



Visit from the Parliamentary Leadership of Guyana

18-21 April 2016

Houses of Parliament

Report





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Background

1.01. In October 2015, CPA UK and the Parliament of Guyana embarked on a six month Capacity Building Programme jointly funded by CPA UK and the British High Commission Georgetown, with cooperation from the Canadian High Commission Georgetown. The aims of the wider programme were to:

- a. Enhance the Assembly's ability to conduct its business in an effective manner.
- b. Work with the Assembly's parliamentary committees to enhance their oversight capacity.
- c. Work with the Parliamentary Leadership, to strengthen its administrative, financial and procedural independence.
- d. Work with parliamentary officials to effectively support the functioning of the Assembly.
- e. Address the challenges of maintaining a successful coalition government.
- f. Support the interaction between UK, Guyanese and Caribbean Parliamentarians to discuss issues of regional interest; sustainability, energy and development.

1.02. The six month Capacity Building Programme was delivered through a series of activities that included both bilateral and multilateral programmes. The activities were:

- a. **Activity 1.** Workshop for Committee Clerks of the National Assembly of Guyana, Westminster, 16-19 November 2015.
- b. **Activity 2.** Westminster Seminar for International Parliamentarians and Clerks, Westminster, 29 November - 4 December 2015. This included two Members from the National Assembly Guyana.
- c. **Activity 3.** Workshop with Committee Chairs and Clerks, aimed at promoting good practices in scrutiny and oversight of the Executive within the committee system. The Workshop involved delegations from the UK and Canadian Parliaments, Georgetown, 4-6 April 2016.
- d. **Activity 4.** CPA UK and UNDP's International Parliamentary Conference on Sustainability, Energy and Development, Westminster, from 14-17 March 2016, which was attended by Members from the National Assembly of Guyana.
- e. **Activity 5.** Visit of the Parliamentary Leadership, Westminster, 18-21 April 2016. The visit focused on parliamentary management, administration and finances.

Aim and Objectives

2.01. **Aim.** The aim of the programme was to provide capacity building assistance to the Parliament of Guyana.

2.02. **Objectives.** Through meetings, discussions and briefings with both Parliamentary and Commonwealth colleagues in the UK a set of objectives to:

- a. **Objective 1.** Explore issues of mutual interest with counterparts from the UK parliament.
- b. **Objective 2.** Explore the management, administration and financing of Parliament.





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- c. **Objective 3.** Discuss practices related to oversight, accountability and professional standards for Parliamentarians and officials.
- d. **Objective 4.** Facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experience between the Speaker, Clerk and officials of the Parliament of Guyana and their counterparts in the UK Parliament.
- e. **Objective 5.** Enhance broader understanding of best practice in the role of Committees and Committee Clerks in the legislative and democratic processes and procedures.
- f. **Objective 6.** Provide support for the Systems Development Co-ordinator of the Parliament of Guyana in their ongoing work to reduce the environmental impact of Parliament.
- g. **Objective 7.** Provide insight and knowledge exchange related to the UK's parliamentary outreach programmes.

Participants

3.01. The delegation from the National Assembly of Guyana comprised:

- Hon. Speaker Dr Barton Scotland CCH MP, *Speaker of the National Assembly of Guyana*
- Sherlock Ewart Isaacs, *Clerk of the National Assembly of Guyana*
- Hermina Gilgeours, *Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly of Guyana*
- Monette Ann Garnett Christopher, *Chief Administrative Officer, National Assembly of Guyana*
- Debra Hermina Cadogan, *Head of Committees Division, National Assembly of Guyana*
- Michael Munroe, *Head of the Parliamentary Library, National Assembly of Guyana*
- Deo Dookie, *Systems Development Co-ordinator, National Assembly of Guyana*
- Christina Ramdas, *Senior Personnel Officer, National Assembly of Guyana*
- Oneika Alphonso-Walton, *Public Relations Officer, National Assembly of Guyana*

3.02. **Key Stakeholders.**

- Guyana
 - National Assembly of Guyana
 - Government of Guyana
- UK
 - Parliament
 - Foreign & Commonwealth Office
 - British High Commission Guyana

Summary

4.01. The four day visit, Monday 18 April - Thursday 21 April, helped solidify ties between the UK Parliament and the National Assembly and provided fruitful discussions between parliamentary colleagues on parliamentary management and administration. Meetings between parliamentary counterparts allowed for an exchange of good practice on a range of issues, from the role of the Clerk of the House to how best to provide research briefings for parliamentarians in parliamentary libraries. This ensured that each





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delegate participating in the programme was able to focus on issues which directly related to their roles in the National Assembly of Guyana.

4.02. As the third activity in the wider six month programme, links with the previous activities were particularly evident in meetings with representatives from the UK Liaison Committee and Scrutiny Unit. Both the Committee and the Unit had been suggested by previous delegates as mechanisms the National Assembly of Guyana could adopt in the future. The previous Committee Workshop in Georgetown, 4-6 April 2016, had also made it apparent that, following the Guyanese General Election in 2015, there is a greater need for cross-party parliamentary consensus. The programme in Westminster subsequently served to highlight the importance of such collaboration, through briefings on the 'usual channels' and the Case Study Meeting with the Energy and Climate Change Committee.

4.03. There was a positive exchange of good practice for the daily management, administration and financing of parliament, seen from the perspective of both Members and parliamentary staff. This allowed for a more holistic understanding of the various levels of roles which coexist within the parliamentary system. The House of Commons Commission, comprised of both Members and staff, highlighted the link between the various parliamentary departments, the relationship between the Commission and the Speaker, and between the Finance Department, the Finance Committee and the Commission. The intertwining of Committees, parliamentary departments and parliamentary governance structures not only highlighted the number of checks and balances that exist within the UK Parliament, but also how these structures ensure the administration, management and financing of parliament remains as depoliticised and effective as possible.

Programme Comments

5.01. **An Introduction to the UK Parliament and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.** The delegation met:

- a. Rt Hon. David Hanson MP, Rt Hon. Alistair Carmichael MP and Patrick Grady MP upon their arrival at the Houses of Parliament. This was an opportunity for the delegation to gain an initial insight into the UK parliamentary context as well as insight into current UK political issues.
- b. The new Secretary General of the CPA, Akbar Khan, to discuss issues relevant to Guyana and the Commonwealth.
- c. Andrew Tuggey DL, Chief Executive & Secretary of CPA UK to discuss the end of the six-month Capacity Building Programme between CPA UK, the British High Commission and the Canadian High Commission.

5.02. **Continuing Conversations.**

- a. **Cross-party Collaboration.** When meeting with the delegation, Rt Hon. Alistair Carmichael MP reflected upon his recent visit to Georgetown, Guyana, where he participated in CPA UK's Committee Workshop, 4-6 April 2016. This drew important correlations between the previous programme in Georgetown and to ensure continuity of the issues which were considered over the





course of the week. For instance, the need for cross-party collaboration in daily parliamentary business was highlighted as this had been identified as a significant issue during the Committee Workshop in Guyana. This point was reiterated several times over the course of the week.

b. **The Scrutiny Unit.** A further outcome of Activity 1 with Committee Clerks, November 2015, was the desire from the visiting Clerks to establish a Scrutiny Unit and Liaison Committee in the National Assembly of Guyana. As a result, the delegation met with David Lloyd, Head of the Scrutiny Unit, who described the creation of the Unit in 2002 and its main purpose of providing research and analytical support to committees with financial and legislative scrutiny. Mr Lloyd explained how the Unit has been mandated to support the common objectives of select committees. One of the concerns from the delegation was that the Scrutiny Unit's work would clash with the work of the Treasury and Finance Ministry, but Mr Lloyd was able to explain that the Unit provides impartial, independent and objective analysis on behalf of parliamentarians to interpret the government's policies, budgets and reports. This ensured transparency and accountability to parliament on behalf of taxpayers.

c. **Relationships between Committees.** The delegates were interested in the UK experience of the relationship between the government, the Scrutiny Unit and committees. Mr Lloyd was able to highlight how, with the increase in significance of committees in the UK parliamentary system over the last ten to fifteen years, it has become much more important to have committees, with their increased public profile, producing detailed, critical reports. It was noted that this level of committee work not only prompts greater analysis of government policies but also calls for greater reflection within government departments themselves who can then attempt to pre-empt committee inquiries. Mr Lloyd described how there was therefore an appreciation by the government that the Scrutiny Unit is performing a useful function, which can have an indirect impact upon the government itself and allows for an overall increase in parliamentary transparency and accountability. Hon. Speaker Dr Scotland CCH MP was interested in the staffing of such a Unit, with Mr Lloyd explaining how secondments to the Unit were often drawn from the National Audit Office, which the Unit has a close working relationship with. Internal placements from within parliament were possible but less likely, as are short-term placements within the Unit for postgraduate students.

