



COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION
NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY BRANCH – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Executive Committee,
Monday 1 October at 4.30pm
Room 21**

Present:

The President, Mr William Hay MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mr David McClarty MLA
Mr Jim Wells MLA
Mr Basil McCrea MLA

Apologies:

Dr Alasdair McDonnell MLA

Also in attendance:

Ms Anna Lo MLA
Mr Hugh Widdis, Director of Legal Services
Mr John Stewart, Director of Information & Outreach
Mr Peter Hall, Head of Outreach & Education (CPA Branch Secretary Designate)
Ms Frances Leneghan, PS to the Speaker
Ms Nicola Rafferty, Outreach (Minutes)

1. WELCOME

The President welcomed Members to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Dr Alasdair McDonnell was unable to attend.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes were agreed without amendment.

4. CPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Speaker asked Ms Anna Lo, who attended the CPA Conference in Sri Lanka on behalf of the NI Assembly, to update Members on her experience.

Ms Lo advised Members that her experience at the conference was very worthwhile especially meeting the other delegates from the BIMR. She stated that the 'Conflict and Peace-building' workshop that she took part in went very well although she was surprised that no-one from the Sri Lankan Parliament spoke about their own experiences as the other countries who spoke had had no recent experience of conflict.

Ms Lo advised the Members that the British delegates arranged their own trip to a conflict area where they saw a housing project and a new hospital that was being built. She stated that there are still a vast number of landmines in the country, 1.5 million, and that it will take approximately 39 years to clear them all with the number of people they have working on the clearance.

Ms Lo thanked Mr Hugh Widdis for accompanying her on the trip and for all his help during it. She also thanked the Outreach Office for their help in the organisation of the visit.

Mr Hugh Widdis advised the Members that there are significant issues within the CPA regarding an audit and a review of its current charitable status. He stated that there are moves to remove away the charity status which is not popular with all the Members.

Peter Hall, the Secretary, stated that as there was not a BIMR representative on the Women's Group, CPA UK should be asked about appointing a substitute member for any future occasions.

5. CPA REVIEW

The Speaker asked the Secretary to update Members on the current review of the Branch.

The Secretary advised Members that a questionnaire about the Branch has been written that, once approved by the Executive Committee, will go to all CPA Members for completion and that each the Members of the Executive Committee will be interviewed on a one to one basis.

The Secretary stated that questions relating to the annual conference will now be added to the questionnaire and that an updated version will be issued as soon as possible.

6. EXTERNAL CPA BRANCH FUNDING

The Secretary advised Members that a query had been received regarding the Branch accepting external funding primarily relating to paying for additional members to attend conferences. He stated that this had been queried with CPA UK and International and that the advice was that the acceptance of external funding is a matter for individual branches but that it must be very well policed and must be fully accountable.

The Speaker stated that, in principal, external funding could be accepted but strict criteria would be required especially regarding how it would be spent. He asked that criteria for funding be drawn up for the next meeting.

7. SELECTION COMMITTEE

- **43rd BRITISH ISLANDS AND MEDITERRANEAN REGION (BIMR) ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

Falkland Islands, February 2013

William Hay MLA, Speaker of the Assembly and President of the CPA NI Branch will attend the BIMR Conference. He will be accompanied by Robin Ramsey.

- **INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON GENDER AND POLITICS**

Westminster, 6-8 November 2012

Basil McCrea MLA will attend the conference on behalf of the NI Assembly.

8. BRANCH BUDGET

The Branch budget was presented to Members for their information.

9. INWARD VISITS

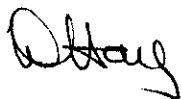
The Secretary advised Members of the inward visits to the Assembly in since the last meeting in May.

10. AOB

No other business.

11. Date of the next meeting

The next will be held on 12th November 2012 in Room 29.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Hay', written in a cursive style.

**WILLIAM HAY MLA
PRESIDENT**