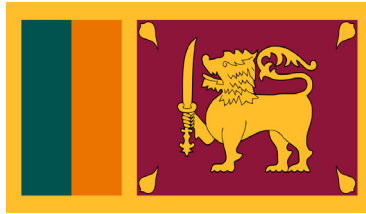


SRI LANKA - COMMITTEE STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME

REPORT SUMMARY

2 - 4 JULY 2019



PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

From 2 - 4 July 2019, CPA UK and Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) led a three-day training programme in Westminster, UK, for Members and officials from the Parliament of Sri Lanka to support Sri Lankan Sectoral Oversight Committees.

This was the third activity in the Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D) programme in Sri Lanka, being delivered in partnership between CPA UK and WFD.

The Sri Lankan delegation comprised of eight Members of Parliament (including four Sectoral Oversight Committee chairs) and two officials from the Parliament of Sri Lanka. They engaged in three days of discussions, presentations, observation sessions and practical exercises to engage in a variety of topics, including:

- Recruiting and developing a strong secretariat for committee business
- Selecting inquiry topics and sourcing research
- Building cross-party consensus
- Impact of public engagement
- Effectively selecting, briefing and questioning witnesses

IMPACT & OUTCOMES

Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy:

Impact. Developing Commonwealth countries strengthen democratic good governance.

Outcome. Parliaments in priority Commonwealth countries adopt more inclusive and accountable practices and policies, particularly with regard to women's political participation.

Programme Aim. To explore the value of openness and transparency in committee work in the Parliaments of Sri Lanka and the UK with the aim of adopting more inclusive and accountable practices.

Programme Outcomes.

Through meetings, discussions, and workshops participants will:

Outcome 1. Identify ways to make committees more open, accountable and inclusive;

Outcome 2. Advance improved capacity to communicate committee business to the media, civil society, NGOs and other diverse audiences.

Outputs.

Output 1. 8 Members to have a better understanding of the benefits and processes of public engagement and outreach;

Output 2. 2 officials to have a better understanding of the benefits and processes of public engagement and outreach;

Output 3. A diverse and inclusive programme that reaches a range of Members and clerks, particularly women;

Output 4. A report has been produced summarising the programme.



The Sri Lankan delegates discuss Select Committee media strategies with Neil Parish MP and Media Officers Tara Kerpens-Lee and Nina Foster

SUPPORTED BY:



COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION UK

Westminster Hall, Houses of Parliament, London SW1A 0AA
 T: +44 (0)20 7219 5373 F: +44 (0)20 7233 1202 E: cpauk@parliament.uk www.uk-cpa.org
 Registered Charity No.1095118 | Registered Company No. 4606846 @CPA_UK



SRI LANKA - COMMITTEE STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME

FULL REPORT

2 - 4 JULY 2019

CPA UK & SRI LANKA

CPA UK and the Parliament of Sri Lanka have worked closely together in recent years and have successfully arranged a number of capacity building programmes on the subject of oversight committees in conjunction with WFD. The most recent activities have been under the aegis of the Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy and delivered in collaboration between CPA UK and WFD.

In October 2018 CPA UK and WFD delivered a programme for Members of the Committee on Public Accounts (COPA) to explore a range of issues relating to public financial oversight. This provided an opportunity for UK and Sri Lankan members to share good practice and experiences.

In February 2019, as the second activity of CP4D, CPA UK and WFD delivered a programme in Colombo for Members and clerks in the Parliament of Sri Lanka led by a UK delegation. The discussions focused on the impact of public engagement and sharing good practice for chairing and managing committees.



Lillian Greenwood MP, Chair of the Transport Committee, and Ed Faulkner, Second Clerk, discuss the role and responsibilities of a Committee Chair with the delegation

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR SECTORAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEES

The delegation discussed some of the opportunities and potential challenges for Sectoral Oversight Committees in the Parliament of Sri Lanka, which is a new committee system (established in 2015).

Opportunities:

- The **ability of the backbenchers to contribute to policy making** through the committees;
- **Engaging with Ministers and ministry officials in policy discussions;**
- **Members can be involved** in the structure of the new system.

Challenges:

- **Committee support staff need more training and research facilities** to carry out their work effectively and efficiently;
- **Time management and consistent participation** from committee members;
- Finding enough committee members for **quorum**;
- The **majority of Sectoral Oversight Committee business in Sri Lanka is focused on scrutinising legislation**, which is a heavy burden for committee members;
- Developing a mechanism to **get wider and progressive ideas from every section of the public**.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Lillian Greenwood MP, chair of the Transport Committee, shared her reflections on the role of the chair, which occupies at least half her time

in Parliament each week. **UK chairs are not necessarily specialists in their committee's subject area.**

The delegation discussed the election of chairs. **In the UK, chairs are elected by the whole House, whereas in Sri Lanka, chairs are elected by the committee.** In the UK, being elected by the whole House gives the chair a degree of responsibility and authority in their role.

The key responsibilities of the chair in the UK are:

- Ensure that all committee members have the opportunity to contribute in an inquiry;
- Lead, but not dominate, committee business;
- Lead in proposing inquiry topics and inviting members for other ideas;
- Represent the committee during media interviews and in the Chamber;
- Work with staff on decisions of witnesses to invite for evidence.

