



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

International Relations: Parliamentary travel

29 September 2022

Reference: SPCB (2022) Paper 61

Executive summary

1. The Corporate Body is invited to consider forthcoming overseas parliamentary travel and, in accordance with Section 2, paragraph 62 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament in relation to receipt by Members of travel, hospitality etc., approve the details of the travel and other costs associated with the outward visit below.

Issues and options

2. The 9th British Islands and Mediterranean Region (BIMR) Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference will take place in Gibraltar, from 4-7 October 2022. The conference will bring together over 50 Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from across the BIMR for this unique conference and networking opportunity. The theme of the conference is *Attracting and Retaining Effective Women Parliamentarians in the British Islands and Mediterranean Region* and the conference will focus on development of the region's Gender Sensitive Parliaments work, looking in more detail at the issues of retention, managing online abuse and trends in recent elections in the region. Session subjects will include Gender Sensitive Parliaments including Parental Leave, Elections (with case-studies from the Region), Managing and Legislating for Online Abuse and outreach activities with local people.
3. Both Members, Sarah Boyack MSP and Karen Adam MSP, will participate in the sessions outlined above as well as wider conference discussions.

Governance

4. The SPCB will recall that, within the International Strategy, which it agreed in September 2021, there is a new requirement for the International Relations Office (IRO) to outline to the SPCB why the visit is in person (as opposed to virtual) and the travel options and environmental impact considered by the delegation.
5. The last BIRM CWP conference was held in 2020, since then Members have only attended virtual CWP meetings with the exception of a short breakfast meeting during the regional conference in March 2022. This conference will provide an ideal opportunity for the two Members to build on the relationships built with other regional members, learn best practices and to promote the work of the Scottish Parliament, such as the Gender Audit. Furthermore, as virtual participation is not available for the conference, there is a strong argument for in person attendance.
6. Due to time constraints, air travel between Edinburgh and Gibraltar is the only realistic option. A direct flight between Edinburgh and Gibraltar has been selected for the outward journey but there was not a direct flight option for the return. As such a direct flight to Manchester followed by a train journey to Edinburgh was selected. The CO₂e footprint per person is 636.8Kg (return).

Resource implications

7. The estimated costs for travel and appropriate incidental expenses for both MSPs and the Secretary of the CPA Scotland Branch (from the International Relations Office) comes to £1600. Note: the host Branch will cover the cost of the accommodation.
8. Section 2, paragraph 62 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament states that certain overseas visits are excluded from the requirement to register where the travel and other costs are wholly met by the SPCB (in this case, from the IRO budget).

Publication Scheme

9. This paper will be published in line with the SPCB's Publication Scheme.

Decision

10. The SPCB is invited to consider the above travel and, in accordance with the Code of Conduct, approve the details of the travel and the associated costs above.

11. The IRO will then notify the Members concerned they do not need to register this travel.

International Relations Office
September 2022