

ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FOR SCOTLAND

ACTION NOTE: Friday 31 July 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)
- **Advisers:** Roddy Angus (RA Scottish Government), Gordon Blair (GB, DRO SOLAR representative) David Miller (DM DRO, AEA Rep), Mette Christensen, (MC Electoral Commission), Alex Mowat (AM Scottish Government), Dougie McGregor (DMcG e-Counting Local Government Liaison)
- **In attendance:** Chris Highcock (CH Secretary to the Board DRO), Ros Wilson (RW Administrator)

		NOTE	ACTION
1	Admin/Note of Previous Meeting/Matters arising etc	<p>Apologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malcolm Burr (MB RO) • Ian Milton (IM ERO SAA) • David Martin (DM RO) • Andy O'Neill (AON Electoral Commission) <p>Note of Previous Meeting (29 May) & Matters Arising The Action Note was accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
2	Update from Scottish Government re CO Fees (Scottish Independence Referendum)	<p>CO Fees</p> <p>RA advised that the Scottish Government has approved all fees and payment of expenses up to the Maximum Recoverable Amount on 31 July. RA also advised that Ministerial approval is being sought for the payment of the full claim amount and therefore expected shortly.</p>	RA

		<p>It was noted that an FOI request was submitted by a journalist seeking information on what CO's claimed (and not what was awarded to them). It was agreed that CH would contact all COs advising on points that might be relevant to their responses in particular advising that before releasing any information all relevant stakeholders including (Scottish Government) would normally be consulted and informed on the proposed release of data.</p>	<p>CH</p>
3	<p>UK Parliamentary General Election – 7 May 2015</p>	<p>Review Seminar on UK Parliamentary General Election – Glasgow 15 June 2015</p> <p>It was noted that positive feedback was returned by delegates.</p> <p>Suppliers round table</p> <p>It was noted that following the Suppliers Group Meeting on 30 June, it was agreed that the experience of Royal Mail Services across some authorities were very poor and the Cabinet Office discussed setting up a further meeting with Royal Mail regarding potential changes to the design of the poll card with print suppliers and electoral administrators. It was agreed that CH would contact Rachel Winham at Royal Mail voicing concerns of the Board and to invite her to discuss all relevant issues.</p> <p>Personation Guidance</p> <p>CH circulated draft guidance on protocol for dealing with Personation at polling stations and the count. It was agreed to canvass all Local Authorities and to convene a meeting of SOLAR sub-group to clarify protocol, prior to submitting to the Electoral Commission and Police.</p>	<p>CH</p> <p>CH/GB</p>
4	<p>Scottish Parliamentary Elections 5 May 2016</p>	<p>Scottish Elections (Reduction in Voting Age) Bill</p> <p>The Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting Age) Bill became an Act when it received Royal Assent on 24 July and commenced the next day.</p> <p>MC tabled a paper on the EC public awareness campaign aimed at 15-17 year olds in Scotland advising that the voting age has been lowered for Scottish Parliamentary and local government elections and to encourage them to register. It was agreed that this</p>	<p>MC/All</p>

		<p>information should go out to Head Teachers now so that it is available to pupils for the start of the new term.</p> <p>Scottish Parliament (Elections Etc.) Order 2015 Stakeholder consultation SOLAR & SAA Feedback RA thanked everyone for their submissions to the consultation. It was noted that the main concerns were surrounding proxy votes. RA anticipated that the Order would be finalised in mid August and in place September.</p> <p>Potential EMB Recommendations It was agreed that the EMB Recommendations on Ballot Paper Colours for the 5 May Scottish Parliamentary Elections sent for consultation by CH on 1 June 2015 be accepted.</p>	CH
5	eCounting for 2017 Local Government Elections	<p>Update from Scottish Government AM advised that they had received 2 strong bids. These are being evaluated.</p> <p>Update from Local Government Liaison Consultant Demonstrations from both bidders are scheduled for 10 and 11 August. The tenders will be reviewed by the Project Board prior to presenting to Ministers.</p> <p>It was agreed to leave the matter of using pens instead of pencils until after the next meeting on 28 August and after the four Glasgow By-Elections on 6 August.</p>	All
6	Other Electoral Events	<p>EU Referendum Bill It was noted that CH is to attend EC - Referendum Planning Meeting in London on 5 August on MP's behalf. It was agreed to voice the Board's concerns on the lack of Notice.</p>	CH

		<p>Update from the Electoral Commission/Scotland Office MC advised that the EC will be testing the EU Referendum Question with electors. It was noted that the question would require a simple Yes or No answer.</p> <p>EC are developing a new results collation system. EMB have given a view that it is unnecessary and a simple system could be use as in the SIR.</p> <p>Draft Conduct Order It was agreed to convene a meeting of the SOLAR working prior to 19 August to allow the EMB to pull together a response to the rules. CH and GB to organise half day event.</p>	CH/GB
7	Update on Registration Issues	It was noted that the Transition to IER is to end in December 2015. JH advised that additional funding has been made available to EROs to allow them to target the non IER registered “carry-forward” electors . Publicity campaigns are currently underway.	
8	Upcoming, by-elections	It was noted that the Local Authority by-elections had taken place in Aberdeen City yesterday. Following the UKPGE there were to be a large number across Scotland.	
9	EMB Role, Resources	<p>EMB Finance It was noted that the funding for the year is now in place and that spending is in accordance with the budget.</p> <p>EMB Membership It was agreed that SG would move to being an Associate Member and that Andrew Kerr, Elma Murray and one other would be asked to join the Board. MP and CH to discuss.</p>	MP/CH
10	Regional Returning Officers’ Group and associated meetings	It was noted that a full hearing into the election of the Liberal Democrat MP Alistair Carmichael is set to take place at the Court of Session in Edinburgh on 7 and 8 September.	

11	AOB	MP advised that invitations are being received to attend Political Party Conferences. It was agreed that either MP or CH would attend on behalf of the Board.	MP/CH
12	Date of Next Meeting	28 August 2015	
Date of future meetings: 25 September, 30 October, 27 November			