d. **The Liaison Committee.** The delegation met with Rt Hon. Lord Beith, previous Chair of the Liaison Committee (in post 2010-2015) and Andrew Kennon, Clerk of Committees. Lord Beith outlined the history of the Committee, detailing the Committee's transition from focussing mainly on MPs' travel budget and finances to providing greater scrutiny of the Prime Minister and increasing the status of committees in general. He then explained how the Committee serves to promote good practice amongst the committees of the House and, although unable to criticise a particular committee if it does not fulfil its remit, the Committee clearly has influence over the committees given the seniority of its Members. Lord Beith noted the support from Rt Hon. John Bercow MP, Speaker of the UK Parliament, as being paramount to this increasing influence seen by both the Liaison Committee and the committee system as a whole as he supported the corresponding increase in committee finances. The Speaker's influence in parliament was therefore shown to be crucial for championing changes to parliamentary procedure.





e. **Management of the Liaison Committee.** Hon. Speaker Dr Scotland CCH MP posed several questions to Lord Beith and Andrew Kennon, one of which was how the Liaison Committee was able to overcome any competition between Committees or just a general lack of cross-party cooperation. The conversation then became more centred on the need for cross-party collaboration for an effective committee system as a whole, as opposed to just a consideration of the Liaison Committee in isolation. Lord Beith detailed several prerequisites, which ensured committees were able to carry out its role in the UK context. One of the conditions noted was that Ministers are unable to sit on committees so, in theory, there will be a greater degree of committee independence from the government. Another prerequisite stated was a reliance on the assumed embarrassment the government would face, should it ever fail to respond to committee reports or send Ministers to give evidence at committee hearings. It is this separation of powers committees have, alongside parliamentary protocol, which overcomes any potential obstacles which might arise as a result of cross-party contentions.

f. **Guyanese Comments.** The difficulty faced by the National Assembly was therefore evident as, given it is a smaller legislature compared to the UK, the delegation explained how it was an inevitability that Ministers would need to sit on committees. Mr Isaacs also noted that, as the one responsible for sending committee reports to the relevant Ministers in the National Assembly, it is rare that he will receive a response of these reports, let alone a confirmation of receipt. He explained that the National Assembly's Standing Orders, which state the government must respond to committee reports are therefore being ignored with no repercussions. It became apparent that, before an effective Liaison Committee could be established, there needed to be cross-party collaboration at the committee level as well as at the parliamentary level. This is especially the case given that the National Assembly is a smaller legislature which depends more on cooperation and collaboration than a larger legislature might.

5.03. An Exchange of Good Practice between Counterparts

a. **Meeting with UK Speaker and Deputy Speaker.** Given that the delegation was very diverse in terms of each delegate's individual role and responsibilities within the National Assembly, there were several private meetings held between delegates and their counterparts in the UK. Hon. Speaker Dr Scotland CCH MP met with Rt Hon. Speaker John Bercow MP, along with Mr Isaacs and Ms Gilgeours, to discuss issues pertinent to their roles as Speakers of their respective legislatures. It was also an opportunity for Mr Isaacs and Ms Gilgeours, as Clerk and Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly, to gain an insight into how the clerks in the UK Parliament can support and assist the Speaker. A similar meeting was held with Rt Hon. Lindsay Hoyle MP, Chairman of Ways and Means and Principal Deputy Speaker as, though the National Assembly of Guyana has no Deputy Speaker, it highlighted the supporting role played by the Deputy Speaker to the Speaker in the UK Parliament. This meeting also provided an insight into the role played by the Chairman of Ways and Means in terms of parliamentary management as he is chairs the Committee of the whole House. This Committee will consider legislation, which is deemed to be of constitutional importance and is also charged with reviewing the Finance Bill.





- b. **Meeting with Clerk of the House of Commons.** In a similar vein Mr Isaacs and Ms Gilgeours were able to discuss the role of the Clerk in greater detail during a meeting with David Natzler, Clerk of the House of Commons. During this meeting, Mr Natzler described how he carries the reputational risk of the House and that he needs to be careful to engage with parliamentary issues and not public issues. The conversation with Mr Natzler and the Guyanese delegation focussed also on the Guyanese parliamentary context, with Mr Isaacs stating how the National Assembly is working towards gaining its administrative independence, which will include financial independence. Subsequently, the importance of the public perception of parliament was noted, something which both Parliaments have got to be concerned with, especially in terms of salary increases or appointments. The National Assembly has appointed two Deputy Clerks, one to deal with daily management issues and the other to have tasks similar to that of the UK Parliament's Director General. Mr Natzler stressed that, under this type of system, it would be imperative to have clearly defined roles and responsibilities to ensure a smooth flow between parliamentary departments and to make sure all departments are accounted for in terms of who would have ultimate responsibility. Mr Natzler described how the appointment of the Director General of the House of Commons was the result of a feeling of discontent that parliament was not delivering the services it should be. This provided a useful meeting in terms of discussing what role parliamentary clerks should play, which was of particular interest to the Guyanese Clerks given their increased responsibility in terms of parliamentary administration and management.
- c. **House of Commons Library.** There was also the opportunity for Michael Munroe, Head of the Parliamentary Library of Guyana, to meet with Hannah Russell, House of Commons Library Customers Service Team. Mr Munroe was able to visit the Member's Library itself and also gain a greater understanding of the specific services provided for Members. He intends to start providing briefings for Members on specific issues or themes in the National Assembly and so it was hugely helpful for him to acquire examples of the briefings provided to UK Members.
- d. **Parliamentary Digital Service.** Deo Dookie, Systems Development Coordinator at the National Assembly, met with Rob Sanders, Director of Live Services with the Parliamentary Digital Service, and then with Emma Allen, Director of Digital Development with the Parliamentary Digital Service. These meetings were requested by Mr Dookie in order to provide an insight into the UK Parliament's provision of digital services, as well as ways in which digital services can be enhanced, especially for Members.
- e. **Committee and Parliamentary Outreach.** Oneika Alphonso-Walton, Public Relations Officer at the National Assembly, was also able to meet with, Lucinda Blaser of the Select Committees Outreach Team in the Department of Chamber and Committee Services where they discussed social media strategies and how best to engage politicians in these strategies.
- f. **Human Resources and Change.** Christina Ramdas, Senior Personnel Officer with the National Assembly, met with Elaine Mason, Human Resources and Change Business Partner at the UK Parliament, to discuss good practice in human resources and strategies employed by both parliaments.

5.04. The UK Committee System.





- a. **Independence of committees.** This need for cross-party collaboration in committees was drawn upon repeatedly over the course of the week. Andrew Kennon provided the delegation with a brief introductory session on the UK's committee system. He explained how the introduction of elections for committee chairs in 2015, which saw an allocation of chair positions according to a political party's representation within the House, had given more independence to committees. Chairs are now no longer selected by their respective party and so there is less pressure on Chairs to toe to the party line. The lack of political party influence over committees has therefore distanced them from political agendas, resulting in more objective inquiries being carried out and well-informed legislation being passed.
- b. **Energy and Climate Change Committee.** This point was further highlighted through a committee case study, where there was an interactive discussion between the delegation and the Chair of the Energy and Climate Change Select Committee, Angus MacNeil MP, along with the Clerk of the Committee, Dr Farrah Bhatti, and the Second Clerk of the Committee, Gavin O'Leary. Mr MacNeil's position as Chair served as a perfect example of cross-party cooperation and lack of party politics in committees as he is the sole Member of his party represented in this particular committee and therefore needs to collaborate with Members from other political parties. He also noted the importance of exchanges of good practice other parliaments, which not only allow for a technical exchange of knowledge but provide a chance for committee Members to 'bond' and form a positive working relationship together.
- c. **Government response to committee Reports.** Once more the issue of the government failing to respond to committee reports was questioned by the delegation, with Mr MacNeil stating that, if this were to ever happen, there would undoubtedly be protestations from the Committee. He also described how having support from prominent industry figures - the energy industry in this case - served as a powerful tool by which pressure could be placed on the government. Mr MacNeil, along with Dr Bhatti and Mr O'Leary, also responded to questions from the delegation regarding what dictates the direction in which a committee might go in. They had recently investigated the most pressing issues as perceived by the energy industry to determine this and their findings would impact upon future inquiries of the Committee. Mr MacNeil also touched upon how committees are more strategic now than they were previously as the end of an inquiry does not mark the end of a committee's focus on a particular subject, with Dr Bhatti noting the increasing utilisation of external experts for committee work in general. Committees will often follow-up on their findings to ensure the government is being held to account. This has had the repercussion of governments having to be more prepared to respond to this greater level of inquiry from committees.
- d. **Value of Committee staff.** This session provided an insight into the relationship between committee members and committee staff. Mr MacNeil noted the importance of the level of expertise of his committee staff. He stated that he frequently relies upon this expertise in order to effectively carry out his role as chair. A chance for further discussion with other committee clerks was provided over an informal working lunch with Dr Anna Dickson, Second Clerk of the Defence Committee, and Gosia McBride, Clerk of the Women and Equalities Committee. These various meetings provided a valuable exchange of good practice which covered not only the role





of clerks but also the additional staff members in all committees, ranging from committee outreach to efforts made by committees to reduce their use of paper.

