



Visit by
Mr Stephen Twigg
Secretary General of the CPA

Accompanied by Tom Davies (CPA Secretariat)

Tuesday 20 June 2023

Programme

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09:20 Greeted in Ty Hywel Reception by Al Davies
(Senedd CPA Branch Acting-Secretary)

09:30 **Meeting with Senedd CPA Branch Office Holders:**
Llywydd, Elin Jones MS (Branch President)
Deputy Presiding Officer David Rees MS (Branch Vice-President)
Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd
(Branch Secretary)

Location: Llywydd's Office, 4th Floor (Ty Hywel)

Programme: Updated 19.06.23

- 10:00 **Meeting with Rhun ap Iorwerth MS, Branch Chair**
Location: Rhun ap Iorwerth's Office (2nd Floor, Ty Hywel)
- 10:40 Coffee Break and informal discussion with
Huw Irranca-Davies MS and **Sarah Murphy MS** – Senedd participants
in the 2022 CPC in Halifax, Nova Scotia.
Location: Senedd Oriel
- 11:00 **Tour of the Senedd and Pierhead**
Led by Richard Gwyn Jones, Visitor Engagement Manager
- 12:00 Return to Senedd Oriel
Transfer to Ty Hywel.
- 12:15 **Official Lunch hosted the CPA Senedd Branch Executive Committee**
- Present:
Branch Vice-President, David Rees MS
Alun Davies MS
Natasha Asghar MS
Delyth Jewell MS
Sam Rowlands MS
Rhun ap Iorwerth MS, Chair (TBC)
Al Davies, Acting Branch Secretary.
- Location: Members' Dining Room
- 13:20 Transfer to Senedd Public Gallery to view Plenary.
- 13:30 **First Minister's Questions.**
- 14:15 Comfort Break / Refreshments.
- 14:30 End of Senedd Programme.

Briefing Note.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

The CPA's Mission Statement is:

"To promote knowledge of the constitutional, legislative, economic, social and cultural aspects of parliamentary democracy, with particular reference to the countries of the Commonwealth."

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is one of the oldest established organisations in the Commonwealth. Founded in 1911, it is a membership association which brings together Members, irrespective of gender, race, religion or culture, who are united by community of interest, respect for the rule of law and individual rights and freedoms, and by the pursuit of the positive ideals of parliamentary democracy. The Association is made up of over 180 legislatures (or Branches) divided up between nine geographic regions of the Commonwealth. It offers a vast opportunity for Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff to collaborate on issues of mutual interest and to share good practice.

Further information about the CPA can be found [here](#).

The Secretary General.

Stephen Twigg is the 8th Secretary General of the CPA, appointed in 2020. A biography of Mr Twigg can be found on the final page of this document.

This is Stephen Twigg's first visit to the Senedd as Secretary General, and the first visit to the Welsh Parliament by a Secretary General of the CPA since 2009 (the late Dr William Shija of Tanzania).

The Secretary General has expressed an interest in visiting the Senedd for some time, having visited the Scottish Parliament last year.

The Secretary General is visiting to learn more of the Senedd's engagement with the CPA and to update us on some CPA Governance matters.

CPA's legal status.

The Secretary General will wish to update the Senedd on progress to resolve the longstanding issue of the CPA's Status. This is as a UK Charity, something which has been unacceptable for many CPA legislature (particularly within the Africa and Asia Regions) and the issue has been a under consideration and debate for over 30 years.

There is understood to have been constructive discussions with the United Kingdom Government in recent months and the goal is to secure primary legislation as a matter of urgency.

At the same time, a set of benchmarks have been developed to assist a potential process for identifying a new location for the CPA Headquarters (currently in London)

It is hoped , if time in the UK Parliament can be secured before the Summer recess, that this matter could finally be resolved by the time of the forthcoming Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Ghana.

CPA Fees

The Senedd Branch has some issues with the rationale behind the CPA Secretariat's new fee structure offered to Sub-national Parliaments, such as ours. In brief, the new option of now being able to have a second delegate at annual CPA Conferences for double the cost of our existing Membership fee (£7,982) appears to offer poor value. The matter was discussed at our Branch Executive Meeting in May with the Branch deciding not to take up this enhanced Membership offer. This issue will be discussed in greater detail, separately, by the Branch Chair, Rhun ap Iorwerth MS.

