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23 May ID Pilot Evaluation Findings (presentation) Audit Committee Annual Report

Remuneration and HR Committee annual report Annual review of complaints Adoption of

2017-18 resource accounts and annual report Draft Business Plan 2018/19 and review of

Performance Measures Chief Executive's Update for May 2018 Forward Plan of Board

business 2018-19 Action tracker for May Chair's and Chief Executive's meetings, and

meetings in devolved legislatures First published: 18 July 2019 Last updated: 23 July

2019 Overview Date: 27 June 2018 Time: 9:30am Location: Boothroyd Room, 3 Bunhill

Row, London Date of next scheduled meeting: Wednesday 13 March Who was at the meeting

Who was at the meeting John Holmes (JEH) Chair Sue Bruce (SB) Anna Carragher (AC)

Sarah Chambers (SC) Elan Closs Stephens (ECS) John Horam (JRH) David Howarth (DH)

Alasdair Morgan (AM) Bridget Prentice (BP) Rob Vincent (RV) Claire Bassett (CB)

Kieran Rix (KR) Ailsa Irvine (AI) Robert Posner (RP) Craig Westwood (CW) Nancy

Bruseker (NB) Polly Wicks (PW) Phil Thompson (PT) Tom Hawthorn (TH) Tracey Blackman

(TB) Apologies None. Declarations of Interest AC is a member of the Board of the Arts

Council of Northern Ireland (which received money from the EU Peace 3 Programme, and

the Corners Programme for individual artists), and a Trustee of the Wildfowl and

Wetlands Trust, which received EU funding, and, having stepped back from her WWT role

during the Referendum, has now reengaged with it (pro bono). AC is also a Trustee of

the National Heritage Memorial Fund (The Heritage Lottery Fund) (remunerated). AC was

a Commissioner for the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland until 23 September

2015 (remunerated). DH in 2008 drafted and put forward in parliament an amendment to

the then European Union (Amendment) Bill, proposing an EU referendum in the terms

'Should the United Kingdom remain in the European Union?' DH had stood for election

on a manifesto supporting an in-out referendum on the European Union. DH was a

council member of Justice, an organisation which had in the past received EU funding.

DH reported that the European Parliament subsidised a regular annual visit by his

Public Policy students to Brussels. DH declared that in 2015 he had been awarded a

research grant of over €40,000 from the European Parliament. DH is a Fellow of Clare

College, Cambridge (remunerated). DH is Professor of Law and Public Policy at the

University of Cambridge (remunerated). DH is a Non-executive director of RAND

(Europe) as well as a member of its Council of Advisers (pro bono). DH is a member of

the Council of Advisers, Constitution Society, and Editorial Advisory Board of

Parliamentary Affairs (pro bono). DH was a Liberal Democrat MP for Cambridge until

2010 (remunerated). DH was a member of Cambridge City Council until 2004

(remunerated). DH declared that his spouse is Bursar and Fellow of St Edmund's

College, Cambridge. JRH was a member of the pro-Europe Conservative Europe Group. JRH

is an Honorary Non-Executive Director, CRU Holdings Ltd (pro bono). JRH was made a

Life Peer on 4 September 2013 and sits as a Member, House of Lords (remunerated). JEH

reported that he is Chair of the Advisory Board, Cargo Logic Air (British Air Cargo

Company established in 2015 by the Russian owner of the Volga Dnepr Group)

(remunerated). JEH is Chair of the Board of International Rescue Committee,

humanitarian NGO (pro bono). JEH is an advisor for MasterCard International

(remunerated). JEH is a Council Member for the Governing Council, Radley College

(boys' school) (pro bono). JEH is Chair of the Humanitarian Aid Memorial Steering

Group (pro bono). JEH is a member of the Advisory Council, Wilton Park (Government-

linked conference centre) (pro bono). SB is a Non-Executive Director for SSE plc. She