5.04. The Usual Channels.

a. **Liaison between Government and Opposition.** During CPA UK's Committee Workshop in Georgetown, 4-6 April 2016, it was raised that cross-party collaboration in daily parliamentary business in the National Assembly of Guyana, especially among party whips was a source of difficulty. This has impacted upon Hon. Speaker Scotland, who now has to spend a great deal of his time acting as intermediary between the two main political parties. He therefore met with Roy Stone CBE, Principal Private Secretary to the Government Chief Whip in the Cabinet Office, and Kate Emms, Political Adviser to the Leader of the House of Commons in the Cabinet Office. Mr Stone's post is often referred to as the 'usual channels' as he is responsible for ensuring that there are lines of communication open between the government, the opposition and all of the party whips. His role was therefore described as being instrumental for both the government, which he described as working for 51% of the time, as well as the opposition, which makes up the additional 49% of his time. Mr Stone explained that he meets regularly with all chief whips and will facilitate the dialogue between them as well as ensuring desirable times are set for requested debates. It was then noted by Mr Stone that it is of vital importance that he is seen to be a-political and a trustworthy figure by all parties, which in part adds to the reason behind this post often sees long tenures. Mr Stone is only the fourth person to have held this position, and has done now for over ten years.

b. Kate Emms' role was noted as slightly different from Mr Stone's but that she performs a similar purpose by ensuring that the Cabinet Office is connected with parliament and therefore more knowledgeable on current parliamentary issues. In a similar vein to Mr Stone, she described how her role is dependent on maintaining positive relationships with key political stakeholders which solidifies the Leader of the Commons' reach and parliamentary awareness, as well as the Cabinet Office's credibility. The full legislative timetable will be planned several weeks in advance and so both Mr Stone's and Ms Emms' main concerns are ensuring that key political stakeholders are represented on the floor of the House of Commons or in Select Committees and that senior politicians are being adequately informed of essential parliamentary news. The daily flow of parliamentary business is therefore protected from political antagonisms as the 'usual channels' ensures that disputes are dissolved behind closed doors so that only constructive dialogue can take place on the floor of the House of Commons and in parliament.

c. The importance of these two positions within the Cabinet Office was noted as ensuring that there is continuity and strength regardless of the inevitable political change. Mr Stone stressed the importance of the longevity of the post of Principal Private Secretary to ensure that post holders can establish themselves as being trustworthy and impartial. This has the inevitable prerequisite that the post is never a political appointment. This was of great interest to the delegation as there is currently no such position in the National Assembly, whilst previous attempts to appoint this kind of role have been deemed too politicised. Whilst these types of positions do not 'fix' any political antagonisms which will undoubtedly arise, their importance lie





in ensuring that these antagonisms do not impact upon the day to day running of parliament and that cross-party collaboration is possible.

5.05. The Management of Parliament.

a. **House of Commons Commission.** The role of the House of Commons Commission was explored with Rt Hon. Tom Brake MP and Chris Bryant MP, both of whom are Shadow Leaders of the House of Commons. Ian Ailles, the Director General of the House of Commons, was also in attendance during this meeting. Discussions focussed on a wide range of issues with regards to the daily management of parliament. Given that the National Assembly currently has a coalition government, particular attention was paid to how the previous UK government, the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government, was able to operate effectively despite significant political differences. Mr Brake, a Liberal Democrat Member, highlighted how important the period of time had been which immediately followed the election result. Following five days of discussions between the two parties, a 'coalition manifesto' was created which became a crucial agreement for both parties during their five years in government. It ensured that neither party could digress from the agreements which formed the justification for each party to enter into the coalition in the first place. The delegation noted that, whilst they had a similar 'coalition manifesto' for the various parties that form the coalition, no one has acted upon the promises set out in this. For instance, a business adviser was recently appointed by the government but this was not common knowledge to all government stakeholders until it was public knowledge. The importance of such agreements being upheld was therefore evident and agreed upon by all.

b. There was a closer examination of the work carried out by the House of Commons Commission itself, with Mr Ailles noting how two external Members also attend these meetings in order to provide an objective and unbiased view. The Commission itself represents the importance of cross-party collaboration, as each party is represented by their respective Leader in the House of Commons, along with Mr Ailles and Mr Natzler. As such they are all charged with the responsibility for the administration and services of the House of Commons - tasks which are apolitical but not hindered by any individual's political allegiance. The Commission therefore ensure the governance of the House is carried out as objectively as possible, which is assisted by the inclusion of the two external Members' participation. The Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) was also discussed in a similar vein as it was created in order to independently oversee and regulate MP's business costs and expenses. Members from the Commission stated that they were appreciative of the work carried out by IPSA and what it stands for, especially in the context of managing parliament from an administrative point of view. Mr Bryant noted how important the independence of the Speaker is in the daily running of parliament in the context of presiding over the chamber in an objective manner. The session therefore highlighted the role of independent officials or bodies who facilitate the management of parliament to ensure that it is not being dominated by political agendas.

5.06. The Financing of Parliament.





- a. **Financial Independence of Parliament.** The Parliament of Guyana, made up of the National Assembly and the Office of the President, had recently become financially independent. This development, though welcome, was described as somewhat unexpected and left little time for the Office of the National Assembly to prepare their procedures and structure for the change. Participants explained that previously, the Office of the National Assembly proposed spending to the Ministry of Finance, and required their approval before the transfer of project funds. Now, although spending will need to be justified to the Ministry of Finance, the Office of the National Assembly will have a separate independent budget. The administration of the management of the Office of the National Assembly will undergo considerable evolution.
- b. **Comments.** As such, the financing of parliament became a recurring theme over the course of the week. The meeting with representatives from the House of Commons Commission centred heavily upon the financing arrangements for both the UK Parliament and the National Assembly. Mr Ailles detailed how the UK Parliament will have a budget of between £200m to £250m, which is then scrutinised by the Finance Committee over the course of the year. The importance of oversight of spending was highlighted by Mr Bryant, who described how the Members' Estimates Committee, which has the same membership as the House of Commons Commission, was able to stop the government from decreasing 'Short Money', the financial assistance which is given to Opposition parties, in 2015. This was possible because the government did not have a majority in the Committee's membership, highlighting that the UK Parliament is able to exert authority over certain elements of its funding and, as in this case, is able to overrule government policies. This served as a good example with regards to parliamentary independence in terms of its funding which was of great interest to the Guyanese delegation given its current context.
- b. **Finance Select Committee.** This discussion was further expanded upon when the delegation met with Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, Member of the UK Finance Select Committee, and Myfanwy Barrett, Director of Finance at the UK Parliament. Sir Alan discussed how the main function of the Finance Committee is to act as an advisory body, monitor performance of administration and report to the House, alongside making recommendations. Ms Barrett discussed the role of the department, which involves some collaborative work with the Finance Committee. Compiling Member's Estimates is one of the main tasks of both the Committee and the Finance Department, which was discussed in detail with the delegation. The Speaker's role in this was described as more of a formality as, although estimates will be put forward to the Speaker for approval, the previous Finance Committee's session will actually lay out plans for these beforehand, along with information on what is being done to make savings. These estimates will then be put forward to the Treasury and form part of the entire public spending package. It was noted that the estimates report became a necessity as a result of the recent increased interest in public spending. These formalities in determining the financial packages for parliament are therefore useful in terms of accountability and having a checks and balances system, as well as scrutiny of spending.
- c. **Finance Department.** The Finance Department is also responsible for giving the department monitoring reports, which will be received once a month, but it is also closely





scrutinised by the Committee itself. Ms Barrett believed this to be imperative to improving the performance of her department. When questioned by the delegation on how she manages unforeseen spending within parliament, she detailed how there is always a contingency budget, as well as the ability for individuals to make their case to the Committee for additional spending. This means that there is the ability to consider potential overspends on smaller budgets against the entire parliamentary budget. The meeting therefore provided an exchange of good practice in terms of parliamentary financial management and a consideration of the various mechanisms in place which allow for the effective financing of parliament.

