

**ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FOR SCOTLAND**

**ACTION NOTE: Friday 27 June 2014, 2:00pm**

**Chief Executive's Board Room, Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh EH8 8BG**

**Present:**

- **Board Members:** Mary Pitcaithly (MP Convener & RO), David Martin, (DM RO), Joan Hewton (JH ERO), Stuart Galloway (SG DRO/ERO)
- **Advisers:** Andy O'Neill (AON Electoral Commission), Nick Dishon (ND Electoral Commission), Roddy Angus (RA Scotland Office), Steve Sadler (SS Scottish Government) Gillian Cross (GC Scottish Government), Louise Unwin (LU Scottish Government/EMB), Gordon Blair (GB, DRO SOLAR representative) David Miller (DM DRO, AEA Rep)
- **In attendance:** Anne Laird (AL Referendum Guidance Consultant), Alison Clyne (AC Referendum Project Manager)
- **In attendance for Item 4.5:** Christina Kelly (CK Golley Slater), Angela Hughes (AH Golley Slater)
- **In attendance for Item 4.6:** Jim Baird (JB Police Scotland)

		NOTE	ACTION / RESPONSIBLE
1	Admin / Matters arising etc	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David Thomson (DT ERO)</li> <li>• Ian Milton (IM ERO SAA representative)</li> <li>• Sue Bruce (SB RO)</li> <li>• Bob Jack (BJ RO)</li> <li>• Malcolm Burr (MB RO)</li> <li>• Chris Highcock (CH Secretary to the Board DRO)</li> <li>• Dougie McGregor (DMCG Referendum Governance Consultant),</li> <li>• Ros Wilson (RW Administrator)</li> </ul> <p><b>Note of Previous Meeting (30 May) &amp; Matters Arising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Action Note was accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.</li> </ul>	
2	European Parliamentary Elections May 2014	<p><b>Project Close Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AC provided an overview of the Project Close Report for the European</li> </ul>	

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		<p>Parliamentary Election. The Board welcomed the report and it was agreed that the lesson learned regarding communication (page 10) was excessively critical of communications with the RRO's team and that it should be amended to reflect the minor nature of the issues which had been raised.</p> <p><b>Postal Voting Statistics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that the Postal Voting Statistics paper circulated provided useful information.</li> </ul>	AC
3	Joint Seminars with the Electoral Commission	<p><b>Joint Seminars with the Electoral Commission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The first seminar to review the European Parliamentary Elections and prepare for the Independence Referendum had taken place in Edinburgh on 4 June, with the second scheduled for 30 June in Glasgow. It was noted that the adjudication of doubtful ballots was the most contentious issue. MP noted that seeking the opinion of Counsel was an option to be considered. It was noted that there was unlikely to be a CCO Direction regarding this matter as this would remove the discretion of COs. A decision would be made following the second seminar.</li> </ul>	<p>EMB/Electoral Commission</p> <p>MP</p>
4	Scottish Independence Referendum	<p><b>Update from Scottish Government</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SS noted that a contract had been agreed with the Royal Mail in regard to mail shots for the two designated organisations.</li> <li>In regard to Fees and Charges, forms from two COs were outstanding.</li> </ul> <p><b>Update from Electoral Commission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25 permitted participants had registered (14 supporting 'Yes' and 11 supporting 'No') and more were expected to register.</li> </ul>	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AON provided an update on the planned Public Awareness Campaign and circulated a paper. It was agreed that the Electoral Commission will provide a presentation of the campaign to the July EMB meeting.</li> <li>• ND noted an issue with data protection regarding permitted participants and contact details. People could be contacting COs/EROs on behalf of a permitted participant, e.g. to request a register, but the CO/ERO currently has no way of confirming if they are in fact acting on behalf of the Permitted Participant. It was agreed that the Electoral Commission would circulate a draft email to permitted participants to the EMB for comment.</li> <li>• Although there is no deadline for registration as a permitted participant, Permitted Participants who register after the deadline for appointing referendum agents (14 August) will not be able to appoint agents to attend the count (or opening of postal votes, polling stations etc).</li> <li>• AON noted that Police Scotland have requested an Integrity Briefing at the Fettes control centre 4 weeks prior to the Referendum. This would be for the CCO and the Electoral Commission to attend.</li> <li>• AON noted that there would be Electoral Commission representatives at 19 or 20 council areas and details would be announced the following week.</li> <li>• It was agreed that the Electoral Commission booklet for voters should not be displayed at polling places.</li> </ul> <p><b>Project Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Status Report</b> (<i>circulated</i>) AC provided an update on the status of the project.</li> <li>• <b>Performance Management Framework for Counting Officers</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Electoral Commission</b></p> <p><b>Electoral Commission</b></p>

