CPA FORWARD PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITY AND FINANCE – REGULAR UPDATE

1. The purpose of this paper is to:

- Provide a note on decisions required for possible changes to the draft forward programme of activity for the period 2011-14.
- Provide an update and breakdown on the Branch finances (Annex A).
- Ask Members to decide whether or not to decline the invitation to attend the Peace, Conflict and Re-generation Conference to be held in Belfast from 22-25 May 2012.
- Ask Members to consider whether or not to accept the invitation to attend the Commonwealth Plenary Conference to be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 9 to 15 September 2012.
- To inform Members that CPA Scotland Branch has been invited to apply for a place as an observer at the Canadian Regional Conference to be held in Quebec from 16-21 July 2012. Members will be invited to make a decision as soon as the Conference theme is known.

Background

2. The Programme of Activity set out at Annex A has been updated in light of decisions made at the last meeting and events which have taken place since the last meeting. Where there are financial implications, explanations are set out in paragraphs 4-6 below.

Branch finances

3. At the first meeting of the BEC held in June 2011 it was agreed to consider, at each subsequent meeting, details of the Branch finances. This regular financial update aims to assist Members when considering the resource planning of future activities.

4. As previously notified, the budget of £57,250 for the financial year 2011-12 is already set. However in line with budget reductions across the Scottish Parliament Members of the BEC agreed that the sum of £15,000 should be returned this financial year.

5. The following information reflects current matters in relation to activities incurring Branch expenditure and invites decisions on some of these matters:
As previously discussed, in relation to the Parliamentary Pairing Initiative with Malawian MPs, no further activity is planned in the 2011-12 financial year for exchange visits.

As discussed at the last meeting, an invitation to apply to attend the ‘Conflict, Peace and Re-generation’ Conference in Northern Ireland from 22-25 May 2012 was circulated to all Branch members. Estimated expenditure for the Conference has been transferred to the 2012-13 financial year. Confirmation of delegates to be agreed subject to interest.

The estimated costs for Commonwealth Week are likely to be in the region of £8,145. This estimate is £1,200 below last month’s estimate and is attributed to a reduced estimate for plasma screen hire. Further information about the programme is contained in CPA Paper S4/11-12/6/2 (agenda item 6).

The Scottish Youth Parliament Members attended Commonwealth Day celebrations in London, on 12 March 2012. The cost to the Branch is likely to be in the region of £695. This figure represents an increase of £195 to cover increases in travel costs due to one of the members travelling back to Shetland.

As previously agreed, Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, Chair of the CPA will visit from 28 to 29 March 2012. Andrew Tuggey, Regional Secretary will also attend the business meetings.

As already agreed, CPA Scotland Branch will attend the CPA Annual Conference in Sri Lanka from 10-17 September 2012. The invitation has been received however the conference theme will not be known until after the International Executive Committee meeting in Tonga in April 2012.

A separate, one-off project budget has been negotiated by UKIRO for the BIMR Conference in 2012. There will be no cost to the core CPA budget. £6,000 will be available in the 2011-12 financial year.

Projected budget reductions for the 2012/13 and 2013/14 financial years have been made to the table shown in Annex A.

6. At the moment there is an estimated underspend of around £495. This increase in the projected underspend is mainly due to further revised estimates for catering and equipment hire as well as small savings elsewhere in relation to the Commonwealth Day programme.

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