Board minutes: 19 January 2022 | Electoral Commission Search You are in the Electoral Commission Board section Board minutes: 19 January 2022 Home How we make decisions Electoral Commission Board On this page Who was at the meeting Apologies and welcomes Declarations of interest Minutes of the previous Board meeting(s) Commission Board action tracker Forward Plans of Board business 2021/22 and 2022/23 Main estimate 2022/23 and corporate plan budgets Policy priorities of the Commission Chief Executive's update Deep dive strategic discussion: approach to political finance First published: 21 March 2022 Last updated: 13 May 2022 Meeting summary Date: Wednesday 19 January 2022 Time: 9:30am to 12:50pm Location: By video conference Date of next scheduled meeting: Wednesday 23 February 2022 Who was at the meeting Who was at the meeting John Pullinger, Chair Rob Vincent Sue Bruce Alex Attwood Sarah Chambers Elan Closs Stephens Stephen Gilbert Alasdair Morgan Joan Walley Katy Radford In attendance: Bob Posner, Chief Executive Craig Westwood, Director, Communications, Policy and Research Louise Edwards, Director, Regulation Ailsa Irvine, Director, Electoral Administration and Guidance Kieran Rix, Director, Finance and Corporate Services Binnie Goh, General Counsel Zena Khan, Board Secretary (Senior Advisor, Governance) Lilly Malik, Legal Officer (all items) Tom Hawthorn, Head, Policy (item 7) Niki Nixon, Head, Internal Communications (item 7) Dan Adamson, Head, Monitoring and Enforcement (item 9) Majella La Praik, Head, Registration and Reporting (item 9) Laura Mcleod, Head, Regulatory Support (item 9) Jamie Weisz, Registration Manager (observing, item 9) Apologies and welcomes There were no apologies received. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, advising that timings against agenda items have been slightly amended, to allow more time for the deep dive strategic discussion towards the end. Declarations of interest That the Board noted no new declarations received. Minutes of the previous Board meeting(s) (EC 80/22) Resolved: That the minutes of the Ordinary Commission Board meeting on 1 December 2021 be agreed. Resolved: That the minutes of the Extraordinary Commission Board meeting on 8 December 2021 be noted. Commission Board action tracker (EC 81/22) The Board noted an update from the General Counsel, on progress for appointing an independent adviser to the Board on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), with discussions held with linked Commissioners for EDI. The Board discussed tracking progress on matters that would not routinely be contained within the regular monthly action tracker such as, recruitment of the independent adviser to the Board on EDI, IT infrastructure and planning for the scheduled off site Board meetings. It was noted that the General Counsel would consider how to keep the Board updated on such matters. Action: General Counsel to provide regular updates on progress on items that are not routinely contained within the regular monthly Board action tracker. Action owner: General Counsel Resolved: That the Board noted the progress against actions requested by the Board. Forward Plans of Board business 2021/22 and 2022/23 (EC 82/22) The Board noted that a report from the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee (PACAC) was scheduled at February's Board meeting but should this not be available, it would then be planned for the meeting in April. The Board noted that February would be Bob Posner's last Board meeting as Chief Executive. The Board noted conversations around planning for the Commission Board meeting being held Northern Ireland were underway. Resolved: That the Board reviewed and noted the Forward Plan of Board business for 2021/22 and 2022/23. Main estimate 2022/23 and corporate plan budgets (EC 83/22) The Chief Executive and the Director, Finance and Corporate Services advised that a number of financial pressures would need to be considered in setting the budget, before the Main Estimate was due to be submitted to the Speaker's Committee ahead of the February Board meeting. The Board

discussed information relating to the extra staff resource for the Commission predominantly consequential to the Elections Bill. The Board also discussed matters relating to on-going work to develop the new Political Finance Online platform. It was noted that a review of our IT infrastructure should be planned alongside the lifetime of the Corporate Plan so going forward, we would be able to identify pressure points, as we start to rely heavily on our IT for day to day business. The Board noted that the Audit and Risk Committee Chair, would be working closely with the Executive Team, in order to provide assurance to the Board on continued work with scoping out procuring IT services. Resolved: That the Board agreed to delegate finalisation of the CP2 budgets, including for 2022/23 to the Accounting Officer in consultation with the Chair and where relevant, the Remuneration and Human Resources Committee (RemCo) Chair (subject to total changes to each budget line). Resolved: That the Board agreed finalisation of the Estimate, in line with the budget set and delegated to the Accounting Officer. Policy priorities of the Commission (EC 84/22) The Chair advised that due to time pressures on the agenda, this item would be deferred to the next meeting. Action: To include on the agenda for the February Board. Action owner: Board Secretary Chief Executive's update (EC 85/22) The Chief Executive introduced the report providing an update on operations and matters arising since the last Board meeting. The Board noted updates on the Elections Bill which Director, Regulation provided and a strategic approach to guide our future citizenship education work provided by Director, Communications, Policy and Research. The Board discussed the Elections Bill proposed Strategy Policy Statement with further discussions to be had ahead of the Lord's briefing. Resolved: That the Board noted the report along with additional updates. Deep dive strategic discussion: approach to political finance (EC 86/22) The Board received a presentation on Regulation, from Director, Regulation joined by the Head of Monitoring and Enforcement, Head of Registration and Reporting, Head of Regulatory support and the Registration Manager. The presentation covered the following areas: • Strategic approach, constraints and choices • Our place in the regulatory environment • Delivering outcomes in practice • Where do we go from here? The Board discussed how resources were allocated to deliver the agreed strategic approach for regulatory work. The Board also discussed the way the political finance regime was based on self-reporting by political parties of declared donations and spending, and the importance of transparency for scrutiny of this. The Board thanked the Director, Regulation and the team for work done, focussing on continued diligence, open and transparent work.