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particular how access can be managed safely and how candidates and agents will be able to oversee proceedings, including how to manage their expectations as to the fact that counts will look different and will take longer. The Board noted that our main focus from the electoral administration perspective now is on responding to queries from local authorities, and in the last week alone we dealt with over 200 enquiries from electoral administrators; there are no particular patterns or concerns emerging from these at this stage, but we will monitor what comes in and our teams across England, Scotland and Wales will remain focussed on supporting local authorities over these final weeks of the election timetables. The Board noted an update on the voter registration campaign, with 1.05 million applications to register being recorded across Great Britain during the campaign period. This exceeded the Commission's targets in all areas, and its stretch targets for Wales, England and Great Britain as a whole. It was further noted in the lead up to polling day we aim to support voters both directly and through media and other third parties, in order to provide an understanding on how to vote with confidence, particularly in light of Covid-19 related safety measures. This includes ongoing work with the media and through the Commission's public information services. The Board discussed ongoing engagement with Royal Mail, including understanding their progress on contingency planning. The Board noted that our Chief Executive and Director, Electoral Administration and Guidance met with the recently appointed Chief Executive of Royal Mail. We were ensured that priority would be given to the delivery of campaign materials, our information booklets, poll cards, postal vote applications and postal ballot packs. The Board requested to be kept abreast of any issues that may arise during the remainder of the election period. Resolved: That the oral updates be noted.

Corporate Plan 2022/23 – 2026/27: plan structure (EC 30/21) The Board received the report providing an opportunity to review the proposed structure for the Corporate Plan 2022/23 – 2026/27 as it will be submitted to the UK, Scottish and Welsh parliaments. The Board discussed the tone and language and pitching it at the right level with emphasis on delivering the Commission's objectives and ensuring appropriate emphasis on work in all parts of the UK. The importance of avoiding management speak was noted, to make it a clearer statement of the context of our role. Commissioners Sarah Chambers, Stephen Gilbert and Joan Walley volunteered to liaise with report authors to provide support and input where necessary before bringing back to the June board meeting for approval. Resolved: That the Board endorsed the structure for the Corporate Plan 2022/23– 2026/27.

Corporate Plan 2022/23 – 2026/27: financial strategy (EC 31/21) The Board received a report providing an opportunity to determine the overall financial strategy for the Commission over the corporate plan period. The Board discussed looking at options and opportunities in terms of the core budget as well as reflecting financial accountability for devolved work in Scotland and Wales. It was noted that further iterations would come back to the Board. Resolved: That the Board endorsed the proposed approach, but would want to consider further before adopting the strategy.

Key messages for the Annual Report (EC 32/21) The Board received a report on our Annual Report and Accounts including a review of our performance from 2020/21. The Board discussed the key messages for the Annual Report drawing attention to a range of topics to be noted. Resolved: That the feedback from the Board will be incorporated into the drafting of the Report and shown in full as part of the draft Annual Report at the May Board meeting.

Chief Executive's update The Board received an oral update from the Chief Executive, Director, Communications, Policy and Research and Director, Regulation. It was noted that the usual full written Chief

Executive's update report was not appropriate at this time due to staff elections work priorities and a significant proportion of work being on the elections as reflected in the update agenda item to the Board. The Board noted the following updates: Recruitment of New Commissioner for Northern Ireland Interviews of shortlisted candidates have been held with John Pullinger, Chair designate as part of the panel. Next steps would be for the Speaker's Committee to consider panel recommendation(s) followed by the Leader of main parties' consultation, then back to the Speaker's Committee then the House, followed by the issue of the Royal Warrant, so there's still a few more months before finalisation. Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) The latest information from CSPL is that they are looking to publish their report on aspects of the Political Finance regulatory framework, in July. PACAC Their review into the work of the Commission is at the stage of doing some oral evidence sessions. They have had one with UK academics that was positive. At the session on 27 April, they will get international academic inputs They will then plan to have a session with us, but no date has been scheduled as yet. The Commission We continue to operate effectively as a remote working organisation (elections work demonstrates that), recognising that there are impacts, including on staff well-being. We have limited re-opening of our offices with social distancing in place and for priority business need only. This is based on a booking system that has limited numbers with no visitors. Our HR policies have been aligned to work more flexibly in the office and remote working including surveying staff. We will trial this for a year to learn, adapt and settle in. Electoral Integrity Bill Preparations are underway for the Electoral Integrity Bill expected from the UK Government, with the establishment of a Commission project board to coordinate activity. The work is currently focused on ensuring our preparations for the Bill's passage, and the need to support parliamentarians by providing accurate and timely briefing on the Bill's provisions; and on mapping out the necessary work to implement the provisions should they be passed into law. Political Finance Online The project has moved on from red to amber for the first time since difficulties with the developer. The budget has now been secured via the Estimate with two in-house developers also in place. Registration modules have been tested internally and preparations for reporting modules virtually now completed. We have kept users updated throughout and now, with them planning how training and implementation will look. Training is planned for August and will be ongoing as and when needed. Regulatory support strategy We are on track for consultation on the regulatory support strategy after the May polls. This will involve survey work and targeted discussions. The targets will include those beyond the main parties; parties with elected representatives at local and regional levels and regulated donees. We have already identified and finalised two new guidance products as a result of early engagement on regulatory support. One is on focussed guidance for accounting unit treasurers, many of who are volunteers and we want to support, and the other on how parties can do valuations of their services or commercial transactions. Resolved: That the Board noted the updates on operations and matters arising. Commission Board action tracker (EC 33/21) The Board received the Commission Board action tracker noting further updates. Resolved: That the Commission Board action tracker be noted. Forward plan of Board business (EC 34/21) Commissioners discussed items of business for future meetings. These would be reflected in the Forward plan of Board business at the May meeting. Resolved: That the Forward plan of Board business be noted. Meet the new Chair designate (Oral) The Chair designate introduced himself to the Board. He was looking forward to working with the Board and staff of the Electoral Commission at such an important time for

the electoral system. He hoped that his appointment process would be concluded in time for him to take up post as planned on 1 May. The Board thanked Rob Vincent for his time and care as Meeting Chair and, as a body looking forward to the next phase.