

CPA UK

20-21



A Year Adapting to Covid-19







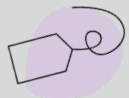





“ I am so impressed at how, through the innovation of colleagues across the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, we’ve still found ways to remain connected. Whether it be the Westminster village or the Commonwealth family, the past twelve months have shown the importance of working together to find shared solutions to the challenges we’ve faced ”

Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP,
Speaker of the UK House
of Commons



Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP, Speaker of the UK House of Commons

Contents

 Responding to Covid-19 4 - 5	 From the Chief Executive 6	 From the Chair 7
 Parliamentary Strengthening 8 - 11	 Women in Parliament 12 - 14	 Security 15 - 17
 Modern Slavery 18 - 20	 Public Accounts Committees 21 - 23	 Trade 24 - 25
 Addressing Racial Disparity 26 - 27	 CPA UK Activities 2020/21 28 - 29	 Financial Overview 30 - 31

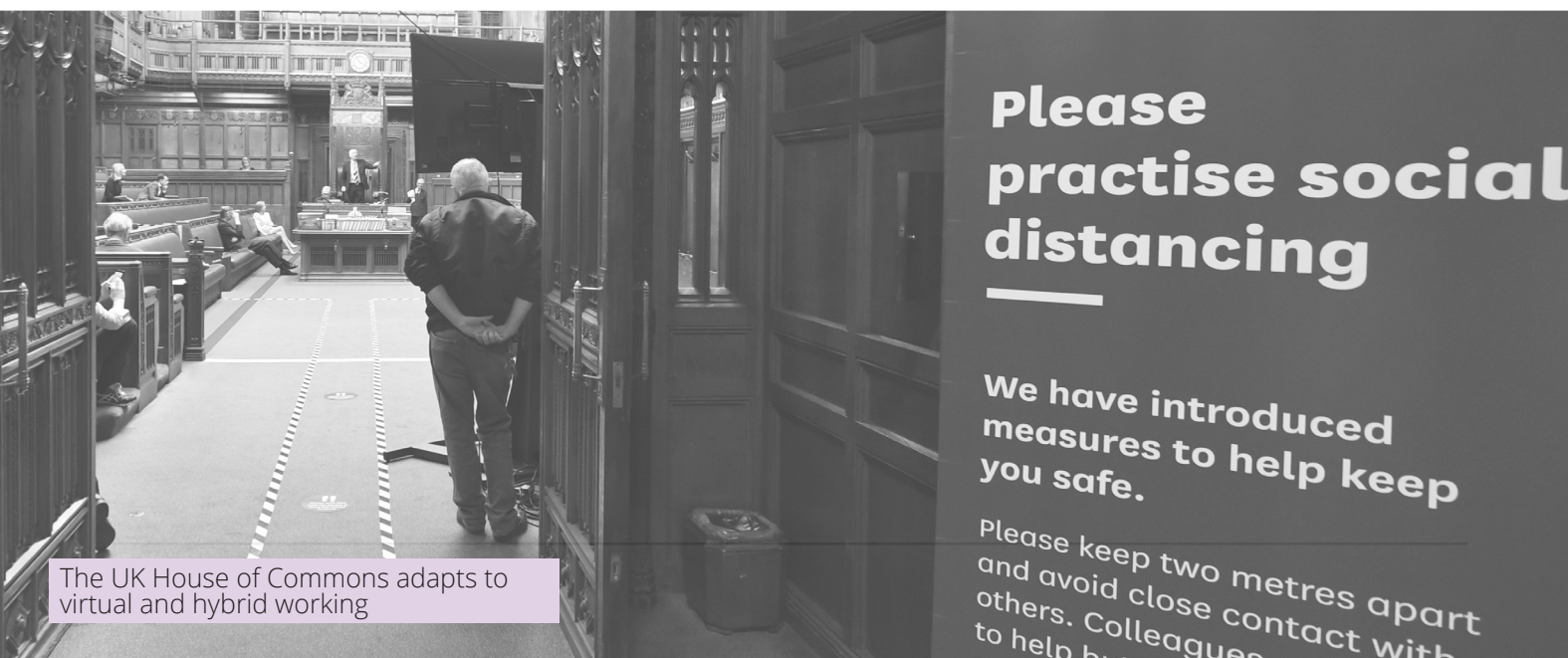
Responding to Covid-19



With the announcement of a national lockdown in the UK in March 2020, CPA UK had to quickly adapt its planning for the year to account for the new restrictions.

