

THE GAMBIA - LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY WORKSHOP

REPORT SUMMARY

30 SEPTEMBER - 2 OCTOBER 2019

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

From 30 September to 2 October 2019 CPA UK, in collaboration with the National Assembly of the Gambia, delivered a workshop on legislative scrutiny for National Assembly Members (NAMs) and parliamentary staff in Banjul. Participants explored new procedures for legislative scrutiny, the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, and effective methods for public consultation and engagement.

Following a CPA UK-supported review, the National Assembly of the Gambia adopted new Standing Orders in September which came into force in November 2019. In panel talks, group discussions, and interactive sessions participants explored key changes, such as the introduction of a nine-day committee stage where previously bills would be considered and voted on by the Assembly within one day. Delegates implemented their learning in a committee exercise by drafting and asking questions in a simulated public hearing, scrutinising a bill line-by-line in small groups, and drafting amendments to a bill. After the conclusion of the workshop participants felt more confident and better prepared to scrutinise legislation in accordance with the new Standing Orders.

With support from the British High Commission in Banjul the CPA UK delegation also met with the Truth, Reconciliation, and Reparations Commission (TRRC), the Medical Research Council Unit The Gambia, and the United Nations Population Fund in the Gambia (UNFPA) to learn about their work, recent milestones, and current challenges.

The Legislative Scrutiny Workshop forms part of a two-year programme of technical parliamentary assistance signed by the Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Mariam Jack-Denton, the Rt Hon. John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons and Co-President of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK (CPA UK), and Sir Henry Bellingham MP, Chair of the Board of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD), in January 2018.



IMPACT & OUTCOMES

Impact. Members of the National Assembly are more confident and skilled in scrutinising legislation, and conduct their parliamentary duties in an effective, accountable and inclusive manner, while strengthening the UK's relations with the Gambia.

Programme Outcomes.

- 1) Members of the National Assembly have strengthened their understanding of legislative scrutiny and their related responsibilities as detailed in the Assembly's new Standing Orders.
- 2) Clerks of the National Assembly have strengthened their understanding of procedures around legislative scrutiny as detailed in the Assembly's new Standing Orders, and increased their confidence in advising Members on these procedures.
- 3) The relationship between the UK (CPA UK and the UK Parliament) and the Gambia has further strengthened.

Outputs.

- 1) At least 25 Members and five clerks of the National Assembly have attended the workshop programme and report greater confidence in performing their parliamentary responsibilities around legislative scrutiny in accordance with the revised Standing Orders.
- 2) Specific changes or actions to be taken within 6 months identified.
- 3) A comprehensive post-programme report is produced and disseminated.

PROGRAMME PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS



Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



British High
Commission
Banjul

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



THE GAMBIA - LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY WORKSHOP

FULL REPORT

30 SEPTEMBER - 2 OCTOBER 2019

CPA UK AND THE GAMBIA

CPA UK and The Gambia have developed a strong relationship, primarily through a programme of engagement to strengthen the National Assembly's parliamentary processes, in particular its parliamentary committee oversight, legislation, communications and outreach.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) detailing a two-year programme of technical parliamentary assistance was signed on 18 January 2018 in London by Madam Speaker Hon. Mariam Jack-Denton on behalf of the National Assembly, Rt Hon. John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons, as Co-President of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK (CPA UK), and Sir Henry Bellingham MP as Chair of the Board of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD).

As part of this programme CPA UK previously facilitated a workshop focused on implementing the new Standing Orders in April 2019. In August 2018 CPA UK arranged for two clerks from the Northern Ireland Assembly (NIA) to support Members and clerks of the Gambian National Assembly in reviewing the previous Standing Orders in August 2018. Other recent engagements include a four-day induction programme for new NAMs in Banjul in September 2017 led by former CPA UK Chair James Duddridge MP, a human resource capacity assessment and parliamentary staff training programme in May 2018, and study visits to the National Assembly for Wales and the UK Parliament for two researchers and two Table Office Clerks in January and July 2019 respectively.



Before questioning witnesses in a committee exercise, delegates acting as committee members allocate questions with the committee chair

Over the course of the three-day workshop, National Assembly Members (NAMs), clerks, parliamentary staff, and CPAUK delegates reflected on the changes to the legislative process and provisions for legislative scrutiny in the National Assembly's new Standing Orders, drawing on comparisons with the UK Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales, and the Northern Ireland Assembly. The summary below outlines key discussions and lessons from workshop sessions divided into two categories: descriptions of new processes under the heading *New Procedures*, and practical advice on implementation and good practice under the heading *How To*.

How To: Scrutinise Legislation

Some parliamentarians focus on **three key questions** in their scrutiny of legislation: **Who can help; what sanctions are involved; and where could unintended consequences emerge.** Firstly, referring to similar pieces of **legislation from other jurisdictions** will save time by offering guidance or possible solutions to problems already addressed by other parliaments. Other countries' acts can serve as a basis for draft legislation once adapted to the particular context of the Gambia. **International laws and conventions** can similarly aid in identifying gaps or potential problems in the bill to be scrutinised.

Secondly, closely examining sanctions or consequences for noncompliance helps ensure the proposed new rules will be implemented and followed. If NAMs fail to scrutinise how sanctions or punishments will work, they risk passing ineffective legislation that will not lead to the desired outcomes. Thirdly, **badly worded legislation can be wilfully or accidentally misinterpreted** by government or private sector companies. Detailed scrutiny, with NAMs checking **each line and word** of the bill, can prevent or diminish the risk of unintended consequences.

