

ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FOR SCOTLAND
ACTION NOTE: Friday 30 August, 1:30pm
Scott 1 Room, COSLA, Verity House, 19 Haymarket Yards
Edinburgh EH12 5BH

Present:

- **Board Members:** Mary Pitcaithly (MP Convener & RO), Brian Byrne (BB ERO, SAA rep), Malcolm Burr, (MB RO), Joan Hewton (JH ERO), Stuart Galloway (SG DRO)
- **Advisers:** Andy O'Neill (AON Electoral Commission), Gordon Blair, (GB, DRO SOLAR representative), David Miller (DM DRO AEA Rep), Roddy Angus (RA Scotland Office) Gillian Cross (GC Scottish Government), Steve Sadler (SS Scottish Government)
- **In attendance:** Chris Highcock (CH Secretary to the Board DRO), Dougie McGregor (DMCG Referendum Governance Consultant), Anne Laird (AL Referendum Guidance Consultant), Alison Clyne (AC Referendum Project Manager), Sam Mills (SM Head of Campaigns and Corporate Communication, Electoral Commission), Alex Robertson (AR Director of Communications)

		NOTE	ACTION / RESPONSIBLE
1	Apologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sue Bruce • Bob Jack 	Noted
2	Note of Previous Meeting, 31 May 2013 (circulated)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS noted that a meeting would be held in the next month to take forward the 2012 Local Government Elections eCounting legacy issues. • GB requested that the 310513 action note be amended to clarify who was responsible for leading the Project Board for the 2017 eCounting Procurement. The leadership, roles and responsibilities need to be identified clearly at the commencement of the project. 	Noted CH

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3	European Parliamentary Elections 2014	<p>Update From Cabinet Office/Scotland Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of poll now confirmed as 22 May 2014 • RRO Order has been made identifying that the RO for Falkirk will be the RRO for Scotland Region • Conduct Order was laid 9 July, with the aim to achieve final approval by end October/early November • Fees and Charges Order should be finalised by November, allowing 6 months before the polls <p>Proposed Communications approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications / stakeholder support strategies are being planned for the RRO to support the LROs for the Euro elections. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regular briefings from MP at SOLACE Meetings ○ Information via EMB Bulletins and Website ○ Ad hoc email updates from the RRO (via EMB staff) ○ Four “Cluster Group” briefings – meetings across Scotland to provide discussion over RRO issues direct to LROs and their depute 	
4	Scottish Independence Referendum : Legislation update from Scottish Government	<p>Referendum Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill Stage 1 report has been published with a positive assessment of the legislation • Debate scheduled for 12 September • Government were expected to write to EMB for clarification on some issues. • Stage 2 consideration expected 3 and 10 October 	

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		<p>Franchise Bill / registration issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Franchise Bill now at Act, in force from 8 August. There has been much discussion with EROs via their Reference Group. • Particular attention to software development. Some concern surrounding the late publication date of the register – 10 March and how this will affect setting up an election on Election Management systems. YP register will be available at the same time as the full register on 10 March but there are some concerns about access prior to the referendum. This may impact polling scheme on software systems. • ACTION – ROs should be encouraged to finalise their Polling Schemes as soon as possible so that at least the districts and places will be clear. <p>Note that Electoral Commission are planning to agree a readiness/progress report on 18 September assessing progress on areas including legislation.</p> <p>Fees and Charges Order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued work is in progress to finalise the Fees and Charges Order, based on the data that has been supplied by Returning Officers. • Aim is to have Fees and Charges Order ready as soon as possible after the Bill is enacted in November/December. 	
5	<p>Scottish Independence Referendum : CCO Work Programme</p>	<p>CCO Overview</p> <p>Memorandum of Understanding with the Electoral Commission - circulated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft MoU was circulated. A number of issues were raised for clarification and it was stressed that the paper was being prepared only to provide 	

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		<p>guidance for stakeholders and to improve signposting. ACTION – any comments to be given to AON who will redraft and agree final MoU with MP</p> <p>The Chief Counting Officer’s Approach – (circulated)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report was considered. Key Objective and Principles were agreed. A number of revisions were suggested to clarify the objective. ACTION CH to redraft, seek approval from the CCO and then circulate to ROs / DROs etc. <p>CCO Resources – oral update from the Secretary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultants were now in place to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project management – Dougie McGregor is overseeing Project Management, Performance Management and Count Collation ○ Guidance – Anne Laird is drafting Guidance Material • Both are based at <i>Office of the Chief Counting Officer c/o Electoral Management Board for Scotland Room 206 59-63 Lothian Chambers Edinburgh EH1 1RN</i> • Need for additional support is being assessed and may include Project management, and administration. • MP / EMB recorded their thanks to the City of Edinburgh Council for their support in terms of accommodation and general admin to arrange IT support etc. 	<p>ALL AON MP</p> <p>CH</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>

