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Commissioners' Code of Conduct. Minutes (EC 127/22) The Board agreed as a matter arising from previous minutes, and in light of the recent article by the Chair published in the Daily Telegraph, that the longstanding Commission policy recommendations related to due diligence in reporting donations should be included in the list of Commission policy priorities, which had been considered and agreed at the Board's meeting in February. Resolved: That the minutes of the Board meeting on 22 June 2022 be agreed. Commission Board action tracker (EC 128/22) The Board requested that those actions that are not routinely reported in the minutes and that have subsequently been actioned be kept on record. Resolved: That the Board noted the progress against actions requested by the Board. Forward Plan of Board business 2022/23 (EC 129/22) The Board were updated on the preparations underway for the Belfast Board Day in October. It was noted that further updates would be made available as the programme was developed including confirmation of accommodation and travel. The Board were advised of a possible location and venue to host the February 2023 Board Day in the region but it was dependent on availability. Commissioners would be canvassed on alternative dates for the month of February 2023. Resolved: That the Board discussed and reviewed the Forward Plan of Board business for 2022/23, with pending topical items for scheduling. May 2022 elections (EC 130/22) The Director, Electoral Administration and Guidance introduced the report updating on progress with reporting on the May 2022 elections and setting out the findings of our statutory evaluation of the flexible voting pilots that took place in Wales for the Board's approval. Commissioners discussed the key themes highlighted in the paper, and confirmed the need to appropriately highlight areas of concern such as around the treatment of female candidates standing at the Northern Ireland Assembly elections. The Board agreed that the reports should aim to take a consistent approach across Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England wherever possible. The Board also supported highlighting issues relevant for future resilience of the electoral system, stressing the importance of the "six month rule" for implementation of changes to electoral law and taking opportunities to emphasise areas which are covered by existing Commission policy recommendations. Resolved: The Board thanked the teams who worked on the paper and agreed the conclusions of the Wales flexible voting pilot evaluation, which will be published by the statutory deadline. Resolved: That the Board confirmed that the key themes and areas for recommendations outlined in the report should be reflected in our reports on the May 2022 polls. Public awareness plans for scheduled elections in May 2023 (EC 131/22) The Director, Communications, Policy and Research introduced the report, advising of our responsibility to provide public information ahead of elections across England and Northern Ireland in May 2023, delivering voter registration campaigns, a campaign about understanding online political advertising in Northern Ireland, and voter fraud and other voter information communications. The Board noted that the agreement on the overall strategy and maximum budget for voter registration campaigns is reserved to the Board. The Board discussed ensuring good integration between this campaign and work to raise awareness of the introduction of voter ID in England, which is scheduled to take place at the same set of polls. The Board discussed how we could encompass and reach disenfranchised groups; the balance of spending between nations (including to ensure sufficient attention is given to England); consideration of the impact of the campaigns on outcomes (i.e. levels of participation as well as of registration); and understanding of barriers to registration. The Board noted an appetite to draw benefit from external expertise on behaviour change campaigning to support future discussion of the Commission's public awareness plans. Resolved: The Board welcomed

the report and agreed the plans and budget for the voter registration campaign.

Modernising voting (EC 132/22) The Director, Electoral Administration and Guidance introduced the report, and was joined by the Head of Policy, Head of Research and members of the team who provided input to the report, on progress with developing the evidence base and proposed next steps for this project. The Board noted that this phase of evidence-gathering had aimed to focus on the views of individuals and organisations across the electoral community, providing a wider perspective on the drivers for and benefits of changes to the system. The Board discussed that the focus should be on improving and securing the electoral system for the future rather than modernising in itself. It was agreed that a key objective should be to mitigate risks to the resilience of the system, in delivery of elections, registration systems and supply chains. It was discussed that transparency should be embedded in all aspects of this work to assure public confidence. The need for comprehensive electoral law reform should also continue to be highlighted. The Board discussed how this work aligns with other planned activity to support resilience in electoral services, such as in relation to coordination structures and the benefits they could bring. It was confirmed that the benefits of changes such as greater use of IT in the electoral system and postal voting should be explored. Experience of innovation in the UK and internationally during the COVID pandemic should also be drawn upon. Resolved: That the Board considered the findings of the research and engagement and endorsed the proposed next steps for the project, in particular the first phase of further work (covering the next 12 months). A further update to the Board on progress with that work and to seek agreement on the subsequent phases of activity will be brought in January 2023.

