Search   Parliamentary Parties Panel minutes: 1 September 2015
You are in the Party panels section Home How we make decisions Party panels On this page Minutes, and actions of the meeting and matters arising (ECPPP 02/06/2015) European Union Referendum May 2015 polls – Post-election report Common Data Standard for Electoral Registers Individual Electoral Registration (IER) Progress Commission Update Report Meeting dates for 2016 Electoral Commission updates Date of the next meeting Actions First published: 1 September 2015 Last updated: 2 September 2019 Who was at the meeting Who was at the meeting Conservative Party: Andrew Stedman, Compliance Manager (AS) Labour: Margaret Lynch, Compliance Manager (ML) Liberal Democrats (Chair): Darren Briddock (DB) Jake Holland (JH) Plaid Cymru: Emyr Williams, Plaid Cymru (EW) Scottish National Party: Scott Martin, Scottish National Party (SM) Electoral Commission: Alex Robertson, Director of Communication (AR) Tom Hawthorn, Head of Electoral Policy (TH) Louise Edwards, Head of Monitoring and Reporting, Party and Election Finance (LE) Karim Aziz, Senior Communications Officer (KA) Minutes, and actions of the meeting and matters arising (ECPPP 02/06/2015) The minutes from 02/06/2015 were agreed with no clarifications sought or noted. There were no other matters arising from the minutes. DB highlighted the action point that the Commission needs to continue to look into improving logo and party descriptions. European Union Referendum AR informed the PPP that the Electoral Commission had given its statutory advice to Parliament on the proposed EU referendum question. AR said that following its question assessment process, the Commission has recommended that the question that was currently in the European Union Referendum Bill 2015-16 should be amended to: 'Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?' with responses being 'Remain a member of the European Union' / 'Leave the European Union'. ML noted that Bill does not include the regulated period dates and asked what the Commission's view of this was. TH responded that the Bill as it currently stands would apply the standard 10-week referendum period as specified in PPERA, but that the Bill also includes powers for the Government to change the length of the period by regulations. After the Scottish independence referendum the Commission recommended that, at future referendums, either the designation of lead campaigners could take place before the 10-week referendum period, or the referendum period could be extended to 16 weeks including the designation process. The Commission would be issuing a briefing before Report and Third reading stages of the Bill in the House of Commons. May 2015 polls – Post-election report There were no comments from the PPP regarding the recommendations made by the Commission in its May 2015 polls post-election report. TH stressed that the Commission was currently focused on getting the UK and Scottish governments to ensure regulations for the 2016 polls are in place in good time. Common Data Standard for Electoral Registers AS started by saying that the principle of receiving electoral registration details in a standard format is the long-established view of the political parties and that members of the PPP have jointly developed a standardised 'Political Party Electoral Register format' spreadsheet. AS said that they were meeting with Cabinet Office officials later to discuss their proposal for a common data standard for electoral registers. DB added that the proposal was drafted taking into account the views of smaller political parties and independents. TH said that in principal this was a proposal that the Commission could support and that it would be important to involve the electoral management software providers in discussions. AR added that it's important that the expert panel of electoral administrators are also involved. Action: Commission to confirm a 'point person' that will feedback on the PPP

proposal. Individual Electoral Registration (IER) Progress AR explained that the Government has made an Order that will bring forward the end to the transition to IER to December 2015. ML asked if there had been any anecdotal reports from local authorities regarding how their annual canvass activities were getting new people added to the registers. TH said that anecdotal feedback from a recent working group meeting with a very small number of electoral administrators suggested that return levels were not as high as they would have expected at this stage in the canvass, but that this was not yet a significant concern. Commission Update Report ML asked why the Commission had decided to do a review of its Enforcement Policy now. LE confirmed that it had been five years since the Commission received new enforcement powers and that now seemed a sensible time to conduct a review. The PPP wanted confirmation that a user-testing session of PEF Online would focus on users experiences of using the 'back-end' of the website. SM asked for more details of the PEF Online redevelopment and said that the existing system for submission of reports was not fit for the purpose. SM said that the Commission did not recognise this when it considered issues under its enforcement policy. AR confirmed that a previous email received by members of the PPP related to providing feedback on the Electoral Commission's main website. Action: LE to confirm dates for when PEF Online user-testing will take place and suggest that the person organising the user-testing talks to PPP members in advance to ensure the session focuses on the right issues. On staffing, AR confirmed that the Commission's new Chief Executive will be starting in the second week of October. LE said that the Commission's introductory guidance on campaigning at May 2016 would be published in early October with the full guidance suite published in December. AS and ML commented that there generally seems to be less consultation by the Commission with political parties about work that affects them. AS added that the consultation about guidance appeared to only be about issues the Commission was interested in, rather than what might be of concern to parties. The panel felt it would be helpful to see an organisational chart for Party and Election Finance (PEF). Action: LE to provide PEF organisational chart. Meeting dates for 2016 The PPP confirmed that they were happy with proposed meeting dates for 2016. Electoral Commission updates TH informed the PPP that the Commission has launched a consultation on its approach to EU referendum directions and the timing of the count. Action: KA to send the consultations to the PPP. TH also informed the PPP that the Commission had submitted evidence to Lord Hodgson's Third Party Campaigning Review and provided hard copies at the meeting, and that the Commission will submit evidence to Sir Eric Pickles review of electoral fraud in the UK. Date of the next meeting The date of the next meeting is 1 December 2015 – Conservative Party to Chair Actions Action Owner Status Commission to confirm 'point person' to feedback on PPP proposal for a common data standard for electoral registers TH This person will be Tom Hawthorn, Head of Policy Commission to confirm dates for when PEF Online user testing will take place LE We will be in touch on this shortly after the May 2016 elections Commission to send PEF organisational chart LE This was sent ahead of the December PPP Commission to send its consultation on EU referendum directions and the timing of the count TH
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