The chair meets regularly with the committee clerk to discuss current work and the committee's future strategy. Select committees have evolved greatly over last 40 years since their introduction to the parliamentary system, and chairs have higher profile and greater authority today.

The delegation discussed mitigating any risks of major organisations lobbying committees. As most UK select committee business is public, meetings with big organisations will most likely be public. **The key concern of select committees is transparency.** UK Members and chairs must declare interests when joining a committee.

SELECTING AN INQUIRY

To decide on an inquiry topic, all committee members generate ideas which the staff team compiles. The committee decides on 2-3 topics at a time. Key questions that all members consider for selecting an inquiry are:

- What matters are topical and relevant at the time?
- Where could an investigation be useful for providing additional evidence in the public domain?
- Will an issue be politically divisive? (If so, this may not result in an effective inquiry as powerful reports have consensus from all parties)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CLERK

The clerk of a committee in the UK is a complex role: in part engaging extensively with the committee, as well as managing the work of the committee team.

Key responsibilities of a clerk include:

- Ensuring that the members have all the papers they need several days before the weekly team meeting – including agenda, briefing documents, suggested questions and documents for review;
- Managing calls for written evidence;
- Managing the process for selecting and inviting witnesses for evidence sessions;
- Providing impartial procedural advice, particularly to the chair. Procedure is usually quite permissive and clerks can be creative to help generate good ideas;
- Representing the committee internally in Parliament or externally;
- Organising logistics for evidence sessions including contacting media, booking rooms and any technical requirements;
- Writing the report for the committee.

The delegation discussed **the importance of building a strong relationship between a clerk and a chair**. The clerk meets with their chair at least once a week and they communicate daily.

Key soft skills of a clerk include:

- Exercising judgement;

The Rt Hon. the Lord Foster of Bath met with the delegation to discuss best practice for questioning witnesses



- Understanding what members want to achieve and how they can achieve it;
- Understanding the political context in which members are working.

BUILDING CROSS-PARTY CONSENSUS

A common theme across discussions was the importance of building cross-party consensus during an inquiry, as inquiries are less effective if members are party political. This includes ensuring that the committee is conducting inquiries into topics suggested by members from different political parties. It also helps build investment into committees to achieve quorum. In the UK, if consensus cannot be reached then a vote is held. The final report publishes which way members have voted in decision-making.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FOR COMMITTEE WORK

Much of the committee work conducted by committees in Sri Lanka and the UK isn't taken notice of by the public. However, it is important that the select committees try to make parliamentary business relevant to issues that people are experiencing in their ordinary lives.

In the UK, all evidence sessions are open to the public and broadcast live. The broadcasts are available to anyone to watch online. Communications strategies across committees have been made more consistent.

The UK Parliament has dedicated outreach teams which focus on engaging the wider public and increasing their understanding of Parliament. This is on the understanding that the voting public has a right to be heard and Parliament has a duty to listen. Select committee media officers shared the OASIS planning template with the delegation, which supports all UK committee staff to organise strategies for effective outreach.

Media

Several discussions focused on engaging with the media. In the UK, the chair is the main spokesperson for the committee and must represent the views of the entire committee, rather than their political party.

COMMONWEALTH PARTNERSHIP FOR DEMOCRACY (CP4D)

The Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D) is a UK Government-funded programme intended to work with parliaments in 18 Commonwealth Member States across Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia to improve representation of women, young people, people with disabilities and the LGBT+ community in the democratic process. CP4D will support parliaments and local governments to monitor the actions of their executive.

The £4m two-year programme was launched at the 2018 London meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government. It is managed by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and implemented by Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) in partnership with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (Secretariat and UK branch) and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum. CP4D activities will be implemented at the regional level and with all Commonwealth members to help raise standards and build political commitment to democratic values. The 2012 Commonwealth Charter commits governments, political parties and civil society organisations in member states to uphold and promote democratic culture and practices that are accountable to the public.

Parliaments and local governments are essential for effective, inclusive democratic governance and CP4D will contribute to making this a reality by:

- Improving inclusion by engaging more women, young people, persons living with disabilities, religious minorities and the LGBT+ community in the democratic process;
- Increase accountability through more effective and transparent parliamentary practices.

ABOUT CPA UK

The international Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is the professional association of all Commonwealth parliamentarians, an active network of over 17,000 parliamentarians from 185 national, state, provincial and territorial Parliaments and Legislatures.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK Branch (CPA UK) is one of the largest and most active branches in the CPA community and delivers a unique annual programme both in Westminster and overseas. Overseen by the Houses of Parliament and governed by an Executive Committee of cross-party bicameral parliamentarians, CPA UK undertakes international parliamentary outreach on behalf of the UK Parliament and the wider CPA.

With a specific focus on parliamentary diplomacy and parliamentary strengthening activities, CPA UK seeks to foster co-operation and understanding between parliaments, promote good parliamentary practice and advance parliamentary democracy through a variety of international outreach activities and multilateral programmes. Its work is divided into three regions, which include national, regional and provincial legislatures and the legislatures of Overseas Territories:

- Americas, Caribbean, and Europe
- Africa
- Asia-Pacific

Working closely with parliamentarians and parliamentary officials, CPA UK focuses its bilateral and multilateral outreach activities on a number of areas, including parliamentary practice and procedure, and themes including human rights, public financial scrutiny, sustainable development, equal access to political and economic empowerment and democratic strengthening through election observation.

