

PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL

Executive summary

1. The Corporate Body is invited to consider forthcoming overseas parliamentary travel and, in accordance Section 2, paragraph 62 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament in relation to receipt by Members of travel, hospitality etc., approve the details of the travel and other costs associated with the outward visits below.

Issues and Options

North America

2. The annual Scottish Parliament visit to North America goes back to 2000. Across the years, delegations have met with key policymakers, legislatures and parliamentarians in Canada and the US. As well as discussions around key policy and parliamentary issues, the visit has also supported the 'partnership' and 'supporting Scotland' outcomes highlighted in successive International Strategies.
3. The delegation will be:
 - Deputy Presiding Officer Linda Fabiani MSP
 - Liam McArthur MSP: Member of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body and Justice Committee
4. The current International Strategy sets out how key issues of importance to the Parliament informs why, when, and who it works with internationally. The primary focus of the visit is parliamentary procedure and reform, including public engagement and public information services. In her capacity as chair of the Young Women Lead programme, the DPO will also hold meetings to inform its latest inquiry into the relationship young women have with sport and physical activity with particular regard to issues which might prevent participation. Meetings will also be arranged for Liam McArthur MSP on matters of interest to the Justice Committee on which he sits.
5. The issues set out in paragraph 4 will form the basis for discussions at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and with key organisations in both Toronto and New York. In New York the delegation will also represent the Parliament in the annual Tartan Day Parade. A detailed programme is in preparation.
6. The travel, accommodation and incidental costs for this visit will be met from the International Relations Office budget.

British Virgin Islands - Election Observing Mission

7. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) British Islands and Mediterranean Region (BIMR) Secretariat received an invitation from John Duncan, Governor of the British Virgin Islands to draw together an Election Observing Mission (EOM) team mainly from BIMR Branches to observe the election which will take place on 25 February 2019.
8. This opportunity was advertised to all Scotland Branch Members and the Branch Executive Committee selected Jamie Greene MSP as the nominee. His application was forwarded to the BIMR Secretariat and he was selected to participate.
9. The travel and accommodation costs for this visit will be met by the CPA UK Branch (IRO will cover any incidental costs).

CPA International Executive Committee – Ottawa, Canada

10. Stuart McMillan MSP will attend the mid-year meeting of the CPA's International Executive Committee as Acting Regional Representative for the BIMR and will also attend meetings of the Planning and Review Sub Committee. The meeting will take place in Ottawa, Canada from 11-15 April.
11. The Scotland Branch is standby Branch for Northern Ireland which cannot participate.
12. The travel and accommodation costs for this visit will be met by the CPA Secretariat (IRO will cover any incidental costs).
13. As the SPCB is aware, advance approval for travel on parliamentary business is not regarded as a registrable interest under the terms of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament.

Resource Implications

14. The estimated costs for the aforementioned visits are set out below:

Date	Description	Destination	Participants	Approx. costs
4-10 April	Delegation to North America	New York Toronto	Deputy Presiding Officer Linda Fabiani MSP; and Liam McArthur MSP (supported by one International Relations Office official)	£10,500 (Cost has been capped at £30,000 since 2009)
23-27 Feb	Election observing mission	British Virgin Islands	Jamie Greene MSP	£150 (to include immunisation costs)

11-15 April	CPA International Executive Committee meeting	Ottawa, Canada	Stuart McMillan MSP	£100 for incidental costs)
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Publication Scheme

15. This paper will be published as part of the SPCB's Publication Scheme.

Decision

16. The Corporate Body is invited to consider the above travel and, in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament, in relation to receipt by Members of travel, hospitality etc., approve the details of the travel and the associated costs as set out.

International Relations Office

February 2019