



BRANCH EXECUTIVE MEETING

Date: Wednesday 24 April 2024
Time: 12:30-13:15
Format: In person Meeting
Location: Video Conference Room

MINUTES

Present

Rhun ap Iorwerth MS, Chair
David Rees MS (Vice-President)
Alun Davies MS
Rhianon Passmore MS
Natasha Asghar MS
Sam Rowlands MS

Secretariat

Al Davies, Acting Branch Secretary
Elin Sutton, Llywydd's Private Office

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCES**

Apologies were received from Delyth Jewell MS

2. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** - Paper CPA 6S-23-02 (**DOC 1**)

The Minutes were agreed as a correct record.

3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

These included:

- *Engagement of Members in BIMR Climate Emergency WG*

Confirmation that invitations to participate in this working group would be enhanced and that the Clerk of the Climate Change Committee would ensure that the Senedd had at least one representative at any future sessions.

- *Engagement of Members of Devolved UK Branches in meetings/briefings with British High Commissioners at CPCs*

This had been discussed with the BIMR Secretariat and the Branch would make a written request for the Senedd Delegation at this year's CPC in Sydney to be invited to any meetings arranged with the British High Commissioner.

- Senedd involvement in wider Commonwealth Networks.

Clarification was given on the Senedd's participation (and options to participate) in a numerous networks, including the **Commonwealth Public Accounts Committees** (CAPAC); **CSPOC** – The Conference of Speakers of the Commonwealth and **SOCATT** – Society of Clerks at the Table.

4. REVIEW OF RECENT ACTIVITIES

Feedback and follow-up of recent Meetings, Visits, Events and Conferences

2023

- *Delegation from the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly (India)
23 November*

Alun Davies MS had met this delegation who were visiting the Senedd as part of a programme through the University of Wales, Trinity St David.

- BIMR CWP SC Meetings
Virtual
4 December / 29 January

These two CWP Steering Committee meetings were attended by our Members and covered matters, including the Reykjavik Global Forum as well as plans for the CWP Malta conference and international Women's Day.

The Chair noted his thanks to Rhianon Passmore MS for her report of her attendance at the Reykjavik Global Forum which was circulated.

- 2023 CPA Virtual Conference on the 4th Industrial Revolution:
"Artificial intelligence, Disinformation and Parliament: Ensuring the Integrity of our Digital Democracy"
4-6 December 2023

Several Members stated that they had been able to observe selected sessions from the virtual conference. It was noted that, whilst the conference content was of a high quality, there were limitations to the effectiveness of engagement through virtual conferences, such as these.

2024

- *CPA BIMR Election Observation Training course
Virtual
22 - 23 January*

The Deputy Presiding Officer had been able to attend this Election Observer Training course. The Chair noted that the Branch now had a good pool of Members who have undertaken the training and were therefore eligible to participate in future EOM Opportunities within our BIM Region.

- *Fijian Clerks Programme*
21-22 February

The Branch was pleased to have facilitated a two day programme for senior visiting clerks from the Fijian Parliament in February, led by the Senedd's Finance Committee. The Chair noted the Branch's thanks to Peredur Owen Griffiths MS and his clerking team for their time and contribution towards this programme, which had been well received.

- *BIMR CWP Conference*
Malta
7-8 March

The Senedd Branch had been represented by Rhianon Passmore MS and Janet Finch Saunders MS at this Regional CWP Conference, hosted by the Maltese Branch.

An official report was being prepared by the Regional Secretariat. Some of the key discussions at the conference had included:

- Cultural attitudes to women in politics and working with men to change the narrative.
- Improving women's representation and the role of political parties committing to more women representatives.
- The Gender Pay Gap
- The impact of Social Media and other forms of abuse on women in politics.

Rhianon Passmore MS reported back on the conference as did Elin Sutton, who had supported the Senedd delegation, and who gave further details of Malta's proportional representation electoral system.

- *72nd Westminster Seminar*
London / Senedd
11-15 March

The Branch had been represented by Carolyn Thomas MS at the Westminster Seminar – the CPA UK’s Flagship annual programme aimed at new or recently elected Members and developing Clerks.

This year also saw the Seminar come to the Senedd for a day and the Branch noted how pleasing it had been to welcome some 30 Members and Clerks representing a range of devolved and smaller legislatures, including from Australia, Canada, the Caribbean and a number from our own BIM Region; including St Helena, the Channel and Falkland Islands.

The Chair had participated in the programme, as had the Deputy Presiding Officer along with Huw Irranca-Davies MS as well as senior Senedd Officials.

Very positive feedback had been received from the Westminster Seminar delegates and discussion with CPA UK were underway to see whether a Senedd programme could feature more regularly as part of future Westminster Seminars.

- *Canadian Parliamentary Seminar
Ottawa
18 -22 March*

Luke Fletcher MS had been selected to attend this Seminar but unfortunately had to withdraw due to Senedd business.

5. **FORWARD PLANNING**

Forthcoming Meetings, Visits, Events and Conferences

- *BIMR Conference
St Helena, 18-25 May
(Hybrid AGM on 20 May)*

Preparations were at an advanced stage for this year’s BIMR Conference which, for the very first time, would be taking place in Jamestown, St Helena. Natasha Asghar MS would be representing our Branch and the Chair wished her well.

It was noted that participation in the AGM would be made available remotely, as well as by Natasha in person. The Chair would attend virtually and invited other Members of the Executive Committee to join him for this.

- *AI and Deepfakes Conference*
Singapore
18-20 June

This conference was being organised by the CPA Secretariat in partnership with the British High Commission in Singapore. A notification had been issued to Members the previous day, inviting expressions of interest and business cases to be submitted by 29 April.

- *Visit by Speaker-led Delegation from National Assembly of Quebec*
11 June.

Speaker Natalie Roy would lead a parliamentary delegation to the Senedd for a full day programme. Opportunities would be made available for several Branch Members to meet with the delegation as part of their visit programme.

- *Commonwealth Youth Parliament*
Wellington, New Zealand
2-6 September

The dates of this year's CYP had been confirmed, with colleagues in the New Zealand Parliament already working to develop the Conference programme. The Senedd hoped to be able to nominate up to two young people and would, once again, work with the Welsh Youth Parliament team to select our nominees.

- *67th CPC,*
Sydney, New South Wales
1-6 November

No further news had been received on this conference but an official invitation was expected in late May.

6. **NEW ITEMS / ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- Proposal to establish BIMR LGBTQ+ Network

Adam Price MS had raised at our last meeting an interest in developing an LGBTQ+ network within the CPA, to build on the momentum of the discussions surrounding Human Rights at the CPC in Ghana.

The Branch was supportive of this work and, with the CPA Scotland Branch having also proposed this topic, the work of LGBTQ+ within a BIMR Context would be included on the agenda of the Regional AGM in St Helena.

- CPA Senedd Hosting of BIMR Annual Conference in 2025.

The Senedd had provisionally noted its interest in hosting a BIM Regional Conference during this Senedd term and 2025 provided an opportunity for us to do this.

Members reiterated their support for the Branch to host the conference. The Chair confirmed that he would write to the Llywydd and Manon Antoniazzi, as our Branch President and Secretary, respectively, to note our wish to host the conference next year and to request that the finance and resources be made available to facilitate this.

7. **FUTURE MEETING DATE:**

Branch ExCo Meeting – July

END OF BUSINESS