MINUTES OF THE 3rd MEETING OF THE CPA SCOTLAND BRANCH
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 16 DECEMBER 2009 AT 12.00 NOON
QUEENSBERRY HOUSE DINING ROOM

Present: Ted Brocklebank MSP (Chair)
Karen Gillon MSP
Jamie Stone MSP
Sandra White MSP
Margaret Neal (Secretary)

In attendance: Billy McLaren, UKIRO

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Jamie Stone MSP.

2. Cross Party Outward visit to Australia and New Zealand: 2009

The Secretary advised that the draft Australia New Zealand outward visit report was almost near completion and would be circulated before the next meeting. The Committee agreed that all Members of the delegation should attend the next meeting to discuss the final draft version of the report.

- Action (3-1): Secretary was asked to invite Members of the CPA cross party delegation who participated in the Australia New Zealand visit to attend the next meeting.

3. CPA Scotland Branch and International Development

The Committee agreed that Ms Lennox would make an ideal special envoy. Her involvement could be a tremendous asset to Scotland and CPA Scotland Branch would be delighted to work with Ms Lennox. The Branch Secretariat was asked to ensure that Scottish Parliament officials were in touch with Ms Lennox to discuss her possible future role. The Secretary was asked to provide regular updates on progress.

- Action (3-2): The Secretary was asked to provide an update on progress at the next meeting.

4. Minutes of the 1st Meeting held on Wednesday 2 September 2009

The minutes were agreed.
5. Matters Arising from the minutes of the 1st meeting

(i) CPA Scotland Branch engagement with Malawi (CPA Paper 2009/10 (03))

The Committee noted that the Scottish Cabinet re-shuffle could impact on key objectives planned for the proposed visit in February 2010, however agreed that in order to progress the MP/MSP pilot twinning scheme, all efforts should be made to ensure that the visit should proceed as planned. The Committee requested that a copy of the draft programme and final objectives for the visit should be available for discussion and approval at the next meeting.

- **Action (3-3):** Secretary to draft outward visit programme and objectives for discussion at the next meeting.

(ii) CPA Governance Update (CPA Paper 2009/10 (04))

Due to time constraints and the importance and significance of CPA governance issues, the Committee agreed that discussion on this matter should be deferred until the next meeting.

- **Action (3-4):** Secretary to add to 4th Meeting agenda.


The Branch Executive Committee noted the contents of the paper.

(iv) Proposed visit to the Northern Ireland Assembly

The Secretary advised that 12 January had been offered as a date to visit the Northern Ireland Assembly (NIA). Given the short timescale Members agreed that the (NIA) should be re-approached and another date requested, possibly to co-incide with a following CPA NIA branch meeting.

- **Action (3-5):** Secretary to contact CPA NIA Branch to decline the offer of a January visit and request a later visit.

(v) Visit by a delegation of Commonwealth Parliamentarians – 18 and 19 November (CPA Paper 2009/10 (06))

The contents of the paper were noted and the Committee thanked Karen Gillon MSP for representing the Scotland Branch at the farewell dinner organised by CPA UK Branch.

6. Minutes of the 2nd Meeting held on Wednesday 12 November 2009

The Minutes were agreed. The following areas were further discussed:-
(i) Participation in the Commonwealth Conversation

The Committee agreed that it was difficult, given current UKIRO resources and the tight deadline for response, to provide a contribution.

(ii) Invite from the Presiding Officer to the Secretary General, Dr William F. Shija, to visit Scotland (CPA Paper 2009/10 (07))

The Branch Executive Committee noted that contact had been made with the CPA Secretariat and asked the Secretary to provide regular updates.

- **Action (3-6):** Secretary to update Committee at 4th Meeting.

7. Matters arising from the minutes of the 2nd meeting

None.


A lengthy discussion around Commonwealth Day 2010 took place. The Committee agreed that due to other pressures on the Secretariat, and the anticipated larger resources required to celebrate the CPA centenary in 2011, that the Commonwealth Day 2010 celebrations should be low key.

It was agreed that a Members’ Debate, followed by a dinner for Commonwealth members of the Consular Corps, should be arranged. The debate would allow the profile of the Commonwealth to be raised and the dinner would provide an opportunity for the Committee to meet the Consuls to discuss how CPA Scotland Branch and the Consular Corps could work productively in the future.

- **Action (3-7):** Karen Gillon to approach the Labour Group Business Manager to request a Members’ Debate for Wednesday 10 March.

- **Action (3-8):** The other members of the Committee agreed to also approach their Business Managers to inform them of CPA plans to arrange a Members’ Debate for Commonwealth Day 2010.

- **Action (3-9):** Secretary to arrange a dinner for the Commonwealth Consuls, following the Members’ Debate.


The Committee noted that the budget was under pressure towards the end of the financial year, but indications were that the Branch activities would be delivered within budget. The Secretary reported that the CPA Secretariat had
been approached with a request to release the remaining Malawi TAP funding for work around media and broadcasting technical assistance and would report back at the next meeting.

- **Action (3-10):** The Secretary to advise Branch Executive Committee on outcome of request for additional funding.


The Branch Executive Committee agreed that due to existing commitments during the final quarter of the financial year that a delegation from CPA Scotland Branch should not attend this conference. The Secretary was asked to notify CPA UK Branch accordingly.

- **Action (3-11):** Secretary to notify CPA UK Branch of decline to this invitation.


The Branch Executive Committee agreed that due to existing commitments during the final quarter of the financial year that a delegation from CPA Scotland Branch should not attend this conference. The Secretary was asked to notify CPA UK Branch accordingly.

- **Action (3-12):** The Secretary to contact the secretary of CPA UK Branch to decline the invitation.

12. **Any Other Business**

Billy McLaren advised the Committee that discussions for Scotland Week 2010 were underway and that it was unlikely that Canada would be included in the itinerary this year. This was mainly due to the fact that many Canadian Parliaments would be in recess for Easter.

Billy also advised Members that as a result of a review of the Scottish Parliament’s External Liaison Unit (now UKIRO) staff resources had been reduced. As a result UKIRO were re-profiling the number of inward visits that used to be accepted and other areas may also be affected. As UKIRO (and as such the Branch Secretariat) was now positioned in the Presiding Officers’ Office, this could also bring benefits. It was agreed that a resources paper, outlining what might be delivered up to March 2011, should be tabled at the next meeting.

The Committee also mentioned that CPA Scotland Branch had not received an increase in allocation since 2000 and requested a further bid be made, to
bring the budget up to the level required to take into account inflation since 2000.

The Committee also asked the Secretary to continue to look for other sources of funding, particularly in relation to, but not exclusively for, technical assistance work for Malawi.

- **Action (3-13):** Billy McLaren to draft a resources/forward look paper for consideration at the next meeting.

**13. Dates of next meeting**

Secretary to circulate dates to the Branch Executive Committee Members to June 2010.

Margaret Neal
Secretary, CPA Scotland Branch
20 January 2010