

British-American Parliamentary Group

Executive Committee Report

2010-11

(For the year ended 31 March 2011)

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OFFICERS & MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2010-2011

Honorary Joint Presidents	The Speaker of the House of Commons The Lord Speaker
Vice-Presidents	The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP The Rt. Hon. the Baroness Boothroyd, PC, OM The Rt. Hon. the Lord Carrington, KG, GCMG, CH, MC, DL The Rt. Hon. Nick Clegg, MP The Rt. Hon. Iain Duncan Smith, MP The Rt. Hon. the Lord Falconer of Thoroton, QC The Rt. Hon. William Hague, MP The Rt. Hon. the Lord Howard of Lympne, QC The Rt. Hon. the Lord Howe of Aberavon, Kt, CH, QC The Rt. Hon. the Lord Hurd of Westwell, CH, CBE The Rt. Hon. the Lord Jopling, DL The Rt. Hon. Charles Kennedy, MP The Rt. Hon. the Lord Mackay of Clashfern, KT The Rt. Hon. David Miliband, MP The Rt. Hon. the Lord Molyneux of Killead, KBE The Rt. Hon. the Lord Owen, CH The Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, MP The Rt. Hon. the Baroness Thatcher, LG, OM,
Honorary Chairman	The Prime Minister
Vice-Chairmen	The Rt. Hon. Dr. Liam Fox, MP The Rt. Hon. Shaun Woodward, MP
Honorary Secretary	Brian Donohoe, MP
Honorary Treasurers	The Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP The Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

House of Commons

Government	Opposition
Christopher Chope, OBE, MP	The Rt. Hon. Hazel Blears, MP
Mark Field, MP	The Rt. Hon. Ann Clwyd, MP
Lorraine Fullbrook, MP	Vernon Coaker, MP
Jack Lopresti, MP	Elfyn Llwyd, MP
Mark Pritchard, MP	Andy Love, MP
The Rt. Hon. Sir John Stanley, MP	Austin Mitchell, MP

House of Lords

Conservative	Labour
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Trimble	The Rt. Hon. the Lord Anderson of Swansea, DL
The Baroness O’Cathain, OBE	The Rt. Hon. the Lord Morris of Aberavon, KG, QC
Liberal Democrat	Cross Bench
The Baroness Scott of Needham Market	The Lord Hannay of Chiswick

Administrator: Hannah Mitchell

The office is situated at 7 Millbank (Room 6/38), London SW1P 3JA
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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Executive Committee 2010-11 met on: 19th October 2010; 7th December 2010; 8th February 2011 and 17th May 2011.

The Annual General Meeting, at which the current Executive Committee was elected, took place on 7th July 2010.

The following indicates attendances at the Executive Committee meetings since the last AGM:

The Rt. Hon. the Lord Anderson of Swansea, DL	/4
The Rt. Hon. Hazel Blears, MP	/4
Christopher Chope, OBE, MP	/4
The Rt. Hon. Ann Clwyd, MP	/4
Vernon Coaker, MP	/4
Brian Donohoe, MP	/4
Mark Field, MP	/4
The Rt. Hon. Dr. Liam Fox, MP	/4
Lorraine Fullbrook, MP	/4
The Lord Hannay of Chiswick	/4
The Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP	/4
Elfyn Llwyd, MP	/4
Jack Lopresti, MP	/4
Andy Love, MP	/4
Austin Mitchell, MP	/4
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Morris of Aberavon, KG, QC	/4
The Baroness O’Cathain, OBE	/4
Mark Pritchard, MP	/4
The Baroness Scott of Needham Market	/4
The Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP	/4
The Rt. Hon. Sir John Stanley, MP	/4
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Trimble	/4
The Rt. Hon. Shaun Woodward, MP	/4

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2010-11

Foreword to the accounts

Introduction

The British-American Parliamentary Group (BAPG) was formed in 1937 to promote closer relations and understanding between Members of both Houses of Parliament and Members of both Houses of the United States Congress by providing opportunities for discussion on problems common to both countries and for the exchange of visits and information. The BAPG Objectives, Activities and Rules were formally adopted on 5 July 1967 and have since been subject to minor amendments in 1968, 1981, 1982, 1996, 2000, 2003 and 2007, 2008 and 2009.

The BAPG acts as an autonomous body within Parliament. It appoints its own administrative staff to carry out its objectives and the Rules of the BAPG define the limitations on its powers.

The management of the BAPG is vested in the Executive Committee. The Honorary Secretary, who is a member of the Executive Committee, is primarily responsible for the BAPG's activities; the Administrator, who is an official of the BAPG and not a Member of the Executive Committee, is responsible for the executive work of the BAPG. The Chairman of the BAPG is the Prime Minister. The two Vice-Chairmen of the Executive Committee are normally of Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet rank.

Principal Activities of the British-American Parliamentary Group

The format of the annual programme of activities has historically consisted of: one Annual Conference; one ad hoc specialist delegation visit to the United States, budget allowing; one familiarisation visit to the United States co-sponsored with the United States Department of State and attendance as observers at biennial courses held in the United States for newly elected Members of Congress. Also every four years during a Presidential election year, members attend the Democratic and Republican National Party Conventions.

Various other activities are held in the United Kingdom with distinguished visitors from the United States.

Arrangements had been made for the Annual Conference to take place in London in November after the U.S. mid-term elections but the House of Representatives BAPG cancelled due to a lame duck session being scheduled to deal with outstanding legislation and there being no military aircraft available to bring the delegation to London after voting. However, in September 2010, the BAPG were able to send eight MPs to the United States to participate in the BAPG / U.S. Department of State Co-Sponsored Visit designed to give members not already familiar with the United States an introduction to the American political system. Also at the end of November, four members attended as 'observers' an induction course for newly elected Members of Congress conducted by the Institute of Politics at Harvard University. All new Members of Congress as elected on the 2nd November were invited to attend. In March 2011, the BAPG sent four members to Los Angeles to look at the combined themes of: Elected Police Officials and Counter Terrorism/Preventing & Resolving Conflict.

Relationship with the House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee

The BAPG is funded mainly by a grant-in-aid from the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee to which it submits a detailed income and expenditure budget together with bids for expenditure, on a rolling three year programme, usually in February each year or at the request of the House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee. Approval of the budget and the amount of the grant for the coming year is agreed in the autumn. Grant-in-aid is paid in one instalment, usually in April each year. The grant-in-aid is paid by the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee on a 70:30 split, respectively.

Prior to 2008-09 the BAPG was funded by HM Treasury.

Results for the Year

The Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure (page 13) shows that the BAPG had an excess of income over expenditure of £23,061 for the year 2010-11. The grant-in-aid for the year was £110,000.

The BAPG currently holds £74,736 in reserves (page 14). The Director of Financial Management at the House of Commons and the Finance Director in the House of Lords have agreed to the Group retaining the 2010-11 income in reserves to supplement the two re-scheduled events; the 2010 Annual Conference and the Annual Reception for the American Ambassador.

Prompt Payment Initiative

In line with best commercial practice it is BAPG policy to pay bills in accordance with contractual conditions. Where no such conditions exist, it aims to pay within 30 days of receipt of goods and services or presentation of a valid invoice, whichever is the later. There are no figures available to show performance against this target.

