NOTE OF THE 6th MEETING OF CPA SCOTLAND BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 30 APRIL 2010 IN ROOM Q1.04 QBH at 12.45pm

Present: Jamie Stone MSP (Chair)
Sandra White MSP
Margaret Neal (Secretary)

In attendance: Billy McLaren, Senior Parliamentary Relations Officer

The quorum for the meeting of the Branch Executive Committee was not met. The next meeting was due to take place on Wednesday 26 May and there were some decisions which needed to be taken earlier, in order to meet deadlines. The two Members present agreed to proceed to informally discuss urgent key issues and no formal agreements or decisions were made.

The Secretary was asked to contact the other Members to inform them about the main discussion points and to seek comments/ratification/decisions for some of the agenda items.

1. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Ted Brocklebank MSP and Karen Gillon MSP.

2. **Minutes from 5th Meeting and Matters Arising - CPA/S3/09-10/5/DM**

Members present were content.

3. **Malawi visit (13\textsuperscript{th} – 20\textsuperscript{th} Feb 2010) - CPA/S3/09-10/6/1 – to follow**

Deferred.
4. **41st BIMR Regional Conference, Isle of Man: Monday 10 May to Friday 14 May - CPA/S3/09-10/6/2**

Members were invited to peruse the papers for the Regional AGM, note the contents and provide a steer for the delegation in relation to: the Internal Audit Committee Paper; the BIMR constitution issue and provide thoughts on the Branch report. The specific purpose of this paper was to highlight some issues on developments in relation to attendance at the conference. This item was briefly discussed. It was noted that due to parliamentary business Jamie Stone MSP would not attend however Mike Pringle MSP has agreed to take his place. Ian McKee and Mike Pringle planned to leave Isle of Man on Friday 14 May. The issues discussed were as follows:

- **Internal Audit Committee Paper** – Members were asked to further consider the Internal Audit Committee paper following changes made by the Isle of Man Branch. Members present thought that the revised document was reasonable and that the delegation should make a decision on the amendments following discussion with other Branches at the conference.

- **BIMR constitution arrangements** - to ascertain what action if any should be taken at the AGM to address the issue in relation to Isle of Man Branch including a free cultural day in the conference programme. The Secretary explained that in her opinion, the issue lay within the wording of the proposed amendment to section 6.06b which addresses the period of the conference - *The conference may last up to 4 working days with an optional cultural day before/after the conference work programme. The optional cultural day normally will be at cost for delegates.*

- The Secretary was of the view that the word “normally” had provided the Isle of Man with scope to provide the cultural day free of charge. If this was the case there was no breach of the rules, as they stand.

- The Secretary further explained that there may be scope to ask that the constitutional amendments pertaining to section 6 be re-visited at the 2011 AGM, when approval is sought for the minutes of the last AGM.

- **Branch Report and centennial** – Members were asked for thoughts on what might be included in the oral Branch report to the delegates at the AGM. This topic was not discussed in any great detail. The Secretary mentioned that the Secretariat was working with other areas in the parliament to ensure that quality events could be put in place to celebrate the centenary based on conversations with members of the Branch Executive Committee at earlier meetings when planning Commonwealth Day 2010.

5. **International Parliamentary Conference On Climate Change Global To Local: Climate Change Post Copenhagen - 12-16 July 2010 - CPA/S3/09-10/6/3**

The Members present felt that the cost of attending this conference was a bit steep. CPA UK now charge delegates for accommodation and meals when attending these
conferences because most parliamentarians receive overnight subsistence allowances even when accommodation and hospitality is provided. This is not the case in Scotland and these conferences do impact on the budget. The feeling was that CPA Scotland Branch should decline this invitation and explain that the decision was made due to costs.

6. **Visit to CPA Northern Ireland: 17 May 2010 - CPA/S3/09-10/6/4**

Members are invited to approve the draft objectives for this visit which were as follows:-

The visit would:

- Enable Executive Committee Members of CPA Scotland to continue the dialogue started in 2008 about how both branches can collaborate to share knowledge, information and experience of best parliamentary practice, processes and procedures.
- Provide an opportunity to discuss how to sustain a relationship with a developing democracy.
- Provide an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of conflict resolution to assist Members of CPA Scotland to better understand how tensions arise and can be resolved to assist with work in developing countries.
- Provide an opportunity for Members of CPA Scotland to study the procedures and practices of CPA Northern Ireland to inform a legacy paper for the new Executive Committee following the 2011 Scottish Parliament election.

