

DRAFT

COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY BRANCH

**MEETING ON MONDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 5.00PM IN ROOM 29,
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Present:

Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mr Robin Swann
Ms Sandra Overend MLA
Mr Basil McCrea
Mr David McIlveen MLA
Mr Jim Wells MLA
Ms Michelle McIlveen MLA
Mr William Humphrey MLA
Mr Sammy Douglas MLA
Mr David Hilditch MLA
Mr Peter Weir MLA

Apologies:

Mr Sam Gardiner MLA
Mr Leslie Cree MLA
Mr Sean Rogers MLA
Ms Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Ms Anna Lo MLA

In attendance:

Ms Susie Brown, Head of Outreach & Communications (CPA Branch Secretary)
Ms Louise Close, Outreach Manager
Ms Nicola Crawford, Parliamentary Outreach Co-Ordinator (Minutes)

1. APOLOGIES

The Secretary welcomed Members of the CPA NI Branch to the meeting and advised that the President was unwell and Mr Stewart Dickson, if agreed, as the longest standing member of the Executive Committee and the Selection Committee would chair the meeting.

Proposed by Mr Robin Swann; Seconded by Mr David McIlveen.

Mr Dickson thanked the Members and took the chair. Mr Dickson advised that apologies from Members would be reflected in the minutes of the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting held on 24th June 2013 were agreed unanimously.

3. MATTERS ARISING

- **Annual Commonwealth Conference**

The Chair advised Members that this year's Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference would be held in Cameroon in October and Brenda Hale MLA had been selected to represent the NI CPA Branch. Unfortunately after receiving information from CPA UK and the UK Government regarding concerns over safety and the Ebola virus the President decided it was necessary to withdraw Ms Hale from the Conference.

4. 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 2014. The evening celebrated the Commonwealth Games and Northern Ireland's history and success in the Games. It was an extremely successful event with excellent feedback received from everyone who attended.

The report was noted by all Members.

The Chair advised of the importance of Members continuing to attend lunches/meetings with visiting delegations.

5. ALTERATION TO BRANCH RULES

The Chair stated that it was agreed at the last Executive Committee meeting that agreement be sought from CPA Members that Executive Committee Members should sit for an Assembly mandate, rather than hold elections annually. The current rule does not allow for Members

to gain any significant insight or experience of the Executive Committee as there are only three meetings a year and it also affects the continuity of the Committee.

The Chair asked for agreement from Members to implement the change to the Branch rules. He advised the rule would also be applied to the election of the Branch Secretary.

Proposed by Mr Jim Wells; Seconded by Mr Sammy Douglas.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair advised Members of a visit by Mr Ian Hansen MLA from the Falkland Islands and asked them to attend the lunch with him if available.

The Chair advised Members that he had been at a Law Society dinner where he met the Mr Brian Spears, Chair of the Commonwealth Lawyers Association. Mr Spears is keen to meet CPA Members and attend any forthcoming events such as Commonwealth Day. The Chair suggested they may be further similar organisations in Northern Ireland and that research should be conducted regarding this.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next Annual General meeting will take place on Monday 15 June 2015, room to be confirmed.

The Chair thanked Members for attending.

The Chair adjourned the meeting.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SD', written in a cursive style.

Stewart Dickson MLA
Acting Chair