Provision of information to auditors

As far as the Accounting Officer is aware there is no relevant audit information of which the BAPG's auditors, the NAO, are unaware. In addition, the Accounting Officer has taken all the steps necessary to make himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the BAPG's auditors are aware of that information.

Rt Hon Greg Knight MP (*Accounting Officer*)

_____ 2011

Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities

Under the Financial Memorandum, the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee have directed the BAPG to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts to the year ended 31 March. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of BAPG and of its income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to:

- give due regard to the procedures laid down in the Financial Memorandum including relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgments and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable standards have been followed and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the BAPG will continue in operation.

The Executive Committee has appointed the Joint Honorary Treasurer of the opposite party to the Honorary Secretary, The Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP, as Accounting Officer of the BAPG. The responsibilities of an 'Accounting Officer' include responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances, keeping proper records and safeguarding the BAPG's assets, as set out in the Financial Memorandum agreed between the BAPG, the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee.

Statement on Internal Control

Scope of responsibility

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the objectives and activities of the BAPG whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets, for which I am personally responsible, in a manner that is consistent with the Financial Memorandum issued by the House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee for the use of the Group's grant-in-aid.

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than eliminate all risk of failure to achieve the policies, aims and objectives of the Group. In doing this, it can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an enduring process designed to identify and prioritise the risks for the achievement of the Group's agreed objectives and activities, to consider the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them effectively, efficiently and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in the BAPG for the year ended 31 March 2011 and up to the date of approval of the accounts, and accords with Treasury guidance.

Control framework and management of risk

The Group's objectives as described above are set out in a single constitutional document, incorporating the Objects, Activities and Rules of the Group. The Group's Annual General Meeting of 5 July 1967 formally adopted the Group's present Objectives, Activities and Rules, subject to minor amendments endorsed by the Annual General Meetings held in 1968, 1981, 1982, 1996, 2000, 2003 and 2007, 2008 and 2009.

The Group's Rules provide for an Annual General Meeting of Members to be held at such a time and place that the Executive Committee may determine. The Rules also allow for Committee to call Special General Meetings to consider and determine any matter of interest and importance that may arise. The Rules provide for the Executive Committee to submit a report of its proceedings to the Annual General Meeting.

The Group's relationship with its funding sponsors, the House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee, is embodied in a Financial Memorandum. The Financial Memorandum is an integral part of the governance arrangements for which the Accounting Officer is responsible.

The Financial Memorandum places a responsibility on the Group to ensure that all resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively; and also provides that Internal Audit may be used to provide assurance to the Finance Directors of both Houses and to the Executive Committee.

In particular the Financial Memorandum sets out:

- the respective responsibilities of both Houses and the Group with regard to propriety, financial management and the safeguarding of public funds;
- the responsibility of the Executive Committee to appoint an Accounting Officer from its membership who will normally be one of the Joint Honorary Treasurers;
- the responsibilities of the Group's Accounting Officer, and the responsibility of the other Joint Honorary Treasurer to review the accounts before being put to the Executive Committee;
- the budgetary, accounting and financial reporting framework;
- the administrative arrangements for the day to day activities of the Group;
- the responsibilities of the Honorary Secretary and the Administrator for the management of the Group's grant in aid; and
- the responsibility of the Group to ensure that risks faced in relation to fraud are managed in an appropriate manner in accordance with relevant practice in corporate governance.

Capacity to handle risk

The risk management process is the responsibility of the Executive Committee and during 2008-09 the executive committee designed a risk register. The Executive Committee members are responsible for overseeing particular risks. This involves a regular appraisal of the existing risks with responsibility for recommending action where necessary, and periodic re-appraisal of the risk register.

As Accounting Officer, I recognise that the Financial Memorandum and the Rules of the British-American Parliamentary Group requires that both Houses are provided with copies of the annual audited Accounts. In part this is to assist both Houses to obtain the assurance that they need that the BAPG has met its obligations to use its resources in accordance with the terms of the House of Commons Administration and House of Lords Supply Estimate (Vote) and other obligations agreed during discussions about the Group's grant-in-aid estimate.

The Group's governance activities in 2010-11

The Executive Committee met on four occasions in 2010-11 to consider matters that are set out in the Committee's Report of the Executive Committee. Amongst other things, the Committee examined: the Group's draft programme of activities for the present year; the Group's forecast budget for 2011-2012; including a review of the Group's budgetary position and the Group's audited accounts for 2010-11; the annual report of the Honorary Secretary; and other matters for discussion and endorsement by the Annual General Meeting.

Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining an effective system of internal control and periodically to review the procedures that I have in place. My review of the BAPG's internal control framework is informed by the deliberations of the British- American Parliamentary Group's Annual General Meeting, the decisions of the Executive Committee as well as the views of the Administrator, the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer of the BAPG, who have day to day responsibility for managing the system of internal control.

I have also had regard to guidance on internal control and financial management issued by the House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee under the auspices of the Financial Memorandum, as well as the comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports made to the BAPG.

On an enduring basis, I advise the BAPG's Executive Committee on the implications of the periodic reviews of the BAPG's internal control processes and procedures. I intend to ensure that the BAPG continues to maintain reliable system of internal control.

The BAPG's Accounts and the activities that underpin them are currently subject to external audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General, supported by the National Audit Office (NAO). The NAO carry out their audits in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) and each year report the results of their work to the BAPG's Executive Committee.

Rt Hon Greg Knight MP (*Accounting Officer*)

_____ 2011

THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH-AMERICAN PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

I have audited the financial statements of the British American Parliamentary Group for the year ended 31 March 2011. These comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows, the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them.

Respective responsibilities of the Accounting Officer and auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, under the terms of the Financial Memorandum agreed with the House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee, which includes the financial statements, and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions.

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the Audit of the Financial Statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the British American Parliamentary Group's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the British American Parliamentary Group; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition I read all the financial and non-financial information in the Executive Committee Report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies I consider the implications for my certificate.

In addition, I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income reported in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Group.

Opinion on Regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by the Group and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Opinion on financial statements

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the British American Parliamentary Group's affairs as at 31 March 2011 and of its net operating income for the year then ended; and
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the terms of the Financial Memorandum agreed with the House of Commons Commission and House of Lords House Committee.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion:

- the information given in the Foreword for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which I report by exception

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Statement on Internal Control does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Chris Bedford

Director on behalf of the

Comptroller and Auditor General

June 2011

National Audit Office

157-197 Buckingham Palace Road

Victoria

London

SW1W 9SP

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

For the year ended 31 March 2011

		2010-11		2009-10	
	Note	Staff Costs £	Other Costs £	Income £	£
Administration Costs					
Staff Costs	3	32,322	-	-	32,520
Other administration costs	4		11,522	-	10,008
Operating income	2	-	-	(1,681)	(953)
Other income	2	-	-	(757)	-
Programme Costs					
Expenditure	5	-	46,309	-	67,908
Income	2			(110,000)	(110,000)
Totals		32,322	57,831	(112,438)	(517)
Net Operating Income before Interest and Tax				(22,285)	(517)
Bank Interest Receivable				(983)	(380)
Corporation Tax Payable	7			207	76
Net Operating Income after Interest and Tax				(23,061)	(821)