For example, a bill requiring that "all children must go to school" would necessitate several clarifications and definitions, including:

- The age of the children
- Minimum requirements for an institution to be considered a school
- Any exemptions from the law

Without such definitions, parents could break the law when keeping a sick child at home and out of school. This exemplifies the need to **question and clarify the meaning and intent behind each word** of a piece of legislation. Other useful starting points for scrutiny include identifying whether the bill accords new or expands Ministers' existing powers, and when and how a bill will commence.

Standing Order 64 requires every bill to

be “accompanied by a memorandum signed by the person in charge of the bill containing a statement of the objects and reasons of the bill”. The **memorandum** supports NAMs in their understanding and scrutiny of the bill; it should be reviewed along with any other explanatory material. If the memorandum is difficult to understand, this could indicate problems within the bill itself, such as overly complex provisions or unclear wording. The Hon. Speaker Mariam Jack-Denton reminded Members that **budget scrutiny** presents an additional challenge as the budget is generally presented without a memorandum or explanatory material.

In addition to explanatory material, governments will usually publish their own **consultations** in relation to new legislation, another useful source of information for legislative scrutiny. Parliamentarians should not, however, rely entirely on **information provided by government which could be biased, skewed, or selective**. Views collected directly from members of the public may give a more reliable indication of public perception.



New Procedures: Committee Stage

When the National Assembly adopted new Standing Orders in September 2019 it introduced new procedures for passing legislation. Legislation will be scrutinised, for example, by a committee for no less than nine days, instead of by a committee of

the whole house over the course of one day. **Committee stage is crucial to legislative scrutiny** as it enables parliamentarians to review legislation in sufficient detail, and members of the public, civil society organisations, academics and other stakeholders to contribute their views and experience to improve legislation.

Bills are referred to the **Assembly Business Committee (ABC)** “for Committal to Committee”, in accordance with Standing Order 68. In the National Assembly for Wales, a more narrowly focused bill would more likely be committed to a Public Bill Committee, while a more broadly focused bill would more likely be committed to a topical committee. A committee’s capacity to undertake legislative scrutiny alongside other planned work should also be considered in this process. The National Assembly has the power to constitute **ad hoc committees** as it sees fit. A Committee of the whole House rarely scrutinises legislation in larger parliaments; in the UK Parliament, for example, less than 1% of legislation is reviewed in full plenary.

Although not explicit in the new Standing Orders, the Assembly may also decide to **combine committees to consider cross-cutting issues**. Recent examples from the UK Parliament include a **joint inquiry** on the long-term funding and provision of adult social care (Local Government and Health Committees, 2018) and a joint inquiry on improving air quality (Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Environmental Audit, Health, and Transport Committees, 2017). This allowed committees to pool expertise and resources, and gave greater weight to the reports’ findings due to the support of more committee members.

While committees cannot amend legislation, reports will usually include recommendations to amend the bill. Reports go to



consideration stage in plenary where the whole House votes on individual clauses and amendments. The Northern Ireland Assembly has a second plenary stage to streamline and “tidy up” the amended bill. Northern Ireland Assembly Members can also delay the start of committee stage by up to two weeks by specifying when a bill is read. On average, committee stage lasts 12-15 working weeks in the Northern Ireland Assembly, but could take longer for more contentious legislation.

Since each bill may have different requirements, each **committee stage should be carefully planned out** – a schedule of events and hearings could be drafted by the clerk in advance and approved by committee members. **A strong working relationship between Assembly committees and related Ministries supports these preparations:** When a Ministry informs the relevant committee of upcoming legislation before it is introduced or gazetted, clerks can start drafting plans and identifying relevant stakeholders as early as possible.

Although committees need only three members to reach quorum and members can be substituted in case of a conflict of interest, demands on NAMs’ time will likely increase with multiple committee memberships.

Careful time management will help balance commitments with constituents, committees, and other Assembly business.

How To: Influence Legislation

Attendance and active participation are key to influencing legislation.

During line-by-line scrutiny, missing a day in the committee could mean missing out on scrutinising and suggesting changes for an entire section of the bill. While the legislative process may differ across legislatures, the methods for involvement remain the same. John Mann MP identified **three basic tactics to influence legislation through scrutiny:**

1) **Negotiation:** Submit an amendment with the intent of persuading government to accept an idea rather than voting on it. Ministers may wish to avoid embarrassment from losing a vote on an amendment to their bill, making them more open to negotiate.

2) **Amendments:** Draft and submit an amendment that is voted on and wins the vote.

3) **Wrecking Amendments:** If a parliamentarian has serious concerns around a bill and considers it detrimental or dangerous to the country, he or she may submit an amendment to change the very nature of the legislation. Such an amendment will be difficult to word and intends to prevent the bill of producing its intended outcome.

Of course these are not the only methods available to NAMs; the Standing Orders provide for multiple levers and devices for effective scrutiny, from asking questions or participating in debates.

Witness avoiding the question? Try this:

- Ask a good question
- Be persistent
- Be fair
- Ask for clarification
- Don't be distracted by heavy technical detail
- Ask the witness to simplify their answer
- Don't be afraid to ask simple questions
- Turn to Chair for support

New Procedures: The Assembly Business Committee

Standing Order 15 defines the composition and functions of the new Assembly Business Committee (ABC): In addition to its important role in committing legislation to committees, the ABC will “prepare and, if necessary, from time to time adjust the Assembly agenda with the approval of the Assembly” and “determine the business of each sitting and the order in which it shall be taken”. All parties will be represented in the ABC to contribute to and agree crucial decisions around Assembly business, including topics and timings. **ABC Members will also be responsible for informing their parties** of discussions and decisions made by the Committee. The ABC should liaise closely with clerks before the order paper is finalised. On legislative scrutiny, the ABC’s decision to commit a bill to a certain committee will significantly influence the process.

