



**BRANCH EXECUTIVE MEETING
15 November 2023**

Draft MINUTES

Present

Rhun ap Iorwerth MS, Chair
David Rees MS (Vice-President)
Alun Davies MS
Delyth Jewell MS
Sam Rowlands MS
Adam Price MS
Carolyn Thomas MS

Secretariat

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

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCES**

Apologies were received from

- Rhianon Passmore MS
- Natasha Asghar MS

2. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** - Paper CPA 6S-23-01 (**DOC 1**)

The Minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

None.

4. **REVIEW OF RECENT ACTIVITIES**

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

- *Women Political Leaders Summit
Brussels
7-8 June*

Rhianon Passmore MS had been one of the BIMR women selected to attend this Women Political Leaders Summit in Brussels, supported by the Regional Strengthening Fund.

- *Visit by CPA Secretary General, Stephen Twigg
20 June.*

The Branch was pleased to have facilitated a comprehensive programme for the Secretary General's visit to the Senedd. This included meetings with Office Holders and Branch Secretariat as well as with Huw Irranca-Davies MS to hear of his experience and feedback from attending the CPC in Halifax. A Branch hosted lunch provided the opportunity to discuss a range of issues from LGBT Rights in the context of the forthcoming conference in Ghana to the CPA's legal status.

- *CPA webinar on SDGs: Beyond 2030
30 August*

Huw Irranca-Davies MS was one of five panellists, representing a range of Commonwealth Parliaments, who contributed to this webinar.

The webinar explored a roadmap to forecast sustainable development post-2030, looking at the positives and negatives of the current SDGs and identified important lessons learned to overcome future risks and exploit future opportunities.

- *Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC)*
Accra, Ghana
2-5 October

The Chair welcomed Adam Price MS and Carolyn Thomas MS to the meeting. He thanked them both for their [report](#) which he said clearly showed how they had contributed and gained much from their participation in the CPC in Accra. Adam and Carolyn were invited to speak to their report and to share their experience in Ghana with Members present.

Members noted their disappointment that the Senedd delegation had not been invited to attend a briefing session between Members of the UK Parliament with the British High Commissioner in Ghana.

Action: Members present asked that the Secretariat contacted the BIMR Secretariat (possibly jointly with the other devolved parliament) to request whether the representatives of all UK legislatures be issued an invitation to join future meetings and briefings held by the British High Commission at CPC Host Countries.

- *BIMR CWP SC Meeting*
Virtual
23 October

Rhianon Passmore MS had participated in this meeting which included Chair Dame Maria Miller's feedback of the CwP meeting in Accra as well as discussions on future BIMR CWP activities for the months ahead.

- *BIMR CPwD Webinar*
26 October

This latest in the series of regional Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities webinar had included a presentation on [SEE Around Britain](#) – a project to support accessibility for people with disabilities. The session had been suggested by Mark Isherwood MS who also discussed the work of [Learning Disability Wales](#).

- *CPA BIMR/Climate Emergency Webinar:
"The Ocean - Our Climate Ally"
8 November*

This latest session from the BIMR's Climate Emergency Working Group was hosted by the Isle of Man, and examined the "blue carbon' ecosystems". Llyr Gruffudd MS had unfortunately been unable to attend. The Chair noted that the Branch would look to involve more Members in the Working Group's future programme. Delyth Jewell MS expressed an interest in participating in future sessions and, in the meantime, asked whether a recording of this session was available.

Afternote: No recording was made of the webinar but the Branch Secretariat shared supporting material from the session.

- *Reykjavik Global Forum - Women Leaders
13-14 November*

Rhianon Passmore MS was selected as one of the delegates to attend this Women Leaders' Summit in Iceland, funded by the CWP Regional Strengthening Fund.

Rhianon Passmore MS would be reporting back from her participation at the Summit in due course.

- *Visit by Canadian Federal Parliament
14 November*

Several of the Branch Members had participated in the visit by a delegation from the Canadian federal parliament, the previous day. The visit programme had included a formal session on *Women in Parliament*, in which Delyth Jewell MS, Carolyn Thomas MS and Joyce Watson MS had contributed, as well as an official lunch hosted by the Branch Vice-President.