CPA UK is also the secretariat for the CPA British Islands and Mediterranean Region,

Neil Parish MP, chair of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, highlighted some of the key benefits of engaging with the media during committee work: raising the profile of the inquiry issue, changing public perceptions of the issue, putting pressure on the government and putting pressure on the private sector.

The select committee media officers provided advice on best practice for writing effective press releases, in particular the importance of keeping press releases focused on three main points and including a quote from the chair. **Press releases should be politically neutral to reflect the cross-party nature of committee business.** Formatting press releases effectively is crucial to sharing messages as journalists do not have extensive time to read them.

The delegation discussed the importance of remaining sensitive to wider affairs when discussing inquiries publicly, as the recommendations of the committee must be agreed by consensus across the entire committee



Rt Hon. David Hanson MP discussed Prime Minister's Questions with the delegation

before an inquiry is discussed publicly. In Sri Lanka, committee reports can only be shared with the public once they are tabled for debate in the Chamber. In both parliaments, usually committee members do not comment on an inquiry if it is ongoing.

Currently in Sri Lanka, there are restrictions on media attending evidence sessions due to the Standing Orders. Some speakers suggested that the Standing Orders could be reviewed to consider opportunities to open the committees to more media and public engagement.

Digital platforms

In the UK, committees regularly share their work through digital platforms, which creates a dialogue with the wider public about their work. Social media is used to share updates in the committee's work, upcoming evidence sessions and inquiry reports.

Once an inquiry is formally agreed by the committee, the following public outreach activities

are always followed:

- Agreeing a press release;
- Publishing web pages on the inquiry;
- Emailing key stakeholders to inform them about the inquiry.

Social media can also be used to gather questions. Some select committees have used Twitter to find out what questions the public would like a Minister or Secretary of State to answer. These answers are then shared online.

The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee created a 'Tell Us What You Think' web page to ask the public for their opinion on what the committee should look into for its next inquiry on Brexit. From this, the committee decided to look at agriculture and Brexit.

External evidence sessions

Several committee chairs shared their experience of holding evidence sessions outside Parliament and the appetite from the public for understanding more about the work of select committees. The

delegation discussed the challenges of raising awareness about the important work of select committees to scrutinise government activity and policies.

SELECTING, SUMMONING AND QUESTIONING WITNESSES

The delegation discussed the different levels of preparation for evidence sessions between Sri Lanka and the UK. The delegation reflected that currently there is not sufficient resource for officials in the Parliament of Sri Lanka to create extensive briefs for the committee to use during an evidence session. Often, members will ask their own questions and the briefing structure is not as fixed as in the UK. Eve Samson, a UK committee clerk, emphasised that briefing material does not need to be particularly long or prescriptive and should act as a guide for members.

Selecting and briefing witnesses

Oral evidence is key to achieving cross-party consensus, as the committee hears it

collectively and are basing their recommendations on the same evidence. In the UK, when selecting witnesses, there are two main types of witnesses which committees are looking to collect evidence from during an inquiry: specialists looking to share information on a matter or issue, and witnesses with a particular argument. The sequence of interviewing witnesses is important – usually, witnesses with a particular argument give evidence last. Specialists sharing information are typically interviewed first, as their evidence may feed into questions for later witnesses. Whilst getting evidence from subject experts is important, it is also important to reach out to witnesses on the ground.

Importantly, the evidence provided by witnesses should create a balanced argument on the issue. This is a significant challenge for members and committee teams, as all the arguments pertaining to an issue must be researched and presented before the committee starts to receive evidence.

UK clerks play a key role in setting the direction of an inquiry, as the information and research they collate sets the direction of the issues that the committee investigates. The chair must give the clerks clear direction on the objectives of the inquiry to ensure that the right witnesses are invited to give evidence.

Questioning witnesses

Lord Foster emphasised the need to plan effectively as a committee to ensure that witnesses provide the best information during evidence sessions. Witnesses are provided with extensive information on the inquiry and focus of the evidence session so they know what is expected of them. Whilst they will not know the answer to specific questions, they will know the information that the committee is hoping to find out.



Baroness Anelay of St Johns met with the delegation to discuss effective strategies for questioning witnesses

During questioning, the committee needs to listen carefully and ensure that questions are clear and simple. If a witness is not answering the question, then the committee should be persistent with questioning.

Baroness Anelay emphasised the importance of being courteous to witnesses, as this helps them relax and provide the most useful information to the committee. The chair should greet the witnesses as they arrive and seat them. Some witnesses have their own ways of sharing evidence, and the committee should remain flexible to different styles of evidence sharing.

A UK committee does not have formal power to make witnesses attend evidence sessions however it is expected that witnesses would attend if invited. If a witness did not attend MPs can raise it in the Chamber and raise public attention about the non-attendance. Summonses are only issued as a last resort if a witness is refusing to attend an evidence session or has not responded. Most witnesses regard it as reputational damage if they do not attend an evidence session.

Tom Tugendhat MP, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, discussed effective strategies for questioning Ministers



organising activities in support of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians network. CPA UK also works to strengthen the Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees in its core objectives.

CPA UK continues to work in partnership with a multitude of national and international organisations for mutual benefit; including the Commonwealth Secretariat, World Bank, UNDP, UNEP, OAS and many others. CPA UK has, and continues to work alongside the UK Government. Over the last five years, CPA UK has leveraged close to £3 million of government funds to achieve its strategic aims in strengthening parliamentary democracy across the Commonwealth.

