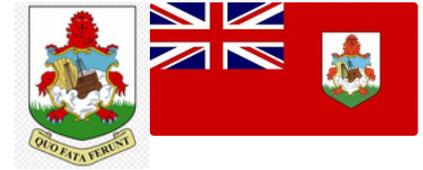


# Bermuda Post Election Seminar

## REPORT SUMMARY



26-28 January 2026

### CPA UK Delegation

- Hon. Erwin Jay Saunders, Minister for Innovation, Technology, and Energy, Turks and Caicos Islands Parliament
- Deputy Beatriz Poree, Member, The States Assembly of Jersey
- Justin Madders MP, Member, UK Parliament
- Joann Corkish, Deputy Clerk of Tynwald and Clerk of the Legislative Council
- Lenox Proctor, Clerk, Anguilla House of Assembly



## Programme Overview

CPA UK, in partnership with the Parliament of Bermuda, delivered a three-day Seminar from 26-28 January 2026. The purpose of the Seminar was to enhance the skills of both new and returning members who were elected in Bermuda's General Election on 18 February 2025. The programme focused on parliamentary oversight and scrutiny; understanding of the roles and responsibilities of members and parliamentary officials; and building knowledge of parliamentary procedures and practices. Sessions covered topics such as separation of powers, the role of select committees, effective questioning techniques, and communications.

CPA UK is grateful to the Parliament of Bermuda for hosting the programme and enabling CPA UK to invite Honourable Members and Parliamentary officials from the Parliament of Turks and Caicos Islands, UK Parliament, Tynwald - Parliament of the Isle of Man, the Anguilla House of Assembly, and the States of Assembly of Jersey. The Seminar provided an opportunity for participants to deepen their learning and strengthen relationships across different legislatures.

This report highlights some of the key discussions that emerged from the programme. Seminar presentations and additional resources were also shared with the participants.

## Expectations for Members & Parliamentary Officials

Participants identified ongoing pressures around defining the roles and responsibilities of both members and clerks. A consistent challenge across groups was that many members may not have in-depth knowledge or understanding of legislation, parliamentary processes, and procedural functions. Participants also highlighted the difficulty members face in balancing relationships, workload, and personal life.

It was noted that making greater use of CPA UK's resources and training opportunities could significantly improve members' understanding. Participants also suggested that a clear parliamentary calendar would help members plan more effectively, giving them advance notice of upcoming business and time to prepare.

## Parliamentary Standards

"The rules set in parliament should reflect the values of the country: 'We are here on behalf of the people, and we need to set a precedent'

The Speaker of the House of Assembly,

Members must understand the standing orders, which serve as a framework for conduct in parliament. As a living document, the standing orders should evolve as parliaments modernise. Participants also stressed that the code of conduct must be clear and concise so members can easily understand it. A well-designed and properly implemented code can strengthen trust in an assembly, but its value depends less on the document itself and more on how consistently it is applied, communicated and enforced.

## Separation of Powers

There are aspirations within the Parliament of Bermuda to implement a clearer separation of powers, building on an earlier attempt in 2007. Participants heard from an official from the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago, who noted that many Commonwealth countries struggle to put the separation of powers into practice in a way that allows institutions to operate autonomously. Factors such as political culture, historical context, and the executive's willingness to rebalance authority all influence how successfully autonomy can be achieved.

An official from the Parliament of the Bahamas emphasised that separation of powers is essential to a democratic system. The Bahamas recently advanced this principle through the Parliamentary Services Act, passed in 2023 and implemented in 2024, which strengthens the independence, professionalism, and institutional capacity of the Bahamian Parliament. The Act provides Parliament with its own administrative and staffing structure, separate from the Executive. There was strong interest for similar reforms to be introduced in Bermuda to ensure the independence of parliament and to allow parliament to manage its own budget.



## Cross-Party Collaboration

Cross-party collaboration enables members with differing views to come together around issues they care deeply about. Speakers highlighted that the public responds positively when they see politicians working collectively in the best interests of the people. Committees were identified as one of the strongest opportunities for this kind of collaboration, as they require members to set aside party affiliation and focus on a shared purpose: examining legislation, advising on policy matters, and scrutinising the actions of the government.

Other effective ways to encourage cross-party cooperation include building personal relationships outside the parliamentary setting. Developing trust and rapport beyond the chamber can make a significant difference when seeking support for a bill. While Private Members Bills are not common in the Parliament of Bermuda, speakers noted that in other jurisdictions they can serve as another mechanism to bring members together around common goals.

## Communicating in Parliament

Delegates took part in several practical exercises focused on identifying their listening habits. Four common habits were highlighted: ignoring, pretending, selective hearing, and attentive listening. Good and attentive listening can be undermined by behaviours such as interrupting, shifting the conversation to yourself, asking closed questions, or making judgements. To strengthen listening skills, participants were encouraged to use the SEEDS method, as shown.



