MINUTES OF THE 3RD MEETING OF THR CPA SCOTLAND BRANCH
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WHICH WAS HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28
NOVEMBER 2012 AT 12.45PM IN ROOM Q1.04

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

In attendance: Steven Bell, Parliamentary Relations Officer
Sally Coyne, Media Relations Officer

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Stephen Herbert, Senior Parliamentary Relations Officer.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 September 2012

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Gordon Arthur, Director of Communications at Glasgow 2014

Gordon Arthur, was invited to attend the meeting to discuss how best CPA Scotland Branch could assist with the promotion of the Commonwealth Games. Mr Arthur updated the Committee on the state of play in relation to the organisation of the Commonwealth Games and mentioned a number of events which were planned or in the early stages of planning.

Mr Arthur noted that Glasgow 2014 Limited would launch the programme for the Games, entitled the “Game on Scotland” programme, in March 2013. This programme would highlight planned events and ideas on how people could become involved. Glasgow 2014 were already engaged with The Royal Commonwealth Society, British Council Scotland, Local Authorities, the university sector, the Commonwealth Business Council and other Commonwealth organisations.
It was suggested to Mr Arthur that Burns’ Federations would be an ideal way to contact the Diaspora to generate interest in the games and visiting Scotland.

Several ideas were broadly discussed in relation to what CPA Branch could do and how the Branch could become involved. These included: an event for the diplomatic corps; creating a Commonwealth Games section on the CPA Scotland Branch Website; arranging a slot at the 2014 Festival of Politics highlighting the legacy of the Games for the Parliament and Scotland.

The Branch Executive Committee agreed that a link to Glasgow 2014 website should be posted on the CPA Scotland branch pages of the Scottish Parliament’s website.

The Branch Secretary was also asked to send the CPA Secretariat’s contact details to Mr Arthur.

Mr Arthur offered to return in Spring 2013 to provide a further update to the Committee. Members of the Committee also emphasised that Glasgow 2014 should not hesitate to contact the Branch if opportunities to assist arose in the future.

4. Forward Programme of Activities/Financial Paper

The content of the Paper was noted. It was also agreed that CPA funds would not be required for the Westminster Abbey service on 19 March 2013.

5. Invitation to attend the 24th Commonwealth Parliamentary Seminar in Singapore

Members agreed that due to other priorities during the 2013/14 financial year, the invitation to attend this Seminar should be declined. The Secretary was asked to write to the CPA Secretariat accordingly.

6. TAP2

The Secretary reported that TAP2 had progressed since the last meeting. The Clerk/Chief Executive had written to Clerk of Parliament (CoP) at the National Assembly of Malawi in relation to activities which could be arranged during the next 12 months. The CoP had responded positively. They were keen to undertake a range of work including workshops on budget scrutiny and legislative scrutiny with an emphasis on environmental impacts on legislation. The Presiding Officer would write to the Speaker seeking formal approval for this work to be undertaken. The Secretary reported that a notice had been sent to all Branch members on 27 November inviting applications to visit Malawi in March 2013.

The Secretary also reported that officials from UKIRO had met (separately) with counterparts in the Scottish Government and representatives from the
Active Learning Centre (ALC). The ALC were carrying out work with the Women’s Caucus in Malawi to support them to: carry out consultations throughout their constituencies; work with the Caucus to focus on key areas of concern that arose from this constituency work, and to help them to effect policy in the key areas of concern. There was a likelihood that the ALC would be in Lilongwe during the same week as the Scottish delegation in March. If it could be organised, it would be mutually beneficial for the Scottish Members to assist the ALC with the delivery of workshops to the Women’s Caucus. The Secretary was asked to provide the Branch Executive Committee with further information about the ALC Project.

The Branch Secretary further reported that a contact within a Scottish organisation had suggested that assistance with drafting a private Members Bill on compulsory education for girls would be welcome. Whilst it was agreed that this was tangible piece of work which could be delivered, it was also noted that officials should be mindful of existing pressures within that area.

Members noted that no progress had been made on the PPI video conferences.

7. Commonwealth Day

The Branch agreed that given Commonwealth Day was fast approaching and arrangements needed to be in place, that the Commonwealth Day/David Livingstone event should be arranged for the week beginning Monday 25 March 2013. This would provide the Branch with the opportunity to celebrate and reflect on other events which had taken place to mark the David Livingstone bi-centenary prior to this.

8. Special Envoy

Margaret Mitchell spoke with the Chair of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) whilst attending the International Parliamentary Conference on Women and Gender in London at the beginning of the month. The Secretary was asked to contact the Chair of the CWP to progress arrangements.

It was noted that there was a likelihood of a visit from the Special Envoy in the first quarter of 2013.

9. Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Steering Group selection procedure

The Secretary reported that following her correspondence to the Regional Secretary there were 4 Branches who wished to be considered for the vacancy on the CWP Steering Group. These were Gibraltar, Guernsey Northern Ireland and Scotland.
The CPA Regional Secretary had advised that he is in the process of creating a BIMR procedure using part of the CPA voting system and adapting it for e-voting. He confirmed that the appointment of the BIMR representative would not be made at the Annual General Meeting in the Falkland Islands. Given that there is no mechanism in the BIMR constitution for a CWP Steering Group election, the procedure would need to be drafted as a constitutional change for the 2013 AGM to agree.

The Regional Secretary intends to have the election details and timelines dispatched to Branches by Christmas.

10. International Women in Politics Conference

Margaret Mitchell MSP spoke about her attendance at the conference and answered questions from other Members of the committee. In conclusion, Margaret Mitchell re-iterated that the conference had been well organised and the speakers were excellent. She considered that this type of conference to be extremely worthwhile and represented good value for money.

11. Any Other Business

The suggestion to take forward ideas from the Scottish delegation who had attended the 2012 Commonwealth Plenary Conference, in Sri Lanka, was deferred to the next meeting.

12. Dates of next meetings

- 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
- Thursday 13 June – Annual General Meeting TBC
- Wed 26 June 13 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04

Margaret Neal
Secretary, CPA Scotland Branch
The Scottish Parliament
Email: margaret.neal@scottish.parliament.uk