CPA UK'S STRATEGIC GOALS

1. To strengthen parliamentary democracy by undertaking international parliamentary outreach work on behalf of the Houses of Parliament and the wider CPA
2. To contribute to sustainable development, poverty reduction, trade, investment and business development opportunities through parliamentary strengthening work that supports democracy, good governance, human rights, environmental protection and the rule of law
3. To further co-operation between Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth Parliaments and legislatures, and other democratically elected institutions
4. To communicate the work of CPA UK and the Commonwealth within Westminster, across UK and internationally to enhance the profile of the Houses of Parliament, the Commonwealth, the CPA and CPA UK



The delegation took part in a committee exercise based on the Environmental Audit Committee's Sustainable Seas inquiry

The delegation discussed the importance of creating a structure for questions, as otherwise it is hard to build cross-party consensus. Some information from witnesses needs to be redacted for privacy purposes.

Questioning Ministers

The delegation discussed the distinction in questioning Ministers in the UK, as Ministers take a political line during questioning. Building cross-party consensus is therefore critical for interviewing witnesses, as they are a key form of holding government to account. **The aim of questioning Ministers is to be cooperative and improve policy.** For each committee, a Minister – including Secretaries of State – is usually questioned every six months.

The delegation discussed how the UK Prime Minister engages with select committees by appearing before the Liaison Committee for questioning three times a year. Select committee chairs are all members of this committee and submit bids on what topics to question the Prime Minister about. Brexit has dominated recent Liaison Committees.

CONDUCTING EVIDENCE SESSIONS

The delegation engaged in a Committee Exercise based on the Environmental Audit Committee's recent inquiry into Sustainable Seas. Through a detailed role play exercise, the delegation led an evidence session in the style of a UK select committee. Laura Grant, Committee Specialist for the Environmental Audit Committee, provided technical and procedural advice during the session.

Reflecting on the briefing and process of the evidence session, the delegation commented that the committee structure in the UK provides better support for the committee members. Extensive preparation for potential questions for the witnesses, and agreeing the questioning structure in advance, created a strong structure for conducting the session.

WRITING REPORTS AND INFLUENCING THE GOVERNMENT

The delegation noted that there is a similar procedure between the UK and Sri Lankan Parliaments for publishing an inquiry report, conclusions and recommendations. In both Parliaments, the relevant government department must address the conclusions and recommendations but does not have to act on the recommendations.

In the UK, reports use the same format of numbered paragraphs. Most chairs prefer concise and readable reports – this is a challenge for clerks to still include all the key information. The Baroness Barker, reflecting on her work as Member of the Draft Registration of Overseas Entities Bill (Joint) Committee, emphasised the importance of keeping an inquiry report as a living document, with different committee members taking different parts of reports and instigating debate about them in the Chamber. The report can also empower the inquiry witnesses to pursue their cause. The delegation and speakers discussed the challenges of attributing the impact of reports to government policy changes, as policy can shift gradually over time.

EVALUATING COMMITTEE WORK

The delegation discussed the evaluation process on committee work in the UK. Whilst committees conduct a degree of self-evaluation for committee work, which is standard procedure, the Liaison Committee, which represents all chairs, is currently engaging in a piece of work into the effectiveness of select committees. This has gathered evidence of the effectiveness of select committees within the House and externally.

