

**ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FOR SCOTLAND**

**ACTION NOTE: Friday 28 August 2015, 2pm**

**Chief Executive's Board Room**

**Waverley Court, East Market Street**

**EDINBURGH EH8 8BG**

**Present:**

- **Board Members:** Mary Pitcaithly (MP Convener & RO), Joan Hewton (JH ERO), Stuart Galloway (SG DRO/ERO), Pete Wildman (PW ERO), Malcolm Burr (MB RO), David Martin (DM RO), Elma Murray (EM RO)
- **Advisers:** Gordon Blair (GB, DRO SOLAR representative) David Miller (DM DRO, AEA Rep), Alex Mowat (AM Scottish Government), Dougie McGregor (DMcG e-Counting Local Government Liaison), Andy O'Neill (AON Electoral Commission), Andrew Scallan (AS Electoral Commission), Maria McCann (MMc Scottish Government)
- **In attendance:** Chris Highcock (CH Secretary to the Board DRO), Ros Wilson (RW Administrator)

		<b>NOTE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Note of Previous Meeting/Apologies</b>	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ian Milton (IM ERO SAA)</li> <li>• Roddy Angus (RA Scottish Government)</li> <li>• Andrew Kerr (AK RO)</li> </ul> <p><b>Note of Previous Meeting (31 July 2015) &amp; Matters Arising</b> The Action Note was accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	<p><b>Royal Mail</b></p> <p>It was noted that Royal Mail's performance was poor and there were inconsistencies throughout Scotland. EMB agreed to canvass Local Authorities for their issues and to invite Rachel Winham to an EMB meeting to respond.</p>	

		<p><b>Personation</b> It was agreed that SOLAR Working Group would continue to consider the issues.</p>	CH
3	<p><b>Update from Scottish Government re CO Fees (Scottish Independence Referendum)</b></p>	<p><b>CO Fees</b> RA advised that full claims have been agreed. It was noted that EROs would receive extra money in a grant form to reflect additional work associated with SIR.</p> <p><b>FOI request re Counting Officer Claims</b> It was noted the EMB would encourage each authority to make their own responses, taking account of the intention of the Scottish Government to release the information shortly.</p>	
4	<p><b>Scottish Parliamentary Elections 5 May 2016</b></p>	<p><b>Update from Scottish Government</b> AM advised that the Scottish Parliament Election Order was planned for the end of September. It was noted that SOLAR would provide comments to the Scottish Government.</p> <p><b>Update from Electoral Commission</b> It was noted that Guidance is dependent on the Conduct Order and that planning dates will be out from October.</p> <p>Work is currently being carried out on the <b>“TIME OUT TO GET IN”</b> campaign which is taking place in all schools and colleges across Scotland from the <u>7-11 September</u>. The event is supported by The Electoral Commission, Education Scotland, SOLACE, ADES, School Leaders Scotland, the EMB, the SAA, the Scottish Council for Independent Schools, Colleges Scotland and the Scottish Government Learning and aims to encourage 15-17 year olds to register to vote at the Scottish Parliament election on 5 May 2016.</p>	

		<p>EMB to host meeting in spring next year. MB advised SOLACE were aware and involved.</p> <p><b>EMB Role and Recommendations</b> It was noted that the EMB will set recommendations on dates and issues surrounding poll cards and postal votes for elections. DMcG advised that he would create a template spreadsheet for the allocation of Regional Seats for RROs.</p>	
5	<p><b>Referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union</b></p>	<p><b>Update for the Electoral Commission</b> In anticipation of the EU referendum, potential dates have been investigated. The EU Referendum Management Board (EURMB) has been set up along with a Referendum Delivery Group which has been established to support the CCO.</p> <p><b>Appointment of Regional Counting Officers</b> Jenny Watson has been appointed as CCO and Andrew Scallan as DCO. There are 11 RCO's across Great Britain including a Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland. The CCO intends to approach the management of the EU referendum in a similar way to that followed by the CCO for the Scottish Independence Referendum in September 2014. It is noted that MP has been appointment RCO Designate for Scotland and as such has scope to issue Directions.</p> <p><b>Draft European Union Referendum (Conduct) Regulations</b> Copies of Responses to the Cabinet Office's Consultation on the Draft European Union Referendum (Conduct) Regulations from SOLAR Elections Working Group and SAA were tabled. It was noted that these responses were endorsed by the EMB.</p>	

