|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FOR SCOTLAND **ACTION NOTE: Tuesday 16 April, 12:00 P.M.**  **Tele-Conference** | | | |
| Present:   * Board Members: Malcolm Burr (MB Convener), Steve Grimmond, Andrew Kerr (AK), Angela Leitch, Roger Mennie (for David Martin), Ian Milton, Karen Wiles (for Jim Savege), Pete Wildman (PW). * Advisers to EMB: Mark Conaghan, SOLAR; David Miller, AEA; Andy O’Neill (AON), Sarah Mackie (SM) and Martin McKeown (MMCK), Electoral Commission; Maria McCann and James Newman, Scottish Government. * Regional Returning Officer: Kenneth Lawrie (KL). * Also in attendance: Chris Highcock (CH), Secretary to the Board; Dougie McGregor. | | | |
|  |  | **NOTE** | **ACTION** |
| **1** | **Background** | **MB** outlined arrangements for oversight of the European Parliamentary General Elections on 23 May. The Regional Returning Officer is Kenneth Lawrie (**KL**). EMB will support the RRO to deliver the polls. |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **2** | **Key issues** | The following issues were discussed: |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2.1 Risk Register** | **CH** has produced a risk register for the EPEs, a copy of which was circulated. This will be monitored and revised throughout the election process as required. | **CH** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2.2 Governance** | **KL**, as RRO, has overall responsibility for the EPEs. He has agreed to appoint **MB, AK** and **CH** as Depute RROs. KL will attend EMB meetings during the run up to the EPEs. EMB will support LROs in delivering the polls. **CH** will oversee the nomination process and DMcG will coordinate the collation of local results.  **AON** outlined the EC approach to performance standards monitoring for the EPEs, and general support available to RRO and LROs. | **CH**  **DMcG** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2.3 RRO Directions** | It was agreed that rather than issuing Directions, the RRO will issue a number of recommendations to LROs, to ensure a level of consistency for voters. Proposed recommendations were outlined and discussed. It was agreed that CH issue these to LROs after consultation with **KL, MB, PW** and **AON**. Given deadlines, there was limited scope for overseas electors to vote by post. Need to steer overseas voters towards proxy appointments. **SM** confirmed that EC was aware of this and addressing in its awareness raising activity.  DMcG will liaise with LROs in due course on count collation and CH will provide advice on count timings. | **CH**  **SM**  **CH/**  **DMcG** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2.4 Registration issue** | **PW** advised on deadlines for EU voter form (UC1s) and impact on registration and poll card issues. SM advised that the EC was looking at messaging around UC1 forms to avoid voter confusion. She agreed to share with PW once finalised. Key registration dates had been agreed.  **CH** agreed to ask Cabinet Office about costs associated with international postage for overseas electors and to advise LROs. | **SM**  **CH** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2.5 Costs** | Cabinet Office has intimated Maximum Recoverable Amounts and that all reasonable costs will be met through the Fees and Charges Order, even if polls are cancelled. ECAB will continue to monitor. |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2.6 Integrity** | **CH, AON** and **MMcK** have met with the Lead SPOC, Supt. Pat O’Callaghan, to discuss policing and integrity matters, and will continue to liaise with Police Scotland throughout the election process. Police Scotland confirmed that storage of ballot boxes in Police cells would no longer be supported generally. SPOCs have been encouraged to contact LROs. | **CH**  **AON**  **MMcK** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2.7 Additional Advice** | **CH** is investigating whether it is possible to arrange signature verification training before the EPEs.  **CH** will recirculate EMB advice on personation to LROs.  **AON** confirmed range of guidance available on EC website. | **CH** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2.8 Public Awareness** | **SM** confirmed that the EC would be carrying out public awareness activity through digital media and TV advertisements. | **SM** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2.9 Media** | **AON** advised that he had met with BBC to discuss EPEs.  **KL** advised that he was being interviewed by STV.  EMB noted that media contact will be coordinated by David Grindlay at Falkirk Council.  Agreed key facts and figures might be useful for such interviews. | **SM** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2.9 Communications** | **CH** will arrange to produce and circulate a regular bulletin and updates to LROs as arrangements for the EPEs progress. SAA ERC would coordinate with EROs. | **CH**  **PW** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2.10 legal issues** | **MC** agreed to coordinate with SOLAR on legal issues arising during the elections period. Caveats were being lodged on behalf of RRO. LROs/EROs should deal with their local requirements. | **MC** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2.11 Meetings** | **CH** to coordinate with RRO and EMB on weekly tele-conferences. Meeting of EMB scheduled for 25 April would proceed unless otherwise advised. | **CH** |