is Chair of RemCo; a NomCo member for SHEAC (remunerated). SB is Convenor of Court at the University of Strathclyde (pro bono). SB is Chair of RSNO (pro bono). SB is the Independent Chair of the Nominations Committee for the National Trust for Scotland (pro bono). SB is Governor of Erskine Stewart's Melville Schools (pro bono). SB is a member/Court member of the Merchant Company of Edinburgh (pro bono). SB is a trustee of The Prince's Foundation (pro bono). SB is Chair of the Expert Panel on measures for the environment: Represents Scottish Government (remunerated). SB was previously Chief Executive (and Returning Officer) of Edinburgh City Council from 01/11/2011 to 31/08/2015 (though she usually gave RO fees to charity/other staff) ECS was appointed in July 2017 for three years as a non-executive Director of the BBC Unitary Board (remunerated). ECS is Chair Wales Nations Committee, BBC, including their Fair Trading Committee, the NI Nations Committee and S4C (Welsh 4th channel) (remunerated). ECS is Deputy Lord Lieutenant (Dyfed) and Vice Lord Lieutenant (Dyfed) (pro bono). ECS is Chair of the Public Bodies Forum (Arm's Length bodies of Welsh Government (remunerated). ECS is a member of Strata Florida Trust (Charitable organisation) (pro bono). ECS is a member of Aberystwyth Arts Centre Advisory Committee (pro bono). ECS is Emeritus Professor and member of Court at Aberystwyth University (pro bono). ECS declared that up to April 2018 she was a Board Non-Executive Director of the Permanent Secretary's Board of Welsh Court and Chair of Audit & Risk. (remunerated). BP is a trustee of Age Exchange (reminiscence and inter-generational work for people with dementia) (pro bono). BP is a trustee for Foundation for Jimmy (working with young people to be good citizens) (pro bono). BP is Chair of Governors, Trinity Lewisham (all-through school) (pro bono). RV is Chair, Kirklees Cultural Education Trust (pro bono). RV is Non-executive Director, Bradford Community Health trust (remunerated). RV is Director, New Ing Consulting (mentoring and technical assessment work with Local Government Chief Executives) (remunerated). RV was Chief Executive of Kirklees MBC between 2004 and 2010 (remunerated). RV was Implementation Director for the West Yorkshire Combined Authority from September 2013 to March 2014 (remunerated). RV was Chair of the Rotherham Improvement Board from September 2014 to March 2015 (remunerated). RV was advisor to Tower Hamlets Council on governance and decision-making issues from May to October 2015 (remunerated). SC is a panel member of the Competition & Markets Authority until 30 June 2018 (remunerated). SC is a panel member of the Judicial Appointments Commission (remunerated). SC is Chair of Legal Services Consumer panel (remunerated). SC sits on the Civil Aviation Authority Consumer Panel until 31 October 2018 (remunerated). SC is Chair of the renewable energy consumer Code Applications Panel (remunerated). Minutes of the Commission Board meeting of 23 May Sue Bruce's attendance added to minutes. Add: Annex D was agreed at paragraph 5.15. Otherwise the minutes were agreed as a true record of proceedings and approved. ID Pilot Evaluation Findings (presentation) CW introduced the presentation, setting out the history of the Commission's previous work in this area and recommendations to the UK Government. Given the Commission's statutory role in evaluating the pilots, the Commission had not been involved in the pilots or engaged in public debate about them. The evaluation included discussions with the Cabinet Office, interested MPs and organisations such as Mencap and RNIB. Ongoing engagement had helped to provide reassurance about our independence and also our ability to effectively evaluate the pilots. PT presented the findings of the evaluation of the ID pilots, highlighting the impact on voters, polling administration, security and confidence in the poll. The headline results showed that a small percentage of voters' desire or capacity to vote was impacted. There was no evidence of an impact on specific groups such as

younger voters or those with disabilities. It was difficult to gather evidence relating to these groups as there were only small sample sizes. The impact of the pilot on administration of the polls had not been significant. Where specialist IT was used it had worked well but was resource intensive to set up. A short discussion followed on cost. The team said the report would include some information on proportional cost increases as a result of the pilot. No conclusions on the impact of the pilot on the actual security of the poll could be drawn. There was an impact on the confidence expressed by voters, but this was complicated, inconsistent across the pilots and seemed to depend, at least in part, on local conditions. TH presented the conclusions and next steps. The pilots were well run but did not provide enough evidence to conclusively test the impact of voter ID schemes. Some issues included the unrepresentative nature of the localities chosen and the fact that local election turnout was usually lower than some other polls. In terms of next steps, it was expected that more pilots would be undertaken, over a wider range of locations. Future evaluations would have resource implications for the Commission. A general discussion followed. Commissioners felt that the Commission should make recommendations about the need to stage pilots in areas with a greater demographic range, though without prescribing specific localities. It was noted that the Government had a manifesto commitment to roll out voter ID by 2022. Audit Committee Annual Report SB presented the report, explaining that it had been a challenging year due to ill health of the chair, but the Committee had remained effective. The Commission had had substantial assurance from its internal auditors. The tabled papers updated the position on audit of the final accounts, following the 26 June Committee meeting. The NAO were proposing an unqualified opinion on the Commission's accounts. CB noted that the internal auditors were positive about the Commission's internal control environment, describing it as one of the best they had seen for bodies of our size. BP sought clarification on paragraph 3.3 – the increase in cost for internal audit – which was explained as being due to additional work. KR noted that the whistleblower policy elaborated in paragraph 5.14 had been updated. This was due to the particular circumstances facing the Audit Committee with the absence of the chair. He also noted that it would be updated in due course to reflect the new escalation route following the recruitment of a new independent advisor. AC asked for clarification on the priority recommendations in paragraph 3.5. It was explained that these were recommendations which were in progress and not necessarily outstanding. More detail on these recommendations was considered by the Audit Committee and could be made available to the Board. JEH commended the work of the Committee and noted that interviews for the independent advisor would take place on 10 July. He had written to the out-going Independent advisor to thank him for his work, and would convey the thanks of the Board overall as well. The report was noted. Remuneration and HR Committee annual report RV introduced the paper, drawing attention to the fact that the departure of the Head of HR in the middle of the year had been disruptive. Notwithstanding this, the team had succeeded in staying focused on the basics of the HR function, while putting more strategic issues to one side as a temporary measure. A successor was now due in post shortly, allowing renewed focus on these strategic issues later this year. There was a short discussion on the staff survey and the progress made to effect cultural change. Given the intense scrutiny the Commission was currently facing and the pressures of work, this was important. Many changes had been embedded culturally at the level of the Heads, and work was underway to take this to other staff. A further discussion followed around the mechanisms by which these changes were being produced in practice. KR outlined the developments around