RECRUITING AND TRAINING CLERKS AND OFFICIALS

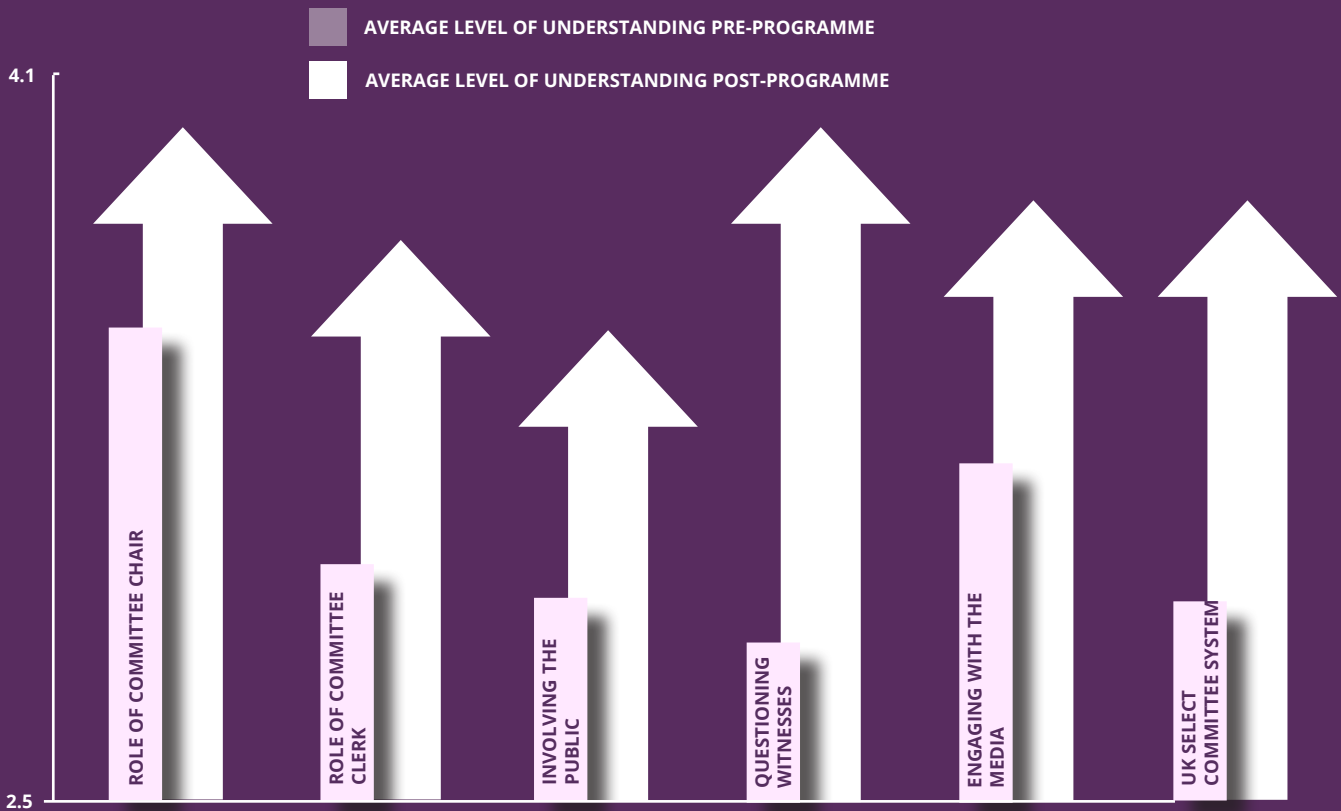
The delegation discussed the officials support for committee business in the UK and Sri Lanka. Whilst in Sri Lanka, an official can support several Sectoral Oversight Committees, in the UK, a select committee is usually supported by between 6-12 members of staff, including several clerks, a media officer, subject specialists, an administrative assistant and researchers. Whilst specialist advisers are brought in for the short term in the UK, most staff are employed on a long-term basis. In the UK, 90% of the budget for select committees is spent on staff.

Senior clerks from the UK noted that they look for clerks who understand and can engage with a wider range of stakeholders including civil society organisations, as this is where committees get most of their thinking power for inquiries from. The priority is recruiting and supporting good policy analysts who can condense and communicate key information for busy members of committees. A key quality for all staff in the UK is their political impartiality.

Whereas in Sri Lanka, a committee chaired by the Speaker oversees parliamentary staffing, in the UK, the process does not involve members as a specific body chaired by the Clerk of the House manages staffing.

MONITORING & EVALUATION: KEY RESULTS

From the outset of this training programme and the wider programme, concerted efforts have been made to tailor the training to the needs of the participants. Feedback on the committee-strengthening programme from the delegation was very positive, particularly about the relevance of sessions on the roles of the committee chairs and clerks, involving the public in an inquiry, and briefing and questioning witnesses.



NEXT STEPS

During final reflections on the programme, the delegation discussed the following actions for the Sectoral Oversight Committees in the Parliament of Sri Lanka:

- Support the recruitment and development of more staff to support Sectoral Oversight Committee work;
- Identify opportunities to increase interaction between Sectoral Oversight Committee business and the media;
- Put a motion to the Parliament of Sri Lanka for a three-month special Select committee to lead an inquiry on how committees function (including a CPA UK and WFD visit to the UK).

Building on the knowledge and understanding developed during this programme, in the third quarter of 2019, CPA UK and WFD will work closely with the Parliament of Sri Lanka to continue strengthening the capacity of Sectoral Oversight Committees. This will include attachments of clerks to partner Parliaments for practical skill-building.

CPA UK and WFD look forward to continuing close cooperation between the UK and the Parliament of Sri Lanka during this programme and beyond.

The delegation met with Jon Davies, Chief Executive of CPA UK



PROGRAMME

Day 1 - Tuesday 2 July 2019

Palace of Westminster

TIME SESSION

0845 - 0900 **Delegation arrival**

0900 - 0945 **Welcome & Programme Briefing**

This session will welcome the delegation and discuss their expectations of the programme.

Speakers:

Jon Davies - *Chief Executive, CPA UK*

Robert Harper - *Asia Pacific Regional Programme Manager, CPA UK*

Sarah Giles - *Programme Officer, CPA UK*

Matthew Hamilton - *Monitoring & Evaluation Manager, CPA UK*

Sophia Fernandes - *Commonwealth Programme Director, Westminster Foundation for Democracy*

Tom Cormier - *Regional Director, Westminster Foundation for Democracy*

0945 - 1030 **Session 1: Overview of the UK Select Committee System**

Senior Clerk, Paul Evans, will introduce delegates to the Westminster committee system, with particular reference to the different forms of scrutiny through Select Committees. The presentation will provide useful context for subsequent sessions on the detailed work of committees and chairs.

Speaker: Paul Evans - *Clerk of Committees*

1030 - 1130 **Session 2: Insight into Sectoral Oversight Committees and Preparation for Committee Exercise**

This session will invite delegates to discuss the opportunities and challenges involved in engagement with Sectoral Oversight Committees in the Parliament of Sri Lanka. The session will also invite the delegates to review the committee exercise briefing for Session 12 and discuss any questions.

