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**Action Note**

12 November 2024 Action Note, 2PM

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| **Attendance/Apologies** | **Attendance**: Chris Highcock, Maria McCann, Alison Davidson, Mark Adam, Andy O’Neill, Kenneth Lawrie, Karen Greaves, Peter Hessett, Brian Rout, Robert Nicol, Catherine Heggie, Kirsty Mavor, Paul Docker, Kenneth Pentland, Sarah Mackie, James Newman, Sarah Mackie  **Apologies**: Jim Savage |
| **Action from previous meetings** | None outstanding |
| **UKPGE 2024** | **Electoral Commission Report** on UK Parliamentary General Election – to follow (publication 13 November) – noted.  **AEA 2024 Post-Polls Letter to Secretary of State -** noted |
| **Workstreams** | **Local Government By-elections** - note high adjudication rates in some area; potentially indicating the need for additional voter education, especially around use of numbers on paper. EC project on voter education is preparation. Print quality continues to be a concern in some cases, especially depth of perforation on papers. KL (Falkirk RO ) noted generally positive experience of working with Fujitsu.  **Postal Voting and Print Roundtable: draft agenda/programme** – date to be finalised, ideally in January 2025. Should include participation from Royal Mail.  **Manual Verification and Count: Good Practice** – to follow later in 2025 following postal vote roundtable. Recommendations needed by autumn 2025 to feed into planning for the Scottish Parliament elections in 2026  **Accessibility Subgroup** – current focus on developing an testing ballot paper overlays as a more effective replacement for the TVD.  **Future Status and Resourcing of the EMB** – Scottish Elections (Representation and Reform) Bill will see EMB created as Body Corporate, reporting to the Scottish Parliament. Convener and Secretary are engaging with SP Corporate Body with respect to practical arrangements. |
| **Updates** | **UK Government –** PD noted that list of issues is being worked up for action working on the resilience and deliverability of elections and potential legislative change, with new Governance structure, looking at a range of work across Finance, Conduct, Integrity. Legislation will follow. E lections Review Steering Group and Working Groups. Particular focus on intimidation of candidates following experience in July 2024.  [Absent Voting (Elections in Scotland and Wales) Bill](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3785) – Letter from Tracy Gilbert; noted. CH, MB and RN have met with Tracy Gilbert MP to discuss Bill and offer support. Note that the UK Government are also considering a LRO, Legislative Reform Order, to allow for access to portal for OAVA if the private members Bill fails.  Letter from Minister to the Electoral Sector 15 October 2024 – *noted*  Royal Mail – future service. EMB and Government are monitoring proposals. OFCOMM consultation expected. Note that any change in service will need to be carefully considered as current timetables for much electoral activity are predicated on current service standards.  **Scottish Government Update**  Scottish Elections (Representation and Reform) Bill – written update noted  eCount Procurement - written update noted.  **Electoral Commission**  Written update noted. Scottish Elections (Representation and Reform) Bill - Stage 2 briefing noted. Report – Voter ID at the 2024 UK General Election – noted  **Boundaries Scotland / Boundary Commission for Scotland** – |
| **EMB Admin** | EMB Annual Report *in preparation*  Future Meetings - to be confirmed: February, April, June, September, November |