The work of a member of parliament throughout the Commonwealth also drastically changed with the arrival of the global pandemic. CPA UK's role supporting Commonwealth parliamentarians during these unprecedented times meant new activities had to be designed and implemented that would equip lawmakers to respond effectively.

Covid-19 also presented an opportunity for CPA UK to reach a greater number of parliamentarians through virtual channels. Our flagship Westminster Seminar, which took place online for the first time, hosted 127 delegates, an increase of 112% on the previous year's in-person event.



The UK House of Commons adapts to virtual and hybrid working

Through our virtual programmes we've engaged with:

785

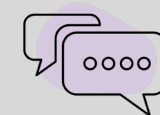
Parliamentarians and parliamentary officials

From

83

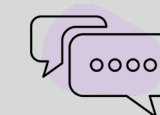
Legislatures across the Commonwealth

Some Covid-19 activities & outputs have included:



Virtual Meeting: Impact of Covid-19 at the Parliament of South Africa

Senior clerks and staff from the UK and South African parliaments met to compare the different approaches taken by committees in response to Covid-19



UK and Canada in conversation: How the parliaments have adapted to Covid-19

The Rt Hon John Spellar MP, UK, and Mr Bruce Stanton MP, Canada, met virtually to reflect on changes to parliamentary business and procedure in the wake of Covid-19



Report on Financial Scrutiny and Covid-19

A report on how Public Accounts Committees have maintained financial scrutiny during Covid-19 as part of a project funded by the FCDO to strengthen democracy, oversight, and sustainability in the Commonwealth.



Virtual Roundtable: Responding to Covid-19 & Parliamentary Democracy Post Quarantine

A virtual platform for parliamentarians to explore how smaller parliaments have responded quickly and innovatively to the pandemic, using the case-study of the Welsh Senedd.



Webinar: How can MPs continue to communicate with constituents during Covid-19?

Parliamentarians from the UK, Jamaica and Canada explored how constituent engagement has changed since the outbreak of Covid-19



The Rise of Cybercrime amid Covid-19: Webinar Series

An in-depth look at emerging trends in cybersecurity and changes in cyberthreats to parliaments under Covid-19.

From the Chief Executive



The theme of this year's Commonwealth Day was Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, Transforming.

The theme seems particularly apt for the work of CPA UK in 2020/21 as the organisation overcame the challenges posed by Covid-19 and a world in lockdown.

Connecting

This year, the usual programme of CPA UK activities, which would have brought parliamentarians and officials physically together, were replaced by an array of virtual workshops, bilateral meetings and conferences. This has allowed us to connect more regularly and more inclusively, especially where travel to and from the UK is more costly and challenging

Innovating

I believe this Review shows how CPA UK has been quick to innovate in order to keep achieving our goal of strengthening parliamentary democracy throughout the Commonwealth. This has included the first ever virtual election assessment missions carried out in Guernsey, Anguilla and the Turks & Caicos Islands.

Transforming

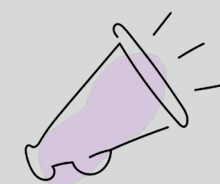
Our Parliaments need to keep transforming and reinventing themselves to keep up with the pace of change and to reflect the realities of the societies they represent. So, I welcome our continued work on addressing the scourge of modern slavery and human trafficking as well as efforts to increase the voice of women and marginalised groups in the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth family of 54 member countries has rarely faced as challenging a time. Connecting, Innovating, Transforming: that is how we will build the Common Future which the Commonwealth deserves.