The notes on pages 17 to 22 form part of the accounts

Statement of Financial Position

For the year ended 31 March 2011

		31 Mar 2011	31 Mar 2010
	Note	£	£
Current assets:			
Trade and other receivables	8	829	1,222
Other current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	9	77,626	49,010
Total current assets		78,455	50,232
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	10	(3,719)	(3,557)
Total current liabilities		(3,719)	(3,557)
Assets less liabilities		74,736	46,675
Taxpayers' equity:			
General fund		74,736	46,675
Total taxpayers' equity		74,736	46,675

The financial statements on pages 13 to 16 were approved by the Executive Committee on 17th May 2011 and were signed on its behalf by:

Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP (Accounting Officer)

The notes on pages 17 to 22 form part of the accounts

Statement of Cash Flows

For year ended 31 March 2011

		2010-11	2009-10
	Note	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net operating income		23,061	821
Interest Receivable		(983)	(380)
Tax Payable	7	207	76
Adjustments for non-cash transactions – audit fee		5,000	5,000
(Increase)/Decrease in trade and other receivables	8	23	7,387
Increase/(Decrease) in trade payables	10	226	(383)
Tax Paid		(197)	(466)
Net cash inflow from operating activities		27,337	12,055
Cash flows from investing activities			
Net cash outflow from investing activities		-	-
Cash flows from financing activities			
Net cash inflow from financing activities		1,279	72
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period before adjustment for receipts and payments to the Consolidated Fund		28,616	12,127
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	9	49,010	36,883
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	9	77,626	49,010

The notes on pages 17 to 22 form part of the accounts

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity

For the year ended 31 March 2011

	Note	General Fund
		£
Balance at 31 March 2009		40,854
Non-cash charges – auditor's remuneration		5,000
Net operating income for the year		821
<i>Total recognised income and expense for 2009-10</i>		5,821
Balance at 31 March 2010		46,675
Changes in taxpayers' equity for 2010-11		
Non-cash charges – auditor's remuneration	4	5,000
Net operating income for the year		23,061
<i>Total recognised income and expense for 2010-11</i>		28,061
Balance at 31 March 2011		74,736

The notes on pages 17 to 22 form part of the accounts

Notes to the Accounts

1. Statement of accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2010-11 Government *Financial Reporting Manual (FReM)*. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be the most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the BAPG for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by the BAPG are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

1.1 Non-Current Assets

Office equipment is written off as expenditure in full in the year of acquisition.

1.2 Operating Income

Such income relates directly to the operating activities of the BAPG. It principally comprises the grant-in-aid, annual subscriptions, life subscriptions, donations and interest on the bank deposit accounts. Annual subscriptions cover a 12 month period from 1st April each year. Annual subscriptions paid between 1st January and 31st March each year are treated as subscriptions paid in advance (deferred income).

Life subscriptions are included as income in full in the year of receipt.

During 2010-11 HMRC refunded BAPG the sum of £757.24 in respect of prior year payments of Corporation Tax (£448.62 in 2008-09 and £308.62 in 2009-10).

1.3 Gains and losses

All gains and losses are included in the statement of comprehensive net expenditure.

1.4 Taxation

Bank interest is received net of tax. It has been grossed up to £983 for the Accounts. The tax on the bank interest is offset against the Corporation Tax liability. The total tax liability for 2010-11 is £207 (made up of £197 bank interest tax and £10 Corporation Tax).

1.5 Research and development expenditure

The BAPG does not engage in research and development activity.

1.6 Personal data related incidents

The BAPG had no personal data related incidents during the reporting year.

2. Income

	<u>2010-11</u>	<u>2009-10</u>
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Parliamentary Grant-In-Aid	110,000	110,000
Annual subscriptions	910	579
Life subscriptions	640	280
Donations	131	94
Corporation Tax rebate	757	0
Total	<u>112,438</u>	<u>110,953</u>

3. Staff numbers and related costs

Staff costs comprise:

	<u>2010-11</u>	<u>2009-10</u>
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Wages and salaries	24,658	24,659
Social security costs	1,499	1,696
Contributions to employee pensions	6,165	6,165
Total	<u>32,322</u>	<u>32,520</u>

There is one part-time member of staff at the BAPG, who is responsible for the day-to-day running of operations. The reduction in social security costs in 2010-11 was due to a rebate being received from HMRC. All other staff costs remained the same.

4. Other Administration Costs

Note	2010-11		2009-10	
	£	£	£	£
Non-cash items				
Auditors' remuneration and expenses:				
Audit Fee	5,000		5,000	
Total non-cash items		5,000		5,000
Cash Items				
Sundry	3,446		1,955	
Insurance	1,523		1,575	
Annual Report	1,156		1,096	
Website	397		382	
		6,522		5,008
Grand Total		11,522		10,008

The 15% increase in Sundry Items expenditure was due to the acquisition of a new desktop computer and printer to replace outdated equipment. In line with adopted accounting policy the expenditure was written off in year of acquisition.

5. Programme Expenditure

	2010-11	2009-10
	£	£
Annual Conferences	500	29,876
Special Delegation Visits	9,897	23,340
Co Sponsored Visits	25,286	10,058
Reception for American Ambassador	-	3,790
Carbon Offsetting of Air Travel	865	844
Republican and Democratic National Conventions	-	-
New Members of Parliament Orientation (NMOP)	9,546	-
Hospitality	215	-
Ad Hoc Visit	-	-
Total	46,309	67,908

The £865 Carbon Offsetting expenditure for the year takes into account a £135 over-estimation in the 2009-10 accounts of actual costs incurred. A £1,000 accrual for the 2010-11 costs has been included in the Trade Payable accruals figure (see note 10).

6. Financial instruments

IFRS 7 (Derivatives and other Financial Instruments), requires disclosure of the role which financial instruments have had during the period in creating or changing the risks an entity faces in undertaking its activities. The BAPG has limited exposure to risk in relation to its activities.

Liquidity risk

The BAPG was financed by a grant from grant in-aid from both Houses of Parliament. As such it was not exposed to significant liquidity risks.

Interest rate risk

The BAPG was not exposed to significant interest rate risk.

Foreign currency risk

Foreign currency would not usually form part of the Group's assets or liabilities and as such it is not exposed to any significant exchange risks.

7. Corporation Tax

	<u>2010-11</u>	<u>2009-10</u>
	£	£
Corporation Tax	207	76
	<u>207</u>	<u>76</u>

8. Trade receivables and other current assets

	<u>31 Mar 2011</u>	<u>31 Mar 2010</u>	<u>1 Apr 2009</u>
	£	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:			
Accrued Income	-	370	61
Debtors – other	78	78	148
Prepayments	751	774	8,091
	<u>829</u>	<u>1,222</u>	<u>8,300</u>

9. Cash and cash equivalents

	<u>£</u>
Balance at 1 Apr 2009	36,883
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	12,127
Balance at 31 Mar 2010	49,010
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	28,616
Balance at 31 Mar 2011	77,626

<u>31 Mar 2011</u>	<u>31 Mar 2010</u>	<u>1 Apr 2009</u>
£	£	£
77,626	49,010	36,883

The following balances at 31 March were held at:

Commercial bank and cash in hand

10. Trade payables and other current liabilities

	<u>31 Mar 2011</u>	<u>31 Mar 2010</u>	<u>1 Apr 2009</u>
	£	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:			
Accruals	3,458	3,158	3,511
Other taxation and social security	10	74	463
Deferred Income	251	325	355
	3,719	3,557	4,329

11. Losses and special payments

There were no losses and special payments in 2010-11.

