

ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FOR SCOTLAND

ACTION NOTE: Friday 27 January 2017 2pm

Chief Executive's Board Room

Waverley Court, East Market Street

Edinburgh EH8 8BG

Present:

- **Board Members:** Mary Pitcaithly (MP Convener & RO), Pete Wildman (PW ERO)
- **Advisers:** Andy O'Neill (AON Electoral Commission), Stuart Matheson (SM Scotland Office), Gillian Taylor (GT DRO/SOLAR rep), Mette Christensen (MC Electoral Commission), David Miller (DMi DRO/AEA Rep), Dougie McGregor (DMcG e-Counting Local Government Liaison), Maria McCann (MMc Scottish Government)
- **In attendance:** Chris Highcock (CH Secretary to the Board/DRO), Fran Cattanach (FC Administrator), Emma Hartley (EH Head of Campaigns & Corporate Communications – Electoral Commission), Jamie MacLaren (JM CGI), Joanne Campbell (JC Idox), Maxine Graves (Letter Shop), Rachel Winham (Royal Mail), Paul Beaney (Idox)

		NOTE	ACTION
1.0/ 2.0	Admin/Note of Previous Meeting/Matters arising etc	Apologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Kerr (AK RO) • Ian Milton (IM ERO SAA representative) • Roddy Angus (RA Scottish Government) • Elma Murray (EM RO) • Stuart Galloway (SG DRO/ERO) • Malcolm Burr (MB RO) • Jim Savege (JS RO) • David Martin (DM RO) • Rebecca Whyte (RW Scottish Government) 	

		<p>Note of Previous Meeting (25 November 2016) & Matters Arising The Action Note was accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>MP introduced and welcomed key suppliers to the meeting representing CGI, Idox, Letter Shop and Royal Mail. These key suppliers were invited to this meeting to give the Board an opportunity to raise any concerns, issues or questions about the forthcoming May elections.</p>	
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Scottish Local Government Elections 2017</p>	<p>Update from CGI</p> <p>JM reported on fact that CGI are in process of upskilling own teams as Council training starts in Aberdeen in three week's time. Scanners are in production; hardware has been procured and is ready to be shipped to Scotland. Assurance activities are underway and there is green status on the Gateway Review. JM confirmed that a Senior CGI manager will be on-site at every venue. The Project Board are currently working on continuity issues. Board raised query over escalation process so JM confirmed that councils should escalate through their normal contacts and then onto himself and/or DMcG. An Issue Resolution Team will be in place from the end of February which will comprise of CGI and Scottish Government staff.</p> <p>Update from Idox/Letter Shop</p> <p>Plans are currently on track with EasyPrint training complete and some councils have locked down ahead of schedule. Idox has daily updates with Royal Mail. Councils are currently signing off artwork. Letter Shop's contingency planning includes use of a backup factory that has spare capacity should it be required. Letter Shop are happy with numbers to process and are experienced in elections over last six years. Idox has 18 postal vote verification operations and will be printing approx. two thirds of the poll cards in Scotland. It was agreed that similar and consistent lines of</p>	