Jon Davies
**Chief Executive,
CPA UK**



From the Chair



It is with immense pride that I look back on the past year of activities and see how CPA UK overcame the challenges of 2020/21 to connect with colleagues across the Commonwealth and champion parliamentary democracy.

The organisation has shown great flexibility to deliver a programme of outstanding activities despite the restrictions of Covid-19. For that reason, I want to extend my gratitude first and foremost to the team for their resilience and innovation. I also want to thank the many Members who have responded so positively to this innovation and been involved in CPA UK's work, especially my colleagues on the Executive Committee.

As we slowly return to normal here in the UK Parliament, I would urge my colleagues in both the House of Commons and House of Lords to connect with CPA UK, contribute to its excellent work and look for opportunities to learn from our Commonwealth counterparts.

The global pandemic is a reminder of our interconnectivity, as one way or another every part of the Commonwealth family has been affected by this virus. There is great benefit to be had from listening to one another, sharing experiences and strengthening our institutions to adapt to the modern-day challenges we face.

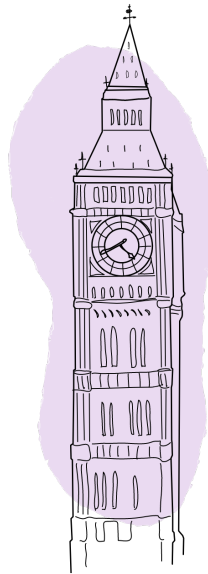


Ian Liddell-Grainger MP
Chair, CPA UK Executive Committee



The UK House of Commons adapts to virtual and hybrid working

Parliamentary Strengthening



building relationships;
strengthening democracy

Elections

CPA UK supports and strengthens parliamentary democracy throughout the Commonwealth. A significant part of that work is through election observation.

In 2020/21, following Election Observation Missions to the Turks and Caicos Islands (2016) and Jersey (2018) both islands introduced extensive electoral reform.

With almost the entire globe being impacted by Covid-19, CPA UK had to adapt its election observation work in 2020/21 in order to overcome travel restrictions and national lockdowns.

To achieve this, the first ever virtual assessments were conducted for elections in Turks & Caicos Islands, Guernsey and Anguilla. The teams of observers carried out research online, as well as undertaking interviews with a wide range of stakeholders utilising digital meeting platforms.

the Turks & Caicos Islands House of Assembly passed the Elections Amendment Ordinance 2020 Bill, which includes provisions to simplify the counting of votes by electronic means, a direct response to the observation mission's recommendation.

DEC 20

Jersey States Members voted for a transformation of the electoral system, removing Senators alongside an increase in the number of Deputies in the Assembly, and a merging of districts. This was in response to the observers' recommendation to rectify issues around boundary delimitation.

DEC 20



Polling station during Guernsey General Election, 7 October 2020

FEB 21

Legislative Scrutiny Workshop with the Parliament of Sierra Leone

A virtual workshop with Members and clerks of the Sierra Leone Parliament, explored legislative scrutiny, approaches to effective pre-legislative scrutiny, and recent changes to Parliament's Standing Orders.

SEP 20

Virtual Election Observation Training Course

CPA UK delivered a virtual training course for future Short-Term Election Observers, open to parliamentarians from the UK, Devolved Assemblies, the British Isles and Mediterranean Region, and the Africa region.

SEP-OCT 21

Virtual Caribbean Clerks Programme

CPA UK delivered a programme for clerks and parliamentary staff across the Caribbean region focussed on improving communication skills for virtual working during Covid-19 and in person.

OCT 21

Programme with the Parliament of Lesotho: Challenges and Solutions in Parliamentary Procedure

A series of online sessions connected parliamentarians and clerks from the UK and Sierra Leone to share experiences on new ways of working during Covid-19.