6	<b>Scottish Local Government Elections 2017</b>	<p><b>eCounting for 2017 Local Government Elections</b></p> <p><b>Update from Scottish Government</b></p> <p>The evaluation panel will report their final scoring to the Project Board prior to forwarding to the Scottish Government. It was noted that the Contract is to start on 2 November 2015.</p> <p><b>Update from Local Government Liaison Consultant</b></p> <p>DMcG advised that both bidders were asked for further clarification on certain points. It was noted that this further clarification phase will not impact on the overall project timetable.</p> <p>It was agreed to defer the pens versus pencil issue until bidder in place.</p>	
7	<b>Other Electoral Events/Issues</b>	<p><b>Recall of MPs Act</b></p> <p>The Cabinet Office asked the EMB for comments on the draft Fees and Charges Order. It was agreed that CH would forward to a subgroup of DROs in various demographic regions for feedback and he will compile the results into a single response and forward to the Cabinet Office.</p>	<p>CH</p>
8	<b>Update on Registration Issues</b>	<p><b>IER Transition</b></p> <p>Andrew Scallan advised that an Order was made on 15 July to bring forward the end of the transition to IER to 1 December 2015.</p>	
9	<b>Local Government by-elections</b>	<p>It was noted that there were still by-elections pending. A discussion took place regarding resourcing ballot box opening times for e-count.</p>	

10	<b>EMB Role, Resources</b>	<p><b>EMB Membership</b> MP welcomed Elma Murray and Andrew Kerr to the Board.</p> <p><b>Website</b> It was noted that financial resources is now available to refresh the Website.</p>	CH
11	<b>Election Petition: MP for Orkney and Shetland</b>	It was noted that the case against Alistair Carmichael, MP for Orkney and Shetland will be heard in the Court of Session in Edinburgh on 7 and 8 September.	CH
12	<b>Party Conferences – Autumn 2015</b>	It was agreed that MP would represent the EMB at two of four Political Party Autumn Conferences and ROs would be invited to attend the two.	CH
13	<b>Law Commission’s Review of Electoral Law</b>	<p><b>Electoral Commission’s Second Response</b> It is noted that the EMB is keen to support the Electoral Commission in their response to the Law Commissions’ consultation paper. It was agreed to have a unanimous decision regarding the question of whether there should be a ‘public interest’ petitioner which could challenge the result of the election.</p>	
14	<b>Electoral Fraud</b>	<p><b>Call for Evidence by Sir Eric Pickles</b> It was agreed that stakeholders in Scotland should contribute any evidence to Sir Eric Pickles review of electoral fraud. It was noted that the deadline for submission is 8 October.</p>	CH
15	<b>Regional Returning Officers’ Group and associated meetings</b>	<p><b>Elections &amp; Registrations Working Group/EU Referendum Delivery Group – update from Secretary</b> Paper from the EU Referendum Delivery Group was circulated.</p>	

		<b>Electoral Advisory Board/EU Referendum Management Board – update form Convener</b> CH to attend 13 October Meeting.	<b>CH</b>
	<b>AOB</b>	<p>It was noted that EMB has been asked to deliver a presentation on STV to the Electoral Commission in Northern Ireland and support a project to improve performance.</p> <p>It was agreed to cancel the September meeting.</p> <p>It was noted RW retires in October. The Board thanked her for her work during her secondment and wished her well in her retirement. CH is initiating the process of getting another administrator through secondment from within the City of Edinburgh Council.</p>	<b>CH</b>
	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	30 October 2015	
<b>Date of future meetings: 27 November</b>			