5.07. **Parliamentary Standards and Privileges.**

a. **Standards Committee and Codes of Conduct.** The delegation met Lynn Gardner, Clerk of the Standards Committee, to discuss standards, privileges and the UK Parliament's Code of Conduct. The Committee is based on this Code of Conduct and focusses mainly on 'parliamentary scandals' which arise, such as Members using their position for personal gain or any illegal use of expenses. The UK Parliament agreed the Code of Conduct, which began as a series of high-level parliamentary principles. The delegation questioned the process by which complaints could be made, with Ms Gardner explaining that complaints needs to be made by a named person and in writing. The Parliamentary Commissioner on Standards, Kathryn Hudson, has the power to look at any complaint she deems appropriate, which was not the case before, meaning that issues which are important do not lose momentum by how long they take to be considered. However, she is unable to consider complaints levied by the public through social media. Hon. Speaker Dr Scotland CCH MP believed that the Commissioner's power should be increased in order to deal with all of the levied complaints no matter where they are from, to which Ms Gardner replied that increasing Ms Hudson's powers is something which will come in due course.

b. **The Committee and IPSA.** The Committee on Standards itself investigates complaints, can report on issues and can either agree or disagree with the Commissioner. The remit of the Committee is to provide an accountability mechanism on MPs and what they do financially in their public roles, but not their private lives. The role of IPSA was once more noted, as it was only created in 2008 following the expenses scandal in the UK. This means that MPs have no control over their salaries, which has had the negative impact for some MPs in that they do not want an increase in their salaries because of the negative public perception, but have no ability to stop this. The delegation found a body like IPSA to be of great use, especially given the need for positive public portrayals of parliamentary spending and the recent changes to the National Assembly's funding.

5.08. **Parliamentary Research.**

a. Meetings were held with representatives from both the House of Commons Library and the Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology (POST) to discuss the various types of parliamentary research which is undertaken in the UK. Dr Aaron Gaughter, Environment and Energy Adviser, discussed the work undertaken by POST. This office provides objective scientific research but also identify gaps in the research on specific issues. This has sometimes led to POST





pre-empting legislative issues and so, given its independence and objectivity, it allows for well-informed and unbiased research to support parliamentarians and parliamentary debates. Vaughne Miller, Research Analyst at the House of Commons Library, provided an overview of the library and the two teams which sit within it - the research team and the resources team. The Library also provides information for Members and their staff upon request, both in Westminster and Members' constituencies, whilst research undertaken is, like POST, independent and the responsibility of the researchers to determine the content.

b. **Library Research.** The delegation queried as to whether or not the Library receives any requests from the government, but Ms Miller explained how this can only be provided for if it is within the remit of an MP's constituency and has nothing to do with a Ministerial portfolio. This would fall under the responsibility of the civil service. Mr Munroe stated that the Parliamentary Library in Guyana can be used by all, whether a parliamentarian or a member of the public. Whilst he will work with committee staff to assist with conducting research, they do not currently draft briefing notes. This is because of a lack of training to do so, but it is something which he hopes to introduce. Mr Munroe intends to use the UK Library's briefing papers which are online as a potential template for taking this forward. The meeting with these two different research-focussed departments therefore allowed for this exchange of good practice with regards to how parliamentary libraries can both conduct research and provide briefings for parliamentarians. Challenges faced by the Parliamentary Library of Guyana were also identified, in terms of training needed and the capacity of staff, and so steps can now be made to overcome these obstacles.

5.09. Diversity & Inclusion.

a. **Ensuring a Diverse Parliamentary Workforce.** There was an opportunity for the delegation to meet with Anne Foster, Head of the UK Parliament's Diversity and Inclusion team, along with Maxine Albert, the Deputy Head of the team. The Diversity and Inclusion team is responsible for ensuring that all employees of the UK Parliament feel valued at work and to ensure that there is a proportional representation of the UK population in the make-up of these employees. However, senior positions in the UK Parliament are still mainly held by men, with only 29% being held by women, and there are few ethnic minority employees. This meeting touched upon the activities and role of the team, such as responsibilities over the House of Commons nursery, running several schemes which aim to attract young people or ethnic minorities to parliament and initiative a parliamentary role model campaign. The support offered to parliamentarians was also noted, such as assisting with any disability requirements.

b. **Recruitment of Parliamentary Staff.** The focus during this meeting was on how the UK Parliament is responsible for its own recruitment. Guyana has a Public Service Commission which is responsible for all appointments within the Public Service as a whole. Recent parliamentary appointments have been internal promotions within the same departments, without a consideration for staff in other departments. Ms Foster advised that departmental crossovers might have more benefit in this kind of context as staff tend to learn more from acquiring experience in different departments and are more likely to be ready for senior roles as a result. By contrast, the UK Parliament will have job roles advertised both internally and externally as,





although professional progression is desired for internal staff, external candidates will increase the level of potential expertise being recruited. Whilst there is no positive discrimination policies employed by the UK Parliament, if there are two equally qualified candidates for a role then whether or not one of the candidates is from an under-represented group can be a determining factor. Given that the National Assembly has recently acquired control over its finances it was discussed how a similar recruitment process to that of the UK Parliament could be adopted at some point in the future.

c. **Comments.** There was also a discussion of how best to increase the expertise of parliamentary staff, with Ms Foster noting how the UK often seconded staff to different departments, perhaps for a year or two, in order to spread knowledge and increase the skill base of staff. Another strategy employed by the UK was placing less emphasis on academic qualifications where possible and, instead, focussing on experiences and attitudes. This could be done by requesting pre-application tests which show the merit of an individual. Overall, the discussion with the Diversity and Inclusion team provided the delegation with a chance to exchange ideas and best practices in terms of positive recruitment strategies which not only ensured diversity of parliamentary appointments but also means by which parliamentary expertise can be broadened.

5.10. Environmental Considerations - Paperless Parliaments.

a. In line with the National Assembly's recent attempts to go 'paperless', the delegation met with Martin Wittekind and Abigail Green from the UK Parliament's Environment Team and Catherine Fogarty, Deliverer of the Vote. Until five years ago the UK Parliament had no environmental or sustainable programmes, but there were now decisive efforts to ensure that there is compliance with UK legislation and that, as consumers, the UK Parliament is effectively and sustainably managing its resources. Portcullis House, for instance, is a very 'green' building, with no electrical heating throughout. 'Smart targets' had also been set up across the parliamentary estate to monitor energy conservation, as have solar panels on the roof. The meeting also allowed for an exchange of strategies in terms of reducing the reliance on paper in both the National Assembly of Guyana and in the UK Parliament. Ms Fogarty was able to expand upon the UK's efforts to go 'paperless', such as making everything available online, but noted that there was still a strong reliance on having the same information available on paper. A 'print on request' policy, the use of recycled paper and bringing all printing in-house has helped to reduce the spend on paper as well as the frequency of printing, but some parliamentarians simply prefer the use of paper. It was mutually agreed upon throughout this meeting that having an environmental conscious was ultimately very important for many Members to move away from this though, with Mr Dookie stating that this was the case in the National Assembly of Guyana. Having political support within parliament was also noted as key, as if senior parliamentarians are supporting these efforts to go 'paperless' then it makes it easier for parliamentary staff to pursue on their behalf.

Programme.





