

Board minutes: 25 April 2023 | Electoral Commission Search

Board minutes: 25 April 2023 You are in the Electoral Commission Board section  
Home How we make decisions Electoral Commission Board On this page Who was at the meeting Commission Board action tracker Chief Executive's update (quarterly) Update on the plan for the review of Commission's Strategic Objectives Digital campaigning Forward Plan of Board business 2023/24 Update on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activities Registers of Interests, gifts, donations and hospitality First published: 14 June 2023 Last updated: 23 June 2023 Board minutes 25 April 2023 Date: Tuesday, 25 April 2023, 9.30am Location: Bunhill Row, London, and by Video conference Date of next scheduled Board meeting, Tuesday, 23 May 2023 Who was at the meeting Who was at the meeting John Pullinger Chair Rob Vincent Alex Attwood Sarah Chambers Roseanna Cunningham Chris Ruane Katy Radford 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 David Moran Interim Director, Finance Matt Pledger Senior Adviser, Governance Tasnim Jahan Legal Officer [meeting support] Phil Thompson Head of Research [items 1 and 5] Emma Rose Senior Research Officer [item 1] Tom Kelsey Senior Research Officer [item 1] Sandy Grant Senior Research Officer [item 1] Helen Lyon Senior Research Officer [item 1] Charlotte Eva Senior Research Officer [item 1] Tom Hawthorn Head of Policy [items 5 and 7] Michela Palese Policy Manager [item 5] Cahir Hughes Head of Electoral Commission, Northern Ireland [item 5] Professor Kate Dommett University of Sheffield [item 7] Welcomes and apologies, followed by an introduction to the Research Team providing an overview of its work The Board received apologies from: Commissioners: Elan Closs Stephens Stephen Gilbert Independent Adviser to the Commission Board EDI Sal Naseem The Board noted that Kieran Rix, Director, Finance and Corporate Services would be leaving the Commission and that this was his last Board meeting. The Board thanked him for his work at the Commission. There were farewell words from the Chair of the Board, Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Chief Executive. All thanked the Director, Finance and Corporate Services for his dedication and support to both them and the Commission. The Board welcomed David Moran, Interim Director, Finance to the Commission. The Board welcomed the Research Team members, who provided an outline of their work. The Board noted the team works across the Commission's objectives, basing their research methodology on robust processes to present qualitative and quantitative findings, which are published wherever possible to support wider sector insight. The Board thanked the Research Team members for their time and update. Declarations of Interests The Board noted the following updated entry of declarations of interests since the March 2023 Board meeting: Commissioner: Sarah Chambers: Consumer Expert Panel member for the Office of Rail and Road Minutes (EC 189/23) Matters arising: That the Board noted that under item 8.3 resolved that the Chair had agreed the rewording of the Conflicts of interest guidance appendix of the Commissioner Code of Conduct. This revised version has been adopted as part of the Corporate Governance Framework. The document would be circulated to commissioners for signing. Resolved : That the Board agreed the minutes of the Board meeting of 22 March 2023. Commission Board action tracker (EC 190/23) The Director, Communications, Policy and Research reported to the Board that arrangements were underway for an expert to attend the July 2023 meeting to support the Board's discussions on public awareness campaigning. Resolved : That the Board noted the progress against actions requested by the Board. Chief Executive's update (quarterly) (EC 191/23) The Chief Executive reported that there

were a range of challenges for the team arising from the latest timetable for the next phases of Elections Act implementation. The Board noted that the UK Government had also communicated an updated timetable for the parliamentary consultation on the proposed Strategy and Policy Statement. The Board requested an update on the next phase of Elections Act implementation at the next meeting. The Board noted key findings of the annual tracker survey 2022, and an update on the Commission's readiness for the May 2023 polls. The Board noted that it had been regularly updated by the Executive Team as to the preparations for the May 2023 polls. The Board discussed the impact of voter ID and noted that there would be an interim analysis of the voter ID data to be published in June/July 2023, followed by the Commission's full post poll report in September 2023. Resolved : That the Board noted the Chief Executive's update on operations and matters arising, including an update on election preparations for the May 2023 polls, and an update on the annual tracker survey 2022 key findings. Update on the plan for the review of Commission's Strategic Objectives (EC 192/23) The Chief Executive introduced this item reporting to the Board following discussions at the February 2023 Board Away event, noting that the review was an opportunity to engage in an open discussion and test the level of ambition of the Board. These discussions would in turn influence the next Corporate Plan. The Board agreed to hold a series of thematic reviews of the current strategic objectives through extensions to the monthly Board meetings. Resolved : That the Board noted the presentation and approved the programme of activities. Digital campaigning The Director, Regulation introduced Professor Kate Dommett to the Board. Professor Dommett from the University of Sheffield presented research on public attitudes towards online political advertising. The project was aimed at determining public perceptions of what legitimate political advertising looks like. She presented data about the relative campaign spend on online political advertising. Professor Dommett highlighted findings indicating that there appeared to be general public consensus on the factors that determine whether an advert is acceptable; such as decency, legality and truth. The Director, Regulation noted that the research provided insights into both the value of online campaigning as an accessible tool for campaigners, and the risks around voter trust in online campaign material. The Board explored the findings presented and thanked Professor Dommett for her presentation. Resolved : That the Board noted the presentation by Professor Dommett, University of Sheffield. Forward Plan of Board business 2023/24 (EC 193/23) The Board noted that extended Board meeting sessions would be incorporated into the Forward Plan and for the September 2023 Board meeting to start at 9.00am. The Forward Plan would be amended to include a discussion on the Strategy and Policy Statement at the June 2023 Board meeting. Resolved : That the Board noted the Forward Plan of Board business 2023/24. Update on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activities (EC194/23) The Chief Executive gave an update on the first meeting of the EDI Project Board. The Board noted that the next meeting of the EDI project Board would consider external facing EDI activities as well as activities to further promote EDI within the Commission. It would also consider the structures and resources required to implement EDI work. Resolved : That the Board noted the update on EDI activities. Registers of Interests, gifts, donations and hospitality (EC195/23) The General Counsel updated the Board as to the Register of Interests. The Board noted that the Governance Team would be issuing the annual documentation for Commissioners to update their interests. Resolved : That the Board noted the Commissioner's Register of Interests, gifts, donations and hospitality.