How To: Gather, Analyse, and Present Evidence

Public hearings or evidence sessions form an important part of any parliamentary committee’s work. How parliamentarians question witnesses in formal or informal settings directly impacts the quality of evidence obtained – **effective questioning yields useful evidence, resulting in evidence-based and convincing recommendations** that are more likely to be implemented.

The most effective questions are clear, concise, open, and

fair. Questions should not turn into statements or speeches as this could

confuse the witness and complicate the answer. Committee members should also avoid asking multiple questions at once and opt for open



rather than closed questions. **Open questions starting with who, what, why, where, when, and how** require longer answers and yield more information.

Preparing for evidence sessions as a committee and individually through research and by allocating questions to members in advance will contribute to an efficient and useful hearing. **International organisations** are a useful source of information, offering a wealth of accessible research and briefing material online. **Committees should also consider their strategy and questioning style before the start of a hearing.** When questioning vulnerable or nervous witnesses in particular, the committee may need to accommodate their needs. In the National Assembly for Wales, for example, committees have taken evidence from minors in more informal closed sessions to limit the pressure and discomfort their young witnesses could experience.

After a public hearing or evidence session concludes committees should take the opportunity to meet for private deliberations. **A brief private meeting will allow committee members to reflect on what they have heard and share their initial thoughts.** These reflections will also help the clerk identify what key message the

Roundtable Discussion



Hon. Fatoumatta Njai chaired a roundtable discussion on **gender-sensitive scrutiny and women's representation** on Tuesday 1 October. Participants broadly agreed that women and minority groups should be explicitly protected in law. Some felt measures to counter a skewed gender balance in public bodies and companies should be balanced to maintain a meritocracy. Hon. Njai further reflected on CPA UK's **Westminster Workshop on Gender-Sensitive Parliaments** held in June 2019.

committee intends to convey in its report. Separate deliberation draws a clear distinction between gathering evidence, analysing evidence, and making decisions, which in turn will contribute to well-reasoned recommendations and reports.

A **committee report** on a scrutinised bill informs the House of the committee's findings related to each clause and includes recommendations for amendments. **Any recommendations and findings are stronger if carried unanimously by the entire committee**, but reaching a unanimous position can require compromise on all sides. Once the committee is agreed, its support gives the chair more influence and makes recommendations more likely to be accepted.

Many committees across different legislatures struggle with monitoring the implementation of recommendations, citing unresponsive or disinterested government departments, administrative challenges, and resource constraints. **Recommendations may have to be repeated several times until government takes action**; to maintain pressure and scrutinise steps taken **it is crucial to continuously follow up on government's progress towards implementing recommendations.**

How To: Engage with Stakeholders

Constituencies vary significantly across the Gambia; from small and urban, as one in Banjul with 8,000 constituents, to large and rural, with 49,000 or more in another spread across multiple remote settlements with limited access to print or online media. This presents significant challenges in reaching out to distant or disconnected stakeholders. The **radio**, already widely used in campaigns and public information distribution, is an effective medium with a broader reach than some social media platforms which have not penetrated rural areas.

Parliamentarians' existing **religious or community networks** also help communicate with constituents.

Focus groups or townhall meetings facilitate an exchange of ideas that could yield useful advice and experience. In a smaller group setting it is important to listen rather than speak, preferably with only a single parliamentarian present to avoid shifting the focus from constituents to politicians.

Outreach and engagement, including the method for consultation,

should be clearly detailed in the **committee stage plan**. The topic of the bill and the target audience will inform which method or combination of methods of outreach will be most effective. Roisin Kelly differentiates between **three types of outreach**: traditional methods, more recent methods focused on engagement, and technological solutions.

1) Traditionally, a call for evidence invites written evidence from any interested stakeholders. Based on this and independent research clerks compile a list of witnesses for the committee's approval. The committee then arranges formal committee proceedings and events such as site visits.

Advantages: Controlled environments with few surprises. Committee members and staff are comfortable in a familiar environment. Comparatively easy to organise. Information gathered will likely include useful evidence.

Disadvantages: Formal settings can be intimidating or inaccessible to witnesses. The usual format risks favouring the usual witnesses which leads to ineffective scrutiny in which some lived experience is not considered.

2) More recent methods focused on engagement include alternative formats, from focus groups, workshops, facilitated discussions,



and townhall meetings, to "speed dating" sessions with multiple individual meetings in short

The Legislative Process in the National Assembly of the Gambia

A government, committee or member bill is introduced. Intention to introduce the bill is published in the Gazette or newspaper in advance (see S.O. 63).

An accompanying memorandum should be produced accompanying the bill (see S.O. 64).

First Reading
S.O. 65 - A bill is introduced to the Assembly

Second Reading
S.O. 67 - A general debate on the main substance of the bill is debated in the Assembly.

Once read a second time, the bill is referred to the Assembly Business Committee (ABC) to commit the bill to a committee for investigation and report (see S.O. 68).

Committee Stage
S.O. 69 - An opportunity to undertake line-by-line scrutiny of the bill, to call evidence and witnesses and the propose amendments.

This could be Select, Standing or Special Committees. It may also be in a Committee of the Whole House where unique procedures are utilised (see S.O. 70)

With the exception of a Committee of the Whole House a report is published and following referral to the ABC it is presented the the Assembly.

Consideration Stage
S.O. 72 - An opportunity to consider the outcome of the above committees and propose amendments.

