



COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION
NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY BRANCH – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Executive Committee,
Monday 28 May at 4.30pm
Room 29**

Present:

The President, Mr William Hay MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Dr Alasdair McDonnell MP MLA
Mr David McClarty MLA
Mr Jim Wells MLA
Mr Basil McCrea MLA

Apologies:

Mr Jimmy Spratt MLA

Also In attendance:

Mr Gareth McGrath, Director of Information & Outreach
Mr John Stewart, Director of Clerking & Reporting
Mr Peter Hall, Head of Outreach & Education (CPA Branch Secretary Designate)
Mr Robin Ramsey, Advisor to the Speaker
Ms Nicola Rafferty, Outreach (Minutes)

1. WELCOME

The President welcomed Members to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Mr Jimmy Spratt was unable to attend.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes were agreed without amendment.

4. KOSOVO

The Speaker asked Peter Hall, Branch Secretary, to update Members on the process for applying for funding to assist with the creation of a partnership with Kosovo.

The Secretary advised Members that CPA UK had been contacted regarding funding and they had sent the following information:

A letter should be sent to the Secretary-General (Dr William F Shija) on branch letterhead specifying:

What the funds will be used for (just a brief description).

How much is required/requested.

When it will be needed (approximately).

How it will assist your branch and members.

Please note that the Executive Committee will then have to approve the funding and they next meet in Sri Lanka in September of this year. At this stage funding for branches for this year is fully committed and therefore, if funding is granted to your project, it would not be available until next year. However, under certain circumstances (which are not really defined), Exco could decide to provide funding this year but please do not rely upon that as its by no means a 'given'.

Funding is also provided in arrears. This means that your branch would have to pay out the money and then claim the funding from the Secretariat. Your claim must be detailed on you branch letterhead and signed by an appropriate person. It must also include copies of invoices you have paid that add up to (at least) the amount of funding that we are providing.

The Members agreed that the branch should apply for funding and the Secretary stated that he would begin the process.

5. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Speaker advised Members that the AGM will take place on 25th June and that the business on the agenda will include:

- Confirmation of the minutes of the previous AGM;
- Matters arising from the minutes;

- Consideration of the Executive Committee's report on the activities of the Branch during the last year;
- Any other business.

The members were content with the agenda.

6. CPA REVIEW

The Speaker advised Members of the current review of the Branch. He stated that a review of the functions and activities of the Branch is currently under way. The aim of the review is to ensure that the Branch and its Members are fully utilised in its CPA role and also to highlight new initiatives that can be undertaken and developed. To assist with this review the Assembly Branch and its work is being compared against the Branches in the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly.

The findings of the review will be issued to Members on its completion.

7. CONFERENCES

- **42ND BRITISH ISLANDS AND MEDITERRANEAN REGION (BIMR) ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, Scotland, 10-14 June 2012

Jo-Anne Dobson, Stewart Dickson, Basil McCrea and Sean Rogers will attend on behalf of the Assembly. They will be accompanied by Peter Hall.

- **CPA CANADA REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

Quebec, 16-21 July 2012

Due to the lack of value for the Assembly in the themes of the Conference, the Assembly will not be sending a representative to Canada.

- **58TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE**

Sri Lanka, 7-15 September 2012

The CPA Selection Committee will meet after this meeting to discuss expressions of interest from Anna Lo and Leslie Cree to attend the annual conference in Sri Lanka.

Basil McCrea asked the President if attendance at the conference could

be discussed at the meeting.

The President was happy to discuss this and stated very strongly that The Branch would only send representatives to the conference if it would be beneficial to the Assembly and the representative was going for the right reasons. The cost of attending such conference would have to be considered carefully due to the current economic climate and it had to represent value for money.

Basil stated that the Assembly should definitely send a representative and that an observer should be sent too. He advised that the conference would be a very good opportunity for the Assembly to learn from other countries and for them to learn from us. He stated that careful consideration had to be given to who would be sent as they must be able to promote the Assembly and Northern Ireland.

The Secretary advised that the person going would need to be able to advocate our partner country funding application.

8. INWARD VISITS

The Secretary advised Members of the inward visits to the Assembly in April and May.

9. AOB

Jim Wells stated that the Branch should send a message of congratulations to the Queen on her Diamond Jubilee.

The President agreed.

The Secretary to contact CPA UK to find out how this should be done.

10. Date of the next meeting

The next will be held on 25 June 2012 in Room 21.

**WILLIAM HAY MLA
PRESIDENT**

