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Chair Update from the Remuneration and Human Resources Committee (RemCo) Chair First
published: 19 May 2023 Last updated: 1 June 2023 Board minutes Wednesday 22 March
2023 Wednesday 22 March 2023, 9:30am Bunhill Row, London, and by Video conference
Date of next scheduled Board meeting: Tuesday 25 April 2023 Who was at the meeting
Who was at the meeting John Pullinger Chair Alex Attwood Sarah Chambers Stephen
Gilbert [Until 12.30pm] Roseanna Cunningham [item 5 onwards] Chris Ruane Katy
Radford Elan Closs Stephens [item 5 onwards] Sue Bruce In attendance: Shaun McNally
Chief Executive Kieran Rix Director, Finance and Corporate Services Craig Westwood
Director, Communications, Policy and Research Ailsa Irvine Director, Electoral
Administration and Guidance Louise Edwards Director, Regulation Binnie Goh General
Counsel Sal Naseem Independent Adviser to the Commission Board on Equality,
Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Matt Pledger Senior Adviser, Governance Zena Khan
Senior Adviser, Governance Lilly Malik Legal Officer (meeting support) Denise Morgan
Head of Human Resources [item 1] Sarah Wass Rheolwr Learning and Development Manager
[item 1] Fadilah Shuaibu Human Resources Operations Manager [item 1] Jane Gordon
Human Resources Business Partner [item 1] Regine Mbungu-Binda Human Resources Adviser
[item 1] Paul Conway Human Resources Systems & Data Analyst [item 1] Bola Raji
Planning and Performance Manager [item 6] Tom Hawthorn Head of Policy [item 7]
Michela Palese Policy Manager [item 7] Niki Nixon Head of External Communications
[item 7] Welcomes and apologies, followed by an introduction to the Human Resources
Team providing an overview of their work The Board received apologies from Rob
Vincent. The Board welcomed the Human Resources Team who provided an outline of their
work. The Board noted the level of support provided by the Human Resources Team to
Commission staff. The Board thanked the Human Resources Team for their time and
update. Declarations of Interests The Board noted the following updated entries of
declarations of interests since the February 2023 Board meeting: Chief Executive:
Shaun McNally: Association of Chief Executives: Board Member Commissioner: Katy
Radford: Police Service Northern Ireland: External Reference Group member
Commissioner: Katy Radford: British Council: Member of the Board of Trustees Minutes
(EC 183/23) Resolved: That the Board agreed the minutes of the Board meeting of 17
February 2023. Commission Board action tracker (EC 184/23) Resolved: That the Board
noted the progress against actions requested by the Board. Chief Executive's update
(EC 185/23) The Chief Executive, with other members of the Executive Team, reported
to the Board regarding the work of the Commission. The Director, Communications,
Policy and Research provided an update on communications activity ahead of the May
2023 polls, in particular on progress with the public awareness campaign on voter ID.
The Board noted that the campaign is progressing well, with data indicating awareness
levels of 63% at the end of February 2023, up from 22% in December 2022. The Board
noted that following a proposal from the UK Government Minister, the Speaker's
Committee had increased the Commission's financial estimate for FY2023/24 to allow
for additional spending on voter ID awareness-raising. The Board noted the report
from the Director, Electoral Administration and Guidance as to preparations for the
May polls, which included confirmation that hard copies of the updated Polling

Station Handbook had been issued as planned, concluding the proactive guidance activity of the Commission. There was currently significant engagement underway with local authorities, largely at this stage reactive in response to queries. The Board also noted that there had been a huge increase in public enquiries coming into the Commission. The Board noted that the Regulatory Support Team and the Northern Ireland Office were hosting webinars and advice surgeries for candidates and agents. Areas to be covered included guidance around intimidation of candidates. The Board noted the arrangements for Commission representatives observing the May polls and the proposed approach for post-poll reporting. Commissioners were invited to express interest in being paired with Commission staff to observe the polls. Resolved: That the Board noted the Chief Executive's update on operations and matters arising. Commission Strategic Direction (EC 186//23) The Board noted the positive discussion about the scale of the Commission's ambition at the February 2023 Board event in Chorley. The Chief Executive presented his paper and slides, explaining the impact of implementing the Elections Act 2022 on the capacity of the organisation. Given that impact, the Board noted that the priority must be for the Commission to ensure that statutory obligations are undertaken, particularly in supporting the delivery of elections. The Board further noted that a commitment had been made for the resource envelope on core activities for the Commission be no higher in real terms at the end of the current Corporate Plan cycle than it was at the beginning. The Board noted that the recommended method for it to undertake a forward