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Elections decision-making discussion (EC 23/19) Update on recruitment of new Chief
Executive First published: 26 July 2019 Last updated: 26 July 2019 Meeting overview
Date: 9 April 2019 Time: 9am to 10am Location: Boothroyd Room, 3 Bunhill Row, London
Who was at the meeting Who was at the meeting John Holmes, Chair Alasdair
Morgan (Videoconference) Alastair Ross (Teleconference) Anna
Carragher (Teleconference) Elan Closs Stephens Joan Walley Rob
Vincent (Teleconference) Sarah Chambers (Teleconference) Stephen Gilbert Bob
Posner, Chief Executive Ailsa Irvine, Director, Electoral Administration and Guidance
Louise Edwards, Director, Regulation (Videoconference) Craig Westwood, Director,
Communications and Research David Meek, Senior Adviser, Governance Jennifer
Hartland, Head of Human Resources Apologies and introductions Sue Bruce sent her
apologies. Declarations of interest No new declarations of interest. European
Parliamentary Elections decision-making discussion (EC 23/19) Bob Posner explained
that the Government had confirmed that the European Parliamentary Election would be
held on 23 May 2019, unless an agreement had been reached for the UK to leave the
European Union and the polls were consequently cancelled. We were therefore preparing
for these elections on the assumption that they would go ahead on this day. Craig
Westwood introduced the paper setting out options for the proposed registration
awareness raising campaign related to the European Parliamentary Election, with
different spending plans attached to each. The Commission had a statutory duty to
conduct such campaigns, but there was also an obvious need for a proportionate
campaign, given the relatively short period available on this occasion, and the need
to ensure that any budget spent could achieve a significant impact. The Commission
would also be working with our usual partners, including local authorities, which
provided a lot of extra impact without requiring extra spending. The Board was
assured that, if it became clear at any stage that the European Parliamentary
Election would probably or definitely not go ahead, spending on the registration
campaign could and would be delayed/paused or – ultimately – cancelled, to the extent
possible. The Board discussed the targeting of the campaign funding and noted the
clear evidence base that existed relating to under-registered groups. There was also
a discussion of the duties and obligations on the Commission during election periods.
Anna Carragher left the meeting at 9.40. Resolved: That the Commission should mount a
campaign on the lines recommended, up to a maximum spend of £500,000. Update on
recruitment of new Chief Executive Officers were asked to leave the meeting, except
for Jennifer Hartland, who took the official note for this item. John Holmes recalled
the note from the recruitment panel that he had sent to Board members the previous
day and provided an oral update. The Board noted the rigour of the selection process,
involving an outside recruitment agency and an interview panel including an
independent outside member, and the high calibre of the candidates under
consideration. The Board discussed the selection and adopted the panel's
recommendation. Resolved: That Bob Posner be appointed to the post of Chief
Executive.