There was also a strong emphasis on recognising some the speaking habits individuals have adopted such as speaking too quickly, overusing hand gestures and filler words, or losing their train of thought. Suggested solutions included using short, punchy sentences, pausing for breath at the end of each sentence, and speaking slowly. Practising in front of a mirror can help improve body language and manage hand movements. Since many people struggle with eye contact when speaking, delegates were advised to practice scanning the room, focusing briefly on someone on one side before shifting to someone on the other to create a natural sense of connection with an audience.



## Exploring the use of AI and technology in Parliaments

Speakers outlined how AI is being used to support parliamentary work and how digital transformation has been implemented across different legislatures. Digital tools can assist members in preparing speeches, analysing government spending trends, and helping clerks review government documents or draft annual reports. A key takeaway was the importance of checking AI-generated information for accuracy, as AI cannot guarantee that its outputs are always correct. Understanding the limitations of AI is essential for using it responsibly.

The Anguilla House of Assembly shared examples of their digital innovation, including an AI-driven Hansard system that converts audio transcripts and an AI chatbot on their website that allows users to search for specific information. Speakers emphasised that AI can significantly improve efficiency, particularly in small legislatures where staffing is limited, provided that strong governance and regulatory frameworks are in place.

## Engaging with the Public

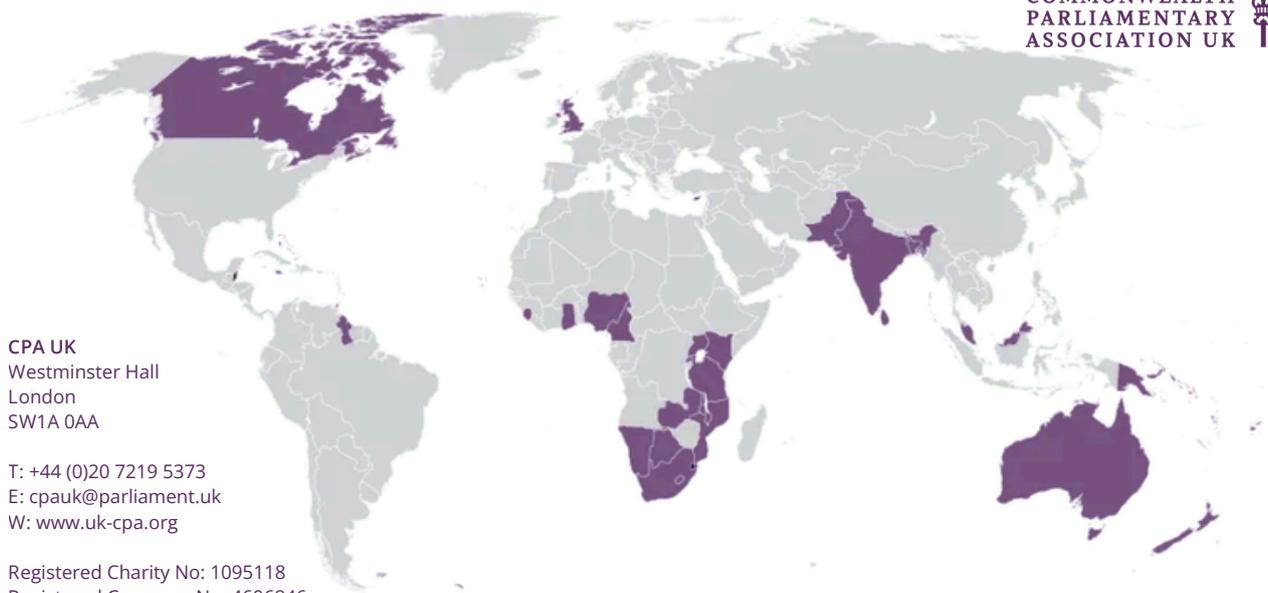
Outreach plays a vital role in strengthening democracy because it ensures that people feel heard and involved. The speakers shared a range of ways to engage communities, including social media to communicate key messages, organising coffee mornings, and visiting local businesses, charities, and schools. Efforts to improve digital engagement were also highlighted.

The Anguilla House of Assembly, for example, has significantly upgraded its website and now livestreams its sittings. It has also expanded the public consultation of bills, organising townhall-style consultations where the public can submit their questions

All of the speakers emphasised the importance of involving young people, noting that each of their legislatures runs an active youth parliament where young people can participate in decision-making and discuss national issues. The panel also heard from members of the Bermuda Youth Parliament, who meet weekly, interview members, and take part in mock debates. Some of the members highlighted they began their political journey by becoming a youth parliamentarian themselves.

However, youth engagement has decreased since COVID-19. The youth representative from Bermuda noted that using platforms popular with young people such as TikTok and Instagram could help rebuild interest. They also suggested that integrating politics more effectively into education could spark curiosity and interest at an earlier age.





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