DRAFT MINUTES OF THE 5th MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
SCOTLAND BRANCH HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 MAY 2008 IN ROOM
Q1-04 QUEENSBERRY HOUSE

Present: Ted Brocklebank MSP
Roseanna Cunningham MSP (Chair)
Karen Gillon MSP
Jamie Stone MSP
Margaret Neal (Secretary)

1. Apologies

All present.

2. Minutes of the 4th Meeting held on Wednesday 27 February 2008

Agreed.

3. Matters Arising


The Members were generally content with the revised draft programme. A discussion took place about the possibility of Scotland Branch hosting the BIMR Conference in 2010 or 2011. The Executive agreed that it would not be possible to consider given that there may be a UK election in 2010 and the Scottish elections were due to be held in 2011.

The Secretary was asked to make minor amendments to the draft programme in light of the discussion.

The Secretary was also requested to inform the Regional Secretary that Scotland Branch would be keen to host the BIMR Conference on 2012.

Ted Brocklebank MSP and Roseanna Cunningham MSP confirmed that they would be available to visit the Northern Ireland Assembly on 20 May. The Executive Committee agreed that as this visit had been postponed in the past that these 2 Members should represent the Executive Committee.

Action: Secretary to:

- make minor amendments to the draft programme
- Inform the Regional Secretary that Scotland Branch would be keen to host the BIMR Conference on 2012.
- Make arrangements for Ted Brocklebank MSP and Roseanna Cunningham MSP to visit the Northern Ireland Assembly on 20 May
Attendance of Members at CPA Conferences and seminars

The Executive Committee agreed that attendance at CPA Seminars would continue to be managed on a case by case basis given that Business Managers were unable at this point in time to agree to instituting a formal pairing agreement to allow Members to attend CPA events.

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference

The Secretary advised that a formal reply had not been received from the Secretary General regarding the enquiry about the status of the chair of the CWP given the fact that Pakistan had been suspended from the Commonwealth. The Executive Committee agreed that Margaret Mitchell MSP should raise this issue with the Secretary General during the BIMR Annual Conference.

Action: The Secretary to remind Margaret Mitchell MSP to enquire about status of chair of CWP.

CPA Scotland Branch engagement with Malawi (CPA PAPER 2007/08 - 16)

Karen Gillon MSP expressed concern about the content of the paper. She was particularly disappointed that the twinnings paper she had asked for had not been provided. She also expressed concern about the lack of involvement with Members in the TAP. She felt that Members had too often been informed after decisions about activities had taken place. She also noted that a substantial portion of the activity to date and proposed activity had involved engagement with officials. A discussion followed and the Executive Committee agreed that a pilot twinning scheme between Members should be developed between 9 pairs of Members. This would allow for a fair balance across regions and political parties and a framework for this should be in place before the elections in May 2009. The Executive Committee also agreed that twinnings were not just for women Members.

The Executive Committee felt that officials should not wait until September to take forward ideas for the final part of stage 3 of the TAP. They agreed that at the next meeting they would discuss how best to use the remainder of the TAP funding in a manner which included involvement by Members.

The Secretary was asked to provide a note consolidating projects undertaken by the Parliament detailing what activities had been carried out had been funded from the TAP.

The Secretary advised that a letter had been sent to the Convener of the European and External Relations Committee (EERC) regarding the request from the International Relations Committee in Malawi for a twinning or cooperation agreement. The Executive Committee advised the Secretary that any twinning activities between the EERC and the International Relations Committee in Malawi should not be considered within the context of the proposed pilot twinning scheme.
The Executive Committee agreed future engagement should be agreed by Members in the first instance when the Scotland Branch funds and CPA funds were being used. The Secretary was also instructed to provide an outline paper on twinning for consideration at the next meeting.

It was agreed that the Clerk/Chief Executive should be invited to the next meeting so that the Executive Committee could further discuss their concerns about the TAP.

**Action:** The Secretary was asked to:
- Provide an outline paper on twinning for consideration at the next meeting.
- Invite the Clerk/Chief Executive to attend the next meeting.
- To list projects undertaken by the Parliament detailing what activities had been carried out had been funded from the TAP.

**Commonwealth Day 2008**

The Secretary reported that the event had been successful although the turnout was less than expected due to an accident on the Forth Road Bridge. The collaborative approach had worked and a quality event had been arranged.

**Branch Accounts (CPA PAPER 2007/08 – 17)**

The Executive Committee were content.


The Executive Committee agreed that Margaret Mitchell MSP should lead the delegation and deliver the report of Branch activities since the last meeting which had been held in New Delhi in September 2007.

The Secretary advised the Executive Committee that there had been an approach from officials in the Parliament to ask if a Member of staff could attend the BIMR Conference. The CPA Regional Secretary had been consulted as well as the Gibraltar Branch. It seemed likely that on some occasions there might be scope to include officials at CPA events, however the Branch would have to meet all costs and the participating officials would be required to work as conference administrators. The rationale being that CPA annual and regional conferences and seminars were designed for members of parliament. CPA ran separate courses specifically for staff of Commonwealth parliaments. The Secretary explained that these events were expensive for the host branch to organise and all branches tended to keep the number of participants to a minimum. In this particular case the host Branch did not require additional administrative support.
20th Commonwealth Parliamentary Seminar: 8-14 June Ottawa

The Secretary informed the Executive Committee that Bill Butler MSP had confirmed he would attend and arrangements were in hand.

International Parliamentary Governance Seminar 8-20 June 2008

The Secretary informed the Executive Committee that Iain Smith MSP had confirmed he would attend and arrangements were in hand.

54th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, 4-10 August: Kuala Lumpur

The Secretary informed the Executive Committee that Tricia Marwick MSP and Dave Whitton MSP had confirmed attendance and arrangements would be made in the near future.


The Branch Executive Committee agree that the Secretary should circulate a notice to all Members informing them about arrangements for the AGM last together with a nomination form, agenda and draft minutes of the last AGM in accordance with the agreed timescales.

Action: Secretary to circulate a notice to all Members informing them of arrangements for the AGM with relevant documents

5. Any other business

None

5. Dates of next meeting:

Wednesday 18 June AGM 12.45am Chamber