Facilitators:

Robert Harper - *Asia Pacific Regional Programme Manager, CPA UK*

Sarah Giles - *Programme Officer, CPA UK*

1200 - 1300 **Members: Tour of the Houses of Parliament**

Delegates will be invited for a tour of Parliament

Facilitator: Sarah Giles - *Programme Officer, CPA UK*

(cont.)

Palace of Westminster

TIME	SESSION
1300 - 1430	<p>Lunch with the recent UK Delegation to Sri Lanka</p> <p>The delegation will be joined by the delegation of UK members and officials who engaged in a Sectoral Oversight Committees programme at the Parliament of Sri Lanka in February 2019.</p> <p>Attending: The Rt Hon. the Baroness D'Souza CMG – <i>former Lord Speaker (Baroness D'Souza will be accompanied by a guest)</i> Lilian Greenwood MP – <i>Chair, Transport Committee (House of Commons)</i> Nigel Evans MP – <i>Member, International Trade and International Development Committees (House of Commons)</i> Margaret McKinnon – <i>Senior Clerk, Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (House of Commons)</i> Sophia Fernandes – <i>Commonwealth Programme Director, Westminster Foundation for Democracy</i> Robert Harper – <i>Asia Pacific Programme Manager, CPA UK</i></p>
1430 - 1530	<p>Session 3: Role and Responsibilities of Committee Chairs</p> <p>This session will focus on the key role and responsibilities of committee chairs and their crucial role in developing the strategy for the committee and achieving cross-party consensus.</p> <p>Speakers: Lilian Greenwood MP - <i>Chair, Transport Committee (House of Commons)</i> Edward Faulkner – <i>Second Clerk, Transport Committee (House of Commons)</i></p>
1530 - 1615	<p>Session 4: Role and Responsibilities of Committee Clerks</p> <p>Building a strong team of officials to support committee work is key to the success of committees. This session will focus on the varied role of committee clerks and their key responsibilities to manage committee business.</p> <p>Speakers: Hannah Bryce - <i>Senior Clerk, Foreign Affairs Committee</i> Richard Ward – <i>Clerk, Education Committee</i></p>
1645 - 1730	<p>Session 5: Selecting an Inquiry and Research Resources</p> <p>This session will discuss the process for a committee to select an inquiry. The process will be discussed and mapped out. This session will also explore the available research resources to conduct an inquiry, and the process for engaging the wider public in gathering research for inquiries.</p> <p>Speakers: Nigel Mills MP – <i>Member, Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, Public Accounts Committee, Backbench Business Committee, Work and Pensions Committee (House of Commons)</i> Margaret McKinnon – <i>Senior Clerk, Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (House of Commons)</i></p>
1730	<p><i>End of day one</i></p>

Day 2 - Wednesday 3 July 2019

Palace of Westminster

TIME	SESSION
0945 - 1045	<p>Observe Transport Committee Public Evidence Session with Minister of State Michael Ellis MP</p> <p>Delegates will observe a public evidence session for an inquiry into pavement parking by the Transport Committee, chaired by Lilian Greenwood MP.</p> <p>Inquiry witnesses: Michael Ellis MP - <i>Minister of State, Department for Transport</i> Anthony Ferguson - <i>Deputy Director, Traffic and Technology, Department for Transport</i></p>
1100 - 1130	<p>Brief on Prime Minister's Questions with Rt Hon. David Hanson MP</p> <p>Rt Hon. David Hanson MP will provide an overview of the history of, and procedure for, Prime Minister's Questions, before the delegation observes Prime Minister's Questions in the Chamber.</p> <p>Speaker: Rt Hon. David Hanson MP - <i>Vice Chair, CPA UK Executive Committee</i></p>
1145 - 1245	<p>View Prime Minister's Questions</p>
1245 - 1400	<p>Lunch with the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sri Lanka</p> <p>Attending: Dr Matthew Offord MP - <i>Member, Environmental Audit Committee (House of Commons) and Member, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sri Lanka</i> Virendra Sharma MP - <i>Member, International Development Committee (House of Commons) and Panel of Chairs</i> Jon Davies - <i>Chief Executive, CPA UK</i></p>
1415 - 1445	<p>Session 6: Collecting Evidence from Ministers and Senior Figures: Insight from the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee</p> <p>This session will invite the delegation to reflect on the challenges and opportunities for interviewing and collecting information from ministers and senior figures as part of a Select Committee inquiry.</p> <p>Speaker: Tom Tugendhat MP - <i>Chair, Foreign Affairs Committee (House of Commons)</i></p>
1530 - 1630	<p>Session 7: The Impact of Public Engagement with Committee Work</p> <p>The session will explore different methods for public engagement during committee work and wider parliamentary business, to raise awareness about committee work. This session will also examine successful strategies for constructing and promoting key messages to parliamentary audiences, the media and wider public. This will include exploring the role of social media and other strategies to publicise committee work externally and raise profile, as well as identifying key stakeholders to engage.</p> <p>Speakers: Neil Parish MP - <i>Chair, Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, and Member, Liaison Committee</i> Tara-Jane Kerpens Lee - <i>Senior Engagement Officer, Select Committees</i> Nina Foster - <i>Select Committee Media Officer</i></p>
1700 - 1730	<p>Session 8: Engaging with the Media - Q&A with a parliamentary journalist</p> <p>This session will invite participants to pose questions about media reporting on committee business in the UK Parliament to an experienced journalist.</p> <p>Speaker: Tony Grew - <i>Journalist, The Sunday Times</i></p>
1730	<p><i>End of day two</i></p>

Day 3 - Thursday 4 July 2019

Palace of Westminster

TIME SESSION

0915 - 1015 **Session 9: Influencing and Negotiating with the Government**

The committee chair and committee members all play critical roles in influencing the government to act. In this session, speakers will discuss how to negotiate, influence, and convince the government to address the key findings of the committee.