Westminster Seminar 2020: Preparing Parliamentarians for a Changing World

From the 23-25th November 2020, CPA UK hosted the 69th Westminster Seminar, its flagship capacity building event bringing together parliamentarians and clerks from across the Commonwealth to engage in peer to peer learning.

This year the Seminar was the first ever to take place virtually. With parliaments adapting to Covid-19 restrictions, the Seminar offered delegates a chance to consider how the pandemic has created challenges as well as opportunities for strengthening democracy.

CPA UK welcomed 127 delegates from every Commonwealth region, with 39 speakers.

A report by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK, following the 2018 general election, found elections in Jersey needed to be "fairer". This led to the [Privileges and Procedures Committee] drafting their proposals in order to simplify and improve fairness in the process

BBC News



This was an election of firsts: the first time election observers were invited by Guernsey; the first use of a new electoral system; the first inclusion of advance polling days; and, on top of all this, the first election to be conducted during a global pandemic



Jim Wells MLA
Head of Mission, Northern Ireland Assembly

Women in Parliament



promoting representative democracies; supporting women parliamentarians

This year we have worked hard to create virtual spaces for **women parliamentarians** to share their experiences challenging online harms and gender-based violence, ensuring equal access to political participation and making progress on gender-sensitive legislation.

“ You have to be bold and you have to be daring... to be a woman politician ”

Hon. Fatoumatta Njai, National Assembly of Gambia, during the CPA UK International Women's Day Debate, March 2021

- Hon. Fatoumatta Njai from the National Assembly of the Gambia, an attendee at the 2019 Westminster Workshop on Gender Sensitive Scrutiny, took some of her learning and experiences from the workshop forward to propose the establishment of a Committee on Gender in her legislature.

In September 2020 that proposal was accepted. It is the hope that the new Committee will give a voice to women and underrepresented communities across Gambia, and will place issues relating to gender and inclusion to the fore.

Paving the way for legislative change:
CPA UK published a report on the effectiveness of legislation protecting women from all forms of violence

#Choosetochallenge:
International Women's Day debate united women from parliaments across the Commonwealth to share experience and pledge support

UK-Fiji virtual meeting:
We connected with women parliamentarians from Fiji and the UK to explore the challenges of tackling violence against women in politics

The 'shadow pandemic':
We heard from women parliamentarians in our podcast episode on the global increase in domestic abuse during Covid-19 lockdowns

APR 21

MAR 21

FEB 21

JUL 20



International Women's Day #ChooseToChallenge Virtual Debate, 8 March 2021

“ It happens to us no matter where we are, and it happens to us because we are women...Women are more than capable of being leaders. We need to give women confidence and to apply that in whichever field ”

Dawn Butler, speaking to parliamentarians from Fiji, February 2021.



“ It's vital that all leaders take collective responsibility to overcome the barriers to women's political empowerment and that includes violence and the threat of violence ”



Rt Hon James Cleverly MP, during CPA UK's International Women's Day debate, March 2021.

Security



increasing awareness of national, cyber and climate security

Climate change is a pertinent issue for parliaments in the Commonwealth. A high proportion of countries within the Commonwealth are classed as Small Island Developing States or within the Least Developed Countries group. These regions are highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, yet often have low ecological footprints.

In March 2021, CPA UK hosted a **virtual Climate Forum** to give a voice to these under-represented communities, and to discuss the role of elected representatives in holding governments to account, setting ambitious climate commitments and complying with international agreements.

Your influence, expertise and insight are invaluable. You are the people above all others that can mobilise action

Fiona Clouder,
COP26 Regional Ambassador to Latin America & Caribbean

Building upon the learning from the Forum, **two working groups were elected to represent and advocate for collective Commonwealth priorities.** A Pacific Focused Working Group and a Pan-Commonwealth Working Group will listen to their region and represent these interests, coordinating efforts and highlighting concerns in the lead up - and during - COP26.

MAR 21

Commonwealth Parliamentary Forum on Climate Change - Preparing for Glasgow COP26:

Ahead of the UK hosting COP26 in November 2021, CPA UK partnered with the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to explore the role of parliamentarians in holding governments to account, setting ambitious climate commitments and complying with international agreements.