The amended bill and memorandum and reasons are circulated to Members in advance of its final stages.

Reconsideration Stage
S.O. 74 - A further opportunity to amend the bill.

Third Reading
S.O. 75 - Further amendments can be proposed to the bill.

See Part 3, Section 3 of the Constitution of The Gambia.

Presidential Assent

succession. These settings are more interactive with more fluid conversations.

Advantages: More engaged and personal. May uncover views or feelings constituents would not offer in writing or in a formal setting. Promotes understanding on both sides and involves more people in the democratic process.

Disadvantages: Requires more resources and more complex organisation. Difficult to record and manage. Committee must be prepared to engage and possibly take criticism from members of the public.

3) The many technology-based outreach solutions available today include webinars, apps, social media,

voting buttons at events, online votes, and online surveys.

Advantages: More accessible for those in remote locations with internet connectivity. Can reach a diverse audience. Easy to use. Limited or no cost.

Disadvantages: May exclude some demographics, such as older people or those without internet access. Resource intensive, may require significant moderation and oversight. May yield large amounts of data requiring more time to process and analyse.

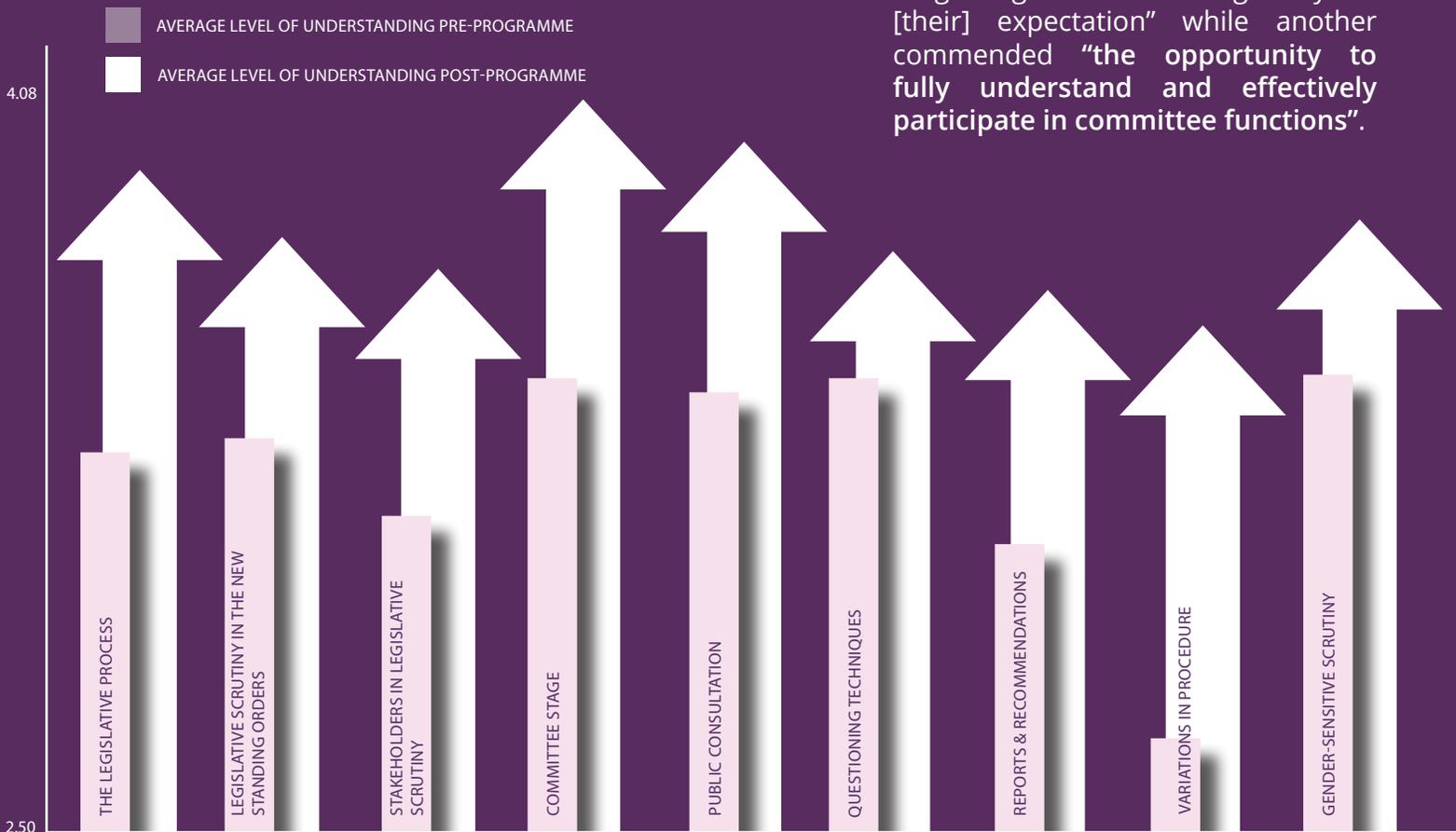
Regardless of the method of engagement, members of the public should be made aware of new legislation under review by the

National Assembly, especially as few are likely to consult the official gazette. National Assembly Members can support public awareness by proactively asking constituents for their views as soon as a new bill is introduced or announced. As the Assembly's official language is English bills and acts will not be translated into local languages such as Wolof or Mandingo, **NAMs can help constituents better understand legislation in their own words**, both before and after it is passed. This in turn enables participation in the legislative process and helps ensure new laws are followed once implemented. Many remain unaware of the ban on smoking in public places in the Gambia, for example, leading to more people inadvertently breaking the rules.