Speakers:

The Baroness Barker – *Member, Draft Registration of Overseas Entities Bill (Joint)*

Kerry McCarthy MP – *Member, Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee and Environmental Audit Committee (House of Commons)*

1045 - 1145 **Session 10: Selecting Witnesses**

This session will explore the challenges of selecting witnesses during an inquiry. How are witnesses selected? How are opportunities for witnesses advertised to the wider community? This will include further discussions on how to engage senior officials and Ministers in inquiries.

Speaker: Damian Collins MP – *Chair, Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee*

1145 - 1245 **Session 11A: Members Session - Best Practices for Questioning Witnesses** **Session 11B: Officials Session - Prepping Witnesses and Committee Members**

Questioning at oral evidence sessions is intended to draw evidence from the selected witnesses, rather than being a means for members to make statements or outline their own views. This session will discuss the questioning techniques which committee members can use to make best use of an evidence session.

Speakers:

The Rt Hon. the Lord Foster of Bath – *Chair, Rural Economy Select Committee (House of Lords)*

The Rt Hon. the Baroness Anelay of St Johns DBE – *Member, International Relations Committee (House of Lords)*

This session will focus on techniques to help prepare witnesses and committee members before evidence is given at a committee hearing. This will include techniques to put witnesses at ease, how to provide training for witnesses, and managing public expectations when engaging with committee hearings. Participants will practice briefing members on witnesses ahead of the Committee Exercise in Session 12.

Speaker: Eve Samson – *Clerk, Joint Committee on Human Rights*

1245 - 1400 **Lunch with H.E. Manisha Gunasekera, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to the UK**

Attending:

H.E. Manisha Gunasekera - *High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to the UK*

Mr Abdul Haleem – *Counsellor (Commonwealth and Political Affairs), High Commission of Sri Lanka to the UK*

The Rt Hon. the Lord Naseby PC – *President, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sri Lanka*

The Rt Hon. the Lord Dholakia OBE DL – *Member, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sri Lanka*

Susie Latta – *Head of International Partnerships, CPA UK*

(cont.)

Palace of Westminster

TIME	SESSION
------	---------

1400 - 1600	Session 12: Role Play: Committee Exercise (Evidence Session)
-------------	---

Chair: Member of the Sri Lankan delegation (to be confirmed)
Committee: Environmental Audit Committee (House of Commons)
Inquiry: Sustainable Seas (2018)

Witnesses:

Alastair King-Smith - *Coordinator Global Campaign for Media Freedom, Foreign & Commonwealth Office*
Fleur ten Hacken - *Programme Officer, CPA UK*

Clerk: Laura Grant - *Committee Specialist, Environmental Audit Select Committee (House of Commons)*

1400 - 1440	<i>Briefing and private meeting - Committee and clerks</i>
-------------	---

1420 - 1440	<i>Clerks brief witnesses</i>
-------------	--------------------------------------

1440 - 1540	<i>Evidence Session</i>
-------------	--------------------------------

1540 - 1600	<i>Private meeting to review evidence</i>
-------------	--

1630 - 1700	Session 13: Reflections on Role Play: Committee Exercise (Evidence Session)
-------------	--

This session will enable delegates to reflect on their learnings during the Committee Exercise, including peer-to-peer feedback.

Facilitators:

Robert Harper - *Asia Pacific Regional Programme Manager, CPA UK*

Sarah Giles - *Programme Officer, CPA UK*

Priyanga Hettiararchi - *Sri Lanka Country Representative, Westminster Foundation for Democracy*

1700 - 1730	Feedback Session and Evaluation
-------------	--

Delegates will be given the opportunity to provide feedback about the programme and discuss lessons learnt. Participants will provide feedback of their experience of these sessions and discuss next steps to implement learnings and development from the programme.

1730	<i>End of day three and programme</i>
------	---------------------------------------

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS - SRI LANKA

HON. AJITH P. PERERA MP - *Delegation Leader*

Member of Parliament (United National Party)

Ajith Perera is a Sri Lankan politician and current member of Parliament, who commenced his political career as a member of the Provincial Council of the Western Provincial Council in 2009. He is a lawyer by profession and alumnus of University of Sri Jayawardenapura Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka Law College and Ananda College, Colombo. He was first elected to the Parliament of Sri Lanka in 2010 as a member of the United National Party from the Kalutara District and then he was re-elected to the Parliament in 2015. He is the current State Minister of Power and Renewable Energy in Sri Lanka. In January 2017, he was selected as the Chair of the Energy Committee of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. He heads the Presidential Task Force for Demand side Management in Sri Lanka.



