CPA SCOTLAND BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE 2nd MEETING, 2012-13

WEDNESDAY 31 OCTOBER 2012 AT 12.45PM IN ROOM Q1.04

Present: Patricia Ferguson MSP
Margaret Mitchell MSP
Tavish Scott MSP (Chair)
Sandra White MSP
Duncan McNeil (Attended for Agenda item 3)

In attendance: Margaret Neal (Secretary)
Stephen Herbert, Senior Parliamentary Relations Officer
Ned Sharratt, Assistant Parliamentary Relations Officer

1. Apologies

No Apologies were received

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 May 2012

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Forward Programme of Activities/Financial Paper

Members of the BEC noted the contents of the paper. Members also agreed that a delegation should be sent to Malawi in March 2013. The delegation should consist of two MSPs and one official from either the Chamber or Committee Office.

4. TAP2: Proposed Activities in 2012-13

Members agreed that a range of activities should be undertaken under the auspices of the TAP 2 programme in 2012-13. These activities were:
• That a video Conference session involving National Assembly of Malawi (NAM) officials to discuss parliamentary radio services be arranged.

• That two video conference sessions involving parliamentary pairs be held before the end of December.

• That two Malawian interns from the NAM be invited to the Scottish Parliament for a one period during March 2013.

• That two MSPs and one parliamentary official visit Malawi during March 2013. It was also agreed that, during this outward visit, workshops should be held in Malawi dealing with the topics of legislative scrutiny, budget scrutiny and leadership in committees. That in selecting the MSPs who will form this delegation that priority should be given to Members of the PPI who can demonstrate knowledge/experience of the workshop topics.

5. Commonwealth Day update

Members noted the plans for marking Commonwealth Day 2013. Due to current uncertainty regarding the timing of events around the period of Commonwealth Day and, in particular regarding the bi-centenary of the birth of David Livingstone, it was agreed that the Committee should be updated at the next meeting of the Branch.

6. Special Envoy Update

The Branch noted that it was possible that the Special Envoy may visit the Scottish Parliament in March 2013. The Branch agreed that should the Special Envoy visit, that a meeting with the Branch Executive Committee and the Malawi parliamentary pairs would be beneficial.

7. Commonwealth Plenary Conference 2012 draft report

Duncan McNeil MSP attended the meeting to update the Committee on his recent attendance at the 2012 Commonwealth Plenary Conference. Mr McNeil considered that attendance at the Conference had been an exciting and formative experience and expressed his thanks for the support he had received from the Branch Secretary, both before and during the conference.

A range of learning points were identified by Mr McNeil with regard to future Scottish Parliament delegations attending CPA conferences. Firstly, Mr McNeil suggested that prior to attending CPA conferences, Members should be aware of the scale of the conference. This would allow Members to identify opportunities in advance to maximise potential benefits. Secondly, Mr McNeil emphasised the necessity to ensure that all Members attending CPA events should continue to be briefed on political developments within the CPA.
as an organisation. Thirdly, that given the range of experience that MSPs hold, there is scope for MSPs to fulfil a more prominent role at CPA events, principally, through obtaining speaking roles at such conferences.

Mr McNeil observed that there was discussion at the conference about developing the role of the CPA in providing election observers and that this may be an area of activity that the Branch may wish to explore. More generally, Mr McNeil observed that there was a need for discussion and consideration around how delegation members can network more effectively and express a common view on the politics of the CPA.

Mr McNeil also felt that consideration should be given as to how future delegations can best promote the 2014 Commonwealth Games at future CPA events.

Finally, Mr McNeil also considered that attendance at CPA events also offers an opportunity to engage with the wider Scottish diaspora and business community. It was recommended that early engagement with the Scottish Parliament Business Exchange, the Global Scot network and Scottish Development International would provide a means of identifying networking opportunities for Members attending CPA events.

Following the discussion with Duncan McNeil MSP, Members agreed the report on the 2012 Commonwealth Plenary Conference.

8. Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Steering Group

The Branch agreed a selection procedure for the CWP vacancy and agreed that this procedure should be sent to the Secretary of the CPA UK Branch.

9. CPA Scotland Branch Annual General Meeting

Members agreed that the CPA Scotland Branch AGM will take place on Thursday 13 June 2013 in Committee Room One. It was further agreed that a Member of the CPA Branch who had been on an outward visit over the course of the year should be asked to present on their experiences at the AGM.

10. Any Other Business

Patricia Ferguson MSP and Sandra White MSP indicated that they would continue to participate on the Parliamentary Pairing Initiative (PPI). Margaret Mitchell MSP indicated that she would be willing to participate should space on the PPI be available. Members also agreed that Members of the PPI should be updated on the wider TAP activities agreed for 2013-13.

Members agreed that that David Grevenberg, Chief Executive of Commonwealth Games 2014 Limited, should be invited to attend the next
meeting of the Branch in order to update Members on preparations for the Commonwealth Games.

11. **Dates of next meetings**

- Wed 28 Nov 2012 at 12.45pm in Room Q1.04
- 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
- 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