

I have spent the last ten days doing a significant amount of travelling in my capacity as Sports Minister. First I went West to the Super Bowl in Minnesota.

It sounds like fun, and of course the game itself was, but beforehand I held numerous meetings on both trade and sport. The UK is the destination for a large amount of exports from Minneapolis and it was good to meet the Mayor, business partners and Trade Commissioners to reassure them that we're open for business.

In addition I met with the owners of the NFL teams coming to London this year for their season games and other partners who provide the UK/US link into American football. The season games, that are hosted at Wembley and for the first time this year Tottenham Hotspur, bring a £60m boost to the London economy. If we were to get a franchise from the NFL, which is the ultimate aim of Government, then its value to the economy is estimated at £100m per annum. A sum not to be sniffed at. With the growing popularity of American football, both being played and watched, it was an extremely worthwhile trip.

With a days touchdown in the UK I then headed East for the Winter Olympics. I have never been to South Korea and on first impressions I was charmed. The trip was again bookended with plenty of dialogue including the international sports ministers meeting. Strangely I found myself sat next to the North Korean minister. I made polite small talk. They do a lot of school sport he said (through his interpreter) proudly. I didn't quite know what to say back. I don't think the foreign office is for me. I am way too pleased to be home now and am not going anywhere else for a while.