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		<p>Governance /Project Management</p> <p>Project Initiation Document - (circulated)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. PID was well received and provides a comprehensive base line for the Referendum planning. • For clarity, under the PRINCE2 approach the EMB are to take the role of Project Board. <p>Guidance</p> <p>Progress Report on Guidance for Counting Officers- (circulated)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report Noted and agreed • Significant progress has been made on the drafting of Guidance. This is based on the structure and format of existing Electoral Commission materials. • Guidance will be circulated for consultation to ROs / SOLAR and the Electoral Commission. • Guidance will include Performance Standards which will inform a Performance Management Framework. <p>Draft Guidance: Parts A and B – (circulated)</p> <p>Update from Forms Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. Work is continuing on Forms for European Elections and Referendum. The EMB noted its gratitude for the work that Aileen Knudsen and her group put into this important and very useful task. • Anne Laird will also take part in the group to ensure that the forms reflect the Guidance that is being drafted. 	<p style="text-align: right;">CH</p> <p style="text-align: right;">AL</p>

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		<p>Count Collation</p> <p>Consultation on Count Timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A consultation exercise will be undertaken in October/November to report by the end of the year. • This will involve all stakeholders: media, COs, politician, campaign groups etc to identify the key issues associated with the timing of the count especially those that may impact on the duration of the count. • Aim is to document and expose these issues well ahead of the poll so that there is a full understanding and appreciation of the challenges that exist and what factors may impact on the timing of declaration. <p>Count Collation Arrangements - (circulated)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. • It was noted that full verification – i.e. of unused papers - would be expected • Guidance and/or direction would also expect COs to share verification reports with observers at the count to ensure full traceability and transparency • ACTION – Forms group to consider verification reports • There was some discussion of count arrangements. The CCO will expect results by local authority area. How counts are managed below this is up to the CO, however it would be expected that count models are used to allow good levels of verification – e.g. mini-count models – such that any discrepancies can be quickly traced and addressed. • The sequencing of declarations and the approval of the CCO for count figures is a key issue and procedures are being drafted to address this in 	<p>D McG</p> <p>AL / Forms</p>

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		<p>detail.</p> <p>Count Declaration Event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addition work needs to focus on planning for the count declaration event. Venue is likely to be within the Royal Highland Showground at Ingliston. Here will need to be consideration of full range of Event Management for the declaration, e.g. dressing of stage etc. <p>Media coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major broadcasters are already panning coverage of the referendum, particularly declarations. It is understood that the BBC intend to have cameras in every count with major coverage based at the Count Collation venue in Edinburgh. Other broadcasters will also be involved, including international, but the spread of coverage across the country is likely to be lower. Project Plan needs to anticipate and support media contact over the next year. <p>Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted that additional CCO resource and support will be needed to develop communications for the Referendum Source for these needs to be identified either via local authorities or elsewhere. <p>Public Awareness – Presentation from Electoral Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation given by Head of Campaigns and Corporate Communication, Electoral Commission. ACTION CH to circulate presentation electronically Note that MP had worked with the Electoral Commission, ADES and Education Scotland to prepare information for schools. 	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>CH</p>

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6	Bulletin & Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EMB Bulletin to be issued in October. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Issues covered to include Polling District Reviews ○ ACTION Any other issues for Bulletin to be identified to CH • Website needs to be populated with information, forms etc. Secure area will be established for forms, with a security method to be identified, possibly via password. 	<p style="text-align: center;">CH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ALL</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CH</p>
7	Issues raised by the Election Teams across Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None not otherwise discussed elsewhere on the agenda. 	Noted
8	Individual Electoral Registration Update from Cabinet Office (Colin Dingwall to attend)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper circulated by Colin Dingwall was noted. 	Noted
9	Regional Returning Officers' Group and associated meetings <i>(Papers available at http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/elections/elections-and-</i>	<p>UK Electoral Advisory Board – Update from Convener</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant papers had been circulated by the convener. <p>Elections & Registrations Working Group – Update from Secretary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most recent meeting had been cancelled to allow the Working Group to consider and comment on the guidance being prepared for EROs around 	Noted

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	<i>referendums-working-groups)</i>	IER.	
10	Consultations / Evidence Sessions	<p>Consultation on Performance Standards for ROs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deadline for submission in 14 October. ACTION any comments to be submitted to CH asap to allow a response to be formulated for return to the Electoral Commission. Note that these standards will inform the Performance Standards that are being prepared for the CCO to use in managing the performance of the COs for the Referendum and the aim will be to ensure appropriate consistency between the standards for ROs applied at the Euro election and those for COs at the Referendum <p>Cabinet Office Review of Election Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACTION D McG to compile an EMB response and submit to the Cabinet Office. 	<p>ALL / CH</p> <p>D McG</p>
11	Any Other Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Communications Rep needs to be identified by the Board to take responsibility for the Comms Plan and actions that will be associated over coming months. ACTION Board to consider appropriate individual Bryan Byrne (BB) intimated that he would be retiring as an ERO in December 2013 and would therefore be stepping down from his membership of the EMB. The SAA would identify a replacement member for the EMB. 	ALL

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MP noted that David Martin, RO for Renfrewshire, had agreed to become a member of the EMB following the resignation of David Anderson. • BB noted that David Thomson had been nominated by the SAA as an ERO member to replace Douglas Gillespie 	
12	Date of future meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was agreed that future meetings would be held on the afternoon of the COSLA Leaders' meeting, at the COSLA Office to make it easier for members to attend. 	Note
Date of next meeting: 27 September 1:30pm			