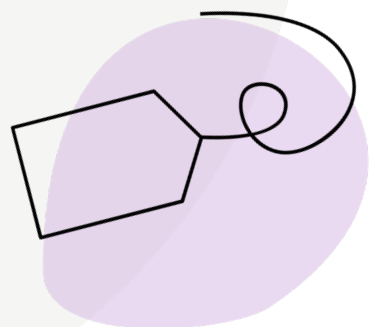
We are looking forward to taking the momentum from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Forum on Climate Change into the Pacific Working Group. We hope to find solutions to the environmental issues we collectively face by working together, with citizens, and within our parliaments



Hon Pinto Katia MP (Kiribati) and **Hon Ralph Regenvanu MP** (Vanuatu), Asia-Pacific Working Group Co-Chairs



Modern Slavery



combatting modern slavery, human trafficking & forced labour

CPA UK's work on combatting **modern slavery, human trafficking and forced labour** once again received international recognition for its "innovation" and "tailored approach", both in the US Trafficking in Persons Report 2020 and the UK's Independent Commission for Aid Impact review.

- With the UK Government-funded Modern Slavery Project coming to an end in 2020, CPA UK resumed its commitment to tackling contemporary forms of exploitation as part of its core activities. This saw a new partnership with the **Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre** to join up academia, civil society and policy makers to strengthen the protection of victims in international law.

Assisting and Protecting Survivors of Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking and Forced Labour:
CPA UK organised a two-day virtual conference in partnership with the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (Modern Slavery PEC).

SEP 20

“The conference has been very inclusive of grassroots organisations directly working with the survivors and the voices of survivors themselves. In the future, this kind of inclusiveness should continue since it informs on what the survivors real needs are.”

Delegate, Assisting and Protecting Survivors of Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking & Forced Labour

- Additional support was provided for legislators across the Caribbean through a **Regional Workshop**. This will form the basis of ongoing assistance in the region to raise awareness of modern slavery and shore up anti-trafficking legislation.

Caribbean Regional Workshop:
CPA UK brought together parliamentarians and officials from across the UK and Caribbean to increase awareness and build networks in response to the global challenge of human trafficking and forced labour

FEB 21



Participants during the virtual conference on Assisting and Protecting Survivors of Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking and Forced Labour, **September 2020**

“**The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association [Modern Slavery Project] has undertaken interesting small-scale innovation on legal development, parliamentary drafting and civil society mobilisation to combat modern slavery in Commonwealth countries**”

The Independent Commission
for Aid Impact

ICAI

Public Accounts Committees



ensuring transparency,
accountability & honesty
in government

Across the Commonwealth, **Public Accounts Committees** play a critical role in scrutinising government spending and ensuring financial transparency and accountability.

Working with oversight committees such as Public Accounts Committees is one of the key ways CPA UK supports financial scrutiny, ensuring members have the technical expertise and knowledge to hold governments to account on behalf of their citizens.

- Over the past 12 months, CPA UK has continued to work with PACs across all Commonwealth regions to build capacity, especially through its role as Secretariat of the **Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees (CAPAC)**.
 - CAPAC now has **52 member committees**, 12 of whom joined since the start of 2021.
- We were also delighted that 50 delegates attended the CAPAC General Meeting & Conference in March 2021, the most participants at a CAPAC activity since its creation in 2015.

“Our work is vitally important and Covid has shone a light on that. With so much money being spent on the Covid response, transparency and accountability for that spending is more important than ever before.”

Meg Hillier MP, Chair of UK Public Accounts Committee and Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees (CAPAC)



NOV 20

St Helena PAC Financial Scrutiny Training

CPA UK organised virtual workshops for the St Helena PAC to improve knowledge and understanding of financial scrutiny, including measuring Performance, Value for Money, and Approaches to Questioning.

