

**COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION**

**NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY BRANCH**

**MEETING ON TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2016 AT 4.30PM IN ROOM 29,  
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**Present:**

Mr Robin Newton MLA, President  
Mr Jim Wells MLA  
Mr Robin Swann MLA  
Mr Philip Logan MLA  
Mr Robbie Butler MLA  
Mr Steve Aiken MLA  
Mr Roy Beggs MLA  
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA  
Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA  
Ms Joanne Bunting MLA  
Ms Jo-Anne Dobson MLA  
Mr Edwin Poots MLA  
Mr Sammy Douglas MLA  
Mr Doug Beattie MLA  
Ms Emma Little Pengelly MLA  
Mr William Irwin

**Apologies:**

Ms Sandra Overend MLA  
Mr David Ford MLA  
Ms Brenda Hale MLA  
Ms Kellie Armstrong MLA

**In attendance:**

Ms Susie Brown, Head of Communications & Engagement (CPA Branch Secretary)  
Ms Frances Leneghan, PS to the Speaker  
Ms Louise Close, Engagement Manager  
Ms Nicola Crawford, Parliamentary Engagement Co-Ordinator (Minutes)

**1. APOLOGIES**

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

## 2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2015 were agreed unanimously.

**Proposed by Mr Robin Swann; Seconded by Ms Jo-Anne Dobson.**

## 3. ELECTION OF BRANCH CHAIR, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### BRANCH CHAIR

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

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
- Mrs J Dobson	Mr H McKee	Mr D Beattie

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
- Mr S Dickson	Ms J Dobson	Ms K Armstrong
- Ms B Hale	Mr W Humphrey	Mr T Clarke
- Mr R Swann	Mr R Butler	Mr M Nesbitt
- Mr J Wells	Mr T Clarke	Ms J Bunting
- Mr W Humphrey	Ms B Hale	Mr S Anderson
- Mr D Beattie	TBC	TBC

## 4. ELECTION OF SELECTION COMMITTEE

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

<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
-----------------	-----------------

- |                 |               |                |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| - Mr S Dickson  | Ms J Dobson   | Ms K Armstrong |
| - Ms B Hale     | Mr W Humphrey | Mr T Clarke    |
| - Mr J Wells    | Mr T Clarke   | Ms J Bunting   |
| - Mr W Humphrey | Ms B Hale     | Mr S Anderson  |
| - Mr E Poots    | TBC           | TBC            |

Proposed by Sammy Douglas; Seconded by Ms Joanne Bunting.

## 5. MATTERS ARISING

- **CPA BIMR Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Regional Representative**

The President advised Members that a CPA BIMR e-election was held to elect a CPA BIMR Regional CWP Representative to serve for three years on the CPA International CWP Steering Committee.

Jo-Anne Dobson, a current member of the regional CWP Steering Committee, stood in the election against Joyce Watson AM from the National Assembly for Wales.

Joyce Watson AM won the election but Jo-Anne will remain a member of the regional CWP Steering Committee.

- **NI Assembly Branch Executive Committee Regional Representative**

The President advised that the CPA NI Assembly Branch is due to appoint the next Regional Representative to succeed Hon. Carmelo Abela MP (Malta) on the CPA Executive Committee. Mr Abela will stand down after the first batch of ExCo meetings at the annual CPA conference in Dhaka. The Regional Rep should attend the first meeting of the new ExCo – to be held in Dhaka after the General Assembly. This post is for three years.

The rep will attend two sets of ExCo meetings a year, plus the BIMR Regional Conference. The travel cost for these meetings will be subsidised. The most important part of the role is keeping up to speed with some of the challenges faced by the CPA by networking with fellow BIMR reps and others on ExCo.

The President stated that as Jo-Anne Dobson had been elected as Branch Chair that he would like to nominate her for the position.

Members agreed unanimously with this nomination.

- **62<sup>nd</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, Bangladesh, September 2016**

The President stated that this year's Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference will be held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1<sup>st</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> September. The theme of this year's conference is 'A Collaborative Commonwealth: Unity, Diversity and Common Challenges'.

The President advised that the Assembly is entitled to send one delegate to the conference and as Jo-Anne Dobson, in her new role as Regional Representative, is required to attend the first meeting of the new CPA Executive Committee in Dhaka, that she will take the place and represent the Branch.

## **6. ANNUAL REPORT ON BRANCH ACTIVITIES**

The Annual Report gave Members information about the visits and conferences attended by CPA Members over the last year and the Commonwealth countries that visited the Assembly. It also covered the event held in Parliament Buildings to celebrate Commonwealth Day 2016.

The President asked Jo-Anne Dobson and Jim Wells to tell Members about the recent conferences they had attended.

Ms Dobson advised Members that she had attend the CWP Conference in Guernsey in February which she had found extremely useful. She also discussed the BIMR Conference in Jersey, in May, where she had chaired a session where she was able to discuss her recent re-election experiences. She stated that she had found the session on engaging with young people very beneficial especially how Jersey engage with primary school children. Ms Dobson also suggested that when the Assembly host the CWP and BIMR Conferences that they should avoid running two parallel workshops as they lose delegates between the sessions.

Mr Wells discussed the Canadian Parliamentary Seminar he attended in May stating that it was one of the best events he had ever been too and was extremely well organised. The Canadians discussed how they campaign and fund elections and how they use the 'list system' to appoint the politicians. He advised that he was able to tell the delegates about the NI Assembly system and his experiences and that they were particularly interested in our Petition of Concerns.

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- **CPA Revised Programmes Strategy**

The Secretary discussed the CPA Revised Programmes Strategy for 2016 – 17 with Members and advised them that further information on the various initiatives would be passed on as soon as it is made available.

## **8. NEXT MEETING**

The next Annual General Meeting will take place in June 2017, date and room to be confirmed.

The President stated that the CPA Northern Ireland Branch is continuing to act as a successful platform for international engagement and he thanked Members for their continued assistance with Commonwealth visitors.

The President thanked Members for attending.

The President adjourned the meeting.

**Robin Newton MLA**  
**President**