



**COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION**

**NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY BRANCH – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2016  
4.30PM IN ROOM 106**

**Present:**

Mr Robin Swann MLA, Chair  
Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson MLA  
Mr David McIlveen MLA  
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA

**Apologies:**

Mr Alban Maginness MLA  
Mr Basil McCrea MLA  
Mr Ross Hussey MLA

**Also In attendance:**

Ms Susie Brown, CPA Branch Secretary  
Ms Louise Close, Outreach Manager  
Ms Nicola Crawford, Outreach (Minutes)

**1. WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed Members of the CPA NI Executive Branch to the meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Mr Alban Maginness, Mr Basil McCrea and Mr Ross Hussey were unable to attend.

### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes were agreed without amendment.

**Proposed: Stewart Dickson**

**Seconded: Jo-Anne Dobson**

### **4. CPA EVENTS**

#### **COMMONWEALTH WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS (CWP) ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 12-14 FEBRUARY, GUERNSEY**

Jo-Anne Dobson MLA and Brenda Hale MLA attended the annual CWP Conference in Guernsey in February.

The conference theme was 'Influencing Policies and Legislation for the Empowerment of Women' and was attended by women parliamentarians from the British Isles and Mediterranean Region as well as international representatives from India, Canada and Australia.

Ms Dobson advised Members that the conference had been very useful, especially the sessions on equality and health. She thanked Nicola Crawford for her secretarial support and stated that the conference itself had provided a very good learning opportunity if the Assembly is to host the conference in 2017.

### **5. FORTHCOMING CPA EVENTS**

#### **BIMR ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 15-18 MAY, JERSEY**

The Chair advised Members that an invitation had been received from Jersey CPA Branch for four delegates from the NI Assembly to attend the 46<sup>th</sup> BIMR Conference in Jersey in May. He also advised that Jo-Anne Dobson, as the Assembly's representative on the CWP Steering Committee, is automatically given one of these places.

The Chair explained that the normal process is to issue the invitation to CPA members and ask them to submit applications to apply however, with the forthcoming election this procedure is not quite as straight forward as some of the members may not be re-elected.

After a discussion Members agreed that, once the provisional date for the first plenary had been confirmed and if it fell prior to the conference, the invitation would be issued to the CPA membership and applications sought to attend.

## **13TH CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY SEMINAR, MAY 29 - 4 JUNE, OTTAWA**

The Chair advised that The 13<sup>th</sup> Canadian Parliamentary Seminar will take place in Ottawa, the theme of which is 'Strengthening Democracy and the Role of Parliamentarians: Challenges and Solutions'. An invitation has been received for the Branch to apply for selection only. It is not an invitation to attend.

Members agreed that the Branch should apply for selection and, if selected, decide then whether to attend.

## **ANNUAL COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE, 1-10 SEPTEMBER, BANGLADESH**

The Chair advised Members that the 62<sup>nd</sup> CPC will take place in Bangladesh in September. The NI Assembly Branch will be invited to send one delegate who can be accompanied by an observer (e.g. secretary) and Clerk attending the Society of Clerks at the Table (SOCATT). Places are on a 'first come, first served' basis. Attendance at this conference will be discussed at the next meeting when further information has been received.

## **6. HOSTING THE CWP CONFERENCE**

The Chair informed Members that a request had been received from CPA UK for the NI Assembly Branch to host the next CWP Conference in 2017.

The Secretary advised Members that hosting such an event would raise the profile of the Assembly and be good experience for the Branch prior to hosting the larger BIMR Annual Conference in 2019.

Members were given a briefing paper with further information and agreed that they were content for the Branch to hold the conference.

## **7. COMMONWEALTH DAY 2016**

The Chair advised Members that initial planning is underway for the Commonwealth Day 2016 event.

The theme for Commonwealth Day is 'An Inclusive Commonwealth' and will coincide with International Women's Week. Therefore the event will comprise female speakers and performances from each of the Commonwealth regions.

The Chair encouraged Members to attend the event and to bring additional guests.

## **8. COMMONWEALTH YOUTH GAMES 2021**

The Chair discussed Northern Ireland hosting the Commonwealth Youth Games and asked Members if they would like the Branch to hold events prior to Games to celebrate the occasion.

The Members agreed that events should be held.

## **9. VISITS UPDATE**

The Chair asked Members to take note of the inward visits to the Assembly since the last meeting.

## **10.A.O.B**

No other business.

## **11.DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June at 4.30pm, Room TBC.**

**ROBIN SWANN MLA  
CHAIR**