Isle of Man Branch

Report of the Chairman of the Branch Executive Committee
for the period January 2017 to December 2017

Introduction

1. The aims of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association are to promote knowledge of the constitutional, legislative, economic, social and cultural aspects of parliamentary democracy. It does this among other things by arranging Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences, and other conferences, seminars, meetings and study groups; and by promoting visits between Members of the Branches of the Association.

2. This year saw the Isle of Man celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first popular election of the House of Keys, previously a self-elected body. 1867 was a date of pivotal significance in the advancement of Manx parliamentary democracy and a number of events took place to celebrate this anniversary in Manx political history.

Farewells

3. 2017 saw the departure of just one CPA member: Mr Tony Wild was a member of the Legislative Council from 2011 to 2017 and an active member of the Isle of Man Branch. He represented the Isle of Man at regional conferences in Scotland in 2012 and the Falkland Islands in 2013, and attended a study visit to Westminster in 2012.

On-Island activities in 2017

4. In February 2017 we were delighted to welcome Mr Akbar Khan, the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, on his first visit to the Isle of Man, as part of a CPA parliamentary strengthening programme. During his visit Mr Khan delivered four CPA roadshows to schools in the Island, reaching more than 200 students; the roadshows focused on three core Commonwealth values - diversity, development and democracy. Mr Khan also had the opportunity to see some of our inter-parliamentary work first-hand, thanks to the fact that his visit coincided with a visit by a delegation from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly in Pakistan.

5. In September 2016 a capacity-building programme between the regional parliament of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in north western Pakistan and the UK and Scottish Parliaments was launched and sponsored by the British Council. Tynwald was included in this programme and we continued throughout 2017 to host visits from members of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly. By the end of the programme around two-thirds of the Assembly’s 124 Members had travelled to the Island in seven groups to participate in parliamentary training and exposure programmes.
6. In March the annual Commonwealth Day Dinner was held at Douglas Golf Club. The guest speaker was Sir Richard Gozney KCMG CVO, who had been sworn in as the Island’s Lieutenant Governor in May 2016.

7. Also in March, we hosted a study visit for a ten-strong delegation from the National Assembly of Laos. Sponsored by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD), the visit was set against the background of the National Assembly establishing a Justice Committee and moving towards a more proactive and systematic legislative review process. The programme included an examination of the Isle of Man’s relationship with the UK and the European Court of Human Rights, the legislative and committee procedures of Tynwald and its addressing of human rights.

8. In July at Tynwald Day, the honoured guests this year included the following fellow parliamentarians from neighbouring CPA branches:

   - Linda Fabiani MSP, Deputy Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament
   - Ann Jones AM, Deputy Presiding Officer of the National Assembly for Wales
   - Gavin Robinson MP, Member of Parliament for East Belfast

9. Later in July the annual sitting of Junior Tynwald took place. Organised by the Branch in association with the Department of Education, Sport and Culture, the sitting saw Year 12 students from the Island’s five state secondary schools assume the roles of Members of the House of Keys and the Legislative Council to debate matters of concern. The Outstanding Participant Award went to Cameron Byrne (Castle Rushen High School).

10. In October the clerk of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Falkland Islands, Ronnie (Ronald) Maclellan Baird, visited us for a study visit; he was joined by Felicity Herrmann, CPA UK project assistant for the UK Overseas Territories Project. The two-day programme provided Mr Maclellan Baird with an overview of the responsibilities of a PAC clerk, together with guidance on committee procedures and protocols. Mr Maclellan Baird’s visit was funded by CPA UK as part of a three-year UK Overseas Territory Project, in consortium with UK National Audit Office and UK Government International Audit Agency. The project aims to support UK Overseas Territories’ parliamentarians, committee clerks and support staff engaged in managing public financial oversight.