LGBTQ+ Rights

Members may be minded to ask the Secretary General **what is the CPA Secretariat doing to raise the issue of LGBTQ+ rights** within the CPA Membership. Whilst the CPA seems keen to promote equalities and opportunities for **Women, Parliamentarians with Disabilities** and **Youth parliamentarians**, there appears to be little appetite to broach the matter of LGBTQ+ rights.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences (CPCs)

The Senedd has, since it joined in 1999, actively participated in Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences (The CPA's Annual Flagship Conference attracting some 500 Parliamentarians from across all Nine regions of the CPA.)

The Senedd was represented at last year's CPC in **Halifax, Nova Scotia** by **Huw Irranca-Davies MS and Sarah Murphy MS**. The Secretary General will be meeting Huw and Sarah as part of his programme to learn more of their experience at the Halifax Conference and for feedback on how the Secretariat can improve future CPC programmes.

This year's conference will take place in **Accra, Ghana** in early October. We have

received a number of applications from Members of the Senedd interested in attending and we will select our delegation this week.

Commonwealth Youth Parliament. (CYP)

The Senedd Branch of the CPA was pleased to see the CPA Secretariat's resumption of the annual Commonwealth Youth Parliaments.

Since the establishment of the **Welsh Youth Parliament** (in 2019) the Senedd been represented by numerous past and present WYP Members at CYPs.

These have most recently included:

CYP New Delhi 2019 – Talulah Thomas & Rhian Shillabeer

CYP Trinidad & Tobago – Gwion Rhisiart a Betsan Angell Roberts.

Does the CPA Secretariat have confirmed hosts for future Commonwealth Youth Parliament? (there are rumours that New Zealand has offered to host).

Note: the Senedd made provisional enquiries with the Secretariat to examine the possibility of us hosting a future CYP (in partnership with the WYP). We were however (somewhat disappointingly) informed that this would not be practical in the coming years given a rotation between the CPA's Regions would not see the CYP come back to our (British Islands and Mediterranean) Region until 2030 at the earliest.

Hosting of future International Executive Committee Meeting?

There is a possibility that the Secretary General may ask whether the Senedd would consider hosting a meeting of the CPA's International Executive Committee (comprising of some 35 Members responsible for the Association's governance). The majority of the costs of hosting a meeting are borne by the CPA.

Suggested Line to Take: The Senedd would be open, in principle, to hosting a meeting but would consider it appropriate to do so when we next have a Member of the Senedd sitting at the table of the Executive Committee (expected between 2026-2028).

Hosting of future British Islands and Mediterranean Regional (BIMR) Conference.

The Senedd is one of 13 legislatures (Branches) which make up our BIM Region. We last hosted a BIMR conference in 2014. We will be expected to host another conference before the end of this Senedd term and have, tentatively, agreed to host in 2025.

The conference offers an excellent opportunity to showcase the Senedd and its work and to create our own programme of content.

As well as being attended by the other 12 legislatures within our Region, the Senedd would (as we did in 2014) look to invite international observers from the CPA's other eight Regions.

We would also invite the Secretary General to the Senedd Conference.



CPA Secretary-General - Biography

Stephen Twigg 8th Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)



Stephen Twigg was appointed as the 8th Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) on 1 August 2020.

The CPA is one of the oldest established organisations in the Commonwealth, founded in 1911, and is a membership association and the parliamentary wing of the Commonwealth. The CPA brings together Commonwealth Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff, who are united by community of interest, respect for the rule of law and individual rights and freedoms, and by the pursuit of the positive ideals of parliamentary democracy. The CPA membership is made up of CPA Branches in almost 180 Commonwealth Parliaments and Legislatures at national, state, provincial and territorial level and it offers a vast opportunity for Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff to collaborate on issues of mutual interest and to share good practice.

The CPA Secretary-General, Stephen Twigg is a former UK Parliamentarian, who was previously elected to the Parliament of the United Kingdom as a Member of Parliament from 1997 to 2005 (Enfield Southgate) and from 2010 to 2019 (Liverpool West Derby). During his parliamentary career, he held several senior positions including Chairperson of the International Development Select Committee, Minister for Schools and a range of Shadow Front Bench roles. Following the 2019 General Election, Stephen Twigg was instrumental in setting up the International Parliamentary Network for Education and was actively involved in parliamentary strengthening with both Global Partners Governance and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD).

Prior to his parliamentary career, Stephen Twigg studied at Balliol College, Oxford University, where he studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics. He became the youngest President of the National Union of Students in 1990-92 and was then elected as a Local Councillor in the London Borough of Islington.