Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to seek the views of Members with regard to an invitation to apply for a place to attend the 11th Canadian CPA Parliamentary Seminar which will take place in Ottawa from Sunday 1 June to Saturday 7 June 2014. A copy of the official letter of invitation is attached at Annex A.

Background

2. The CPA Canadian Parliamentary Seminar has become a regular feature in the CPA calendar of activities, complements existing professional development programmes for parliamentarians and is also a tool for sharing best practice throughout the Commonwealth. Jenny Marra MSP attended this Seminar in June 2013.

3. The Seminar is for Members of Parliament only. Spouses, family members, officials and/or staff cannot be accommodated.

Theme

4. The theme for the seminar will be: Strengthening Democracy and the Role of Parliamentarians: Challenges and Solutions.

Selection

5. The allocation of the spaces available for the seminar is based on representation from each of the regions with attention being given to achieving gender balance. The seminar is designed to meet the needs of newly elected members and/or backbench parliamentarians. The seminar is not suitable for Speakers or Conveners. It is further suggested by the Canada Branch that delegates should be Members who have not had an opportunity to participate in a similar CPA programme.

6. The CPA Canada Branch has stipulated, to achieve gender balance that those branches selected, should be prepared to nominate either a female or a male member as requested by Canada Branch. If Scotland Branch is selected, an official invitation will be received by mid-April 2014.
Costs

7. The Seminar is offered by the Canadian Branch and is funded jointly by the Branch and the CPA Secretariat. Should Scotland Branch be selected to participate, the Scotland Branch will be responsible for the cost of airfares to and from Ottawa. The cost of accommodation and meals from noon, Sunday, June 1 until noon on the departure day, Saturday, June 7, 2014 will be covered by the Canada Branch. The cost to the Scotland Branch is likely to be in the region of £2,780.

Decision

8. Members are invited to:

- Consider whether to apply for a place at the Seminar as detailed above, and

- Should agreement be reached to apply for a place, agree that a circular should be issued to all Branch Members inviting applications.

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