The members present were content.

7. **Invitation to attend the 8th CPA Canadian Parliamentary Seminar, Ottawa: Sunday 17 October to Saturday 24 October - CPA/S3/09-10/6/5**

Members were invited to consider an invitation from Canada Branch and to advise the Secretariat whether or not CPA Scotland should apply for a place.

The Members present felt that given that this Seminar would take place during October Recess and given the positive feedback from Members who have attended in the past, Scotland Branch should apply for 2 places. The Members also suggested that if successful, delegates should fly super economy/economy.

8. **CPA resources and forward programme of activity – review - CPA/S3/09-10/6/6**

Members were invited to note the financial position for 2009/10 and agree/provide thoughts on priorities for 2010/11.

Members present discussed this paper at some length. Main points of the conversation as follows:
• The Presiding Officer had received an invitation to the Opening Ceremony of the new Assembly building in Malawi and with great reluctance would decline.
• Members were informed that the Presiding Officer would not visit India. The Members present felt that given the current financial climate and given that the proposed timing of this visit co-incided with the Commonwealth Games, the visit should be postponed and re-visited when the CPA Scotland Branch forward programme is developed for Session 4. This might be an item for inclusion in a legacy paper if Members agree to postpone.
• Officials were in discussion with CPA Scotland’s special envoy about a possible visit to Malawi in October. One of the ideas discussed was that the Presiding Officer might also consider visiting Malawi in October. The Secretary advised that more information should be available at the next meeting.
• As previously mentioned, Members did think £1,200 to attend the Climate Change Conference in London was a bit steep.

9. Commonwealth Day 2010 and other related matters - CPA/S3/09-10/6/7

Following the meeting with Commonwealth Consul Generals and Honorary Consuls in March, Members were invited to discuss the possibility of establishing an appropriate mechanism for regular contact between the Commonwealth Consuls and Branch Members, internships and the CPA Scotland Branch event at the Festival of Politics.

Mechanisms for establishing regular contact between Commonwealth Consuls and Branch Members

Possible mechanisms for establishing regular contact between Commonwealth Consuls and Branch Members were not really discussed. The Secretary suggested that it might be an idea to arrange a regular meeting during Commonwealth Week and to also arrange a meeting in September, following the Scottish Parliament elections to allow the new Executive Committee to build relationships with the Commonwealth Consuls early, with a view to inform the CPA forward programme of activity.

Interns

Members were also informed that the Secretariat was working on how to develop a pilot programme for interns as discussed with Commonwealth Consuls. Preliminary ideas discussed included the possibility of establishing one internship for 3 months at some point in 2010/11. The Secretary advised Members that, at the moment, there is no formal internship programme at the parliament and the main challenge would likely be resources and funding. The idea that an internship programme could possibly be established over a 4 year period whereby a different country would be selected to participate each year was discussed. The Secretary felt that given the work with Malawi over the last 5 years, it would be apt if Malawi could be the first country to participate. The Secretary also advised that the Senior Parliamentary Relations Officer hoped to find organisations willing to support a small programme. Members present were in favour of pursuing this initiative.
Festival of Politics

The Members were content that the Festival of Politics Slot should be around Malawi and that the Speaker of Malawi and Dr Shija should be invited to participate. No further discussion about the format took place as it was felt that Karen Gillon would have a informed contribution to make in relation to format content etc.

10. 9th Annual General Meeting of CPA Scotland Branch - CPA/S3/09-10/6/8

The Members were invited to note the arrangements and approve the draft minutes and agenda prior to circulation to all Members. Members present were content with the arrangements and draft minutes.


Members present were asked to note the correspondence received from Dr Shija. The Members were fairly positive about the prospect of Scottish Parliament involvement providing resources were not detracted from Malawi. Members felt that the main resource would be MSP time to assist CPA deliver the programmes if invited to do so.

12. Any other business

None.

13. Dates of next meetings

- Wednesday 26 May, 12.45pm to 1.45pm, Room Q1.04, Sandra White MSP to chair
- Wednesday 23 June, 1.00pm - 1.45pm, AGM - Debating Chamber/CR1, Presiding Officer will chair

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