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First published: 1 August 2022 Last updated: 1 August 2022 Overview Overview This section provides an overview of our work on devolved matters in Wales, our purpose, our performance during the last year and the key risks to achieving our goals. We have included summary financial information within the performance report. This is consistent with the financial statements, where more detail is available. The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) established the Electoral Commission. We are independent of government and political parties and directly accountable to the UK, Scottish and Welsh parliaments. Amendments made to the Government of Wales Act 2006 by the Wales Act 2017 transferred responsibility for devolved Welsh elections and referendums from the UK Parliament to the Senedd. The Senedd Elections Wales Act 2020 set out the funding and accountability arrangements of the Electoral Commission's devolved activities in Wales. Key achievements In May 2021 we supported the successful delivery of the Senedd and Police and Crime Commissioner elections, working with the Wales Electoral Coordination Board to provide advice and guidance for those running and contesting the polls. We ran a mass-media voter registration campaign, and provided other voter information – including political literacy materials through schools – to support voter participation and confidence We provided expert advice and an evaluation plan on the Welsh government's plans for pilots at the May 2022 elections. We responded to a Welsh Government request for our views on the UK Government's Elections Bill and Legislative Consent Memorandum, and contributed to the work of the Special Purpose Committee on Senedd Reform. We appeared before the Llywydd's Committee to give evidence as part of its scrutiny of the 2022/23 financial estimate and accompanying 5-year corporate plan. Performance analysis Measure Performance Work with the Scottish Parliament and Senedd to implement our new accountability arrangements, including a new funding formula and business plans for Scotland and Wales Completed We comment on 100% of relevant legislation and policy proposals 100% Achieved Further specific performance measures for Wales are being developed and will become operational in 2022-23. Looking ahead While elections in Wales are well run and our survey work shows high levels of public satisfaction in the processes in place for voters to register and cast their votes, challenges still remain. To support more newly enfranchised voters across Wales to become involved in Welsh democracy, we will extend the reach and impact of our education programme ahead of the Welsh local government elections in 2022 and Senedd election in 2026. We want to build on the work already achieved by engaging further with partner organisations across Wales to educate young people about the democratic process and to prepare educators to teach political literacy with confidence. We will support parties and campaigners to comply with the law, while continuing to ensure political finance is transparent. We will support Returning Officers and electoral administrators to help them meet the challenges they face in delivering well-run electoral services and adapt to the increasingly diverse approach to the way elections are delivered, brought about by devolution and the changing needs of voters. We will work closely with the Senedd and Welsh Government as they introduce new primary legislation to bring into effect plans for both Senedd and electoral reforms. We will, through our work with the Wales Electoral Coordination Board, seek to ensure that the views of Returning Officers and s are taken into account in the development of this new legislation. Underpinning our

five-year plan is the requirement to provide value for money and maintain a well-run organisation. The plan incorporates a renewed focus on equality, diversity and inclusion, and is designed to encourage staff engagement, development of skills and use of the technology required to support effective ways of working and continuous learning and improvement. We look forward to working constructively with the Welsh Government, Senedd, other UK governments and parliaments, parties and campaigners, electoral administrators and other interested groups to maintain voter confidence in our electoral system. Commitment to EDI As noted above we have taken significant steps to refresh our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), including producing and consulting on a new EDI Strategy. As a key part of this work, we are committed to the principle that in its conduct of public business and provision of resources and services, the Welsh and languages should be treated on a basis of equality. During 2021/22, we undertook important work with regard to the Welsh language. This has led to further improvement in the service we provide to partners in Wales in the language of their choice and to ensuring that the Welsh Language Standards, set in July 2016, are not only met, but that we are innovative and ambitious in the services that we provide. Using resources During 2021/22 we utilised £1.65m of resources from the £1.75m available. This was predominately for staffing £1.15m (69.69%) and Campaigns £0.50m (27%); the remaining amounts represent the Senedd contribution to common activities and corporate overheads. The underspend is due to savings in design and print of guidance materials, digital transparency campaigns and depreciation. Governance Accountability to the Senedd While the Electoral Commission has regularly reported to both the Scottish and Welsh parliaments in relation to our role at devolved elections, formal accountability (through legislation) has previously only been to the UK Parliament, specifically to the Speaker's Committee of the House of Commons. From 1 April 2021 the Commission became formally accountable to, and received funding from, the Senedd in respect of its functions in relation to devolved Welsh elections and referendums. The Commission reports to the Llywydd's Committee which was established for this purpose and works to the "Statement of Funding Principles". In the autumn we submitted our first set of estimates to both the Scottish and Welsh parliaments enabling the UK Treasury to transfer the agreed level of funding to the Welsh Consolidated Fund and the Scottish Parliament. These processes will ensure all parliaments can be confident in scrutinising our work plans and accounts in the coming years. Funding and financial governance Commission expenditure on devolved matters is payable out of the Welsh Consolidated Fund, following the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020. However Section 129 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 lists the bodies to which payments can be made from the Welsh Consolidated Fund. It does not include the Electoral Commission. Therefore, the Welsh Government has agreed to undertake the administrative function for drawing down funding and paying it to the Commission on behalf of the Senedd. As part of preparing the Governance Statement and Accounts for the Welsh Government and the Fund, the Permanent Secretary will formally write to the Electoral Commission Accounting Officer to seek a general assurance in respect of the systems of internal control. This is to ensure the propriety and regularity of funding provided from the Welsh Government budget and payable from the Fund.

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