Very positive feedback has been received from the Canadian delegation who had asked for their thanks to be passed to all involved in their programme.

5. FORWARD PLANNING

Forthcoming Meetings, Visits, Events and Conferences

- *Delegation from the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly (India)
(through University of Wales, Trinity St David)
23 November.*

Whilst not an official Senedd programme, Members were made aware of this visit which had been organised by the Vice-Chancellor of Trinity St David University, Lampeter. Members of the ExCo would be welcome to meet the delegation, should they be available, and Alun Davies MS suggested that he would likely do so.

- *BIMR CWP SC Meeting
Virtual
4 December*

The meeting Agenda was expected to cover:

- *feedback of the Reykjavik Women's Summit*
- *the forthcoming BIMR CWP Conference in Malta*

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

This recently announced programme was gathering considerable interest and Members were made aware of the deadline of 24 November to register for the conference.

2024

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

The Chair notified Members of this forthcoming EOM Training session for our BIM Region, acknowledging that the dates, coinciding

with Senedd business, could be problematic for Members' attendance.

Afternote: The Deputy Presiding Officer MS was subsequently able to participate in the training.

- *BIMR CWP Conference*
Malta
February/March (TBC)

It had unfortunately not been possible to organise the planned BIMR CWP conference in Malta this Autumn; however the Malta Branch had confirmed that it remained committed to host this.

Afternote: The BIMR Secretariat subsequently confirmed that the conference would take place on 7-8 March 2024.

- *Canadian Parliamentary Seminar*
Ottawa
w/c 18 March (TBC)

The Chair noted that the Canadian Parliamentary Seminar which he, and other Members of the Senedd, had previously attended would be resumed next year. The Senedd would be invited to apply for a place at the Seminar, which was aimed at new and recently elected Parliamentarians.

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

The Chair confirmed that the Senedd had been offered a place at next year's Westminster Seminar and was pleased that Carolyn Thomas MS had been accepted as the Branch's nomination.

- *BIMR Conference*
St Helena
18-25 May

St Helena Branch confirmed that it would be hosting next year's BIMR Conference in May. Given that there were only weekly flights

from South Africa to St Helena the conference would on this occasion be over an extended period.

Afternote: The St Helena Branch issued an official conference invitation shortly after this meeting and expressions of interest in attending sought from Executive Committee Members.

- 67th CPC,
Sydney, New South Wales
early November (exact dates tbc)

New South Wales (Sydney) had now officially been confirmed as the host of next year's CPC. An official invitation for our attendance would be expected next Summer with a guaranteed place for One Delegate.

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

i) The Official report from the 52nd BIMR Conference (hosted by CPA UK in Westminster in April) was noted.

ii) Interest in establishing a CPA LGBTQ+ Network.

Adam Price MS informed Members present of his interest in developing an LGBTQ+ Network within the CPA. He had held informal discussions with the BIMR Regional Secretary as well as with the Secretary General, prior to his participation in the CPC in Ghana.

Initial conversations suggested that working towards an initiative, such as a webinar, led by one or more BIMR Branches could work effectively as a first step. This could then potentially be developed further if there was sufficient interest and momentum. The development of the *Parliamentarians with Disabilities Network* was cited as a positive model.

Action: Branch Secretariat to discuss further with BIMR Colleagues to examine possible options to take this forward.

iii) Membership of International CPA/Commonwealth Networks.
A short conversation touched upon whether the Senedd was aware of and active in various Commonwealth networks, including:

- CSPOC (*Conference of Speakers & Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth*)
- SOCATT (*Society of Clerks at the Table*)
- PACAC (*Public Accounts Committees across the Commonwealth*).

Action: The Branch Secretariat would report back on these.

7. **FUTURE MEETING DATES:**

AGM – Wednesday 6 December 2023

Branch ExCo Meeting – February/March 2024 (TBC)

END OF BUSINESS