Business planning for 2023/24 (EC 133/22) The Chief Executive introduced the report on the strategic approach to budgets for 2023/24. At the September Board meeting, Commissioners will be asked to agree the overall budgets prior to the submission of Estimates to the Scottish Parliament and Senedd at the end of that month. The Board noted that the business plans for 2023-24 would fit within the medium term financial plan agreed with the Speaker's Committee and would ensure alignment with the Corporate Plan objectives. The Board discussed that the business plans and budgets should be developed to meet the requirements of each of the three Parliaments, recognising the implications of recent inflationary pressures, including on pay. The Board further discussed ensuring the right pace and phasing of change, including on the role of digital technologies and allowing for the Elections Act delivery timetable as well as considering post-COVID requirements for office space. Resolved: That the Board agreed the proposed approach contained within the report.

Elections Act update (Oral) The Board received an oral update on the Elections Act implementation, including the UK Government's planned schedule for the Strategy and Policy Statement consultation. It was noted that we are continuing with internal and external meetings to discuss ongoing delays to seeing secondary legislation and policy decisions impacting the design of the card. The Board noted that we were continuing to discuss our approach to preparing the new code of practice for non-party campaigners, and are having conversations with DLUHC regarding timings for presenting the code in order to finalise our internal working timetable. There was a good level of attendance from a range of parties and campaigners at Regulation roundtables on the new imprint and non-party campaigner rules, which provided us with invaluable insight. We will be meeting with DLUHC and the police to discuss enforcement of the Digital Imprint provisions this week. It was noted that pre-consultation work on the accessibility guidance has been completed, with input sought from a range of disability organisations, and we are now finalising a first draft of

the guidance ahead of the statutory consultation period. The Board was impressed with the efforts from the team so far to deliver key activities which will support the effective implementation of the changes in the Act. Resolved: That the Board noted the oral update. Chief Executive's update (Oral) The Board received an oral update on operations and matters arising. The Board noted that we laid our Annual Report and Accounts before the Senedd, the Scottish Parliament, and the UK Parliament, thanking those staff colleagues who had made last minute amendments before sending onto the printer to meet our deadline. It was discussed to also lodge the Annual Report and Accounts in the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Board was advised that the user testing of the new virtual desktop environment commenced this week, following initial testing by the IT Team. This will replace our current virtual desktop system, and once we are satisfied that it is fit for purpose, it will be rolled out to all staff.

The Chief Executive and General Counsel attended the Electoral Lawyers Forum last week outlining our priorities in the Corporate Plan. Resolved: That the Board noted the oral updates. Update from the Remuneration and Human Resources Committee (Oral) The Board received an oral update on the work of the Committee at their meeting earlier in the week. The Board noted activities on the people strategy update, with an accompanying presentation to the report. This also included the work being done on the balance of responsibilities between HR and Managers. Further work included a brief presentation on an update on bullying and harassment, with discussions around our objectives, approach, further development and measuring impact. There was an update on EDI activities and a report on annual recruitment analysis. Resolved: That the Board noted the oral updates. Appointment of the Independent Adviser to the Commission Board on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) (Oral) The Board received an oral update following the recruitment campaign for an Independent Advisor to the Commission Board on EDI. The Board noted that the campaign closed with 26 applications received across a range of public and private sector areas. Interviews were held on Monday with 4 candidates. An offer has now been made to a strong candidate. Should the Board agree the appointment then the Commission Chair will have conversations regarding final terms and conditions with the candidate to join the Commission. Resolved: That the Board noted the oral update.

Deep dive strategic session: Horizon scanning (EC 134/22) The Director, Communications, Policy and Research introduced the session on horizon scanning, joined by the Head of Policy and the Head of Research, along with an external speaker, Ruth Marshall, Head of Futures Capability at Government Office for Science. Ruth provided a presentation on the role of horizon scanning and futures work within government and gave some reflections on the development of the Commission's work in this area. The Board noted the work to date on identifying long term issues and challenges and undertaking desk research to understand and assess potential change in the external environment beyond the field of elections. Commissioners discussed the future policy and strategy environment, major cyber security threats, approach to electoral registration, levels of public engagement, and engaging with other communities on issues such as equalities. They noted the importance of understanding and considering the assumptions that may be built into specific parts of Futures work. The Board noted that forward thinking on horizon scanning would be focussed on informing the development of the next Corporate Plan 2025/2030, and the Commission's work programme for that period. The Board thanked staff colleagues who provided input into the report and for Ruth's presentation which gave the Board an insight into Futures work. Resolved: That the Board noted the report and presentation.