6.01. Details.

Monday 18 April		
1345	Arrival at Portcullis House Escorted by Lauren Tait and Samir Sadiq, CPA UK	Portcullis House, Westminster
1400	Welcome Lunch Andrew Tuggey DL, Chief Executive, CPA UK Rachael Atkins, Americas, Caribbean & Europe Regional Manager, CPA UK Lauren Tait, Programme Officer, CPA UK	CPA Room
1500	An Introduction to the UK Parliamentary System <i>This session will provide a brief overview of the UK Parliamentary System, with consideration of the role of parliamentarians and the parliamentary structure, UK political parties and the functioning of the House.</i> Rt Hon. David Hanson MP (<i>Lab</i>), Honorary Treasurer, CPA UK Executive Committee Rt Hon. Alistair Carmichael MP (<i>Lib Dem</i>), UK Delegation Member, CPA UK Committee Workshop, Guyana, Georgetown, April 2016 Patrick Grady MP (<i>SNP</i>), Member, CPA UK Executive Committee	CPA Room
1630	Meeting with Akbar Khan, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Secretary General	CPA Secretariat, 7 Millbank
1730	<i>End of Day 1</i>	
Tuesday 19 April		
0920	Arrival at Portcullis House Met by Lauren Tait, CPA UK	Portcullis House, Westminster
0940	Tour of the Houses of Parliament Opportunity to visit the gift shop and take photos* *Please note that photography is only allowed in Westminster Hall and the CPA Room	Houses of Parliament
1030	Speaker and Clerk Programme	Parliamentary Staff Programme





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	<p>Observe Mr Speaker’s Daily Briefing, followed by a Meeting with the Speaker of the House of Commons</p> <p>Rt Hon. John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons</p> <p>Office of the Speaker, House of Commons</p>	<p>Tour of the Houses of Parliament (cont.)</p> <p>Opportunity to visit the gift shop and take photos*</p> <p>*Please note that photography is only allowed in Westminster Hall and the CPA Room</p>
	<p>Speaker and Clerk Programme Time: 1100</p>	<p>Parliamentary Staff Programme Time: 1130</p>
	<p>Meeting with the Speaker of the House of Commons</p> <p>Rt Hon. John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons</p> <p>Office of the Speaker, House of Commons</p>	<p>An Introduction to the Committee System</p> <p>Andrew Kennon, Clerk of Committees CPA Room</p>
1200	<p>An Exchange of Good Practice on the UK’s Liaison Committee</p> <p><i>An outcome of the CPA UK programme, November 2015, was that the National Assembly of Guyana was interested in creating its own Liaison Committee. This session will therefore offer a useful insight into how the UK’s Liaison Committee functions and its role and responsibilities. It will also provide an exchange of good practice and ideas, taking into account both the different UK and Guyanese parliamentary contexts.</i></p> <p>Rt Hon. Lord Beith (<i>Lib Dem</i>), Former Chairman of the Liaison Committee (2010-2015)</p> <p>Andrew Kennon, Clerk of Committees</p>	CPA Room
1300	<p>Speaker and Clerk Programme</p>	<p>Parliamentary Staff Programme</p>





	<p>Lunch with the Principal Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Ways and Means Rt Hon. Lindsay Hoyle MP (<i>Lab</i>), Principal Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons and Chairman of Ways and Means</p> <p><i>Also in attendance: Andrew Tuggey DL, Chief Executive CPA UK</i></p> <p>Strangers' Dining Room</p>	<p>Lunch with Committee Clerks Gosia McBride, Clerk of the Women and Equalities Committee Dr Anna Dickson, Second Clerk of the Defence Committee Dr Robin James, Commons Clerk of the Joint Committee on Human Rights CPA Room</p>
1430	<p>Speaker and Clerk Programme</p> <p>Lines of Communication between Whips, Government and the Opposition <i>This session will focus on the role played by the 'usual channels' - lines of communication between the Government Whips and the Opposition. By ensuring cooperation between the opposition parties parliamentary business is kept on track and according to the will of the majority.</i> Roy Stone CBE, Principal Private Secretary to the Government Chief Whip, Cabinet Office Kate Emms, Parliamentary Adviser to the Leader of the House of Commons, Cabinet Office CPA Room</p>	<p>Parliamentary Staff Programme</p> <p>Viewing a Committee Session The Backbench Business Committee - Oral Evidence Session <i>Proposals for backbench business debates</i></p>
1530	<p>Parliamentary Standards and Privileges <i>This session will focus on the independence of Parliament and the roles played by both the Standards Committee and the Standards Commissioner.</i> Lynn Gardner, Clerk of the Standards Committee Kathryn Hudson, Parliamentary Standards Commissioner</p>	CPA Room
1630	<p>The UK Parliament's Scrutiny Unit <i>Another outcome of the CPA UK programme in November 2015 was the National Assembly of Guyana interested in creating its own Parliamentary Scrutiny Unit. This session will therefore describe the role of the Scrutiny Unit as well as an exchange of good practice for implementing a similar Unit in the National Assembly of Guyana, taking into account the different</i></p>	CPA Room





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	<i>parliamentary contexts.</i> David Lloyd, Head of the Scrutiny Unit		
1730	<i>End of Day 2</i>		
Wednesday 20 April			
0845	Arrival at Portcullis House Met by Lauren Tait, CPA UK		Portcullis House, Westminster
0900	The House of Commons Commission <i>This session will consider the role of the Committee, the participation of external Members, the Governance Committee's Report and the Commission's relationship with the Executive Committee of the House.</i> Rt Hon. Tom Brake MP (<i>Lib Dem</i>), Shadow Leader of the House of Commons Ian Ailles, Director General, House of Commons		CPA Room
1000	The Administration of the House <i>This session will continue on from the previous session's discussion with a more detailed look at the administration of the House and the role played by the Executive Committee of the House.</i> Penny Young, Librarian and Director General of Information Services		CPA Room
1030	<i>Tea and Coffee</i>		CPA Room
1100	Briefing: Prime Minister's Question Time Rt Hon. Lord Grocott (<i>Lab</i>), Former Parliamentary Private Secretary to Prime Minister Tony Blair (1997-2001)		CPA Room
1200	Speaker and Clerk Programme		Parliamentary Staff Programme
	View Prime Minister's Question Time The Speaker's Gallery, House of Commons		View Prime Minister's Question Time The Commonwealth Gallery, House of Commons
1245	Lunch with Members of the Caribbean All-Party Parliamentary Group, the Commonwealth All-Party Parliamentary Group and the CPA UK Executive Committee <i>In Attendance:</i> Diane Abbott MP (<i>Lab</i>), Baroness Berridge (<i>Con</i>), Baroness Hooper (<i>Con</i>), Lord Purvis (<i>Lib Dem</i>), Lord Popat (<i>Con</i>), Rt Hon. Baroness Primarolo (<i>Lab</i>)		CPA Room
1400	Meeting with David Natzler, Clerk of the House of Commons David Natzler, Clerk of the House of Commons		CPA Room





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1500	<i>Tea and Coffee</i>	CPA Room
1530	<p>Committee Case Study: The Energy and Climate Change Select Committee</p> <p><i>This session will consider the various roles of Committee staff and how they work with and support UK Members. This will also link in with the environmental impact of Parliament as, given the nature of the Committee, it is one of the 'paperless' Committees.</i></p> <p>Angus MacNeil MP (SNP), Chair of the Energy and Climate Change Select Committee</p> <p>Dr Farrah Bhatti, Clerk of the Energy and Climate Change Select Committee</p>	CPA Room
1700	<i>End of day 3</i>	
Thursday 21 April		
0910	<p>Arrival at Portcullis House</p> <p>Met by Lauren Tait, CPA UK</p>	Portcullis House, Westminster
0930	<p>The House of Commons Diversity & Inclusion Team</p> <p><i>This Team works to make Parliament increasingly more accessible, diverse and free from discrimination, and in doing so meet the requirements of the UK's Equality Act 2010.</i></p> <p>Anne Foster, Head of Diversity & Inclusion Parliamentary Diversity Champion - name tbc</p>	CPA Room
1030	<i>Tea and Coffee</i>	CPA Room
1100	<p>The Financing of Parliament</p> <p><i>This session will explore the financing of Parliament from both Members and Parliamentary staff's perspective. It will also explore how both Members and staff collaborate to ensure the effective management of parliamentary finances and consider financial priorities and any challenges faced.</i></p> <p>Rt Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst MP (Con), Member of the Finance Committee, House of Commons</p> <p>Myfanwy Barrett, Director of Finance, UK Parliament</p>	CPA Room
1200	Viewing a Legislative Session	House of Commons
1300	Lunch in the CPA Room	CPA Room