12. Related-party transactions

The House of Commons and the House of Lords are regarded as related parties, providing Grant in Aid to the Group under the terms provided in the Financial Memorandum. In addition the House of Commons provides free accommodation to the Group.

During the year the Group entered into related party transactions worth £7,283, of this £255 was paid to the House of Commons Catering and Retail Services for the provision of hospitality to visitors from the United States (£215 relating to hospitality and £40 for the hire of a conference room). £7,028 was paid into the House of Commons Staff Pension Scheme for the Group's Administrator. The pension payment relates to twelve months pension contributions and pension arrears relating to 2010-11.

In addition the Group has had a small number of immaterial transactions with other government departments and other central government bodies. Most of these have been with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Other than these related party transactions, no member of the Group or any other related party has undertaken any material transactions with the Group during the year. A Remuneration Report is not required as Members of the Group Executive Committee are unpaid.

13. Events after the Reporting Period

In accordance with requirements of IAS 10, events after the reporting period are considered up to the date on which the accounts are authorised for issue. This is interpreted as the date of the Certificate and report of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUP

7th April 2010

At the request of the U.S. Embassy, the BAPG made arrangements for a group from Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, to be given a tour of Parliament.

7th April

A meeting of the Working Group, established to take forward the implementation of the International Relations Directorate, took place to which the BAPG Administrator was invited to attend.

21st April

A meeting of the Working Group took place to which the BAPG Administrator was invited to attend.

12th May

A meeting of the Working Group took place to which the BAPG Administrator was invited to attend.

12th May

A meeting of all staff affected by the creation of an IRD was held at which staff were formally briefed on the changes.

27th May

A meeting of the Working Group took place to which the BAPG Administrator was invited to attend.

8th June

A meeting of the BAPG Executive Committee took place.

9th June

The Administrator met with Andrew Millar, Head of the North America Team, and Justine Allan, Head of the U.S. Section of the Foreign Office, to update them on the BAPG programme going forward and to invite input on ideas for future specialist delegation visits and areas of possible co-operation.

14th June

A meeting of the Working Group took place to which the BAPG Administrator was invited to attend.

18th June

At the request of the British Consulate General San Francisco, the BAPG made arrangements for a tour of Parliament for staff from the California State Senate.

18th June

At the request of the U.S. Embassy, the BAPG made arrangements for a tour of Parliament for the U.S. Ambassador and his granddaughters and friends. We are grateful to Lord Dubs for so kindly giving his time to conduct the tour.

23rd June

The BAPG made arrangements for a tour of Parliament for visiting U.S. students from Viewpoint High in Los Angeles.

24th June

The Head of the North America Group of the Foreign Office & Commonwealth Office, Andrew Millar, hosted a reception for Fulbright Scholars at the FCO and invited the BAPG to extend an invitation to several new Members of Parliament. The BAPG is grateful to Simon Kirby, MP; Jack Lopresti, MP and John Glen, MP who attended the reception on behalf of the BAPG.

30th June

A meeting of the Working Group took place to which the BAPG Administrator was invited to attend.

30th June

A meeting took place with the staff of the four grant in aid funded inter Parliamentary groups and staff of the House of Commons and Lords Overseas Offices to hear about the work that had been done so far on the implementation of the International Relations Directorate. Remarks were made by Malcolm Jack, Clerk of the House and Chief Executive of the House of Commons Service; Robert Rogers, the Clerk Assistant and Director General of the Department of Chamber and Committee Services and Michael Pownall, Clerk of the Parliaments.

6th July

The BAPG had a stand in the Atrium of Portcullis House to promote the group to new Members of Parliament.

7th July

At the request of the Foreign Office, arrangements were made for three guests of the New York Consulate General (NBC News Anchor and family) to be given a tour of Parliament and then observe Prime Ministers Questions from the Distinguished Visitors Gallery. The BAPG is most grateful to the Speaker for so kindly donating the tickets.

7th July

The BAPG's Annual General Meeting took place at which the Executive Committee for 2010-11 was elected. The Speaker very kindly presided.

26th July

At the request of the British Embassy, the BAPG made arrangements for guests of the U.S. House of Representatives Minority Whip to be given a tour of Parliament.

26th July

A meeting of the Working Group took place to which the BAPG Administrator was invited to attend.

27th July

The Administrator met with Matt Mully, Parliamentary Liaison for the U.S. Embassy, to discuss the 2010 Annual Parliamentary / Congressional Conference and other BAPG activities going forward.

3rd September

At the request of the Foreign Office, arrangements were made for a tour of Parliament for guests of the British Consulate General Atlanta.

6th September

A meeting of the Working Group took place to which the BAPG Administrator was invited to attend.

8th September

By kind invitation of BAPG Executive Committee member, Lorraine Fulbrook, MP, the BAPG hosted a discussion with Commissioner Robert M. McDowell of the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Commissioner McDowell discussed how the FCC regulates the media in the U.S. Beforehand, the BAPG had made arrangements for Commissioner McDowell and guests to watch PMQs from the Distinguished Visitors Gallery. The BAPG is grateful to the Speaker for kindly giving the tickets.

9th September

The BAPG made arrangements for Lord Adonis to be given a tour of The Capitol.

12th to 22nd September

A visit co-sponsored by the BAPG and the U.S. Department of State took place. Eight members seeking a greater understanding of U.S. federal and state Government visited the U.S. from 12th to 22nd September. They spent five days in Washington D.C., gaining an overview of the federal system of government, two days in individual districts with Members of Congress and two days in Lansing, Michigan, to examine a state capital legislature.

23rd September

At the request of the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission, a tour of Parliament was arranged for the 2010 Marshall Scholars intake followed by a question and answer exchange with Rachel Reeves, MP. We are very grateful to Rachel Reeves for kindly giving her time to meet the group.

4th October

A meeting of the Working Group took place to which the BAPG Administrator was invited to attend.

6th October

At the request of the Foreign Office, a tour of Parliament was arranged for guests of U.S. Congressman, John Boozman, Vice Chairman of the House BAPG.

18th October

The BAPG made arrangements for Professor Larry Sabato (America's foremost election expert) to speak to BAPG members via video conference from America on the forthcoming U.S. midterm elections. This was followed by a panel discussion with U.S. state Senators from Washington State and the Chair of Republicans Abroad and a representative of Democrats Abroad. We are grateful to Austin Mitchell, MP, BAPG Executive Committee member, for chairing proceedings.

19th October

A meeting of the BAPG Executive Committee took place.

22nd October 2010

At the request of the British Consulate General San Francisco, the BAPG made arrangements for a tour of Parliament for a delegation of West and East Coast officials on a fact finding visit to the UK to look at offshore energy.

8th November

The Director General of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Robert Hannigan, hosted a reception to say farewell to John Rankin, Director Americas, and to welcome his successor, Angus Lapsley. The Joint Vice Chairman, Shaun Woodward and the Officers attended.

10th November

The BAPG Honorary Secretary hosted a lunch for U.S. Senator James Risch (Republican – Idaho) and his wife and staffer. Senator Risch is a member of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee and the Select Committee on Intelligence. We are grateful to Executive Committee members Lord Anderson and Sir John Stanley for giving the time to attend the lunch. The BAPG also arranged for the Senator to observe PMQs on that day.

