



CPA BIMR STRATEGY

2019-2024





CPA BIMR Conference,
Guernsey | 2019

Introduction: the Constitution of the British Islands and Mediterranean Region (BIMR) of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) establishes the following Purpose and Aims:

“The purpose of the Association 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 of Nations.

Aims

- a) *Work together in pursuing the Association’s purpose.*
- b) *Promote close relations among the Region’s branches and members.*
- c) *Foster close relations with the other Regions of the Association”.*

Building on that foundation, the BIMR’s Branches set the following Vision, Objectives and Priority themes for the period 2019-2024:

Vision: BIMR Branches’ own parliamentary democracy will be strengthened by increasing cooperation between Branches across the Region; and the Region will make a distinctive contribution to advancing parliamentary democracy and mutual understanding across the Commonwealth as part of a strong CPA family.

The United Kingdom’s planned departure from the European Union (“Brexit”) will be the dominant political issue for and between Branches for much of this period. It will shape what our Members work on and discuss, and how they do so. The changing landscape will necessitate discussion about how the Commonwealth network can adapt and/or be strengthened. Many of us will need to acquire new knowledge and skills.

Strategic Objectives:

- **Objective 1: To strengthen our own Parliaments and their Members**

Improving our performance for those we represent and to whom we are accountable.

We will

- » *Exchange opportunities for Members and staff to learn alongside Regional colleagues*
- » *Exchange information, examples of good practice and case studies, across CPA*
- » *Support Branches' self-assessments against newly-revised CPA Benchmarks*
- » *Take action in our own Parliaments based on what we have learned*
- » *Organise Election Observation Missions when requested by a Branch*

How?

- » Members/Branches will actively offer their positive experiences across the Region
- » BIMR Secretariat will seek and share examples of good practice, e.g. through website
- » CWP Steering Committee will use its network to share ideas and experience
- » Members can offer to be mentors to Members in other Branches
- » BIMR updates and meetings should include examples to give a flavour of success and progress
- » Peer-review support for Benchmarks self-assessments

- **Objective 2: To play a leading role in a successful future for the international CPA.**

Ensuring value for subscriptions and a focus on advancing parliamentary democracy

We will:

- » *Use Regional Representatives' presence on ExCo to good effect, along lines agreed in a timely way across the Region, as far as is possible, as provided for in the Constitution*
- » *Support the continued reform of CPA governance and finances*
- » *Establish networks across other Regions*
- » *Seek senior positions in CPA hierarchy*
- » *Monitor welcome change to CPC rules and format, seeking stronger focus on learning and issues rather than bureaucracy, while seeking clarity on and adherence to General Assembly rules*

- **Objective 3: To support non-BIMR Branches, especially where democracy is less established or is under threat**

Use “soft power” of the evolution of our own democratic institutions to support others in theirs

We will:

- » *Seek out opportunities to support such Branches, working together, learning from experience*
- » *Use our own Parliaments as a platform to defend others, including coordinated action on issues of shared concern*
- » *Make our own resources – including Members – available for advice and support*
- » *Support Branches’ self-assessments against newly-revised CPA Benchmarks*
- » *Co-operate to deliver Election Observation Missions, as invited*

Prioritising Themes: *The shape and focus of BIMR’S work will be guided by priority themes. The following three themes will be prioritised for the period concerned:*

- » **The implications of Brexit:** *including parliamentary scrutiny of trade arrangements, citizens’ rights etc*
- » **Women in Parliament/CWP:** *gender equality, women’s empowerment & ending violence against women*
- » **Youth:** *encouraging greater participation and involvement.*

Each AGM will discuss and agree a specific theme for the following year’s work, drawn from proposals by Branches. This will be led by a Working Group formed at or shortly after the AGM, supported by the Secretariat. The following AGM would review and evaluate the work on that theme over the preceding year and draw lessons for future work.

Across all the Region’s work, we should aim to promote and champion the Commonwealth’s distinctive democratic identity.

Monitoring & Evaluation: When Branches work together, including with others outside the Region, they should aim to carry out pre- and post-activity assessments, to demonstrate what change has occurred as a result. These should be simple (CPA UK is happy to share its standard format). Branches should also create short, compelling case studies of particular activities involving Members (including areas for improvement). This material could be pulled together into an annual Progress Report by the Secretariat, which would be illustrative of the value added by working as a Region (without including all CPA activity involving our Branches).

Finance: There is no separate BIMR funding; all BIMR activities will be funded by individual Branches.

The Constitution states that the Regional Secretariat is based in Westminster, and that the Secretary (sic) of CPA UK is Regional Secretary, i.e. ex officio. In practice, the UK Branch provides that Secretariat function gratis, and is happy to continue to do so.

CPA BIMR Branches:



Alderney



Cyprus



Falkland Islands



Gibraltar



Guernsey



Isle of Man



Jersey



Malta



Northern Ireland



St Helena



Scotland



United Kingdom



Wales



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