

**ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FOR SCOTLAND**

**ACTION NOTE: Tuesday 10 March 2015, 3:00pm**

**Mandela Room**

**City Chambers**

**Present:**

- **Board Members:** Mary Pitcaithly (MP Convener & RO), Joan Hewton (JH ERO), Stuart Galloway (SG DRO/ERO), Ian Milton (IM ERO SAA representative)
- **Advisers:** Andy O’Neill (AON Electoral Commission), Roddy Angus (RA Scotland Office), Gordon Blair (GB, DRO SOLAR representative) David Miller (DM DRO, AEA Rep), Louise Unwin (LU Scottish Government), Alex Mowat (AM Scottish Government), Natasha Griffiths (NG Scottish Government),
- **In attendance:** Chris Highcock (CH Secretary to the Board DRO), Ros Wilson (RW Administrator)

		<b>NOTE</b>	<b>ACTION / RESPONSIBLE</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Admin / Matters arising etc</b>	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dougie McGregor (DMcG e-Counting Local Government Liaison)</li> <li>• Malcolm Burr (MB RO)</li> <li>• David Thomson (DT ERO)</li> <li>• Sue Bruce (SB RO)</li> <li>• Roddy Angus (RA Scotland Office)</li> <li>• David Martin (DM RO)</li> </ul> <p><b>Note of Previous Meeting (30 January 2015) &amp; Matters Arising</b> The Action Note was accepted as an accurate record of the meeting subject to change in Number 4 Registration Update should read “letters would be sent out” and not “letters have been sent out”.</p>	

2	<b>EMB Annual Report for 2014</b>	It was agreed that the EMB Annual Report was open for further development prior to being submitted to the Scottish Parliament. It was noted on page 16 of the report that the EMB was leading on procuring an eCounting system. MP thanked CH and DMcG for their valued contributions to the Report.	<b>ALL</b>
3	<b>Registration Update Including IER</b>	<p><b>Poll Cards</b></p> <p>It was noted that a decision would be made next week if there is to be one or two poll cards issued.</p> <p><b>Electorate Figures</b></p> <p>JH tabled a paper on LVJB 2014-2015 Canvass Statistics. It was noted that Scotland showed a slight increase of electors to 100.6% of 2014 equivalent date.</p> <p>IM reported that EROs were successful in securing additional funding from the Cabinet Office for sending out additional Housing Notification Letter.</p> <p><b>ERO Workload</b></p> <p>It was noted that Legislation came into force on 4 March placing a duty on EROs to send a further notification of a rejected postal voting statement to those voters whose postal vote was rejected at the European Parliamentary Elections on 22 May 2014</p> <p>It was agreed that the EMB would advise the Cabinet Office on it's digital service provision – concern that website was misleading in parts.</p> <p>IM advised that discussions are under way with the Scottish Government regarding rolling out the new franchise to 16 and 17 year olds.</p>	<b>ALL</b>
4	<b>UK Parliamentary General Election 7 May</b>	<p><b>Electoral Commission Update</b></p> <p>A discussion took place on nominations and the use of commonly used names. It</p>	