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		<p>Performance Management Framework submissions were due on 20 June, with the next submission due on 8 August. Six authorities (4 risk-based, 2 random) have been asked to provide additional information. No significant issues were raised in the first round of submissions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Performance Management Framework for Electoral Registration Officers</b>            The Performance Management Framework for EROs has been issued and the return is due by 11 July.         </li> </ul> <p><b>CCO Directions – Exception Procedure Decision Tree</b> (<i>Circulated</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that although the deadline for submitting exception requests is 31 July, they will be dealt with as they are received.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suppliers Briefing on 8 July</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MP asked that details of any issues to be raised are provided to Chris Highcock.</li> </ul> <p><b>Guidance/Directions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Guidance for Counting Officers</b>            AL provided an update on the status of the Guidance for Counting Officers. Resources are being uploaded to the EMB website as they are completed. The Polling Station Handbook is being finalised for printing. A wide range of forms are now available on the Knowledge Hub.         </li> </ul> <p><b>Count Collation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An update on the preparations for the national count collation was provided by AC.</li> </ul>	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that the inconsistent approaches to the organisation and publication of local count information had been discussed at the recent PPP meeting. There was not consensus at the PPP meeting regarding the optimum approach for the Referendum. It was agreed that electoral integrity was key and COs should be encouraged to use the same approach as that used at the European Elections. However, Ward level results should not be published. It was unlikely that this issue would be subject to a CCO Direction.</li> </ul> <p><b>Count Event Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CK and AH from Golley Slater provided an update on the work they are undertaking on media management and preparations for the count event.</li> <li>Significant work was ongoing on media logistics, the media strategy, media handling, dressing and branding of the hall and the website.</li> <li>The media have now been allocated space at Ingliston and media accreditation will begin 10 weeks prior to the event.</li> <li>The risk of the website crashing due to the volume of traffic was discussed and it was noted that the hosting of the site would be key.</li> <li>It was noted that there was a risk that the media would film / photograph ballot papers and other confidential information and Golley Slater noted that the media were aware of the rules and would be clearly briefed.</li> <li>It was noted that there were several issues that COs would need to be aware of, such as pressure for recounts, the impact of the media attention, etc. It was noted that Golley Slater are working with local Communications teams to provide briefings. It was suggested that a 'top tips' guide for dealing with the media would be helpful for COs.</li> <li>It was agreed that local branding should be decided locally.</li> </ul>	

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		<p><b>Police Scotland</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JB from Police Scotland provided an update on the planning underway for policing the Referendum. It was noted that there were minimal offences at the European Elections, with those few occurring relating to candidates. The European Elections had allowed Police Scotland to have a dry run of their processes and the focus was on prevention. This approach will be repeated at the Referendum.</li> <li>• There had been a meeting with Golley Slater regarding media accreditation at Ingliston. Local media accreditation would be arranged by COs locally.</li> <li>• A control centre would be established at Fettes and this will provide a point of contact. SPOCs were largely the same staff as in the European Elections.</li> <li>• MP thanked JB and noted that Police Scotland are welcome to attend the EMB again if that would be of benefit.</li> </ul>	
5	<b>Registration Issues</b>	<p><b>Registration/Update from ERO's, including IER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JH provided an update on behalf of EROs.</li> <li>• It was noted that there had not been a significant negative reaction to the letters informing voters that their postal votes had been rejected.</li> <li>• In regard to the referendum, it was noted that the Daily Record will be commencing a week of electoral articles from 7 July and will be circulating a voter registration form at the end of the week. Other work is ongoing in relation to communications around registration for students. Some issues have also been raised by EROs regarding EMS suppliers' lack of progress in</li> </ul>	

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		<p>attaining updates and patches acceptable to Scottish EROs for the Referendum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In regard to IER, this has now been introduced in England and Wales, with Scotland to follow on 19 September.</li> </ul>	
6	RRO/CCO Briefing to SOLACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As circulated.</li> </ul>	
7	Issues raised by Election Teams across Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No issues arising.</li> </ul>	
8	Regional Returning Officers' Group and associated meetings	<p><b>UK Electoral Advisory Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that the potential European Referendum had been discussed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Elections &amp; Registrations Working Group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that there had been discussion of the 2015 General Election.</li> </ul>	
9	eCounting for 2017 Local Government Elections – Update from Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that further volunteers would be welcomed.</li> </ul>	
10	AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No issues raised.</li> </ul>	
11	Future Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25 July, 29 August, 31 October</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Date of next meeting: 9:00am Friday 25 July 2014, Chief Executive's Board Room, Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh EH8 8BG</b></p>			