11. In November 2017 four officers from the Parliament of Sierra Leone completed a WFD-sponsored study visit to Tynwald in a move to strengthen research capacity. The delegation was accompanied by WFD’s programme officer for Africa, Charlotte Egan. Head of the delegation and director of the Parliament of Sierra Leone’s library, research and documentation department, Muctarr Sowa, said “This Tynwald capacity-building programme has been very valuable. We will be sharing what we have learned with our colleagues with the ultimate goal of being able to stand on our own and operate as an independent research department supporting Members in their legislative work.”
12. Also in November we were pleased to host a study visit funded by CPA UK, as part of the capacity-building programme delivered by the UK Overseas Territories Project, for six Members of the Legislative Assembly of St Helena Public Accounts Committee.

**Off-Island activities in 2017**

13. Ben Newsham and Joshua Radcliffe were selected by the Isle of Man Branch Executive Committee to attend the Youth Observance of Commonwealth Day at Westminster in March 2017. The conference theme was ‘A Peace-building Commonwealth’.

14. In March Hon Bill Malarkey MHK attended the International Parliamentary Conference on National Security and Cybersecurity Day in London. The conference of 81 delegates from 34 countries was arranged by the CPA but other countries were also invited to attend.

15. March 2017 also saw the first of two visits to Westminster. The delegation of eight Tynwald Members visited for a new Member induction programme which was arranged with the assistance of our colleagues in CPA UK. Headed by President of Tynwald, The Hon Steve Rodan MLC, the delegates were Mr David Ashford MHK, Miss Clare Bettison MHK, Mrs Daphne Caine MHK, Mr Rob Callister MHK, Mrs Ann Corlett MHK, Hon Ray Harmer MHK and Mr Bill Shimmins MHK. The aim was to build the knowledge and understanding of the Westminster political system through exchanges with parliamentary counterparts and officials, focusing on key areas of importance for Tynwald. The programme took place over three days and concluded with a constituency visit to Romford with Andrew Rosindell MP.

16. In April Mr Tim Crookall MLC represented the British Islands and Mediterranean Region, on behalf of the CPA Executive Committee chairman the Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, at the mid-year meetings of the CPA Executive Committee in Darwin, Australia.

17. Within the British Islands and Mediterranean Region (BIMR), Mrs Ann Corlett MHK serves as a member of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians’ Steering Committee. It was in this capacity that she attended the Conference of the BIMR CWP held in Cardiff in April 2017. The conference was also attended by Ms Julie Edge MHK.

18. Also in April, five Members of Tynwald enrolled on the CPA Fundamentals Programme on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure for Small Branches run by the McGill University. Miss Clare Bettison MHK, Mrs Ann Corlett MHK, Ms Julie Edge MHK, Mr Rob Callister MHK and Mr Martyn Perkins MHK visited Montreal, Canada to cover one of the four modules the delegates were required to complete; the delegates completed the remaining modules back on-Island.

19. In May 2017 The Hon Steve Rodan MLC, undertook a CPA British Islands and Mediterranean Region Election Observer Mission in the Cayman Islands. As Head of the six-member team, Mr President said that the election went well but that the
mission would be highlighting a number of concerns and recommending areas for improvement.

20. Also in May a delegation from Tynwald attended the 47th BIMR conference in Gibraltar. Hon Bill Malarkey MHK led the delegation and was accompanied by Hon Geoffrey Boot MHK, Mr Jason Moorhouse MHK and Mr Bill Shimmins MHK. The Conference theme was ‘Strengthening the role of the BIMR region and considering the role of small branches post Brexit’ and began with the BIMR Annual General Meeting. Mr Shimmins spoke at the Conference on the ‘Strengthening of the Region in the CPC’ and Mr Boot on ‘The Role of Small Branches’.

21. In September 2017 I attended the inaugural meeting of the UK Public Accounts Committee Network in Cardiff, using the opportunity to meet with Auditors-General, Chairs of Public Accounts Committees and clerks.

22. In October 2017 the second Westminster induction visit for new Members took place; I headed the delegation and the other Members were Dr Alex Allinson MHK, Hon Graham Cregeen MHK, Ms Julie Edge MHK, Mr Lawrie Hooper MHK, Hon Bill Malarkey MHK, Mr Ralph Peake MHK, Mr Martyn Perkins MHK and Mrs Jane Poole-Wilson MLC. It was a very useful trip with many highlights, which had also managed in incorporate Education visits for Mr Cregeen and Mr Hooper.