	<p><b>2015</b></p>	<p>was agreed that GB would have a look at it in more detail and forward his comments to EMB.</p> <p>It was noted that a case had appeared where two local authorities share a cross-border Constituency and the RO of one suggested changing the colour of the ballot paper. EMB has recommended that all ballot papers should be white otherwise it may lead to voter confusion. AON to contact the RO of the Local Authority.</p> <p><b>Fees &amp; Charges from Cabinet Office</b></p> <p>The draft expenses Guidance Notes for RO's was circulated. It was noted that funding for General Election Charges Order for 2015 will use the same model as that used for the European Election with a six-month deadline of 7 November 2015. It was also noted that Indemnity Arrangements would be provided for ROs to top up their existing insurance. It was agreed that EMB would deal with the Scotland Office.</p> <p><b>Guidance/Recommendations for Best Practice from the EMB</b></p> <p>A memo dated 9 February 2015 from MP to RO's and ERO's was circulated. It was noted that proposals offered were recommendations and not directions and it was agreed this was appreciated by all RO's and ERO's.</p> <p><b>Contingency Planning – Potential for a further general election in 2015 and council by-elections</b></p> <p>It is understood that some planning is underway by the Cabinet Office although the official line is that ROs always need to be prepared for an election at short notice.</p> <p><b>Police Guidance on Electoral Fraud</b></p>	<p><b>GB</b></p> <p><b>AON/MP</b></p> <p><b>ALL</b></p>
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		<p>IM/AON/CH/RJ attended a briefing held by Police Scotland on 5 March 2015. It was noted that Superintendent Jim Baird continues to be National Police Liaison and that guidance remains the same as the last election. It was also noted that issues reported to Police Scotland regarding Registration, Personation, and Secrecy at Postal Votes Opening at SIR were being addressed. GB suggested Presiding Officers should phone Election Offices on any potential personation issues rather than contacting Police Scotland directly. It was agreed that EMB would raise protocol flexibility issues with JB.</p> <p><b>Suppliers – Royal Mail, Software and Print</b></p> <p>It was noted that Royal Mail had made contact with RO’s regarding arrangements for delivering Writs to them following the dissolution of Parliament.</p> <p>It was noted that ballot papers have been designed to show the address on one line.</p> <p>It was noted that Aileen Knudsen will post updated forms on the Knowledge Hub later this week.</p> <p>It was agreed to approach the Scotland Office to liaise with HMRC regarding P45 payment issues.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>All</b></p>             <p style="text-align: center;"><b>AK</b></p>             <p style="text-align: center;"><b>All</b></p>
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<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Scottish Parliamentary Election 5 May 2016</b></p>	<p>NG advised a draft order for consultation will be circulated to ROs/EROs/EC for comments.</p> <p>It was noted that Parliament will automatically dissolve on Monday 30 March in accordance with the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011.</p> <p>It was noted that in the Section 30 Order to extend franchise to 16 and 17 year old voters Bill will need to be introduced in Parliament by April to allow time to canvass before the summer recess.</p>	<p><b>NG</b></p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>eCounting for 2107 Local Government Elections</b></p>	<p>It was noted that tomorrow is the closing date for receiving procurement applications of interest.</p> <p>It was also noted that Key stakeholders such as RNIB and Enable Scotland have concerns regarding randomised listings. It was agreed the EMB would advise Ministers of these concerns.</p>	<p><b>All</b></p>
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Other Electoral Events</b></p>	<p>It was noted that the Law Commission have published their initial finding and proposals for a review of the Electoral Law for consultation. It was agreed that GB's response was very comprehensive and that this be adopted and endorsed by the EMB as the Board's responses to the proposals.</p> <p>It was agreed that EMB would endorse the idea of a public interest petitioner bringing elections petitions, subject to there being appropriate time limits and that the petitioner be the Electoral Commission. It was noted that ERO's would put forward their own response.</p> <p>It was agreed that GB would circulate responses to the Commission.</p>	<p><b>All</b></p> <p><b>GB</b></p>

8	<b>Issues raised by Election Teams across Scotland</b>	There were no issues raised	
9	<b>EMB Role in context of further devolution</b>	It was noted that Devolution (Further Powers) Committee sees merit in reassessing the role, status and funding of the EMB.	
10	<b>EMB Resources</b>	It was noted that the Devolution (Further Powers) Committee requests the view of Scottish Ministers on the funding of the EMB.	
11	<b>Regional Returning Officers' Group and associated meetings</b>	<p><b>EAB</b> It was noted that a copy of the SOLACE report on RO/ERO fees is to be circulated.</p> <p><b>Elections &amp; Registrations Working Group</b> IM advised that the Electoral Commission confirmed it's guidance on IER for Campaigners and Canvassers. It was noted that DMcG sent in Comments</p> <p><b>Scottish Political Parties Panel</b> Chris advised the meeting in January was not well attended by the Political Parties.</p> <p><b>Electoral Commission Integrity Roundup</b> It was noted that this was a well attended meeting. Risk was discussed. Counsels Opinion had been given to the Labour Party regarding sampling of PV opening. EMB believes it is incorrect : - RO has a responsibility to keep the front of the Ballot Paper secret.</p>	
12	<b>AOB</b>	<p>It was noted that planning for a Referendum on Europe was underway and that MP is to make a presentation and answer questions.</p> <p>It was noted that a communication was received regarding the gender balance of the EMB. It was agreed MP would respond on behalf of the Board. It was agreed to keep this in mind when recruiting two new members to the Board. It was noted that MB would canvass new members from SOLACE.</p>	<b>MP</b>

<b>13</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	14 April 2014,	
<b>Date of future Meetings : 29 May, 26 June, 31 July, 28 August, 25 September, 30 October, 27 November</b>			