look at corporate planning was through the lens of thematic reviews by strategic objective. The Board further noted that the resulting Corporate Plan, which would follow a UK Parliamentary general election, would need to take account of the outcome of that election, given the Commission's role in implementing any reforms. Resolved : That the Board noted the report and agreed to hold thematic reviews to co-create and develop the strategic objectives, including underpinning factors such as EDI, as well as looking at strategic risks over the next 12-18 months. Resolved : That the Board agreed to hold a one day event in July 2023 to continue to develop Commission Strategic Direction. Commissioners should be invited to co-create the agenda and content for thematic reviews. Priority policy recommendations (EC 187/23) The Director, Communications, Policy and Research and Head of Policy introduced the report outlining recent progress towards achieving priority policy recommendations and setting out a recommended approach for the next 18 months. The Head of Policy reported that in reviewing the proposed priority policy recommendations, the team had taken into account the potential impact changes would have on voters, administrators, and parties and campaigners; the potential to achieve progress; and the mechanism for delivering change. The Board agreed the proposed prioritisation, including noting that highlighted in the report were areas of recommendations that were not proposed to be included as priorities for proactive communication. Members noted the ongoing importance of reform in the area of digital campaigning, and that it would be important to add updated recommendations as these are refreshed during the next period. Resolved: That the Board noted and agreed the update on the priority policy recommendations. Annual review of governance (EC188/23) The General Counsel introduced the item, reporting to the Board that the amendments to the documentation were illustrated through tracked changes. The Board noted that further guidance had been provided regarding conflicts of interests which reflected discussions with Commissioners. Members of the Board requested some changes to clauses 14, 15 and 16 of the Annex to Appendix 8 Electoral Commission decision-making - Managing legal and reputational risks. The Board agreed amendments to the Terms of Reference, including

the name change to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC). The Board agreed not to expand committee numbers, and Commissioners were to be encouraged to attend meetings to observe. Clarification was provided in the Terms of Reference that the Independent Adviser, in attendance at ARAC, would not assume the role of Chair in their absence. The Board agreed that the membership terms for ARAC should be amended to allow for the Chair to sit for longer than six years in total. The Board agreed with the recommendation from the Remuneration and Human Resources Committee meeting the day before for an uplift of the day and half day fee rate for the Independent Advisers, in line with the uplift for Commissioners' fees. Resolved: That the Board agreed that the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) be renamed to Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC). Resolved: That the Board agreed amendments to enable an extension to the length of office of ARAC Chair and that in the absence of the Chair the Independent Adviser to the Committee would not assume the Chair for meetings of the ARAC. Resolved: That the Board agreed the amendments to the Corporate Governance Framework to reflect the legal duties of Commissioners as set out in PPERA subject to amendments to the ARAC terms of reference on membership terms and to the conflicts of interest guidance in the Commissioner Code of Conduct. The Board agreed for the redraft to be signed off by the Chair prior to publication. Resolved: That the Board agreed an uplift in the Independent Adviser fees in line with commissioners. Update from Audit and Risk Committee Chair (EC 189/23) The Chair of Audit and Risk Committee provided the Board with an update of the work of the committee at its last meeting highlighting the following areas: Internal Audit specification Internal Report Annual tracker survey Update from NAO external audit Risk Management Resolved: That the Board agreed to note the work of the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting of 21 February 2023 Update from the Remuneration and Human Resources Committee (RemCo) Chair (EC 190/23) In the absence of the RemCo Chair, committee member Sarah Chambers reported to the Board the work of the committee at its meeting of 21 March 2023 Key discussion Agreed to have four meetings a year RemCo to meet with a large group of staff People strategy update Update provided regarding the tendering of the Human Resources IT system Update provided regarding Civil Service Learning Update provided regarding Recruitment Update provided regarding Performance management Draft Annual Report Update provided on key management information Update provided regarding Staff Survey, agreed to share with the Board the overview Resolved: That the Board agreed to note the work of the Remuneration and Human Resources Committee at its meeting of 21 March 2023