		<p>communication are required from all suppliers.</p> <p>JM will ensure that CGI Press Office also has aligned communications and will share any press enquiries and consult relevant parties before responding.</p> <p>Update from Royal Mail</p> <p>RW reported that plans are on track with first contacts with local authorities already made which will be followed up by Field Manager contact. There will be a final day sweep across Scotland. Board raised escalation issues which are to be passed up through their own mail provider and then Doxford can ask the Wholesale Team to ask the provider if OK for Royal Mail to speak to their customer.</p> <p>Discussion about whether Letter Shop can deliver directly to Scotland as Good Friday is an English public holiday.</p> <p>RW confirmed that a 24/7 helpline will be available and that any PR issues should be dealt with by the local authority in question. Board raised point that billing issues need addressed. Board also raised recurring issue of lower delivery rates on Tuesdays. It was agreed that this may be a more important factor this year since the deadline for postal vote registration is Tuesday 18 April which is the day after a public holiday. ACTION: RW to investigate further.</p> <p>MP thanked the suppliers for joining the meeting and for worthwhile discussions and updates. MP reiterated that the Board will raise any concerns with the suppliers but if the suppliers have any issues then they should contact CH in the first instance to circulate to the Board to address.</p>	<p>RW</p>
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		<p>accreditations required for SLGE.</p> <p>DM asked whether the ballot booth poster is available yet as he needs to translate it. ACTION: CH to check whether available online from Forms Working Group.</p> <p>Registration Update</p> <p>PW gave update on Electoral Registration. PW highlighted a potential risk about online registration over the Easter holidays given that the Cabinet Office does not have a contract in place with DWP so therefore cannot guarantee weekend assistance if required. ACTION: PW to email EMB and Scottish Government highlighting the potential issue so that it can be addressed.</p> <p>Performance Management Framework</p> <p>As stated previously, the Performance Management Framework (PMF) has been created jointly between EC and EMB so that both data collection requests are in a single document. The questions will be circulated in advance as requested by the Board. The first survey monkey will address Planning and will be distributed around 6 February. The second survey monkey will address Planning for the Count and will be distributed around 3 April. A sample of five ROs has been randomly selected to have their plans reviewed in February.</p> <p>E-Counting</p> <p>Update from Local Government Liaison Consultant circulated.</p> <p>Print Working Group Update – AM gave update and noted that the group has been</p>	<p>CH</p> <p>PW</p>
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		<p>working on Business Continuity Planning. The Group has reformed and will be known as the User Group since printing element is complete.</p> <p>Paper for Items to Discuss/Decision – Board reviewed each issue within the paper and agreed the recommendations. For consistency reasons, a suggestion was made to issue several examples of ballot papers which should be accepted at first level adjudication and not deferred to the RO. Also, regarding the 80% screen, it was agreed that there is a requirement to explain the screen and what it is showing to any observers. ACTION: CH to revise Directions for MP to issue.</p>	CH
4.0	Other Electoral Events/ Issues	<p>Consultation on draft Scottish Independence Referendum Bill MMc confirmed that the EMB response will be analysed with all other responses in due course.</p> <p>Local Government and Communities Committee Inquiry into Payments to Returning Officers The findings of the above inquiry have been published but the report was embargoed to the press and not sent to evidence givers. Report was sent to CH by the Glasgow Herald. ACTION: CH to speak to Committee Clerk regarding fact that evidence givers were not informed of the publication of the report.</p> <p>Local Government and Communities Committee Promoting Turnout and Participation – MP, IM, CH and AON had provided evidence.</p>	CH
5.0	EMB Role and Resources	<p>EMB Financial Statement</p> <p>DMcG forecasting an underspend in 2016/17 of approximately £7k. ACTION: MMc and AM to confirm whether EMB can retain the underspend.</p>	MMc/AM

6.0	Regional Returning Officers' Group and associated meetings	<p>IM attended the last Elections and Registrations Working Group meeting held on 6 December 2016.</p> <p>No updates from any other meetings.</p>	
7.0	Scottish Parliament Political Parties Panel	<p>SPPPP meeting took place on 5 December 2016.</p> <p>Party Conferences MP will attend the Labour Party Conference on 24 February at 5.30pm in Perth.</p>	
8.0	Electoral Commission/EMB Joint Briefing Event	<p>MP thanked DMI for providing accommodation for event on 12 Jan 2017 and all those who contributed to the successful event, especially the speakers. Board was delighted with positive attendance of attendees, especially the number of Returning Officers. AON summarised feedback from evaluations forms (38 responses received) which was very positive.</p>	
9.0	AOB	<p>Future Electoral Events – Board considering possibility of future events. EC believe that the risk of an event in the near future is low.</p>	
10.0	Date of Next Meeting	24 February 2017	
Date of future meetings: 31 March 2017			
Provisional dates of future 2017 meetings: 21 April, 30 June, 25 August, 29 September, 27 October and 24 November			