17th November

At the request of the Foreign Office, the BAPG hosted a small lunch (at the Foreign Office's expense) for the Mayor of Atlanta, Kasim Reed, and members of his team. The Mayor was in London participating in a Foreign Office arranged visit to study and share initiatives on tackling crime and strategies for economic development. We are grateful to Executive Committee members Austin Mitchell, MP and Mark Pritchard, MP together with Lord Maclennan of Rogart, for giving the time to join Mayor Reed at lunch.

23rd November

A report back meeting took place with participants of the BAPG / U.S. Department of State Co-Sponsored Visit. The visit is consistently valued for the chance it gives Members of Parliament to learn something of the American political system. Two of the participants have recently used their experience and knowledge gained from the programme in the House of Commons chamber when debating fixed term Parliaments. Another MP has tabled two Parliamentary Questions concerning trade between the UK and the U.S. The participants were very impressed with the high level access and briefings given.

30th November to 3rd December

Four members travelled to Boston to observe the Harvard Institute of Politics induction programme for newly elected Members of Congress. The programme involved issue seminars and lectures by Harvard academics and eminent outside speakers.

7th December

A meeting of the BAPG Executive Committee took place.

17th December 2010

At the request of the Foreign Office, a tour of Parliament was arranged for four guests from the United States.

5th January 2011

The 112th U.S. Congress convened.

11th January

The BAPG Officers met to discuss the implications of a 10% cut to its grant in aid for 2011/12. It was agreed that a further letter would be sent to the House of Commons Commission and the House of Lords House Committee appealing against the cut. It was also an opportunity for the Officers to discuss the specialist delegation visit to the Los Angeles consular district and agree the themes that the delegation would look at. The Officers agreed the combined themes of Elected Police Officials and Counter Terrorism/Preventing & Resolving Conflict.

12th January

The Administrator met with representatives of the NAO to agree the timetable for this year's audit, to commence on the 4th April 2011.

19th January

The BAPG Honorary Secretary and Joint Honorary Treasurer The Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP hosted a small lunch in the Palace for Ms. Anthea Buckeridge of the U.S. Embassy (Public Affairs) who was due to retire after 31 years of service. Anthea had coordinated the annual BAPG / U.S. Department of State co-sponsored familiarization visit to the U.S. for British Members of Parliament. We are grateful to Mr. Speaker for kindly giving two tickets for Anthea and partner to observe PMQs from the Distinguished Strangers Gallery.

2nd February

At the request of the U.S. Embassy, the BAPG made arrangements for the Embassy's Minister Counselor for Political Affairs, Ms. Robin Quinville, and colleague to observe PMQs. Apparently, PMQs is featuring more heavily in the Embassy's reporting to Washington. Again we are grateful to the Speaker for so kindly giving the tickets.

8th February

The Honorary Secretary hosted a small lunch for the new Foreign Office Director of Americas, Mr. Angus Lapsley, and was joined by BAPG Joint Vice Chairman Shaun Woodward. Mr. Lapsley was very enthusiastic about the work of the BAPG and receptive to ideas for greater co-operation.

It was agreed that the Foreign Office would give six weekly briefings to the BAPG on US/UK transatlantic relations and developments in the U.S. These briefings would be given either by a Foreign Office Minister, the British Ambassador to the British Embassy in Washington D.C. when in London or by a senior official at the Foreign Office with the aim of building closer contacts with the Foreign Office and understanding. The Foreign Office would endeavor to give as much notice as possible of the dates for the meetings in order that we may have reasonable time to get the dates in to members' dairies.

It was also agreed that the FCO (either Mr. Lapsley or a senior official) would assist with providing briefings to members participating in BAPG visits in advance of departure and would attend a de-briefing meeting on their return.

Mr. Lapsley said that he would be prepared to consider joint and exclusive funding of BAPG events.

8th February

A meeting of the BAPG Executive Committee took place.

9th February

At the request of the Climate Change and Energy Department, the BAPG arranged gallery tickets for Mary Nichols, Chair of the California Air Resources Board, and her husband, John Daum, to observe PMQs. We are grateful to the Speaker for kindly giving the tickets. We are also hugely appreciative to Professor Cope, Director of the Parliamentary Office of Science & Technology, who very kindly hosted a small lunch for the guests in the Palace followed by a tour of Parliament.

9th February

Officers' & Members of the BAPG Executive Committee were invited to a British American Security Information Council event to launch a new independent cross-party Commission to examine the future of UK nuclear weapons policy and the issue of Trident renewal.

15th February

The BAPG Administrator met with the CBI's International Director, Rhian Chilcott, to discuss the BAPG programme and any possible areas for co-operation. Miss Chilcott is based in Washington D.C. and provides very useful briefings on what is happening in the U.S. Congress.

22nd February

The Administrator met with Justine Lancaster, Parliamentary Liaison Officer of the U.S. Embassy, to discuss the BAPG programme going forward and possible areas for joint collaboration.

3rd March

The Administrator met with the Head of the U.S. Section of the North America Team at the Foreign Office, Justine Allan, to discuss the idea of an event on Capitol Hill in July to launch/promote the Sister Member Programme which is run in conjunction with the UK Caucus to pair Members of Congress with Members of Parliament.

16th March

The BAPG assisted with a visit to Parliament by the Governor of Massachusetts, Deval Patrick, who was visiting London as part of a 'Massachusetts Innovation Economy Partnership Mission' sponsored by the Foreign Office. The Governor was accompanied by a coalition of the state's leading business executives and senior government officials. The programme arranged by the BAPG consisted of a tour of Parliament for the group, tickets to PMQs for the Governor and his core team, a meeting with the Minister of State for Health, the Rt. Hon. Simon Burns, MP, and a reception and lunch for Governor Patrick and his core team hosted by the Speaker in Speaker's House, which we are most grateful to the Speaker for. The head of Political, Press and Public Affairs of the British Consulate General Boston, Matthew Champion, later wrote that the visit to Parliament was a highlight for the Governor and his delegation and the BAPG's counsel and assistance were crucial to the success of the visit.

16th March

At the request of the Mayor's office of the City of Westminster, Maryland, arrangements were made for the President of Westminster's Common Council, Damian Halstad, and family to be given a tour of Parliament and to see PMQs. Again we are grateful to Mr. Speaker for providing the tickets.

17th March

The Director of Americas of the Foreign Office, Angus Lapsley, briefed BAPG members in advance of their specialist delegation visit to Los Angeles to explore issues around elected police chiefs and counter terrorism.

27-31 March

Four members travelled to Los Angeles to look at the combined themes of Elected Police Officials and Counter Terrorism/Preventing & Resolving Conflict. The British Consulate General organised the programme of calls. The delegation was led by the Lord Boateng.

31 March

The U.S. Embassy held a farewell party for Ms. Anthea Buckeridge who was retiring from the Embassy after 31 years of service, which was attended by the Administrator. Anthea had coordinated the annual BAPG / U.S. Department of State co-sponsored familiarization visit to the U.S. for British Members of Parliament.

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE GROUP DURING 2010-2011

The Annual General Meeting of the Group took place on 7th July 2010. The Speaker, Joint President of the British-American Parliamentary Group, kindly presided.

It was reported that the Group's membership stood at 617 and that between April 2009 and April 2010 there had been one Annual Parliamentary / Congressional Conference in the UK, giving 13 Members of Parliament an opportunity to meet with five U.S. Senators, and 13 Members had visited the U.S. under the auspices of the Group.