HON. (PROF.) ASHU MARASINGHE MP

Member of Parliament (United National Party)

Ashu Marasinghe has a Doctorate in Philosophy in Computer Science and Engineering from the University of Aizu, Fukushima, Japan. He serves as a Member of Sri Lanka Parliament from 2015. He is a former Visiting Professor at International University of Japan and former Associate Professor of the Department of Management and Information Systems Engineering, Nagaoka University of Technology, Niigata, Japan. His specialization in research and studies include Computer Science, Database Management, Software System Engineering and Information Network. At present he serves as the chairman of Sectoral Oversight Sub Committee on Higher Education, Science Technology & Research, & Skills Development, Sectoral Oversight Sub Committee on Power & Renewable Energy and Sectoral Oversight Sub Committee on Traffic Management



HON. HARSHANA RAJAKURANA MP

Member of Parliament (United National Party)

Harshana Rajakaruna is a Sri Lankan politician and a member of parliament since 2015. He is a former member of the Western Provincial Council. He has a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree from Cardiff University, UK. He also has a Investment Advisor Certification from Colombo Stock Exchange. From 2005-2009, he has worked for John Keells Stockbrokers (Pvt.) Ltd as a Senior Investment Advisor. In his political career, he is being serving as the United National Party (UNP) Dompe Electorate Organiser from 2011 to present. He is the Chair of Sectoral Oversight Committee on Economic Development and a member of Sectoral Oversight Committee on Youth, Sports, Arts and Heritage and Sectoral Oversight Committee on Business and Commerce.



HON. CHARLES NIRMALANATHAN MP

Member of Parliament (Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi)

Charles Nirmalanathan is a Sri Lanka politician from Mannar. He has studied in Valayutharm Maha Vidyalaya, Point Pedro, Sri Lanka. He was elected to the Sri Lanka parliament in 2015 from Vanni District. He is a member of the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) political party. He serves in different committees such as Ministerial Consultative Committee on Mahaweli Development & Environment, Sectoral Oversight Committee on Sustainable Development and Environment and Natural Resources, Sectoral Oversight Committee on Health and Human Welfare, Social Empowerment and Sectoral Oversight Committee on Transport and Communication.



HON. KALADUGONDA K. PIYADASA MP

Member of Parliament (United National Party)

K.K Piyadasa is a Sri Lanka politician representing Nuwara Eliya district. He serves his district by involving in different initiatives such as being the Chairman of the Nuwara Eliya District Development Board. He has followed his higher studies in the field of Business Management and Human Resources Management. He is businessman by profession. He is involved in Sectoral Oversight Committees on Economic Development, on Youth, Sports, Arts and Heritage and on Business and Commerce.

**HON. MAYANTHA DISSANAYAKE MP**

Member of Parliament (United National Party)

Mayantha Dissanayake is a Sri Lankan politician from Kandy District who has pursued his childhood passion of becoming a Printer and earned his degrees from the Rochester Institute of Technology in the United States and the London College of Printing & Distributive Trades in London. He has held many positions such as the Management Executive, Chief Operating Officer, Managing Director in different private companies engaged printing businesses. He is now the Chief Organiser for the Yatinuwara electorate in the Kandy District for UNP from September 2014 to present. He is the Chair of Sectoral Oversight Committee on International Relations in the Sri Lanka parliament.

**HON. NIHAL GALAPPATHTHI MP**

Member of Parliament (Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna)

Nihal Galappaththi is a Sri Lanka politician from Tangalle, a city in the south of Sri Lanka. He has a General Degree in Accountancy (B.A) and has served the country as a teacher before becoming a full-time politician. He is a member of parliament since 2015 and before that he was member of provincial council. He contributes to different Sectoral Oversight Committees such as Sustainable Development and Environment and Natural Resources, Education and Human Resources Development and Internal Administration and Public Management.

**HON. SUJITH SANJAYA PERERA MP**

Member of Parliament (United National Party)

Sujith Sanjaya Perera is a Sri Lankan politician from Yatiyantota. He has a Diploma in Plantation Management and has worked as an Assistant Manager at Janatha Estates Development Board from July 1984 to January 1991. He has started his political career as the Chairman of Divisional Council, Yatiyantota in 1991. He is the present Chief Organiser for United National Party, Yatiyantota Electrate. He is the Chair of Sectoral Oversight Committee on Manufacturing and Services and a member of the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Education and Human Resources Development.



KUSAHANI ROHANADEERA

Assistant Secretary General, Parliament of Sri Lanka

Kushani Rohanadeera is the Assistant Secretary General of Parliament of Sri Lanka. She is working for the parliament from 1999 and has served in different roles such as Parliamentary Officer, the Personal Assistant to the Secretary General, Assistant Principal Officer in the Establishments Office and as a Deputy Principal Office in the Committee on Public Petitions and Committee Office. She is a lawyer by profession and holds a bachelor's degree in Biological Science from University of Colombo.

**SENAKA KULUGAMMANA**

Assitant Director, Parliament of Sri Lanka

Senaka Kulugammana is the Assistant Director of Parliament of Sri Lanka. He from Kurunagala. He has a bachelor's degree in science and has had his parliamentary internship in Lok Sabha.





CPA UK

Westminster Hall
London
SW1A 0AA
T: +44 (0)20 7219 5373
F: +44 (0)20 7233 1202
E: cpauk@parliament.uk
W: www.uk-cpa.org

Registered Charity No. 1095118
Registered Company No. 4606846

COMMONWEALTH
PARLIAMENTARY
ASSOCIATION UK 

Report Author: Sarah Giles, Programme Officer, CPA UK