

**COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION
BRANCH EXECUTIVE MEETING**

Meeting Date: Tuesday 19 January 2010

MINUTES

Present:

Janet Ryder AM, Chair
Mike German AM
Jeff Cuthbert AM
Alun Cairns AM

Claire Clancy, Secretary
Natalie Drury-Styles, Outreach & International Relations Manager
Al Davies, Secretariat

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies from the Branch Vice-President, Rosemary Butler were noted.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING - paper CPA 05-09M

Attendees present concurred with the minutes of the previous meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None

4. REVIEW OF RECENT ACTIVITIES

Feedback and follow-up of recent events and conferences

- *2 December 2009 - The Commonwealth @60 Evening Reception*
The Chair noted that the Branch had marked the Commonwealth@60 with an evening reception at the Senedd. The event had been a great success attracting over 130 guests representing over 20 Commonwealth countries.

The Chair wished to put on record her thanks and recognition to all those who contributed to the success of the evening including the National

Assembly's Events team and the Tour Managers who had given several tours of the Senedd to the guests whilst awaiting the late finish of business. This had greatly enhanced their enjoyment of the evening and their visit to the National Assembly, many of whom were visiting the Senedd for the first time.

Action Point: Branch Secretariat to draft letter of thanks on behalf of the Chair to the Assembly's Events team and the Tour Managers.

- *12 January – Chair's presentation of CPA Wales Branch activities to the European and External Affairs Committee.*

The Chair noted this recent item on the EEAC (on which both Mike German and Jeff Cuthbert sit) where she had presented a paper of the Branch's recent activities which was well received.

One point to note which had come out of the Committee was a question raised by Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM, about how the Branch Executive might more effectively communicate with the wider CPA Wales Branch regarding the Branch's activities and opportunities. A discussion followed on the possibility of extending an invitation to all Assembly Members to attend the Branch Executive Committee Meetings and the practicalities that this would entail, such as finding a suitable room to accommodate Members and the provision of a translation service.

Action Point: Branch Secretariat to:

- ensure that minutes from BEC meetings are from now on distributed directly to all Assembly Members.
- refer to the National Assembly's Standing Orders to ascertain whether there are any references to this matter.
- liaise with counterparts in the Scottish Parliament and Northern Ireland Assembly for advice on how they approach this issue and report back to Chair with findings.

Recent visits to / by Commonwealth Countries

- *Verbal report by Mike German on last November's visit to Lesotho.*
Mike German gave a report on his visit to Lesotho last November. Mike undertook the visit in his capacity as President of Dolen Cymru but also undertook some work on behalf of the CPA Wales Branch to assess progress and the impact of the technical aid previously given to the Lesotho Parliamentary service by Members and Officials of the National Assembly for Wales.

Mike German had met with both Members and Officials of the Parliament in Maseru and had the honour of visiting the soon to be opened new Parliament building for the first time with the Speaker. The date for the official opening of the new parliament building was unknown but was anticipated to be this summer. It was yet to be seen whether an official invitation would be sent to the NAFW to attend the opening.

Mike German said that it was clear that the Lesotho Parliament had

benefited from technical aid given by the NAFW – and mentioned in particular the positive work of the Committees and their reputation for effective scrutiny.

A future need by the Lesotho Parliament for further technical aid was mentioned, with the request for expertise in Legal and Public Relations in particular being identified.

The Branch Chair stated that it would now be timely to have a formal record/report of feedback and evaluation of all previous support and technical aid given by the NAFW to the Parliament of Lesotho. Mike German agreed that he would write this report.

Action Point: Mike German to write evaluation report to present to the Branch Executive Committee.

5. FORWARD PLANNING

Forthcoming Conferences

- *59TH Westminster Seminar on Parliamentary Practice and Procedures 7-19 March 2010*

The Chair informed Members that there had been only one application received to attend this forthcoming Westminster Seminar. However, whilst it was hoped that a Member from the NAFW would attend, it was decided that the application received did not at present include a strong enough business case. The Chair therefore requested that the Member interested in attending be contacted and offered the opportunity to present an enhanced supporting business case by 25 January

Action Point: Branch Secretariat to contact Member with details of requested additional business case by the extended deadline.

- *BIMR Conference, Isle of Man 10-14 May 2010.*

The Chair notified Members of the dates of the forthcoming conference of the Region and that the theme of this year's Conference would be "*Technology and Democracy: Successes and Challenges*". She requested that the Branch Secretariat notify all Members of this opportunity with the request that any expressions of interest be accompanied by business cases before they could be considered, as would be standard and expected practice for all future applications to attend CPA related business.

