

Parliamentary Parties Panel minutes: 20 February 2018 | Electoral Commission

Search

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You are in the Party panels section Home How we make decisions Party panels On this page Minutes of the last meeting and actions arising (ECPPP 05/12/2017) New Codes of Practice Public awareness preparation, May 2018 local elections Feedback on replacement for integrity roundtables Commission update report Any other business Actions First published: 20 February 2018 Last updated: 2 September 2019 Who was at the meeting Who was at the meeting Conservative Party: Andrew Stedman (AS) Anita Owusu (AO) Labour: Andrew Whyte (AW) Monique Shockness (MS) Liberal Democrats: David Allworthy (DA) Darren Briddock (DB) Scottish National Party: Scott Martin (SM) Electoral Commission: Claire Bassett, Chief Executive Craig Westwood, Director of Communications & Research (CW) Bob Posner, Director of Political Finance and Regulation & Legal Counsel (BP) Denise Bottom, Senior Guidance Adviser (DBM) Laura McLeod Public Affairs Manager (LM) Rob Vincent, Commissioner (RV) Minutes of the last meeting and actions arising (ECPPP 05/12/2017) The minutes from 5/12/2017 were agreed with no actions arising or amendments. New Codes of Practice CB outlined that after writing to the parties, the Commission is interested in hearing the views of the Panel on the proposed Codes of Practice (COP) and would welcome any input or questions at this stage. SM said that the COP deal with the existing schedule and asked whether there is a way can agree and amend the schedules of category spending. CB explained that there are ongoing discussions on this issue but clearly a challenge of available legislative time. BP agreed that it was worth considering and engaging with Cabinet Office. All sides were keen to continue constructive engagement. DA raised the issue of authorisation and reported parties only received correspondence from the Commission five days before the 2017 general election. DB asked if the Codes are going to address authorisation. DB reported the difficulties in authorisation when there is a snap election. DBM outlined there is only so much the COP can address. AW asked if authorisation was a COP issue or need to think of it separately in legislative terms. BP and CB agreed to look at how far the Commission can take guidance. CB suggested using COP to shine a light on authorisation. All sides agreed would be useful to put on agenda for a future meeting. AW asked if there was a compelling case to move away from guidance to COP. CB explained the COP would have stronger status. DBM explained there is a particularly compelling case to make digital campaigning clearer and more transparent. Public awareness preparation, May 2018 local elections CW outlined the Commission's public awareness preparation ahead of the local elections. CW highlighted the new campaigns: 'Got 5?' and 'Your vote is yours alone'. AS asked for an update on the Commission collating data on people moving house and producing standard artwork to target this group. CW explained the Commission is still consulting on this and agreed to keep the Panel informed. AS asked about the Commission's role in relation to voter ID pilots. CW outlined the Commission's role to carry out an independent evaluation and will report before summer recess. DB suggested often the perception of fraud was worse than the reality. DB highlighted the issue when legitimate things are perceived as a problem and there is a false perception you aren't allowed to campaign on polling day. DB asked if the Commission's fraud campaign could go too far and cause people to worry. CW explained the positive tone of 'Your vote is yours alone' and messaging on intimidation and bribery. CB said the campaign messaging is focused on the voter and empowering them to understand and report electoral fraud. Feedback on replacement for integrity roundtables BP explained the rationale in trying to refresh arrangements and establish the best way to engage with political parties, electoral administrators and the

police. BP suggested more flexible, ad hoc events focusing on particular issue may be a better use of everyone's limited resources than a scheduled meeting every six months with a standing agenda. BP invited feedback from Panel members on what sort of event would be useful. DB said at SPOC seminar the format was particularly valuable and useful in helping to facilitate conversations with ERO officers and can't underestimate future value this has for collaborative working. CB explained the Commission had listened to feedback on having more emphasis on conversations and opportunities to share information but understands the need for different formats at different times. AS agreed. RV said he was struck by size and suggested the need for smaller groups. AS and DA agreed. DA said it was particularly useful to have a case study and a mix of participants round the table as it allowed for different viewpoints on the problem and constructive engagement. DA explained the importance of the networking. CB said this feedback was helpful. CB explained the different options available: workshops, smaller roundtables or specialised training sessions and asked views of the Panel. AS stated the benefit of smaller group discussion. DR outlined personal preference for big table discussions. Commission update report AS thanked the Commission for sending over dates of PFR publication dates for 2018. SM asked what the date would be for the General Election spending returns for the larger parties. SM said it would be useful to have in PDF format. CB agreed to see if possible to send in this format but indicated this might not be possible due to size. DBM explained guidance colleagues at the Commission could help give advice to the Panel on any issues relating to the publication of electoral registers where there are local government boundary changes. Any other business DA raised register of interests and the issue of the fundamental differences between the two reporting mechanisms. DA cited the example of new MPs having to report one year before and outlined if someone was looking at Commission records there could be the automatic assumption something is wrong. DA asked if future correspondence from the Commission on this issue could be more diplomatic and account for different reporting systems. CB said feedback will be taken on board. DA said the overlapping deadlines are hard to manage. AS explained there is the perception parties are huge but this is not the case. AS said between the Commission and the ICO, the regulatory burden is huge and said it would not be uncommon to need to double staff. CB explained the Commission was sympathetic to the pressures outlined and stated the Commission's commitment to not unnecessarily adding further to this. DA raised aggregation and stated DA and DB had come to two different interpretations of the guidance on 62(12). DA said there is a lack of examples in the Electoral Commission guidance to make it clear. CB acknowledged the helpful feedback and offered to direct Commission staff to the Panel to address this issue. DA and DB offered to provide examples.

Actions
Action Owner
Status
Add authorisation of spend to future PPP meeting agenda
BP Complete
To be included as an agenda item for meeting in September 2018
Investigate if feasible to share General Election spending returns for the larger parties in PDF format.
BP Complete
Guidance team to consider feedback on application and examples of 62(12) in Modern Guidance Project
DBM Complete
Fed into project
Related content
Party registration decisions
View our decisions on political party names, descriptions and emblems
View current applications
View the political party names, descriptions and emblems which we are currently considering as part of our assessment process
Donations and loans
Find out about donations and loans to a political party, individual or other organisation
Registers of unincorporated associations
Download and view the registers of unincorporated associations