MONITORING & EVALUATION: KEY RESULTS

The Legislative Scrutiny Workshop achieved all stated outcomes and two of three planned outputs. Attendance ranged from **19 to 33** across the three days' sessions. Participants shared **positive feedback** with all considering the programme relevant to their role and work (23/25 repoded fully relevant, 2/25 partially relevant). The programme was designed to specifically address those areas prioritised by NAMs; an exploration of the stages of the legislative process, for example, was included based on the interest shown by participants during the Standing Orders Workshop held in April 2019. Participants' self-reported level of understanding increased most significantly for **procedural variations and special cases in legislative scrutiny**, as well as **rules and procedures around the legislative process**. The Legislative Scrutiny

Workshop supported one participant in gaining "new knowledge beyond [their] expectation" while another commended "the opportunity to fully understand and effectively participate in committee functions".



Monday 30 September 2019

Day 1: Rules of Procedure

0900 - 0930 **Registration & Housekeeping**

0930 - 1000 **Welcome and Introduction**

This session will offer an introduction to the programme, its background and structure, as well as the impact, objectives, and outcomes.

Speakers: John Mann MP, *House of Commons, UK Parliament*

1000 - 1030 **Session 1: The Legislative Process – Timelines and Milestones**

From introducing to passing legislation, the Standing Orders detail the steps to be taken by the “person in charge” of a government, Committee, or Member’s bill. Participants will map a bill’s journey to becoming an Act of the National Assembly and compare the steps to the legislative process followed in other legislatures.

Facilitator: Felicity Herrmann, *Regional Programme Manager, CPA UK*

1030 - 1100 *Break*

1100 - 1130 **Session 2: Legislative Scrutiny in the New Standing Orders**

Following the visual breakdown of the legislative process in the first session, the second session will focus on the provisions and requirements of Standing Orders related to pre-legislative scrutiny (Standing Orders 66 - 80).

Speaker: Hon. Madi MK Ceesay, *Vice Chair, Standing Orders Committee, National Assembly of the Gambia*

1130 - 1230 **Session 3: Roles and Responsibilities in Legislative Scrutiny**

In groups and plenary participants will identify different stakeholders involved in legislative scrutiny and define the roles and responsibilities for each one. Speakers will provide comparative perspectives from different legislatures.

Speakers: John Mann MP, *House of Commons, UK Parliament*
David Melding AM, *National Assembly for Wales*

1230 - 1330 **Session 4: Legislative Scrutiny in Committees**

The Assembly Business Committee (ABC) may commit a bill to a Select, Standing or Special Select Committee, or a Committee of the Whole Assembly (Standing Order 68). This session will explore the reasons a bill would be committed to a certain committee as well as the impact this has on the role of an Assembly Member (Standing Orders 69-71).

Speakers: Kalipha M.M Mbye, *Director, Table Office, National Assembly of the Gambia*
Gibairu Jannah, *Director Communications, National Assembly of the Gambia*
The Lord German OBE, *House of Lords, UK Parliament*
Roisin Kelly, *Clerk of Business, Northern Ireland Assembly*

1330 - 1430 *Lunch*

Monday 30 September 2019

Day 1: Rules of Procedure

1430 - 1530 **Session 5: Committee Stage**

The session will consider the scope and remit of a committee investigating a bill, what changes or amendments a committee may recommend, and the order of events for a representative committee stage (Standing Orders 68, 69).

Speakers: John Mann MP, *House of Commons, UK Parliament*
Roisin Kelly, *Clerk of Business, Northern Ireland Assembly*

1530 - 1630 **Session 6: Public Consultation**

Any committee stage will generally include some form of public consultation to obtain feedback and insights from stakeholders affected by the new bill. Participants will discuss how committees in different legislatures reach out to relevant stakeholders, highlighting the advantages of different approaches.

Speakers: David Melding AM, *National Assembly for Wales*
Roisin Kelly, *Clerk of Business, Northern Ireland Assembly*

1630 *End of Day - Networking*

Tuesday 1 October 2019

Day 2: Challenging Scrutiny

0930 - 1000 **Reflection on Day 1**

A brief reflection on the previous day's discussions and an opportunity to address any unresolved questions or issues.

Facilitator: Mariam El-Azm, *Head of International Partnerships, CPA UK*

1000 - 1100 **Session 7: Reports and Recommendations**

Following on from the exploration of committee stages and public consultation, this session examines the resulting report, conclusions and recommendations to identify how these can be made most effective.

Speakers: Roisin Kelly, *Clerk of Business, Northern Ireland Assembly*
John Mann MP, *House of Commons, UK Parliament*

1100 - 1130 *Break*

1130 - 1230 **Session 8: Subsidiary Legislation and Special Cases**

Procedures for pre-legislative scrutiny differ in some cases, such as for subsidiary legislation (Standing Order 80) or bills with a certificate of urgency attached (Standing Order 77). Participants will discuss variations in procedure in these and other examples.

Speakers: Kalipha M.M Mbye, *Director, Table Office, National Assembly of the Gambia*
David Melding AM, *National Assembly for Wales*
The Lord German OBE, *House of Lords, UK Parliament*

1230 - 1330 **Session 9: Common Challenges and Solutions in Legislative Scrutiny**

Having examined the steps and procedure for legislative scrutiny as detailed in the Assembly's new Standing Orders, participants will share experiences or concerns around the process to identify effective solutions.

