

ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FOR SCOTLAND
ACTION NOTE: Friday 30 January 2015, 2:00pm
Midlothian Suite, Lothian Chambers, 59-63 George IV Bridge
Edinburgh EH1 1RU

Present:

- **Board Members:** David Thomson (DT ERO); Joan Hewton (JH ERO)
- **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)
- **In attendance:** Chris Highcock (CH Secretary to the Board DRO), Dougie McGregor (DMcG e-Counting Local Government Liaison), Ros Wilson (RW Administrator)

		NOTE	ACTION / RESPONSIBLE
1	Admin / Matters arising etc	<p>Apologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary Pitcaithly (MP Convener & CCO) • Malcolm Burr (MB CO) • David Martin (DM CO) • Stuart Galloway (SG DRO/ERO) • Sue Bruce (SB CO) • Ian Milton (IM ERO SAA representative) • Alex Mowat (AM Scottish Government) <p>Note of Previous Meeting (14 November) & Matters Arising The Action Note was accepted as an accurate record of the meeting subject to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOLAR Review and Workshop Page 2: Gordon Blair advised that SOLAR would be making comment to the Law 	

		<p>Commission to input to their proposed changes to Legislation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other Election Events Page 6 Item 7: It was noted that combining Referendum on Europe and eCounting for 2017 Local General Government Elections was a matter for Westminster but EMB would be wary of such a combination. 	
2	Scottish Independence Referendum	<p>The Project Close Report was circulated. It was noted that there were financial issues that still needed to be finalised and that the deadline for submitting expenses claims for the SIR is 20 March. Louise Unwin advised that any provision for any additional costs will need to be made in a further Charges Order depending on the exact amount to be reimbursed. This Order will be made after all expense claims have been submitted and considered.</p> <p>A discussion took place on Page 11 of the Project Close Report - Police Scotland involvement. It was agreed that there did not always seem to be a link with Police Scotland and regional SPOCs. MP and CH had met Sir Stephen House raising concerns that some investigations had not been progressed. CH read out letter of reply from Sir Stephen to MP. It was agreed that the letter does not provide any update on potentially fraudulent registration applications which were submitted prior to the referendum. It was noted that there is a Regional SPOC briefing at Police Scotland E Division at Fettes on 5 March. It was agreed to modify the Project Close Report to reflect the Police Scotland Issue.</p> <p>A letter from John McCormick, Electoral Commissioner to Mary Pitcaithly was circulated along with the Report on the Scottish Independence Referendum. It was noted that the Electoral Commission had recommended that the EMB's role should be placed on a statutory footing for all parliamentary elections in Scotland. It was agreed that this should be discussed at a future meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that the EMB gave evidence to the Scottish Parliament Devolution (Further Powers) Committee on 18 December 2014.</p>	All

3	EMB Annual Report for 2014 – to be submitted to Parliament	It was agreed that the EMB Annual Report to Scottish Parliament should be circulated to the Board first to allow for stakeholder comments.	CH
4	Registration Update Including IER	<p>It was noted that EROs are in the process of annual canvas and that notification letters have been sent out to all households .</p> <p>A discussion took place on wording for poll cards for those electors who have not registered individually and a copy EC supplementary guidance was tabled. It was agreed that, to promote a consistent approach, MP would provide guidance to allow the 32 Returning Officers and 15 EROs in Scotland to implement a common solution ie, a separate poll card for “carried forward” electors.</p>	
5	UK Parliamentary General Election 7 May 2015	<p>Electoral Commission It was noted that the Electoral Commission Guidance was available on website.</p> <p>Cabinet Office It was noted that the Cabinet Office Fees & Charges Order had updated Orkney and Shetland figures.</p> <p>EMB Guidance/Recommendations paper was circulated to the Board for comment. There was some discussion regarding item 4. Public Awareness. It was agreed this should be called “communications”. It was noted that MP would discuss further at SOLACE.</p> <p>Contingency Planning A discussion took place regarding the “fixed term parliament act” should a Government fall and a second election be necessary.</p> <p>Police Guidance on Electoral Fraud It was noted that Jim Baird was contact for UKPGE. It was agreed that the EMB would feed back to Police Scotland the need for clear communication with regional SPOCs on national issues.</p>	<p>MP/SOLACE</p> <p>EMB</p>

6	Scottish Parliamentary Election 5 May 2016	Louise Unwin advised that the Scottish Government are finalising draft conduct order for consultation.	
7	eCounting for 2017 Local Government Elections	<p>Update from Scottish Government It was noted that procurement process is progressing and an Invitation to Tender document was issued the week beginning 26 January.</p> <p>Update from Local Government Liaison Consultant The Board noted the current status of preparatory work to procure an e-counting solution for the 2017 local government elections.</p>	
8	Other Electoral Events	<p>Potential UK Referendum It was noted that a potential referendum on Europe would depend on the outcome of the UKPGE.</p> <p>LAW Commissions' Electoral Law Consultation Paper Gordon Blair reminded the Board that the deadline for comments to the consultation paper was 31 March 2015. He advised that SOLAR are holding two working group meetings to consider a response to the consultation papers and that a response will be submitted to EMB in March.</p> <p>Recall of MPs Bill It was noted that the Bill will become Law before the UKPGE.</p>	
9	Issues raised by Election Teams across Scotland	There were no issues raised.	
10	EMB Role in the context of further devolution	This was covered under item 2.3	
11	EMB Resources	This was covered under item 2.3	
12	Regional Returning Officers' Group and	<p>UK Electoral Advisory Board No Update</p> <p>Elections & Registrations Working Group</p>	

	associated meetings	No Update Scottish Political Parties Panel Chris advised that he attended a meeting on 27 January and that it is likely to be the last meeting prior to the UKPGE in May. He noted that the Boundary Commission are in deliberations with COSLA and that a meeting has been set up with COSLA Officer Bearers in the first instance.	
13	AOB	It was agreed to approach SOLACE for new EMB member and bring back to the March Meeting.	MP
14	Future Meetings	10 March, 27 March, 24 April, 29 May, 26 June, 31 July, 28 August, 25 September, 30 October, 27 November	
Date of next meeting: 3pm, Tuesday 10 March 2015, Dunedin Room, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1YJ			