CPA SCOTLAND BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE 1st MEETING WHICH TOOK PLACE ON THURSDAY 19 JUNE 2014 IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2

Present: Patricia Ferguson MSP
Tavish Scott MSP (Chair)
Sandra White MSP

In attendance: Liam McArthur MSP
Margaret Neal, Secretary
Stephen Herbert, Senior Parliamentary Relations Officer

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Margaret Mitchell MSP.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 27 May 2014

The minutes were approved.

3. Feedback from the Malawi post-election Seminar

The main points discussed included the following:

Liam McArthur MSP outlined the new composition of the National Assembly of Malawi. The results produced 52 independent MPs and 50 from the Democratic People’s Party (DPP) with the remaining parties taking up the remainder of the seats. Peter Mutharika, leader of the DPP and winner of the Presidential elections, was in the process of forming a government. Ninety six new Members were elected and the election of the Speakers took place on 16 June 2014.

The 12 seminar workshops took place over 3 days. The workshops were well attended. Mr McArthur led the discussion at 4 workshops, chaired others and served as a panellist.

Overall, Mr McArthur felt that future engagement with Malawi should be maintained with a stronger focus on supporting officials although he was also of the opinion that there seemed to be a desire and need for political input. As a member of the
Parliamentary Pairing Initiative with Malawi, Mr McArthur felt that the initiative had not operated as effectively as anticipated. Mr McArthur also advised that care should be taken to manage expectations on what the relationship at parliamentary level would achieve. The relationship had its roots in knowledge and information exchanges between MSPs and officials and could not extend to providing infrastructure in constituencies.

The Branch Executive Committee agreed to discuss future engagement with Malawi at the next meeting in August and take into account the views expressed by Mr McArthur. It was further agreed that the Scottish delegation should meet with their Malawian counterparts in Cameroon.

4. **Forward Programme of Activities / Financial Paper**

Members considered the forward programme of activity. The budget underspend of £12,040 for the 2014/15 financial year was noted.

The main points of the discussion were:

a) Members had previously agreed at the meeting which took place on 27 May 2014 that the Branch should send 1 delegate and 1 observer to attend the Commonwealth Plenary Conference subject to the content of the programme. Members considered the draft programme and potential benefits to the Branch from attending the conference and agreed that given the high costs associated with sending an observer that only one delegate should be selected.

b) Members were delighted that the CPA Scotland Branch had been invited to lead the discussion at the good governance workshop which would take place during the Commonwealth Plenary Conference.

c) Members agreed to ring-fence funds to enable women Members to attend the next BIMR CWP Conference which was likely to take place in Gibraltar. No decision was made on how many places should be allocated as this would be dependent on the invitation.

All other points as outlined in the main paper were noted.

Members were also content with the new format of the annexes to the paper as requested at the last meeting.

5. **Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians**

Patricia Ferguson MSP informed Members that the CPA secretariat had arranged a Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Pan-Commonwealth Conference which would take place from 25 - 28 June 2014 in London. The invitation was limited to members of the BIMR CWP steering committee. The theme of the conference would be ‘Women in the Post Millennium Development Goal Era’.
6. **Any Other Business**

At this point, the meeting was not quorate. Tavish Scott MSP left the meeting to allow a discussion to take place about selection of the Scotland Branch delegate to attend the CPC 2014 Conference in Yaoundé, Cameroon. Those Members present agreed that Tavish Scott MSP should attend the conference.

**CPA Scotland Branch Annual General Meeting**

A discussion took place about attendance at the AGM. Members felt that further thought would be required to encourage a higher turnout of Members in the future.

7. **Dates of future meetings:**

   - Wednesday 20 August 2014
   - Wednesday 24 September 2014
   - Wednesday 29 October 2014
   - Wednesday 26 November 2014
   - Wednesday 17 December 2014

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