Facilitator: Felicity Herrmann, *Regional Programme Manager, CPA UK*

1330 - 1430 *Lunch*

1430 - 1500 **Session 10: Committee Exercise Briefing**

On Day 3 participants will engage in line-by-line scrutiny of a bill in a committee exercise. The preliminary briefing introduces participants to the exercise, its aim and intended outcomes. Those wishing to participate in questioning witnesses may register their interest.

Speakers: Roisin Kelly, *Clerk of Business, Northern Ireland Assembly*
Felicity Herrmann, *Regional Programme Manager, CPA UK*

Tuesday 1 October 2019

Day 2: Challenging Scrutiny

1500 - 1630 **Roundtable: Gender-Sensitive Scrutiny and Women's Representation**

CPA UK hosted the Westminster Workshop on Gender Sensitive Scrutiny at the UK Parliament in June 2019. Participants from across the Commonwealth, including the Gambia, discussed the importance of mainstreaming gender into the scrutiny of legislation and budgets. The roundtable will follow up on these discussions and offer Assembly Members an opportunity to share their perspectives and experience.

Chair: Hon. Fatoumatta Njai, *National Assembly of the Gambia*

1630 *End of Day - Networking*

Wednesday 2 October 2019

Day 3: Legislative Scrutiny in Practice

0930 - 1000 **Reflection on Day 2**

A brief reflection on the previous day's discussions and an opportunity to address any unresolved questions or issues.

Facilitator: Felicity Herrmann, *Regional Programme Manager, CPA UK*

1000 - 1100 **Session 11: Questioning Techniques**

As part of the committee stage a committee may invite witnesses likely to be affected by new legislation to give evidence. Since effective questioning techniques are crucial to obtain relevant information, participants will explore different approaches to improve their skills around questioning witnesses.

Speakers: David Melding AM, *National Assembly for Wales*
Roisin Kelly, *Clerk of Business, Northern Ireland Assembly*

1100 - 1130 *Break*

1130 - 1300 **Session 12a: Committee Exercise – Public Hearing**

Having deepened their questioning skills, registered participants will take on the role of committee members to question witnesses on the possible impact of a draft bill. Briefing materials and suggested questions will be provided.

1300 - 1400 *Lunch*

1400 - 1530 **Session 12b: Committee Exercise – Clause-By-Clause Scrutiny**

In small groups simulating a committee setting, participants will use the information obtained from witnesses to scrutinise the draft bill and suggest amendments. As detailed in Standing Order 69, groups will record an opinion on each clause and schedule of the bill. At the end of the session each "committee" will present some of their recommendations.

1530 - 1600 **Open Discussion / Q&A**

Before participants share their feedback at the end of the programme, a short open discussion provides space to raise any issues not addressed in previous sessions, resolve any new or outstanding questions, and get delegates' views on any further topic of interest.

Facilitator: Mariam El-Azm, *Head of International Partnerships, CPA UK*

1600 - 1630 **Feedback & Close**

The programme evaluation offers an opportunity for participants to share their experience of the programme.

Facilitator: Mariam El-Azm, *Head of International Partnerships, CPA UK*

1630 *End of Day - Networking*

PARTICIPANTS

John Mann MP

Delegation Leader

Member for Bassetlaw (Labour)

John Mann has been the Labour Member of Parliament for Bassetlaw since June 2001. He has been a member of the Treasury Committee since January 2009 and sits on the executive of the European Population Forum. He is a Vice President of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) Against Antisemitism and was appointed as the independent government adviser on antisemitism by former Prime Minister Theresa May.



The Lord German OBE

Member of the House of Lords (Liberal Democrat)

Lord (Michael) German led the Liberal Democrat group on Cardiff City Council for 12 years between 1983 and 1995. In 1997 he was awarded the OBE for political and community service in Wales.

In 1999 he was elected to represent South Wales East in the first ever elections for the National Assembly for Wales. A year earlier he had been elected by his Party to be their leader in waiting for the National Assembly. He is a former Deputy First Minister and also held various ministerial portfolios including the Economy, Europe and Rural Affairs. In 2007 he became the overall leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrats and left the National Assembly in June 2010 to join the House of Lords.

From 2010-2015 he was the Lords Spokesperson for the Liberal Democrats on Work and Pensions. Since 2016 he is the Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Prison Reform, Rehabilitation and Probation. He currently sits on the EU Internal Market Select Committee. He is Vice Chair of the Parliament Choir, and Hon. President of Dolen Cymru which links Wales with Lesotho. Since 2016 he has been the Treasurer of the Liberal Democrats.



David Melding AM

Member for South Wales Central (Welsh Conservative Party)

David Melding was first elected to the National Assembly for Wales in May 1999. He has served as the Conservatives' Shadow Minister for Health and Social Care and for Economy and Transport. Between 2000 and 2011 he was the Welsh Conservatives' Director of Policy and wrote the Welsh Conservatives' manifestos for the 2003, 2007 and 2011 Assembly elections.

He has previously chaired the Assembly's Audit; Health and Social Services; Standards of Conduct; and Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committees. David Melding was Deputy Presiding Officer during the Fourth Assembly. He is a former manager of the Carers National Association in Wales and a former Deputy Director of the Welsh Centre for International Affairs.



Roisin Kelly

Clerk of Business, Northern Ireland Assembly

Roisin Kelly is Clerk of Business (Table Section) at the Northern Ireland Assembly. She has 18 years' experience working in a parliamentary environment. In her current role she leads the Table Section of the Business Office. Roisin began her parliamentary career in the Assembly Research and Library Service in 2001 as a parliamentary researcher in the Public Finance Research Unit. She became a clerk in 2007 and since then has clerked several statutory (select) committees and served as a bill clerk in the Bill Office with responsibility for Executive Bills and the development of Private Members' Bills. She has also undertaken various learning and development and organisational development roles for clerking and the Assembly more broadly. She is one of the two authors of a 2018 evaluation of the National Assembly of the Gambia.