NOV 20

Anguilla Public Accounts Committee Workshop

CPA UK delivered a two-day virtual Workshop to strengthen the capacity of the Anguilla PAC, covering evidence session, managing Inquiries, reporting, and measuring success.

OCT 20

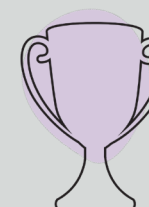
Westminster Workshop on Public Financial Oversight

CPA UK hosted a virtual programme for over 90 chairs, members and clerks of PACs across the Commonwealth to share good practices and increase understanding of accountability and oversight.

APR 21

Report on Financial Scrutiny and COVID-19

32 PACs participated in research for a CPA UK report on how PACs in the Commonwealth have maintained financial scrutiny during the ongoing pandemic. The report was part of a project funded by the FCDO.



UK Overseas Territories Project Wins Public Finance Award 2020

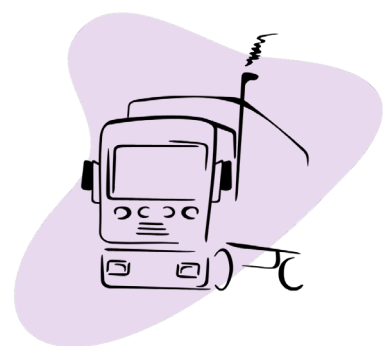
The **UK Overseas Territories Project**, delivered by CPA UK in partnership with the National Audit Office and the Government Internal Audit Agency, works to **support and strengthen financial oversight and governance** in the Overseas Territories.

In October 2020, the Project was awarded the Public Finance Award for **Good Governance, Risk Management or Prevention**.

The Award recognises an individual or team that has developed a governance, risk management or prevention project, displaying high accountability standards, strong oversight and risk awareness alongside improved outcomes and impact.

The Judges said **“The UK Overseas Territories Project stood out as being different and one that has the potential to make a substantial impact. It addresses a recognised problem and is robust in its oversight. Government departments with interests abroad can replicate success with this approach.”**

Trade



developing capacity;
sharing knowledge

It has been a year of unprecedented change for international trade relationships between the UK and the Commonwealth, with both **Brexit** and the **Covid-19** pandemic dominating governmental trade agendas.

CPA UK has brought together **parliamentarians, representatives from business groups and trade experts** from across the Commonwealth to build mutually beneficial relationships and develop capacity as the UK enters into a new era of negotiating and scrutinising trade agreements.

These discussions have paved the way for CPA UK's upcoming **Workshop Series on Trade Agreements** in June 2021, which will give delegates the opportunity to speak to experienced politicians and experts from across the Commonwealth on effective parliamentary oversight of trade deals, within the context of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

“ Parliamentarians should promote legislation that can help countries recover quickly and manage future risks. They must engage more with the communities and provide support for some of the most vulnerable in their constituencies. ”

Adjoba Kyiamah, the Executive Director of the UK-Ghana Chamber of Commerce, from our blog series, 'Covid, Commerce and the Commonwelath.'

JUL 20

UK-Canada Forum - Brexit, Trade and COP26: Parliamentarians from the UK and Canada met virtually to discuss relations between the two countries in the post-Brexit era.

SEP 20

Covid, Commerce & The Commonwealth Blog series: Experts on the impact of Covid-19 on trade across different regions and sectors in the UK, Ghana and across the Commonwealth.

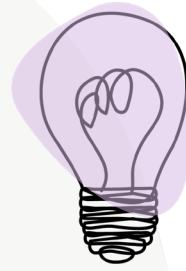
AUG 20

New Zealand & the UK: NZ Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee and UK Foreign Affairs Committee met to discuss their mutual interest in negotiating a strong bilateral free trade agreement post-Brexit.

JUL 20

Webinar on Covid-19 & international trade in UK & Africa: We brought together parliamentarians and experts to discuss how governments can best mitigate against the negative impacts of Covid-19, and take advantage of new markets.