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1400	<p>Parliamentary Research</p> <p><i>This session will consider roles of various research-based offices within the UK Parliament, as well as their differences. It will also touch upon the different types of research provided by the House - Member's briefings, inquiries and parliamentary outreach with the public.</i></p> <p>Dr Chandrika Nath, Deputy Director of the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology</p> <p>Vaughne Miller, Research Analyst, House of Commons Library</p>	CPA Room
1500	<p>The UK Parliament's Environment Team</p> <p><i>The UK Parliament has a dedicated Environment Team which covers a wide range of issues to ensure that Parliament is operating as sustainably and environmentally friendly as possible. This session will therefore offer an insight into measures taken across the parliamentary estate as well as efforts made for the UK parliament to go 'paperless'. The meeting will also allow for an exchange of good practice in reducing the negative effect which parliaments can have on the environment.</i></p> <p>Martin Wittekind, Head of Fire Safety and Environment</p> <p>Environment Team Members - names tbc</p>	CPA Room
1600	<i>Tea and Coffee</i>	CPA Room
1630	<p>Visit to the Education Centre</p> <p>Met by Phil Johnson, Education Centre</p>	Education Centre
1715	<p>Wash-Up Session</p> <p>Rachael Atkins, Americas, Caribbean & Europe Manager CPA UK</p> <p>Lauren Tait, Programme Officer CPA UK</p>	CPA Room
1745	<i>End of Programme</i>	

6.02. Private meetings also were held in addition to the sessions noted above, which included:

- a. Michael Munroe, Head of the Parliamentary Library of Guyana, met Hannah Russell, House of Commons Library Customers Service Team.
- b. Deo Dookie, Systems Development Coordinator at the National Assembly of Guyana, met Rob Sanders, Director of Live Services with the Parliamentary Digital Service, and then Emma Allen, Director of Digital Development with the Parliamentary Digital Service.
- c. Oneika Alphonso-Walton, Public Relations Officer at the National Assembly of Guyana, was also met Lucinda Blaser of the Select Committees Outreach Team in the Department of Chamber and Committee Services
- d. Christina Ramdas, Senior Personnel Officer with the National Assembly of Guyana, met Elaine Mason, Human Resources and Change Business Partner at the UK Parliament.





Outcomes & Follow-Up

7.01. The overall feedback from the programme was very positive, with several delegates stating that it had exceeded their expectations. It successfully tied together themes which had emerged from previous programmes within the six month Capacity Building Programme with the National Assembly of Guyana. The various one to one meetings between parliamentary counterparts were most useful in that delegates were able to have specific questions answered with regards to their individual roles. Mr Munroe stated that he intends to introduce library briefings in the National Assembly and wished to use the templated provided by the UK's library briefings.

7.02. Several challenges were identified throughout the programme however. The need for cross-party collaboration was noted repeatedly, but before there is the instigation of new bodies such as a Liaison Committee there will need to be more consensus amongst the committee system in general. The size of the Guyanese legislature means that it is an unavoidable reality that government ministers will sit on committees and so decisive efforts need to be made to ensure parliamentary independence is maintained and political agendas do not pose an obstacle to daily parliamentary business.

7.03. There was also a higher demand than normal for role-specific meetings with parliamentary counterparts over the course of the week, with additional meetings being incorporated into the programme upon request from delegates.

7.04. The delegates stated they would return to the National Assembly of Guyana and process the exchange of good parliamentary practice which had emerged over the course of the week in order to understand how best to move forward with any potential changes to their parliamentary system. It was suggested that this might be something the National Assembly would be able to do of their own accord.

.05. CPA UK will follow-up with the National Assembly of Guyana in due course to monitor any additional outcomes of this programme and the wider Capacity Building Programme, as well as to gauge any levels of support which could be offered by CPA UK in the future.

Funding Breakdown

8.01. The full cost of the programme was funded by CPA UK.

Acknowledgements

9.01. CPA UK thanks the National Assembly of Guyana and the participating delegates, UK parliamentarians and parliamentary officials who supported the programme and the British High Commission in Guyana for support in the wider six month programme.

About CPA UK





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10.01. CPA UK is one of the largest and most active branches in the CPA community and delivers a unique annual international outreach programme in Westminster and overseas. CPA UK works to encourage parliamentary diplomacy and build parliamentary capacity on behalf of the UK Parliament and the wider CPA. Through activities such as conferences, seminars, delegations and parliamentary strengthening teams, CPA UK provides Members with a practical, current and first-hand perspective on international issues facing fellow parliamentarians across the Commonwealth. Working with CPA UK's international outreach programmes also enhances Members' understanding of issues facing diaspora communities in their own constituencies.



Delegation Biographies

Dr Barton U.A. Scotland, C.C.H MP

Speaker of the National Assembly of Guyana



Dr Barton Scotland, C.C.H.M.P., was elected, unopposed, as Speaker of the National Assembly of the Parliament of Guyana at the First Sitting of the Eleventh Parliament on June 10, 2015. He was nominated by Government Chief Whip and Minister of Social Cohesion, Honourable Amna Ally, M.P. The nomination was seconded by Honourable Catherine Hughes, MP. Minister of Telecommunications with responsibility for Tourism.

Before his election to the Office of Speaker, Dr Scotland practiced as an Attorney-at-Law in Private Practice in Guyana. In his private practice, he worked, among others, in the areas of Natural Resources and Investment Law Negotiations, International Law and Maritime Law. He has also served as

Adviser and Consultant within Guyana and beyond.

Dr Scotland has served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guyana and undertook several Diplomatic Missions on behalf of Government. He served as Deputy Chairman of the Guyana Natural Resources Agency and led the Department of International Economic Co-operation during the Administration of President Desmond Hoyte. He served as Adviser and Consultant within the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) and was appointed by the Regional Legal and Judicial Services Commission to serve as one of the Commissioners of the CARICOM Competition Commission which was established in 2008.

He has also served as visiting Lecturer and Examiner in International Law at the University of Guyana. Dr Scotland holds the Degree Master of Law and a Doctorate in International Law from the University of London, England. He is a Member of the Bar of Guyana and a Barrister-at-Law of England and Wales of the Inner Temple, London. He was awarded the Cacique Crown of Honour (C.C.H.) for services beyond the call of duty in the field of Negotiations and in International Development.

Dr Scotland is married to Justice Jo-Ann Barlow and is the father of four children.



Sherlock. E. Isaacs

Clerk of the National Assembly of Guyana

Mr Isaacs has been Clerk of the National Assembly of Guyana since. He holds a Master’s degree in Business Administration.

The Clerk of the National Assembly is a Constitutional Office Holder. The Clerk has a public administrative role as well as being a specialist in the rules of parliamentary procedure and practice. As departmental head, the Clerk administers the Parliament Office. However, the exercise of this responsibility is qualitatively different to the exercise of the normal

administrative functions of a departmental head, because decisions made or advice given may often be





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subject to the scrutiny of all Members of the National Assembly and the public at large.

The Clerk administers a department of staff members and is responsible for providing services to the Speaker and the Assembly, including the Prime Minister, Ministers, Party leaders; “shadow” Ministers and private Members.



Hermina Gilgeours

Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly of Guyana

Ms Gilgeours has been Deputy Clerk to the National Assembly of Guyana since May 2014. Before that, she was Assistant Clerk from 2007-2014, and Acting Head of the Parliamentary Library. She was a Research and Analytical Assistant in the Parliament Office from September 2003-April 2007, and a Procedural and Sale of Legislation Office from 1997-2003. She was previously a Teacher at Bygeval Secondary School from September 1995-April 1996 and holds a B.Sc. Public Management.

The Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly is also a Constitutional Office Holder. The Deputy Clerk attends Sittings of the National Assembly and assists

the Clerk in the execution of his administrative and procedural duties (see Clerk of the National Assembly).

The Deputy Clerk is the Accounting Officer of the Parliament Office and co-ordinates all human resources and the physical maintenance of the Public Buildings



Monette Garnett Christopher

Chief Administrative Officer, National Assembly of Guyana

Ms Christopher has been the Chief Administrative Officer for the Parliament Office since July 2015. Previously she was Expenditure, Planning and Management Analyst from 2004 - 2015. She was also Acting Deputy Clerk from October - November 2007. She was a Teacher of Economics at Queens College, Guyana from June 2003 - March 2004.

Ms Christopher holds a MA in Business Administration from the Australia Institute of Business, a B.Sc in Economics from the University of Guyana and a

Diploma in Commerce & Economics from the Government Technical Institute.



Ms Christopher holds Certificates from the following programmes: Parliamentary Internship Programme, Parliamentary Administration - Lok Sabha Secretariat, India; Monitoring & Evaluation - International Programme for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET); Parliamentary Budget Office - World Bank Institute (WBI).