PARTICIPANTS

Mariam El-Azm

Head of International Partnerships, CPA UK

Mariam is an international relations professional and project manager with over seven years' experience managing projects on behalf of the UK Parliament. She currently heads the International Partnerships Team at CPA UK, overseeing most of the organisation's bilateral engagement. She previously managed the UK Overseas Territories Project focused on strengthening good practice in public financial scrutiny. Mariam holds a Master's degree in Global Governance and Ethics from University College London and a trilingual BSc in Business Administration from HEC Montreal. She is fluent in French, English and Spanish and is also a trained yoga teacher and a career coach.



Felicity Herrmann

Asia Pacific Regional Programme Manager, CPA UK

Felicity oversees CPA UK's engagement with Commonwealth legislatures across the Asia Pacific region, instigating and directing short- and long-term parliamentary strengthening and diplomatic programmes. In her previous role as Programme Officer she delivered study visits, workshops and other activities across different Commonwealth legislatures, as well as leading on CPA UK's engagement with the National Assembly of the Gambia. Before this she supported the UK Overseas Territories Project (UKOT) on good governance and public financial scrutiny, delivered by a CPA UK-led consortium of project partners. She holds an MSc in Comparative Politics from the London School of Economics.



ABOUT CPA UK

CPA UK is the largest and most active of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's branches. Located in and funded by the UK Parliament it supports and strengthens parliamentary democracy throughout the Commonwealth. CPA UK has a distinctive ability and capacity in this area given the origins of CPA since its formation in 1911, and the UK Parliament's propensity to evolve, develop, learn and inform. Peer to peer learning is central to CPA UK's methodology; it designs bespoke interactions between UK and Commonwealth parliamentarians and officials enabling and facilitating knowledge-sharing to achieve improved parliamentary oversight, scrutiny and representation.

Vision. Inclusive, representative and transparent Commonwealth Parliaments; fully effective in enforcing the accountability of the executive and representing the interests and concerns of the electorate.

Purpose. To learn from and strengthen Commonwealth parliaments to deliver effective oversight, scrutiny and representation.

CPA UK's Strategic Objectives are:

Objective 1. To strengthen parliamentary democracy

Being responsive to the complex challenges of Parliaments and facilitating access to information and skills

We will:

- *provide opportunities for UK parliamentarians to learn from Commonwealth peers*
- *convene Commonwealth parliamentarians to increase their capacity to hold governments to account and to effectively represent their electorates*
- *build knowledge within the Commonwealth parliamentary community on issues of common interest and concern*

Objective 2. To link Westminster with the Commonwealth

Promoting collaboration, understanding and cooperation, emphasising its continuing relevance to future generations

We will:

- *play a leading role in CPA*
- *establish and strengthen networks across parliaments, and beyond*
- *engage young people in our work and vision*

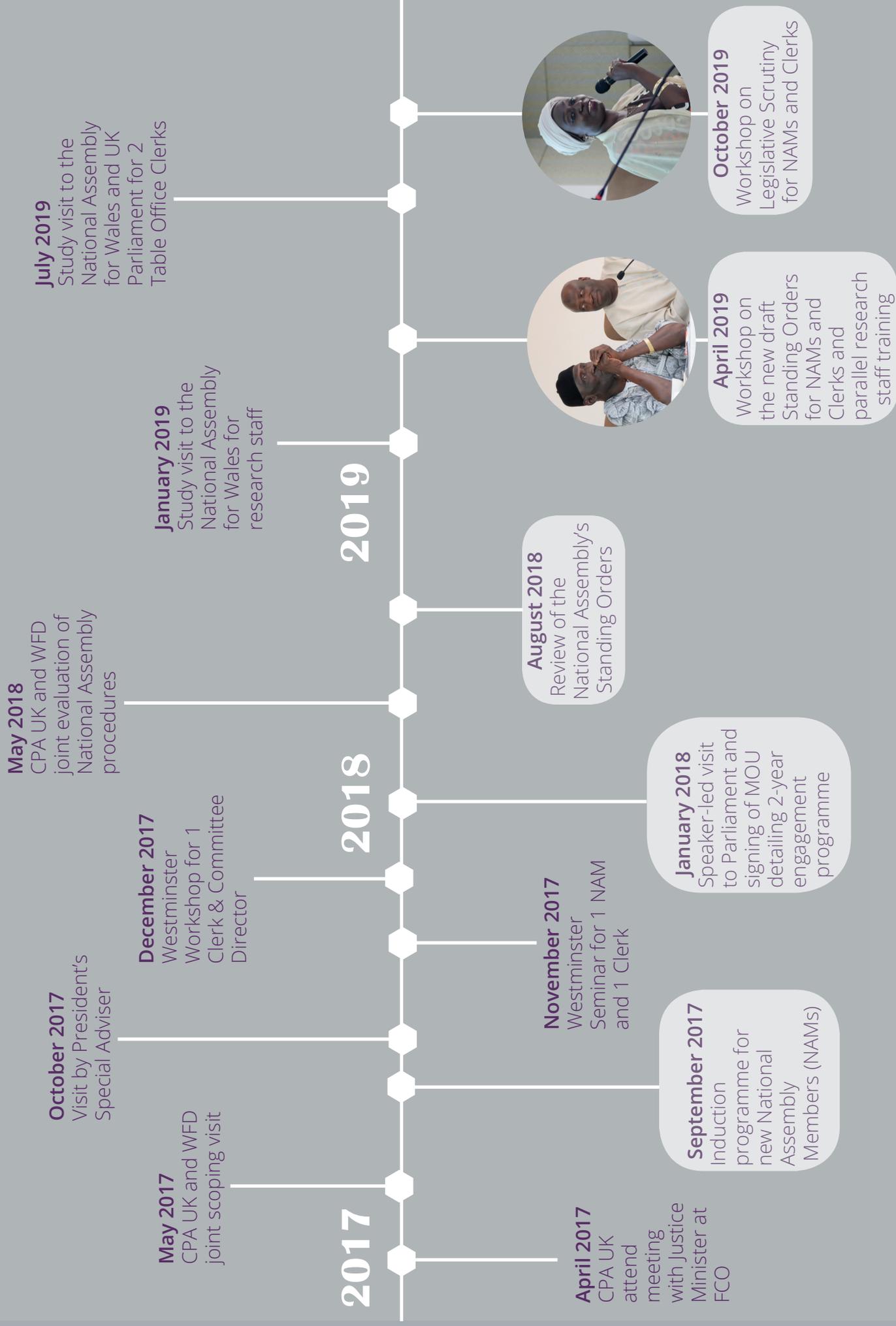
Objective 3. To set and demonstrate high performance standards

