Minutes of the 4th Meeting of CPA Scotland Branch Executive Committee held on Wednesday 7 December 2011 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04

Present: Patricia Ferguson MSP
Margaret Mitchell MSP
Sandra White MSP (Chair)
Margaret Neal (Secretary)

In attendance: Billy McLaren, Senior Parliamentary Relations Officer (SPRO)

1. **Apologies**
   
   Apologies were received from Tavish Scott MSP.

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 September 2011**
   
   The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

3. **British Islands and Mediterranean Region Annual Conference June 2012: CPA Paper/S4/11-12/4/1**
   
   The Members of the Branch Executive Committee (BEC) agreed the draft programme and asked the Secretary to invite lead speakers with an expertise in each of 3 main pillars (media, people and money). The Secretary was asked to explore the possibility of inviting an official from the Media Relations Office to deliver a presentation from an institutional perspective. The SPRO and the Secretary were also asked to review the concept for the media pillar and report back at the next meeting.

   Members also agreed that a cultural tour to Fife should be arranged. The Secretary was asked to provide an outline programme and estimated costs for the next meeting.

   
   Members of the BEC agreed that Scotland Branch should accept the invitation from the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly to attend the Conflict Peace and Regeneration Conference to be held from 7-10 February 2012. The Secretary was asked to advertise the opportunity to all Branch Members.

   The BEC also agreed that the invitation to attend the Westminster seminar and workshops should be declined on this occasion.
The BEC Committee also agreed that the Secretary should book flights as soon as possible for the 58th Commonwealth Plenary Conference in accordance with the SPCB guidelines.

The BEC further agreed that 2 members of the Scottish Youth Parliament should be offered the opportunity to attend the Commonwealth Day observance events in London as per the invitation from the CPA Secretariat.

Margaret Mitchell MSP reported back to the BEC about the International Parliamentary Conference: Millennium Development Goals. Ms Mitchell explained that she would submit a written joint report with Sarah Boyack MSP in due course. She deemed the Conference to be very worthwhile and a complete success. Ms Mitchell also reported that the Special Envoy’s session has been well received by delegates.

Members noted that the report from the 22nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Seminar should be available in time for the next meeting on 25 January.

The BEC Members considered and were content with arrangements as outlined in the paper and suggested some amendments to the draft programme and other arrangements. It was agreed that unless there were compelling reasons, a dinner was unnecessary on this occasion. It was also agreed that a Members Debate should take place on Wednesday 14 March, focusing on the Commonwealth Day theme, subject to approval by the Parliamentary Bureau. Members of the BEC agreed to raise this matter with Business Managers.

Furthermore the Secretary was asked to ensure that as much fair trade produce as possible was used for the event. The Secretary undertook to discuss the possibility of a Commonwealth Day theme in the self-service restaurant that day and to also explore the possibility of Sodexho expanding the use of fair trade produce throughout Commonwealth Week.

6. Engagement with Malawi

Internship Programme
The BEC asked to be updated on progress in relation to the February visit at the next meeting.

Parliamentary Pairing Initiative
The BEC discussed the meeting which took place on 2 November for Branch Members interested in taking part in the Parliamentary Pairing Initiative. It was noted that there was sufficient interest from both old and new Members to rebuild the Pairing Initiative.

TAP2
As reported last month, it had been hoped that TAP2 would have progressed further before the end of the financial year following the visit by the Malawian
officials. Given the current situation in relation to the travel ban by Malawian officials, the BEC agreed to put things on hold until after the visit by Malawian interns in February/March. It was hoped that an opportunity for engagement at official level could be found early in the next financial year.

7. Any Other Business
Given the activity over the coming months, the Secretary was asked to circulate key dates for all known meetings and events to Members of the BEC.

8. Dates of next meetings:
- Wednesday 25 January 2012: Room Q1.04 12.45pm
- Wednesday 29 February 2012: Room Q1.04 12.45pm
- Wednesday 28 March 2012: Room Q1.04 12.45pm

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