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Debra Cadogan

Head of Committees Division, National Assembly of Guyana

Ms Cadogan holds a B.Sc. in Public Management.

The Committees Division which was established in May 2003 provides secretarial, administrative support and procedural advice to all the Committees of the National Assembly. Each Committee is provided with a Clerk and an Assistant Clerk of Committee and, where necessary a researcher.

The Division is managed by the Head of Committees Division who plays an important role in the coordination of resources between the other departments and in the dissemination of information to and from the Committees Division.



Deo Dookie

Systems Development Co-ordinator, National Assembly of Guyana

Mr Dookie holds a B.Sc. in Computer Science, qualifications in Comptia+, Comptia network+ and is a Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP).

The Information Technology Section provides technological support to all members of staff and members of parliament during sittings of the National Assembly, maintains wired and wireless networks, website and live streaming.

The Section is managed by the Systems Development Co-ordinator who plays an important role in developing, co-ordinating and maintaining the Parliament Office's information system and, ensuring that the Office is utilizing appropriate and available computer and informatics technology in all its services and systems to meet the Office's objectives.





Michael Gladstone Munroe

Documentation & Research Officer, National Assembly of Guyana



The Parliamentary library which comprises the research unit of the Parliament Office is the heart of the Parliament as it has the capacity to provide knowledgeable, timely, non-partisan information services to all Members of Parliament, staff and the general public.

Responsibilities of the Librarian include ensuring that books, journals and other printed materials are available to Members of Parliament in support of their legislative functions; that requests from Members of Parliament and Parliament staff, for documents are responded to efficiently; maintain a definitive collection of sessional papers and other documents related to the business of proceedings of the National Assembly their Committees.

Christina Ramdas

Senior Personnel Officer, National Assembly of Guyana



Ms Ramdas has been a Senior Personnel Officer in the Parliament Office since 2012. Previously she was a Human Resource Officer at Berbice Bridge Company Inc from December 2008 to July 2012. She holds a B.Sc. Public Management

The Personnel Section carries out the processes of recruitment, dismissal, performance appraisal, rules and regulations, leave, records management, preparation of record of service and computation of Members of Parliament (MPs) superannuation benefits, staff welfare and, training and development for the staff of the Parliament Office. It is also charged with functions relating to staff compensation/benefits and industrial relations matters. Its main objective is to meet the organizational needs and the needs of the individuals hired to work at the Parliament Office.

The Section is managed by Ms Ramdas, who plays an important role in the implementation of Personnel policies and practices.





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Oneika Alphonso-Walton

Public Relations Officer, National Assembly of Guyana



Ms Alphonso-Walton is a Public Relations Officer in the Public Relations Office, established in 2009 and administratively responsible to the office of the Clerk. Ms Alphonso-Walton is pursuing a B.Sc. in Communication Studies. She is responsible for fostering the good corporate image of the institution of Parliament, disseminating accurate information and educating the public on the operations and functions of Parliament.





Speaker Biographies



Rt Hon. David Hanson MP

MP for Delyn (Labour)

MP for Delyn since 1992, David Hanson has served as Minister of State for Northern Ireland (2005-07), Justice (2007-09) and the Home Office (2009-10). He has been Shadow Exchequer Secretary (2010-11), Shadow Minister for Policing (2011-13) and Shadow Minister for Immigration (2013 -15). He is also the Honorary Treasurer of the CPA UK Executive Committee.



Patrick Grady MP

MP for Glasgow North, Scotland (Scottish National Party - SNP)

MP for Glasgow North since May 2015 General Elections, Mr Grady has been a member of SNP since 1997. He has also been a Convener of Glasgow Kelvin Constituency Association (2008-11) and a National Secretary for Federation of Student Nationalists (2000-01). Mr Grady also became a Member of the Executive Committee of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in 2015.





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Akbar Khan

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Secretary-General

Akbar Khan became Secretary-General of the CPA in January 2016. The Secretary-General is originally from Guyana. He is an honours graduate in English Law (Bachelor of Law LL.B (Hons)) of the University of Reading. He also holds a Master's in Public International Law (LLM) from Jesus College, University of Cambridge. Mr Khan is a qualified Barrister-at-Law and an Attorney-at-Law. He was admitted to the English Bar in 1990 and the New York Bar (USA) in 2000. Mr Khan has held senior positions with, amongst others, the United Kingdom Foreign & Commonwealth Office and at the Commonwealth Secretariat, specialising in International Law.



Rt Hon. John Bercow MP

Speaker of the House of Commons

A former national Chairman of the Federation of Conservative Students and London Borough Councillor, he was elected Member of Parliament for Buckingham in May 1997 as a Conservative, serving on the front benches as spokesman for Education & Employment and Home Affairs. He was appointed Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury in 2001 then Shadow Minister for Work & Pensions in 2002 and from 2003 to 2004 as Shadow Secretary of State for International Development.

Appointed to the Speaker's Conference on Parliamentary Representation in November 2008 he became Chair of the Conference on becoming Speaker. On 22 June 2009 Mr Bercow was elected 157th Speaker of the House of Commons. As part of his commitment as Speaker to making Parliament more accessible, Mr Bercow has embarked on an extensive outreach programme. He was the first Speaker to allow the UK Youth Parliament debate from the House of Commons Chamber, and he chairs the debate.



Andrew Kennon

Clerk of Committees in the House of Commons

Mr Kennon is responsible for all Select Committee activities - the system, powers and resources - as well as advising Members and the Speaker in the Chamber.



Rt Hon. Lord Beith

Chair of the Liaison Committee (2010-2015) (Liberal Democrat)

The Member of Parliament for Berwick-upon-Tweed from 1973-2015, Lord Beith was a Chief Whip for the liberal party (1976-87), and served as a Liberal Democrat





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Spokesperson for Treasury (1989-94), Home Affairs (1994-95) and Police, Prison and Security Matters (1995-97). From 1993-2003, he was the Deputy Leader for the Liberal Democrat Party. He was also the Deputy Chair, for the Review Committee of Privy Counsellors of the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act (2002-04).



Rt Hon. Lindsay Hoyle MP

First Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Ways and Means (Labour)

Representing the constituency of Chorley for Labour since 1997, Mr Hoyle was previously a councillor on Chorley Borough Council, where he concluded his time with the council as Mayor of Chorley.

In 2010, he was elected as Chairman of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons. This was the first time that this appointment had been made by a ballot of MPs instead of by nomination by the Leader of the House.

The Chairman is usually responsible with presiding over the annual budget

debate and, like the Speaker of the House, cannot speak nor vote on any matters of the House. He was then elected to the Privy Council in 2013. He is currently the Chair of the Panel of Chairs and a Member of the Select Committee on Finance.



Gosia McBride

Clerk of Women & Equalities Committee, UK Parliament

Gosia McBride is the Clerk of the Women and Equalities Committee in the House of Commons, which was established in May 2016. She has been a Clerk in the UK Parliament for 12 years, where she has had a varied and exciting career, with a wide range of committee and corporate roles. Most recently she was Deputy

Manager of a programme to digitise the work of select committees. Before that she ran the Private Office of the Clerk of the House of Commons, also supporting its Audit Committees and Management Board.

Dr Anna Dickson

Clerk, Select Committee on the Armed Forces Bill; Second Clerk, Defence Committee, UK Parliament

Anna Dickson is currently Clerk of the Select Committee on the Armed Forces Bill and Second Clerk of the Defence Committee. She has previously worked for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs Committee, the Communities and Local Government Committee and the International Development Committee. Prior to working for Parliament, Dr Dickson was a lecturer in Politics and International Relations at the University of Durham. Her specialist area of research was on international political economy of



development and her PhD (1991) was on the Sugar Protocol of the Lome Convention. She was born in Guyana and grew up in Jamaica. She came to the UK in 1986 for postgraduate studies in International Development at Cambridge University.

Roy Stone

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Principal Private Secretary to the Government Chief Whip

Roy Stone has been a member of the Civil Service for over 30 years. Starting his career in the Ministry of Defence, Roy has also worked in a number of high profile roles as well as Parliamentary Clerk to successive Prime Ministers including Margaret Thatcher, Sir John Major and Tony Blair. Currently, Roy heads the House of Commons Business Management team, which oversees the work of the Chief Whip's Office, Government and Opposition Whips' Offices, and the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons. As Principal Private Secretary to the Government Chief Whip, Roy has the vital task of delivering the Government's legislative priorities and as 'Usual Channels' performs the unique role of facilitating the important channel of communication between the Government Chief Whip and the Opposition Chief Whip and other political parties within the House of Commons. Roy is only the fourth person to hold the post of Principal Private Secretary to the Chief Whip since 1919. Roy was awarded the CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) in the 2014 New Year's Honours List for his services to Parliamentary and public service.