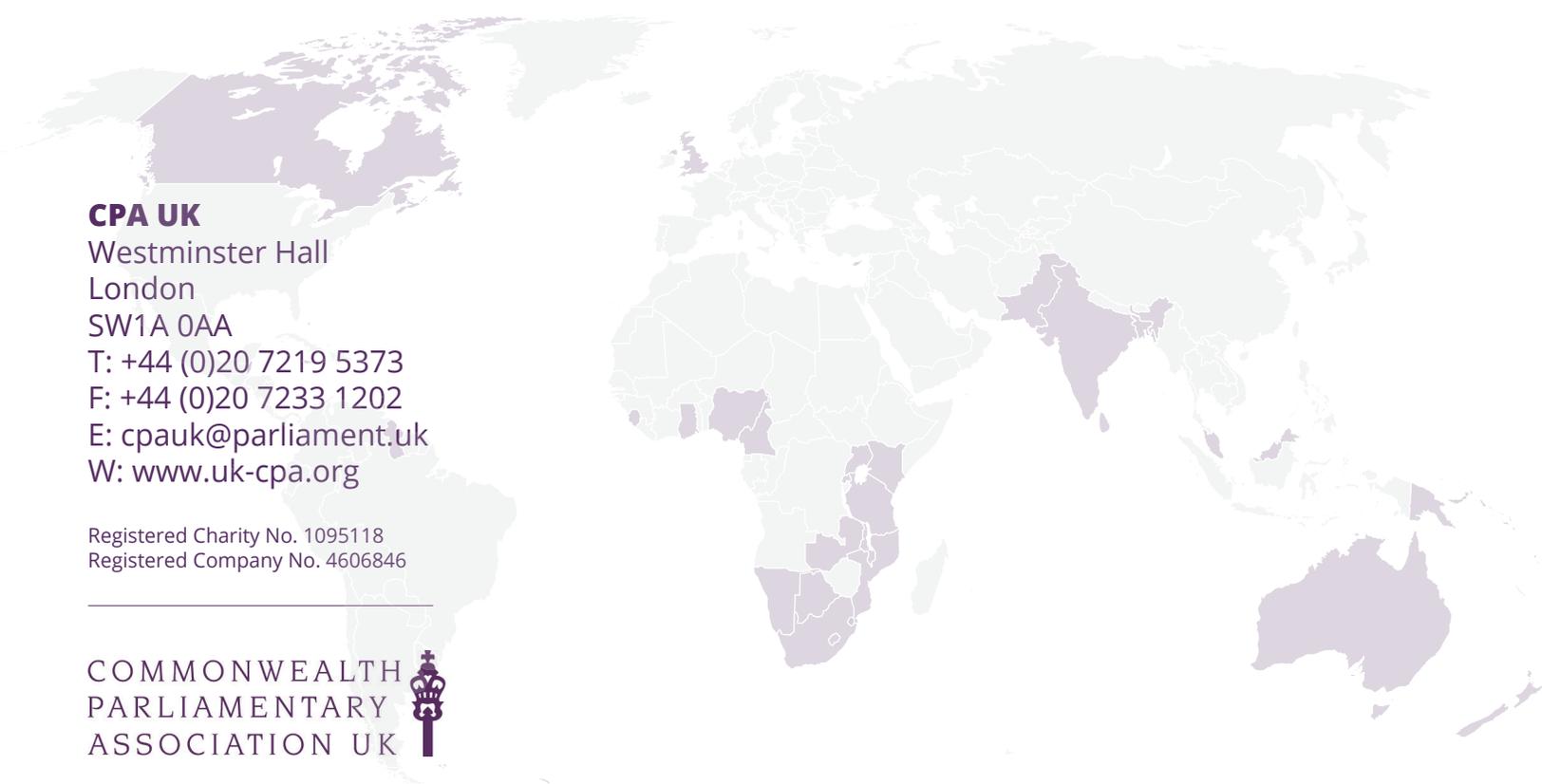
Increasing the positive impact of all we do

We will:

- *achieve value for money in the organisation and delivery of our activities*
- *set and uphold high standards of behaviour*
- *use evidence-based learning to improve what we do and how we do it*

Engagement with the National Assembly of The Gambia: CPA UK Activities 2017 - 2019





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
PARLIAMANTARY
ASSOCIATION UK