During 2010/2011, the Executive Committee was continually frustrated in its efforts to hold the 2010 Annual Conference. The meeting with the House of Representatives BAPG had originally been scheduled to take place in London in November after the U.S. midterm elections but the House of Representatives BAPG cancelled due to a lame duck session being scheduled which meant the House delegation had to return from its meetings in Europe (NATO, OSCE) earlier with no military aircraft available to bring the delegation back to London after voting.

The meeting was tentatively re-scheduled by the House BAPG to February 2011 but with the change from Democrat to Republican control there followed a period of transition with the appointment of a new Speaker who in turn was required to appoint a new chair of the House BAPG which had not taken place by February.

However, in spite of the British General Election in May and the midterm Congressional elections in November, 16 Members visited the United States during the twelve months to April 2011.

The following visits took place:

- In September, eight Members went on a visit to the United States sponsored jointly by the Group and the U.S. State Department. This visit, primarily for members of the Group who had not previously visited America, is designed to give an introduction to the American political system. After five days in Washington D.C. for meetings and visits which illustrated the workings of the U.S. Federal Government, the Members spent a weekend with individual Members of Congress in their Districts before spending the remaining days of the visit in Lansing, Michigan to learn something of the State system of Government.
- At the end of November, four Members attended as observers an induction programme for newly elected Members of Congress conducted by the Institute of Politics at Harvard University. All new Members of Congress as elected on the 2nd November were invited to attend. The programme involved issue seminars and lectures by Harvard academics and eminent outside speakers.
- In March 2011, the BAPG sent four members to Los Angeles to look at the combined themes of Elected Police Officials and Counter Terrorism/Preventing & Resolving Conflict.

In the UK over the year, the BAPG had arranged lunches for visiting VIPs from the United States and various tours of both Houses at the request of the Foreign Office, the American Embassy or directly from the offices of U.S. legislators. Arrangements were also made for the 2010 Marshall Scholars to visit Parliament and to meet with a member for a question and answer exchange.

We were not able to arrange a reception for the U.S. Ambassador due to the Ambassador's limited availability but we are pleased that we have a firm date in July 2011 and the Speaker has very kindly agreed to host the event in Speaker's House.

Contact with the United States Embassy in London has been well maintained throughout the year and a significant part of our programme is dependent on good liaison with both the U.S. Embassy and the Foreign Office. Our extensive thanks are due to the North America Department at the Foreign Office for the very informative briefings which they are always kind enough to provide for BAPG delegations and to the British Embassy in Washington D.C. and the Consulates across the USA for their very great input in to the programmes arranged for our delegations. We are grateful for all their very considerable help that they give to the BAPG thereby enabling us to maintain our programme from year to year.

We are also extremely grateful to Members who kindly provide Gallery tickets or Special Permits for visiting Americans.

Group membership now stands at 651, approximately 5.5% up from last year.

Members may wish to be reminded that information about the Group's forthcoming activities is not usually sent out individually but can be found on the All Party Whip from time to time.

Members who need further information should telephone 020 7219 6209 or fax 020 7219 5972. The Group's office is at 7 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA.

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
THE BRITISH-AMERICAN PARLIAMENTARY GROUP
HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM 12
ON WEDNESDAY, 7TH JULY 2010 AT 3:30 P.M.**

The Rt. Hon. John Bercow, MP, Speaker of the House of Commons and Joint President of the British-American Parliamentary Group, presided.

1. Apologies.

Mr. Speaker conveyed apologies for absence from the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, the Lord Chancellor & Secretary of State for Justice and the Joint BAPG Honorary Treasurer, the Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP, together with 36 others.

2. Minutes of the last Meeting.

The Minutes of the last meeting, having been circulated, were approved and signed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising.

There were no matters arising.

4. To Receive the Annual Report from the Executive Committee for April 2009 to April 2010 and the Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2010.

The Opposition Vice Chairman, The Rt. Hon. Shaun Woodward, MP, was called upon to present the report of the Executive Committee for 2009/2010.

Mr. Woodward first thanked Mr. Speaker for presiding at the Group's AGM. He then reported on the work of the Group during the year to April 2010. He reminded members that full details of all the Group's activities appeared in the printed report, which had been circulated before the AGM.

During those 12 months, there had been one Annual Parliamentary / Congressional Conference in the UK, giving 13 Members of Parliament an opportunity to meet with five U.S. Senators and 13 Members of Parliament had visited the United States under the group's auspices:

- In April 2009, four members visited New York City and Newark, New Jersey, to look at company and banking regulation and the regeneration of depressed cities and work fare projects.
- In September, three members participated in the BAPG /U.S. Department of State Co-Sponsored Visit, designed to give members an introduction to the American political system. The group visited Washington D.C., Pennsylvania and individual Congressional districts.
- In October, the BAPG in conjunction with the Foreign Office, sent two members to Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Washington D.C to share with the respective state legislatures the UK's best practices and experience with carbon cap and trade schemes. This visit was financed by the Foreign Office.
- In February 2010, four members visited Washington D.C., South Carolina and Georgia to look at the U.S. automotive sector with particular reference to environmental issues.

Also in London, the Group had been able to arrange some meetings/tours/lunches for visiting U.S. Members of Congress/state legislators/other visiting U.S. VIPs and this is a part of the Group's role which we are always keen to expand and develop.

We are very grateful to the Speaker for kindly hosting a reception on behalf of the BAPG for the new U.S. Ambassador, Louis B. Susman, in the Speaker's State Rooms in early December 2009. Around 140 members of the Group, together with 20 members of the U.S. Embassy, attended the reception.

The Group's complete list of activities for the year are shown on pages 20 to 26 in the Annual Report. They show the contribution the Group has made over the year to promoting good relations with the U.S. and the role which the Group has played in the programmes of American visitors.

Mr. Woodward paid tribute to the co-operation which the Group had received over the year from the American Embassy, particularly from the Political and Cultural Affairs Departments, and support had always been forthcoming from The Ambassador. The Group were also indebted to the North America Department at the FCO and to the British Embassy in Washington D.C. on whom a significant part of the group's programme is dependent. The British Embassy is particularly helpful when it comes to arranging meetings and other aspects of any programme for BAPG delegations to Washington D.C., as are the Consuls-General in other parts of the USA.

Mr. Speaker thanked Mr. Woodward and invited any questions.

There being no questions, Mr. Speaker moved a motion to adopt the Annual Report which was proposed by Dr. Therese Coffey, MP and seconded by Adrian Sanders, MP and received the unanimous approval of members present.

Mr. Speaker then called upon The Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP to present the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2010 in the absence of Greg Knight, Joint Honorary Treasurer, who was unable to attend the AGM at short notice. The Accounts had been circulated previously to members.

Mr. Spellar made the following points as regards the Accounts to March 31st 2010:

Budget Expenditure

Total expenditure had been £5,555 less than originally budgeted.

During the year, the planned interim conference with a budget of £12,000 was cancelled. There was also a lower than predicted cost of the co-sponsored visit, as there were fewer participants. Part of this in-year surplus was utilised with a specialist delegation.

The grant-in-aid for 2009-10 had increased by 5% (£4,000)

The grant-in-aid for the next three years will be frozen at this level with the increasing need to utilise the surplus from prior years to cover any indexed increases in inflation during that period.

Staff costs had increased by 1.3% (£422).

