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the polls, and they have confirmed that election mail will be treated as a priority. The Director, Communications, Policy and Research provided an update on research with voters which continued to indicate a clear desire among many for polling station voting, while also capturing a likely increase in the desire to vote by post. There had been ongoing public awareness and information activity, which continues according to plans, with additional activity scheduled to support voter engagement in the polls under Covid-safe conditions. The Director, Regulation updated Commissioners on the use of monitoring data and other sources of intelligence gathering that would guide campaigners to stay within the law. She updated also on an ongoing survey to understand the impact of Covid restrictions on campaign plans for the elections. The Board raised the issue of concerns around the security of postal votes. It was noted that guidance on security seals exists and awareness of the safeguards that are in place would be raised. Resolved: That the oral update be noted. Business planning 2021/22 (EC 2/21) The Board received the report, noting a draft outline closely based on previous business plans for the final draft. The Board discussed areas of the plan that needed to be more robust, looking at how we positioned ourselves outwardly and how we measured productivity during the pandemic. The Board noted that a fully developed draft would be brought to the February Board meeting. Resolved: That the proposed approach be approved. Update on Board Effectiveness review: proposed action plan (EC 3/21) The Board received the report on the proposed action plan for the Board, Audit Committee and Remuneration and Human Resources Committee following a review carried out by Advance Boardroom Excellence (ABE). The Board noted the administratively focussed nature of the consultant recommendations as opposed to focussing on a more strategic approach. The Board discussed the wider scope of the skills matrix in that it should reflect more broadly on succession planning for new Commissioners to include younger age ranges, experience of information technology and diversity. The Board thanked Commissioners Joan Walley and Sarah Chambers as well as the Head of Projects for working on this plan. Action: That the Executive Team should do some preparatory work with Commissioners on the thematic findings in the report to provide a basis for discussion with the new Chair. Resolved: That the actions and timescales outlined in the Board effectiveness action plan be agreed. Resolved: That the Executive Team should do some preparatory work with Commissioners on the thematic findings in the report to provide a basis for discussion with the new Chair. Resolved: That the rejection of specific recommendations as detailed in the Board effectiveness action plan be approved. Resolved: That the Audit Committee would now be titled the Audit and Risk Committee. Developing the effectiveness of the Commission Board (EC 4/21) The Board received the report noting the potential governance changes to develop Commissioner non-executive contribution to the oversight and support of the Commission's work. The Board discussed more linked up working with external stakeholders across the regions of England in particular for better understanding on key issues, along with working collaboratively with the Executive Team. It was noted that this was helpful thinking for the future and planning such work on future agendas. Resolved: That the report be noted. Resolved: That an item be added to the Board effectiveness review action plan for consideration later in 2021 by the new Chair of the Commission with the Board. Resolved: That pending the arrival of a new Chair of the Commission, the Board nominate a lead Commissioner contact for each of the Directors in the intervening period. Casework and the Committee on Standards in Public Life (Oral) The Board received a presentation from the Director, Regulation and Head of Monitoring and Enforcement on the following key headlines: RoadTrip2015 BeLeave The Committee on Standards in

Public Life (CSPL) – Conservative and Unionist Party submission The Board welcomed the presentation and noted the insight it gave to how learning was incorporated into the Commission’s regulatory approach. Resolved: That the presentation be noted.

Horizon scanning (EC 5/21) The Board received a report on work developed in the last year, with the aim of giving the Commission additional intelligence on how emerging trends and developments might challenge current policy and practice in relation to elections. The Board welcomed the progress on this area of work, and that this will enable input into the Board’s forward looking strategic planning and risk management. It asked that social, economic, and attitudinal developments be given appropriate weight in the further development of the approach. Resolved: That the report be noted.

Remuneration and Human Resources Committee (RemCo) (EC 6/21) The RemCo Chair gave a brief update of the last Committee meeting on 2 December 2020, covering the following: Feedback from staff session People strategy Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) work Pay benchmarking exercise Resolved: That the Committee Chair approved minutes of the Committee meeting held on 2 December 2020 and oral update be noted.

Audit Committee (EC 7/21) The Audit Committee Chair had no further updates since the last update received at Board on 2 December 2020. Resolved: That the Committee Chair approved minutes of the Committee meeting held on 1 December 2020 be noted.

Chief Executive’s update (EC 8/21) The Chief Executive introduced the report, drawing attention to the Bullying and Harassment report released in December 2020, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the work of the Commission, and Commissioner recruitment. The Board thanked the Chief Executive and teams for a comprehensive update. Resolved: That the report be noted.

Commission Board action tracker (EC 9/21) Action: Deep dive financial risk item to stay open until a date has been allocated and the Forward plan of Board business updated to reflect this. Resolved: That the Commission Board action tracker with the above caveat be noted.

Forward plan of Board business (EC 10/21) Commissioners asked that a discussion of means of ensuring that the Board had contact with sections of the electorate which were not reflected in its composition should be scheduled for later in the year. Action: A discussion of means of ensuring that the Board had contact with sections of the electorate which were not reflected in its composition be included onto the Forward plan of Board business. Resolved: That the Forward plan of Board business be noted.