23. In November I attended the 63rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) in Dhaka with Miss Clare Bettison MHK. We joined more than 500 parliamentarians and parliamentary clerks from across the Commonwealth for the conference, which was hosted by the Bangladesh Branch of the CPA and took for its theme ‘Continuing to enhance high standards of performance of parliamentarians’. I chaired two sessions and presented a third, whilst Miss Bettison served as the BIMR representative at the inaugural CPC youth roundtable session.

24. In November 2017 Tynwald PAC member, Mr Michael Coleman MLC embarked on a Public Accounts Committee Workshop with the Montserrat Legislative Assembly. The workshop was held to identify measures that would strengthen the effectiveness of the Montserrat Legislative Assembly’s PAC operation and heighten the committee’s visibility. As Head of the delegation Mr Coleman, joined representatives from the Scottish Parliament and Parliament of Jamaica for the workshop which was organised in tandem with, and wholly funded by, CPA UK as part of the three-year UK Overseas Territories Project to develop good practice in public financial oversight.

25. The 9th Commonwealth Youth Parliament, which was due to be hosted by the British Virgin Islands in November 2017, was unfortunately postponed because of hurricane damage; the Youth Parliament was later rescheduled for February 2018 and will now be held in Jersey.

26. In December 2017 I attended a PAC Seminar at Westminster as a guest speaker on the subject of Public Accounts Committees in small jurisdictions. I also attended the Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees the following day.
Conclusion

27. I continue to believe that the education and training of Tynwald Members is key to our success. Opportunities afforded to us through our Branch membership of the CPA have shown increasing benefits this year, particularly in building Members’ own capacity through the study of parliamentary practice at home and in other jurisdictions, and helping other parliaments within the Commonwealth through election monitoring and capacity-building.

28. Tynwald has been recognised as a centre of good practice for study visits in the areas of parliamentary practice, research, Hansard services, and more recently in matters of public financial oversight, and the Isle of Man is playing a central role in the CPA UK’s capacity-building project with UK Overseas Territories.

29. It is in this regard that I remain firmly of the view that the small proportion of the ‘Legislature’ vote which is spent on CPA membership continues to be money well spent. In 2017 the annual membership fee paid by the Isle of Man Branch to the CPA was £22,572.

30. I am pleased that our Branch has also continued to support the traditional activities of Regional and Plenary Conferences and thank our members for their enthusiasm and readiness to partake in these opportunities to represent the Isle of Man.

31. Although the Isle of Man is not a sovereign state, we do have our own international identity. Tynwald is very much a part of this and the CPA Isle of Man Branch can make a practical contribution developing contacts across our main trading partners and raising the Island’s profile on the international stage. Maintaining links between Tynwald and the legislatures of the surrounding jurisdictions in particular is an important part of ensuring that the voice of the Isle of Man is heard by opinion formers and policy makers throughout the British Isles.

32. Meanwhile it is an essential function of any legislature to be open and transparent. Our work in explaining the work of Tynwald to the young and to the wider community in the Island contributes to the good governance of the Island as a whole, and enables our unique parliamentary heritage to be appreciated by all.

33. It remains my aim as your Chairman to optimise the value we obtain from these opportunities and I shall continue to do so in the future.

The Hon Juan Watterson SHK
March 2018
# THE ISLE OF MAN BRANCH OF THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD

1st January to 31st December 2017

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Receipts &amp; Payments Account for 1 January to 31 December 2017</th>
<th>£</th>
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<tr>
<td>Opening Balance</td>
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<td>Subscriptions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amount transferred to the General Charges Account -12638773</td>
<td>(180)</td>
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**Payments**

Payments made during accounting period

| Payments | (605) |

**Closing Balance**

3,341

**Assets and Liabilities as at 31 December 2017**

| Current Account | 3,341 |

| Cash at Bank | 3,341 |

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I have audited the receipts and payments account for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2017 and in my opinion it is an accurate statement of the account of the Isle of Man Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association as at 31 December 2017.

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Honorary Treasurer
Mrs J Corkish

Honorary Auditor
Mr S Hind FCCA

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**Note**

The amount of £180 Membership Fees has been received into The Isle of Man Government General Charges Account 12638773.