. It focuses on cultivating fast-growing sectors such as biomedicine, ecommerce, energy, environmental protection and new materials.

Key sectors for Edinburgh Chamber based companies to meet key economic needs in the Chinese target cities include: electronic information, robotics and artificial intelligence, bioscience, R &D and smart technologies, food and drink and even football management.

The accelerated growth of consumers in Shandong province also opens opportunities in consumer goods, recreation and tourism services, financial and professional services and education.

Chief Executive SCC, Liz Cameron said: "We now have a deeper understanding of how we can achieve the best exchange for business, where the opportunities exist for Scottish organisations and how we can best pursue these.

“We have also identified a number of potential opportunities for inward investment into Scotland and will be working with Scottish Government and SDI as well as other trade organisations to explore these and leverage the momentum of change within China.

SCC intends to return to Shandong Province later this year to conclude discussions on further Memorandums of Understanding and explore new ways to foster co-operation between the two countries.