

COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY BRANCH

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON THURSDAY 18TH JUNE 2020 AT
4.30PM**

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Present:

Mr Alex Maskey MLA, President
Mr Andrew Muir MLA
Mr Jonathan Buckley MLA
Mr Michelle McIlveen MLA
Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA
Mr Robin Newton MLA
Mr Roy Beggs MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA
Mr William Humphrey MLA
Mr Harry Harvey MLA
Mr Edwin Poots MLA
Mr Paul Frew MLA
Ms Kellie Armstrong MLA
Mr Jim Wells MLA

Apologies:

Ms Joanne Bunting MLA
Mr Steve Aiken MLA
Ms Naomi Long MLA

In attendance:

Mr Simon Burrowes, Head of Public Engagement (CPA Branch Secretary)
Mr Robin Ramsey, Adviser to the Speaker
Mr Paul Stitt, PS to the Speaker
Ms Louise Close, Engagement Manager
Ms Nicola Crawford, Parliamentary Engagement Co-Ordinator (Minutes)
Ms Emma Gray, Engagement Office

1. APOLOGIES

The President welcomed Members of the CPA NIA Branch to the meeting and agreed that apologies would be reflected in the minutes of the meeting.

The President advised Members that this was his first meeting in post and that he was looking forward to getting the Branch functioning again after a long break.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting, held on 14th June 2016, were agreed.

Mr Humphrey advised that he had attended the meeting and asked that the minutes be amended to reflect that.

Proposed by Mr William Humphrey; Seconded by Mr Jim Wells.

3. ELECTION OF BRANCH CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

BRANCH CHAIR

The following nomination was received for the position of Branch Chair:

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
- Mr William Humphrey	Ms M McIlveen	Mr R Newton

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The following nominations for election to the Executive Committee were received:

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
- Mr J Buckley	Ms M McIlveen	Mr R Newton
- Mr M Storey	Ms M McIlveen	Mr R Newton
- Ms M McIlveen	Mr R Newton	Mr W Humphrey
- Mr R Newton	Ms M McIlveen	Mr W Humphrey
- Mr S Dickson	Mr A Muir	Mr J Blair
- Dr S Aiken	Mr R Butler	Mr R Beggs

All nominations were agreed by the Members present.

BRANCH SECRETARY

The President nominated Mr Simon Burrowes to be Secretary of the Branch.

Proposed by Mr Alex Maskey; Seconded by Mr Jonathan Buckley.

Members approved the nomination.

4. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Forthcoming Conferences:

The President advised Members about the following conferences:

- **Virtual BIMR Conference, September 2020**

CPA Malta was due to host the BIMR Conference this year but due to COVID-19 and the travel restrictions they will now host a virtual conference on the 24th and 25th September. Further information will be issued as soon as it is received.

- **Annual CPA Conference, Nova Scotia, Canada, January 2021**

The next Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference will be held in Nova Scotia, Canada, 12th – 18th January 2021.

As the Assembly is entitled to send one delegate to the conference, the President asked Members if they are content, dependent on circumstances, to send a delegate to the conference.

All Members agreed that the Branch should send a delegate.

(ii) Hosting the BIMR and CWP Conferences

Members were informed that the NI Assembly Branch is due to host both the BIMR Conference and CWP (Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians) Conference. The Branch had been pencilled in to host next year but have asked to host the BIMR Conference in 2023 to allow the Branch to be fully operational again and to give Engagement staff sufficient time to organise such a large-scale conference.

The President asked Members if they were content to host the conference in 2023 and all Members agreed.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- **Report on Commonwealth Day 2020**

The President advised Members about the Commonwealth Day event, which was held on Monday 9th March in the Long Gallery with the theme of “Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, Transforming”.

Through a series of speeches and music, the event showcased how innovative projects have transformed the lives of people in Northern Ireland by connecting local communities with those from across the Commonwealth.

The President said that his highlight of the night was the keynote speech from Aaron Smith, a pupil at St Louise’s College in Belfast.

Aaron spoke about his personal experiences; how he tragically lost a close friend, who took his own life, and, looking for support, turned to volunteering with the community programme, Uniting Communities Young Leaders. This led him to becoming part of a Commonwealth Sport NI exchange visit to Rwanda and speaking at the Sporting Chance Forum, which took place at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva.

6. NEXT MEETING

The next Annual General Meeting will take place in June 2021, date and room to be confirmed.

The President handed over to Mr Humphrey as the new Chair of the Branch.

Mr Humphrey thanked the President and the Members for electing him to the post and told them that he appreciated the opportunity to chair such an important and unique organisation. He stated that there is much the Branch can share with the Commonwealth and that we have an exciting year ahead.

He thanked those Members who had previously served on the Executive Committee and advised that he was keen to revitalise the Branch and build up connections throughout the Commonwealth. He stated that the Branch should be Ambassadors for the NI Assembly.

Mr Humphrey informed Members that he attended the Commonwealth Day event and that it had been an excellent occasion, bringing together the different cultures in Northern Ireland and showed the vibrancy and richness of diversity that we have within the country. He stated that this is something that he is very keen to build upon in his role as Chair.

Mr Humphrey finished by advising Members that he was looking forward to have a meeting of the new Executive Committee as soon as possible.

The President then thanked Members for attending.

The President adjourned the meeting.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alex Maskey". The signature is written in a dark ink and has a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Alex Maskey MLA
President