Addressing Racial Disparity



With global demands to address racial injustice and Covid-19's disproportionate impact on black people and other minority ethnic groups, 2020/21 was a time of reflection on social inequality.

As a Commonwealth organisation, CPA UK recognises the negative aspects of the British Empire, including contributing to racial injustice. We also recognise the rich diversity within our family of 54 countries and the incredible contribution people of different ethnicities and cultures have made to Britain, both past and present.

In playing our role to promote our shared Commonwealth values, CPA UK will continue to champion inclusiveness, diversity and equality in all areas of its work. One practical way we're seeking to do this has been through the establishment of the **Racial Disparity Working Group**.

The Working Group has led on numerous efforts to promote inclusivity, including the creation of a new role within the Executive Committee: the Racial Diversity & Inclusion Lead. The position has been taken up by **Rt Hon. Lord Dholakia OBE DL** who will support the wider Executive Committee in ensuring the promotion of racial diversity in all aspects of CPA UK's work and processes.



Diversity and Equality must be at the heart of our democracy. We cannot be at peace with ourselves, or at ease with ourselves if these values are lacking in everything we do.

I am therefore delighted to take up the role of Racial Diversity & Inclusion Lead within CPA UK's Executive Committee. The last year has highlighted there is still so much work to be done on addressing social injustices, not only in the UK but throughout the world.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure diversity and inclusion is at the forefront of our minds when delivering programmes and activities.



Rt Hon. Lord
Dholakia OBE DL



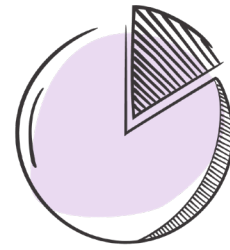
CPA UK Activities 2020/21



CPA UK is part of the **British Islands and Mediterranean Region (BIMR)** and serves as its Secretariat. BIMR activities in 2020/21 included the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Conference on Women's Representation & Gender Sensitive Parliaments; a series of roundtables sharing responses to Covid-19; and discussions between Commonwealth parliamentarians with disabilities.



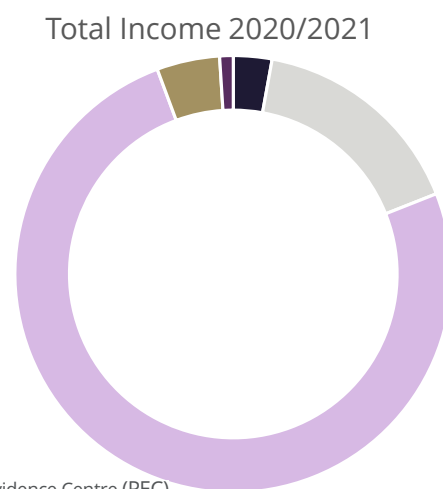
Financial Overview



In the financial year 2020/2021, CPA UK had an income of £1,960,791. This included grant-in-aid of £1,476,961 from the UK Parliament (70% House of Commons/30% House of Lords). This represented 75% of the full grant originally agreed, in line with significantly reduced expenditure due the nature of the programmes we were able to deliver during the Pandemic.

The UK Overseas Territories Project was funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to the tune of £316,849, again a pandemic-related reduction on original plans. In addition CPA UK secured a further £166,702 from the FCDO and other partners to undertake projects and other activities mentioned above, including working with Public Accounts Committees; on Women in Parliament, Modern Slavery and Climate Security; and on Election Observation Missions.

This is a summary of our financial activities, extracted from the audited accounts for the year ending 31 March 2021. The full Annual Report and Accounts will be available on the CPA UK website: www.uk-cpa.org.



- Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC)
- UK Overseas Territories Project
- Grant in Aid From the House of Commons and House of Lords
- The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
- Others

CPA UK

Westminster Hall | Houses of Parliament | London | SW1A 0AA

T: +44 (0)207 219 5373

W: www.uk-cpa.org

E: cpauk@parliament.uk

Registered Charity No. 1095118

Registered Company No. 4606846