CPA SCOTLAND BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE 1st MEETING, 2012-13

WEDNESDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2012 AT 12.45PM IN ROOM Q1.04

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

In attendance: Stephen Herbert, Senior Parliamentary Relations Officer
Sally Coyne, Media Relations Office (MRO)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Murdo Fraser MSP and Alison McInnes MSP.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 May 2012

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Feedback from Murdo Fraser MSP and Alison McInnes MSP

Members of the Branch Executive Committee (BEC) discussed both reports and noted the contents. In particular the Secretary was asked to ensure Murdo Fraser’s suggestions in relation to the Falkland Island referendum and the oil and gas industry in the Falklands should be explored further by the delegation attending the regional conference, in the Falkland Islands, in February 2013.

The content of Alison McInnes’s report was noted for future reference in terms of engagement with Canada.

The Branch Secretary was asked to write to both Members, on behalf of the BEC, thanking them for their reports.
4. **Information update from Hanzala Malik MSP**

Hanzala Malik MSP attended the meeting to provide Members of the BEC with an insight into the international work in which he was involved which includes building links with the Punjab in Pakistan. Amongst other matters discussed, Mr Malik informed the Members that Scotland had much to gain from trade links with Pakistan and co-operation across a range of spheres such as higher education.

5. **Feedback from Tavish Scott MSP in relation the Commonwealth Plenary Conference which took place in Sri Lanka**

Tavish Scott MSP provided feedback on the events and discussion that took place during the Commonwealth Plenary Conference in Sri Lanka. Discussion focussed on the content of the regional meeting and the politics around the Working Party report. Members were disappointed that the Internal Audit recommendation had been removed from the Working party’s report however accepted that this had been necessary to allow the Association to move forward. It was noted that discussions about an internal audit process would continue at the International committee level.

Members of the BEC agreed that the Scotland Branch should keep a watching brief on developments in relation to this issue which had dominated, and at times, overshadowed the work of the CPA as a whole.

The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Steering Group was also discussed. Members of the BEC expressed disappointment that the regional secretariat had not brought forward a proposal for electing the representative from BIMR. The BEC also expressed disappointment that the BIMR was not represented at the CWP Steering Group meeting which took place in Sri Lanka. The Secretary was asked to present options for a selection process for the vacancy for the next meeting.

The Secretary informed Members that she had attended a meeting with counterparts from the devolved legislatures, in Belfast on 24 September, and all three devolved legislatures were looking at ways in which to improve support to members attending CPA regional and annual conferences. It had been agreed that the Scotland Branch Secretary should write to the Regional Secretary on behalf of all three Branch Secretariats, requesting that committee papers should be produced for regional meetings, in advance of the meeting, to allow delegates to give the matters to be discussed, proper consideration.

Tavish further informed the BEC that the Scotland Branch delegation has sought to fulfil the aims of attendance at the conference namely, of promoting the Scotland Branch candidate for the BIMR place on the CWP Steering Group, and of promoting the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, Scotland
and the Scottish Parliament to the wider world. In addition, it was also noted that the delegation had made a range of contacts with the Malawian delegation present at the conference.

The BEC agreed that the Chairperson and Secretary-General of the CPA should be invited to attend the David Livingstone reception and/or meet with the BEC following the next mid-year meeting of the International Executive Committee in April 2013.

Overall Tavish Scott MSP reported that the conference had been an immensely useful experience and commented that spending a period of time with Parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth provided an excellent opportunity to share views, thoughts and ideas about political developments taking place across the Commonwealth. Tavish also noted that the workshops held at the conference had been a particularly valuable forum for discussion and exchange of ideas. Mr Scott stated that he would provide a written report about the Conference in the near future.

6. Forward Programme of Activities/Financial Paper

Members of the BEC noted that there had been developments in relation to planned activities since the last meeting. A lengthy discussion took place around priorities, and it was agreed that:

- Two Members, and a Parliamentary official, should attend the British Islands and Mediterranean Regional (BIMR) conference to be held in the Falkland Islands in February 2013. It was further agreed that the delegation should take advantage of the sponsored rate for flights and travel via RAF Brize Norton. UKIRO was asked to issue a notice to all Members;

- One Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament should be invited to attend the 5th CPA Youth Parliament in London from 4-8 December 2012;

- One Member should have the opportunity to attend the International Parliamentary Conference on Gender and Politics Conference. The Secretary was asked to advertise the opportunity to all Branch Members as soon as possible.

- The Branch should aim to hold 2 Members’ debates in March 2013. The first debate should ideally take place on Wednesday 13 March on the Commonwealth day theme. The second Debate should take place on Wednesday 19 March 2013 to coincide with the 200th anniversary of the birth of David Livingstone.
• A programme for Commonwealth Day 2013 should be developed with flexibility to allow for possible new developments surrounding the David Livingstone bi-centenary celebrations.

• That the Malawian Intern programme should proceed on the usual basis and be arranged end February / March 2013. The Secretary was asked to take forward arrangements as necessary.

• That TAP2 activity, including the Parliamentary Pairing Initiative, should be developed in accordance with the suggested proposal for 2012/13. The Branch Secretary was asked to bring forward an updated draft programme for the next meeting in October.

• It was noted that engagement with Malawi had potential to crossover with TAP2 and Commonwealth Day this year, not least because of the David Livingstone bi-centenary. The Branch Secretary was requested to monitor opportunities that may arise, to ensure that the Branch’s limited resources continued to be used to maximise outcomes.

• It was also agreed that a Member should attend events in Lilongwe, to mark the David Livingstone bi-centenary, if invited to do so. It was further agreed that if an opportunity to deliver workshops and strengthen the PPI could be found, then these arrangements should be taken forward.

Lastly, Members discussed ways in which to involve younger Members in Branch activities. It was thought that events which targeted Members aged 18-29 could provide an ideal development opportunity for younger Members. The Branch Secretary was asked to bring forward a paper, later in the year, to consider options for a selection procedure for events of this kind.

7. **CPA Scotland Branch Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

Members discussed the draft minutes and raised a concern that, for a number of years, a large proportion of Members were unable to attend the AGM due to party group meetings taking place at the same time. It was agreed that the Secretary should explore the possibility of holding the AGM in 2013 in the Chamber on a Thursday. It was further agreed that Members should also be advised of the date for the AGM earlier in the future.

The Branch Secretary was requested to post the draft minutes, of the last AGM, on the CPA Scotland Branch webpages.

8. **British Islands and Mediterranean Region Annual Conference June 2012**

Members of the BEC considered the report of the 42\textsuperscript{nd} Conference of the British Islands and Mediterranean Region, which was hosted by the CPA
Scotland Branch, from 10 to 14 June 2012. Members were content with the report and it was agreed that the report should be posted on the website.


The report of the Commonwealth Day Observance events in London was noted by the Committee.

10. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

11. Dates of next meetings

- Wed 31 Oct 2012 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- Wed 28 Nov 2012 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- Wed 19 Dec 2012 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- Wed 30 Jan 2013 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- Wed 27 Feb 2013 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- Wed 20 March 2013 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- Wed 24 April 2013 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- Wed 29 May 2013 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- Wed 26 June 13 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04

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