MINUTES OF THE 7th MEETING OF THE CPA SCOTLAND BRANCH
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WHICH WAS HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL
2013 AT 12.45PM IN ROOM Q1.04

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

In attendance: Margaret Neal, Secretary
               Stephen Herbert, Senior Parliamentary Relations Officer
               Claire Bennett, Assistant Parliamentary Relations Officer
               Sally Coyne, Media Relations Officer

1. **Apologies**
   No apologies were received.

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 February 2013**
   The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

3. **Matters Arising from the minutes**
   There were three items arising from the minutes of the last meeting.
   
   **Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP)**
   Members of the Branch Executive Committee congratulated Patricia Ferguson MSP on being elected by the Branches of the British Islands and Mediterranean Region (BIMR) to represent the region on the CWP Steering Group.

   **Future funding of BIMR conferences**
   Members noted that the status quo would remain which was the Branch’s preferred option.

   **10th CPA Canada Parliamentary Seminar**
   Members agreed that one Member should attend the CPA Parliamentary Seminar in Ottawa. Members noted the short turnaround time to select a Member and agreed that a notice should be sent to all Members as soon as possible.
4. **Forward Programme / Financial Paper**

Members noted that concerns had been raised at the last meeting regarding the scale of Malawi related activities. The following decisions were made:

**Malawian Outward**

Concerns were raised in relation to the timing of this activity given the close proximity to the tripartite election which would take place in Malawi 2014. Apprehensions were also expressed that undertaking this activity in conjunction with attending the Commonwealth Plenary Conference (CPC) was not the best option. Doubts were also raised about how many of the Parliamentary Pairs were currently active despite the pro-active efforts of MSP’s to activate these relationships. Given that the Scotland Branch had arranged an outward and inward visit to and from Malawi in March 2013 the Committee decided to postpone the outward visit until after the Malawian elections in May 2014.

**Commonwealth Plenary Conference (CPC) (South Africa from 28 August to 6 September)**

It was agreed to send 2 Members (one delegate and one observer) to attend the Conference. It was also agreed that Patricia Ferguson MSP would also attend in her role as BIMR CWP representative.

**Malawian Inward**

It was agreed that this proposed activity should be postponed until after the Malawian 2014 election. It was also suggested that that visits post-May 2014 would focus on support to new MPs as requested by the Speaker of the National Assembly. It was further agreed that the Committee would write to their counterparts at the National Assembly reaffirming the Branch’s support for the TAP 2 agreement and intention to focus support on new Members post-election. It was also suggested that Malawian officials may wish to consider, in the interim, what activities would be of greatest value to officials post-election.

**Interns**

It was agreed that the interns programme should continue and that two interns from the National Assembly of Malawi should be invited to visit the Scottish Parliament for a one month internship in November 2013. Members expressed concern that activities for interns in the evenings had not been arranged. It was suggested that it would be useful, when planning future programmes, if the interns had a greater awareness of and access to activities that were taking place in Parliament in the evening. It was also suggested that the focus of the interns’ time in the Scottish Parliament should be upon post-election support to Members.
CWP Steering Committee Chair election

It was agreed that the Branch would consider this further at the next meeting in May once it had become clearer who is standing for election.

Commonwealth Day

It was agreed for 2014 that Commonwealth Day activities would look to celebrate the Commonwealth Games coming to Scotland. Accordingly, an event would take place in June or July 2014. It was further agreed that a representative from Glasgow 2014 Limited should be invited to a Branch meeting prior to the 2013 summer recess to consider how the Branch might best add value to the wider activities taking place in relation to the Games.

5. Arrangements for the CPA Scotland Branch Annual General Meeting (AGM)

It was noted that the meeting of the Justice sub-committee on policing would clash with the AGM. It was therefore agreed to move the time of the AGM to 12.45 on 13 June.

6. Mid-session review of working practices

Tavish Scott MSP asked that his Convenor’s brief for meetings becomes a simpler one page summary. It was agreed that hard copies of the Branch annual report would be available for Members at the AGM.

7. Any other business

Members agreed to encourage attendance at the AGM through respective Group meetings.

8. Dates of next meetings

It was noted that not all Members were able to attend the next meeting of the Branch. It was therefore agreed to move the next meeting to Tuesday 28 May and seek the availability of Members which could include an evening meeting. The dates of the next meetings are:

- Tuesday 28 May 2013 at 5.15pm in Room Q1.04
- Thursday 13 June – Annual General Meeting TBC
- Wed 26 June 13 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04

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