Kate Emms

Parliamentary Adviser to the Leader of the House of Commons, Cabinet Office

David Lloyd

Head of the Scrutiny Unit

David joined the House of Commons service in October 1984. Since then he has worked on a range of select committees (Scottish Affairs, Social Services, Social Security, European Legislation, Deregulation, Education and Skills, and Regional Committees), as well as in the Journal Office and the Public Bill Office. While in the Public Bill Office (1997-2002) he held successively the posts of Clerk of Supply and Clerk in charge of Private Members' Bills. He is also an Associate Clerk at the Table. Most recently he was Clerk of the Health Committee (2010-2105) and has been Head of the Scrutiny Unit since 1 September this year.



Rt Hon. Tom Brake MP

Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs, Chief Whip and Shadow Leader of the House

Tom Brake was appointed Shadow Leader of the House in 2015, as well as a member of House of Commons Commission. He has previously served as a Shadow Minister for Communities and Local Government (2006-07), London and the Olympics (2007-10), Home Office (2008-10). He was also the Parliamentary Secretary, Deputy Leader of the House of Commons, (2012-15).





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Ian Ailles

Director General of the House of Commons

Ian Ailles joined the House Service as Director General of the House of Commons on 27 October 2015. Ian has worked in complex, customer facing organisations, in both the public and private sectors. He is a qualified accountant and has worked in a wide range of service industries. Most recently, he has been employed in the travel and leisure industry, performing CEO, MD, COO and CFO roles at Thomas Cook and Wyndham. Outside the travel industry he has held executive, non-executive and consultancy roles for charities, start-up ventures and large organisations in sectors including the NHS, education, care homes, IT and banking.



Rt Hon. Lord Grocott

Labour

Lord Grocott was Labour MP for The Wrekin (1987-97) and for Telford (1997-2001). He was appointed as Parliamentary Private Secretary to Tony Blair as Leader of the Labour Party (1994-2001). He was appointed Deputy Speaker (2002-08), as well as the Government’s Spokesperson for Defence (2001-02), Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2001-02) and Chief Whip (2002-08).



Diane Abbott MP

Shadow Secretary of State for International Development (Labour)

Diane Abbott was elected Member for Hackney North and Stoke Newington in 1987 and was Britain’s first black female MP. She contested the Labour leadership in 2010. Ms Abbott served as Shadow Minister for Public Health (2010-13) and is currently Shadow Secretary of State for International Development (2015-). She is also the Chair of the Caribbean All-Party Parliamentary Group.



Baroness Berridge of the Vale of Catmose

Co-Chair, International Freedom of Religion and Belief All Party Parliamentary Group (Conservative)

Elevated to the House of Lords in 2011, Baroness (Elizabeth) Berridge is Co-Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on International Freedom of Religion and Belief, as well as being a member of the House of Lords Select Committee for Social Mobility and a member of the London Policing Ethics Panel. She co-directs the Commonwealth Initiative for Freedom of Religion or Belief (CIFoRB), which is based both at





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Westminster and at the Edward Cadbury Centre for the Public Understanding of Religion at the University of Birmingham. One of the youngest members of the House of Lords, Baroness Berridge is also a trustee of the think-tank British Future, which focuses on identity, integration, migration and opportunity.



Baroness Hooper CMG

Conservative

Raised to the peerage in 1985, Baroness Hooper has served in the House of Lords as a Government Whip (1985-87); Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of: Education and Science (1987-88), Energy 1988-89 and Health 1989-92. She has served as Deputy Speaker and Deputy Chairman of Committees since 1993. Baroness Hooper was PPS to William Hague as Leader of the Opposition (1999-2001). Prior to entering the UK Parliament, she was MEP (Conservative) for Liverpool (1979-84).



Lord Purvis of Tweed

Liberal Democrat

Lord Purvis was MSP for Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale constituency (2003-11). Raised to the peerage in 2013, he is Chair of the Reform, Decentralization and Devolution in the UK All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG). He is also serves as Secretary for Sustainable Development Goals APPG (2015 -) and Fashion and Textiles APPG (2015). He is a member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK Executive Committee.



David Natzler

Clerk of House of Commons

Mr Natzler is the 50th person to hold the role of Clerk of the House of Commons, having assumed office in 2014. He was previously Assistant Clerk to Sir Robert Rogers, who preceded him in this capacity. He has worked in parliament for over 40 years and has held many senior appointments within the Department of Chamber and Committee Services. He was previously Clerk to a number of Select Committees, was Principal Clerk of Committees (2001-2004) and Secretary to the House of Commons Commission (2004-2006).



Angus MacNeil MP

Chair, Energy and Climate Change Committee (SNP)

Mr MacNeil has served as Member for Na h-Eileanan An Iar since May 2005. He was appointed as Chair of the Select Committee on Energy and Climate Change (2015), and is a member of the Select Committee on Liaison and Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy (2015). He has also been the SNP spokesperson for





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Transport (2005-15), Environment (2005-07), the Scotland Office (2008-15) and held the Deputy Prime Minister's Portfolio (2013-15).

Dr Farrah Bhatti

Clerk, Energy and Climate Change Committee

Anne Foster

Head of Diversity and Inclusion, UK Parliament



Rt Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst MP

MP for Saffron Walden (Conservative)

Sir Alan was appointed as Chairman of the Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker (1997-2010). He has also served as a member for the Committees on Finance and Services (2008-15), Liaison (2010-15), Works of Art (2011-15) and as Chair of the Administration Committee (2010-15). He also served as Chair of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, UK branch (2010-15).

Myfanwy Barrett

Director of Finance, UK Parliament



Dr Chandrika Nath

Deputy Director of the Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology (POST)

Dr Nath, in her capacity as Deputy Director for POST, is responsible for assisting with the oversight of a programme of oral and written briefings for members of both Houses of the UK Parliament on a range of policy relevant topics in science and technology. Her primary focus is the physical sciences, which includes issues related to ICT and security. She also leads POST's work in the developing world, aimed at collaborating with other parliaments to support evidence informed policy making. Prior to working at POST Dr Nath worked as a glaciologist at the British Antarctic Survey. She holds a D.Phil in High Energy Physics from the University of Oxford. She is also a freelance journalist and received an award from the British Association of Science Writers for "best edited radio programme on a science subject" in 2007 for a radio documentary on leprosy in India.

Oliver Bennett

Environment Policy Analyst, House of Commons Library

Martin Wittekind

Head of Fire Safety and Environment



Andrew Tuggey CBE DL

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Chief Executive, CPA UK

Andrew Tuggey is CPA UK’s Chief Executive and Secretary, as well as Secretary of the CPA British Islands & Mediterranean Region. Highly experienced in international outreach, parliamentary strengthening and parliamentary diplomacy, he served in the Army prior to his current appointment, latterly as a Defence diplomat with the FCO. Andrew has a BSc (Eng) and speaks French, German, Malay and Nepalese. He is Vice Lord-Lieutenant in Gwent in Wales.

Rachael Atkins

Americas, Caribbean and Europe Programme Manager, CPA UK



Rachael is responsible for the planning and delivery of CPA UK’s engagement with the Americas, Caribbean and Europe region, including UK Overseas Territories. Prior to this, she worked as a Programme Officer within International Outreach and a Conference Assistant in CPA UK’s Conferences and

Projects team.

Previously Rachael worked as a Research Assistant in pro-democracy capacity building in EU Eastern Partnership countries, and for the Centre for Political and Diplomatic Studies. She has also worked in organisations dedicated to the promotion and protection of the human rights of asylum seekers and refugees. She holds a BA (Hons) in Politics and International Development and an MA in Migration Studies from the University of Sussex.

Lauren Tait

Programme Officer, CPA UK



Lauren joined CPA UK in 2015, joining the International Outreach Team as a Programme Officer. She holds a BA (Hons) in History from King’s College London and an MSc in Development Studies from SOAS, University of London.

Before joining CPA UK, Lauren worked for the Commonwealth Secretariat in the Africa Regional Team (Governance and Institutional Development Division). She has also worked with Minority Rights Group International on their Kenya Good Governance Programme, after having spent some time working and living in Mombasa, Kenya