training and continual support to staff to have performance management discussions. CB also explained the mechanisms for staff to take personal responsibility. She identified project based work, personal objectives and the values work being undertaken, as the practical tools being used by the Commission. RV commended the HR team, noting particularly that the basics were well advanced, and thanked CB and the Executive Team for their commitment. The report was noted. Annual review of complaints PW introduced the paper, noting that there had been an increase in the number of complaints on the previous year, and the forecast was for this to continue. Complaints were obviously affected by electoral events and press attention. The workload around complaints was unpredictable but manageable. Resources were available but mitigating action to reduce the number of complaints handled was also taking place. Also noted was the close relationship between FOI/Subject Access requests, enquiries and complaints. ECS enquired about the escalation of very serious complaints. It was noted that this would be the role of the independent adviser to the audit committee upon appointment, if deemed necessary. It was also noted that patterns in reports ought to be looked into, for instance where complainants cited vagueness of guidance. This report was an opportunity to be aware of such factors. The board noted the contents of the report by the former independent Chair of the audit committee into complaints against certain Commissioners, and the Annual Review of Complaints. Adoption of 2017-18 resource accounts and annual report KR introduced the report. It had been discussed at Audit Committee, where it was noted that the NAO's report had identified some technical issues to be addressed but nothing to stop the Board from adopting the accounts. KR noted that the aim was for the Accounting Officer to sign the accounts the following day. KR explained that the main outstanding point had been the audit reports from some parties for policy development grants, which had now been received. Some EU referendum costs were also outstanding but these had not been materially misstated. There were minor process issues on journaling and accruals at year end, but these would be resolved going forward, with clear training for relevant staff. Estimating the Commission's dilapidations provision had been an area of focus for the audit. After discussion the NAO had accepted that uncertainty over the correct estimate would be addressed at the point of the Supplementary Estimate during the current year. This would also be relevant to the upcoming end of lease terms for Bunhill Row. It was noted that the report had been subject to minor textual amendments by the Audit Committee. JEH identified unclear wording around the underspend on page 26 of the report, which would be amended to clarify the figures. BP noted that the point on financial fraud identified on page 62 should indicate that the funds had been recovered. The report and accounts were approved. Draft Business Plan 2018/19 and review of Performance Measures KR introduced the paper noting that it had been an unusual year as the Commission had released a 5 year corporate plan and a 1 year business plan. The Executive Team were working on integrating the business plan with the project plans. In the quarterly reporting, the metrics would line up against the business plan goals. CB elaborated that the Corporate Plan was designed to lead to longer term milestones, and the Business Plan represented an effort to identify what was measurable in the work of the Commission. Commissioners generally appreciated the measures produced, and understood the difficulty of using quantitative measures to report on areas of work where quality was more important.. Work in this area would continue. JRH left the meeting at 12.07pm. RV noted that the people strategy point on page 18 should be written with the internal audience of the Commission in mind, and that he would support a separate workforce focused goal in future years. AM noted that ongoing work

on the EU Referendum could be seen to be taking a long time, and invited RP to consider whether more resources would make a difference in future situations. It was also noted that the 6 month delay in campaigners providing spending reports could be seen as unnecessarily long in the digital age. SB left the meeting at 12.16 pm. Chief Executive's Update for May 2018 CB introduced the paper, highlighting the corporate plan, ongoing litigation, the work around communications, the use of plain , for example in the report on digital campaigning, and the work of the devolved offices. AI explained that the report on the annual canvass pilots from 2017 was due to be published the following day. The evaluation had found that none of the models that were tested were implementable as they had been run. Data led canvassing had the most potential as a strategy going forward and the team would be working with Cabinet Office on next steps in this area. RP noted that our work on the 2017 UKPGE financial returns showed that some of the major parties had not fully complied with the rules, for example on authorising all spending, but, given the unexpected nature of the election and the short time between announcement and polls, we were mindful of taking a proportionate regulatory approach. A number of other investigations were progressing or at advanced stages. There was a short discussion on the previous delegation of authority from Board to Chief Executive on referrals to police. RP clarified that referrals happen when we had reasonable suspicion of criminal offences, but there could be variations in the process and handling of such referrals. RV asked for clarification on the ID5 project and CB explained the project had been overtaken by work with the National Cyber Security Centre. JEH asked for an update at a future Board on the progress on the new Commission website. Forward Plan of Board business 2018-19 The plan was noted. Action tracker for May The tracker was noted. Chair's and Chief Executive's meetings, and meetings in devolved legislatures The report was noted.