- Pension costs had decreased by 0.35% (£22).
- Salaries and National Insurance Contributions had increased by 1.5% (£400) due to the Administrator receiving a pay increase.

Administrative Expenditure had increased by 5.4% (£519) (excluding staff costs)

- The increase in administration costs was due to an increase in sundry costs including printing, an increase in insurance which was updated in year and a small increase in website costs.

Programme Expenditure had decreased by 8% (£6,332).

The decrease was largely due to:

- the specialist delegation that was postponed from 2008-09 to 2009-10;
- the absence of the Republican/Democratic Convention which occurs once every four years;

- the absence of the New Members Orientation programme which occurs every two years;
- the cancellation of the interim conference with the House of Representatives;
- the reduced cost of the co-sponsored visit due to a drop in the take up of numbers from eight to three; and
- costs relating to the Reception for the American Ambassador where significantly increased as in the prior year the reception was hosted by the Ambassador.

On membership, prior to the 2010 General Election, the Group had 655 members from both Houses (House of Commons 394 and House of Lords 261). At the General Election, 130 members departed (either retired or not returned) although 11 were subsequently appointed to the House of Lords, revising the total number of members to 536 (House of Commons 264 and House of Lords 272). Since the start of the new Parliament, 81 new Members of Parliament had joined the Group to date, raising the total membership to 617 members, a drop of 38 from the original figure (House of Commons 345 and House of Lords 272).

The only other variation is that currently the group is offering only Annual Subscription to new members and not Life Subscription as a result of the uncertainty around the International Relations Directorate which will be covered in a later item.

On behalf of the Officers, Mr. Spellar placed on record the Group's appreciation of the grant-in-aid without which it would not be possible to maintain a programme.

Mr. Speaker put to the meeting a formal motion to adopt the accounts which was proposed by Sajid Javid and seconded by the Lord Morris of Aberavon and carried unanimously.

5. To Ratify Vice-Presidents' & Officers Proposed by the Executive Committee

Mr. Speaker reported the Executive Committee had recommended that the following individuals should be re-elected as Vice-Presidents of the Group:

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP
 The Rt. Hon. the Baroness Boothroyd, PC, OM
 The Rt. Hon. the Lord Carrington, KG, GCMG, CH, MC, DL
 The Rt. Hon. Nick Clegg, MP
 The Rt. Hon. Iain Duncan Smith, MP
 The Rt. Hon. the Lord Falconer of Thoroton, QC
 The Rt. Hon. the Lord Howard of Lympne, QC
 The Rt. Hon. the Lord Howe of Aberavon, Kt, CH, QC
 The Rt. Hon. the Lord Hurd of Westwell, CH, CBE
 The Rt. Hon. the Lord Jopling, DL
 The Rt. Hon. Charles Kennedy, MP
 The Rt. Hon. the Lord Mackay of Clashfern, KT
 The Rt. Hon. David Miliband, MP
 The Rt. Hon. the Lord Molyneaux of Killead, KBE
 The Rt. Hon. the Lord Owen, CH
 The Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, MP
 The Rt. Hon. the Baroness Thatcher, LG, OM,

and that, The Rt. Hon. William Hague, MP be elected as a Vice-President.

It was proposed by Baroness O'Cathain and seconded by Lord Anderson that these names be adopted, which was unopposed.

Mr. Speaker paid warm tribute to those who had been Officers of the Group during 2009/2010.

The Rt. Hon. William Hague, MP, Government Vice-Chairman, had now completed the third year of his three year term. He had given the Group a great deal of his time and support

over the years, including chairing meetings, leading a delegation to Washington D.C. and Vermont and always being happy to give both help and advice when asked. We are enormously grateful to him for all that he has done for the Group and very much hope that he will continue to take an active interest in its activities.

The Executive Committee recommends that **The Rt. Hon. Dr. Liam Fox, MP**, Secretary of State for Defence, becomes the new Government Vice Chair for a term of up to three years. Proposed by Mark Pritchard and seconded by Charlie Elphicke with unanimous agreement.

The Rt. Hon. Shaun Woodward MP, Opposition Vice-Chairman, was nominated by the Executive Committee as Joint Vice Chair in late October 2009. Shaun has indicated he wishes to continue in the role and we are grateful to him for the interest which he has shown in the Group.

Also, **Brian Donohoe, MP and The Rt. Hon. Greg Knight, MP**, had both indicated they are happy to continue in their roles as Honorary Secretary and Joint Honorary Treasurer, respectively.

Brian Donohoe, the Honorary Secretary, had completed his second year in that office. The Group had been extremely fortunate to have such a hard working Honorary Secretary who gives an enormous amount of his time to the Group's affairs.

We are also extremely grateful to Greg Knight for the considerable amount of time he gives to the Group in his role as Joint Honorary Treasurer and as Accounting Officer, which is very much appreciated.

Our second Joint Honorary Treasurer was, until the election when he retired, Bill Olnier. We are grateful to Bill for the time and attention he gave to the Group's affairs.

The Executive Committee recommends that the Rt. Hon. **John Spellar, MP**, becomes the new Joint Honorary Treasurer which was formally proposed by Lord Morris and seconded by John Robertson with all in favour.

The ratification and election of the Chairman, the Joint Presidents, Vice-Presidents, the two Vice-Chairmen, the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurers was formally proposed by Mark Menzies and seconded by Henry Smith with the unanimous agreement of members present.

6. *To Elect 18 Members to serve on the Executive Committee 2009-10*

Mr. Speaker reported that in accordance with Rule 8a, 18 Members were to be elected to the Executive Committee, consisting of 12 members from the House of Commons – of which there were to be six members from the Government Parties and six members from the Opposition Parties – and six members elected to represent the House of Lords, the proportion of which is determined by the Lord Speaker and the representatives of the parties and groups in the House. Accordingly, the Lord Speaker's office had confirmed the proportions as: two Conservatives; one Liberal Democrat; two Labour and one Cross Bench.

In relation to the election of members from the **House of Commons**, as the group had received only six nominations from the Government Parties for the Committee this year and only six nominations from the Opposition Parties for the Committee, the following members were elected unopposed to serve on the Executive Committee until the AGM in 2011:

House of Commons

Government Parties

Christopher Chope, OBE, MP
Mark Field, MP
Lorraine Fullbrook, MP
Jack Lopresti, MP
Mark Pritchard, MP
The Rt. Hon. Sir John Stanley, MP

Non Government Parties

The Rt. Hon. Hazel Blears, MP
The Rt. Hon. Ann Clwyd, MP
Vernon Coaker, MP
Elfyn Llwyd, MP
Andy Love, MP
Austin Mitchell, MP

In relation to the House of Lords, as the group had received the requisite number of nominations as there were places, the following members were elected unopposed to represent the House of Lords on the Executive Committee until the AGM in 2011:

Conservative

The Rt. Hon. the Lord Trimble
The Baroness O’Cathain, OBE

Liberal Democrat

The Baroness Scott of Needham Market

Labour

The Rt. Hon. the Lord Anderson of Swansea
The Rt. Hon. the Lord Morris of Aberavon, KG, QC

Cross Bench

The Lord Hannay of Chiswick

Mr. Speaker paid tribute to Nigel Evans, MP and David Heath, MP, on behalf of the Group, who had both stood down from the Executive Committee to concentrate upon their appointments as Deputy Speaker and Deputy Leader of the House of Commons, respectively. They had both made a valuable contribution to the Group and we hope they will continue to take an interest in the Group’s affairs.