Action Point: Branch Secretariat to notify Members of the opportunity to represent the CPA Wales Branch at the BIMR conference with the relevant guidance for applications.

- *56th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, Nairobi (Kenya) 10-19 September 2010.*

The Branch Secretariat made the Branch aware that correspondence had been received by CPA HQ inviting suggestions for themes of discussion for the forthcoming CPC to be held in Kenya this September. These would need to be submitted by 17 February so that all suggestions could be forwarded to the HQ for consideration by at the Planning and Review Subcommittee at the IExCo mid-year meeting which would be held in Swaziland.

Action Point: Branch Secretariat to issue a message to all Members inviting suggestions for conference themes by the requested deadline.

Forthcoming Events

- *CPA Wales Branch AGM – 26 January.*

The Chair reminded Members of the rescheduled CPA Wales Branch AGM to be held the following week. It was essential that a quorum of 10 Members be present for the AGM to take place.

- *Commonwealth Day 2010*

a) Invitation to nominate 2 young people to attend the Commonwealth celebrations in Westminster – 8 March

The Branch agreed that we should again apply for places for two young people to represent the NAFW in Westminster on Commonwealth Day and that this, in the first instance, should go through Funky Dragon.

Action Point: Branch Secretariat to contact Funky Dragon to inform them of this opportunity and to invite them to nominate two young people to represent the NAFW at Westminster for Commonwealth Day.

b) Commonwealth Day at the National Assembly for Wales – 9 March

Branch Members agreed that in view of the fact that a large evening reception had been held to celebrate the modern Commonwealth@60 so recently, it would not be feasible to hold another evening reception this Commonwealth day. However, the Branch was in favour of looking into the possibility of holding a Commonwealth debate on this year's theme of "Science, Technology and Society" with young people in the Assembly's Siambr Hywel.

Action Point: Branch Secretariat to liaise with colleagues in the National Assembly's Education service to facilitate this event.

Forthcoming Visits - Scheduled and Proposed.

- *Delegation from the Kwara State House of Assembly – 28 January 2010*

The Chair notified Members of a scheduled visit by a delegation from the Kwara State (Nigeria) House of Assembly.

Action Point: Branch Secretariat to confirm with Members details of the visit so that Members available to meet the delegation could arrange to do so.

- *The Australian Deputy High Commissioner Adam McCarthy – 25 March 2010*

The Chair notified Members that the Australian Deputy High Commissioner, Mr Adam McCarthy would be visiting the National Assembly on 25 March. Robert Lloyd-Williams was leading on this visiting programme and would provide the Branch Secretariat with details of the visit so that this could be conveyed to the CPA ExCo at the next meeting.

Action Point: Branch Secretariat to update the Branch on this visit at the next Branch Executive Meeting so that Members available could arrange to meet with the Deputy High Commissioner.

- *Invitation by the Australian Parliament – update*

The Chair notified the Branch that there had been no further correspondence from the CPA Australia Branch, and that it was difficult at present to ascertain possible dates for a future CPA Wales Branch visit to Australia as their Parliament was at present in recess. It was recognised that any future visit could now realistically only be considered after the UK General Election

Action Point: Branch Secretariat to update Branch on any developments with this possible visit.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING(s)

- **Tuesday 9 February**, 12:30pm (Chief Executive & Clerk's Office, Cwrt)
The Branch Executive Committee confirmed that it would convene to select the CPA Wales Branch delegation to attend the Isle of Man BIMR Conference in May.
- **Tuesday 2 March**, 12:30pm – next formal BEC Meeting.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- *Correspondence from Justyne Caruana (BIMR CWP)*
The Chair informed Members that Justyne Caruana – the recently appointed BIMR Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) representative (of Malta) had contacted Women Members of all 13 Branches from the Region to request any topics and gender related issues which the Members may wish to raise with her. Both the CPA Wales Branch Vice-President and Chair thought it best if the Branch Secretariat coordinate a response from the Wales Branch. The Chair also suggested that the forthcoming BIMR would present an opportunity for the Wales Branch delegation to invite Justyne to

visit the NAFW at a future date and to meet with the National Assembly's Women Members.

Action Point: Branch Secretariat to coordinate Branch response to Justyne Caruana.

- *The International Relations Working Group*
Natalie Drury-Styles informed the Branch that a working group made up of relevant NAFW internal staff/stakeholders had been set up to assess the current situation regarding international activity and to ensure that a joint up approach to the Assembly's International work be secured to ensure the most effective way of working.

Branch Secretariat