Mr. Speaker also paid tribute to members of the 2009/2010 Executive Committee who had either retired from the House at the General Election or were not returned.

They were:

Linda Gilroy
The Rt. Hon. Adam Ingram
The Rt. Hon. John McFall (although recently appointed to the House of Lords)

They had each made valuable contributions to the Group and will be greatly missed.

7. To review the selection of the external Auditors in accordance with the requirements of the Financial Memorandum.

Mr. Speaker reported that the Financial Memorandum, agreed by the BAPG Executive Committee in April 2008, provides that the annual accounts shall be audited by external auditors appointed by members at the Annual General Meeting and that the selection of the external auditors is to be reviewed at regular intervals of not more than five years.

The Group’s auditors are the National Audit Office and it has been five years since their selection has been reviewed.

It is the Executive Committee’s recommendation that the NAO be approved to continue as the Group’s external auditors. Members were asked to note that the NAO charges only a notional fee for its services, which is currently set at £5,000.

A formal motion was passed accepting the National Audit Office as the Group's external auditors proposed by Thomas Docherty and seconded by Dr. Therese Coffey with unanimous approval.

8. Briefing on the newly established International Relations Directorate and its relationship with the BAPG

The Honorary Secretary, Brian Donohoe, MP reported that all members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords had recently been e-mailed details on the newly established International Relations Directorate by the Clerk of the House of Commons and the Clerk of Parliaments. The e-mail included details of a proposed governance structure. Responses and comments had been requested by Wednesday, 14th July.

Mr. Donohoe reported that the declared purpose of the IRD was "to bring greater clarity to the organisation and funding of Parliament's international activities; to ensure that members of both Houses can be supported more effectively in their work in Parliamentary diplomacy; and to ensure Parliament becomes an even more effective contributor in Parliamentary strengthening activities" (e-mail 29th June 2010 from the Clerk of the House of Commons and the Clerk of Parliaments).

"The IRD would bring together Parliament's disparate international activities and give them some coherence through the development of a strategic approach with clear priorities, underpinned by specific objectives". (Proposal from the Management Board).

Mr. Donohoe set out the purported benefits of joining the IRD:

- Flexible resources as part of the House Services.
- "Improvement of service delivered through the sharing of best practice."
- No separate audited accounts.
- Members relieved of HR responsibilities.
- Individual members of staff should benefit from being part of a larger organization and the opportunities for career advancement this will bring.
- Improved control over the reputational risks associated with overseas travel may also be realised.

"The IRD should be able to deliver a service to members that is greater than just the sum of the services provided by the individual component parts." (Proposal from the Management Board).

The risks in joining the IRD:

- The BAPG would be a small voice. It should be noted, the BAPG is not included in 'the list of approvals' in the working group responsible for overseeing the implementation of the IRD, which consists of the CPA and the IPU and the Clerks of the HOC and HOL Overseas Offices.
- Greater control by officials with different priorities.
- A more centralized organization could result in a less diverse programme.
- Less responsive to counterparts in the States.
- It's possible long term that the BAPG would be absorbed in to the IPU.

The risks of not being a part of the IRD:

- The F&S and the HOC Commission might not be willing to continue the grant-in-aid funding of bodies not part of the IRD because of the lack of governance and control of expenditure.
- The HOC Commission and the HOL House Committee may decide to "go it alone" cultivating relations with the U.S. legislature via the NATO Parliamentary Assembly route.
- The HOL House Committee may review the funding of bicameral activities which may result in a change in the percentage funding paid.
- The BAPG would have to bid each year for funds with no guarantee that the funds would be agreed.

Resolution at the last Executive Committee Meeting:

At the last BAPG Executive Committee meeting at the beginning of June, members were briefed on the principle of the International Relations Directorate and while they were not convinced it was appropriate for the BAPG to join the IRD they were not prepared to reject it out of hand, instead wanting to wait for a detailed paper on the format of the IRD and what the BAPG's part would be within it before making a decision. It was agreed that the matter should be held over to the next Executive Committee meeting to be brought forward to September. A letter had been written to this effect and sent to the Speaker and the Lord Speaker.

The Honorary Secretary accordingly proposed that we have further dialogue within the Executive and then give our views to the Commission.

Ann Clwyd commented that the IPU had similar concerns and had agreed to defer a decision until the Autumn. She suggested that the Officers of the four grant aided groups get together and discuss our common concerns.

Lord Jopling added that the IPU had not yet elected a full Executive following the General Election and therefore it was quite unreasonable to expect a decision to be made before a full Executive is in place and has had time to think about it.

Ian Davidson expressed concern at "what seems to be the creation of a vast new bureaucracy which presumably will cost a lot more, will presumably be far more remote from members and will presumably display all the efficiency and understanding that we've see from IPSA".

Mr. Speaker concluded that there was merit in discussing this further at a later time.

9. Any other business

The Honorary Secretary thanked Mr. Speaker for presiding at the Group's AGM.

Mr. Donohoe reported that:

- This year's BAPG / U.S. Department of State Co-Sponsored visit will take place, 12th to 21st September. Eight members (four from the Government Parties and four from non Government Parties) will spend nine days in the United States examining the U.S. political system. The U.S. Department of State organizes the programme and internal travel. The BAPG pays transatlantic fares and a subsistence allowance including hotel accommodation.
- This year's Annual Parliamentary / Congressional Conference will take place in London from the 18th to the 21st November at the invitation of the British delegation to the House of Representatives BAPG. The House delegation will be led by Congressman Ben Chandler (D-Kentucky), Chair of the House BAPG and member of the House Committee on Appropriations and the House Committee on Science and Technology. It will be an opportunity for 13 Members of Parliament to meet with up to 14 Members of Congress. The conference will be advertised on the All Party Whip in the next few weeks.
- At the invitation of the Institute of Politics at Harvard University, the group is to send four members to observe an induction programme for newly elected Members of Congress, to be held from the 30th November to the 2nd December 2010. The programme will involve issue seminars and lectures by Harvard academics and eminent outside speakers. All new Members of Congress as elected on the 2nd November will be invited. The visit will be advertised on the All Party Whip in the next few weeks.
- We continue to try to arrange lunches/meetings for Congressional delegations to London and other VIP visitors.

- Members were reminded that Group functions/visits are always advertised by means of the All Party Whip and the BAPG website www.bapg.org.uk. We are also increasingly using e-mail to alert members to BAPG events advertised on the APW.
- The Honorary Secretary recorded his thanks to: William Hague, Shaun Woodward and Greg Knight and welcomed John Spellar. Special thanks were also given to the Administrator for all her hard work.

Lord Jopling brought to the meeting's attention the recent death of Senator Bob Byrd. Senator Byrd during the 14 years that Lord Jopling was Secretary of the BAPG was either the Leader of the American group or Deputy Leader and he was a huge supporter of the group to the extent that he enshrined a firm financial commitment every year to run the United States office. Lord Jopling asked the group to agree that the Secretary writes, care of the Senate, to say that at our meeting we were deeply distressed to hear of his death. "He was a huge supporter of Britain and a huge supporter of this group and I think it's important that we mark his death because he was a great man."

The Chair agreed this would be very seemly and appropriate which was unanimously agreed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4:10 p.m.

