

Confirmed on 14 October 2004

Minutes of the meeting of the Electoral Commission held on 8 September 2004, in London.

Present: Sam Younger (SY) (Chair)
Pamela Gordon (PG)
Glyn Mathias (GM)
Sir Neil McIntosh (NM)
Karamjit Singh (KS)

In attendance: Roger Creedon (RC)
Jacqui Dixon (JD)
Roger Gough (RG)
Nicole Smith (NS)
Chris Welford (CW)
Rael Zackon (RZ)
Becky Lloyd (BL)
Stephen Judson (SJ)

1. June 2004 advertisement campaign

- 1.1 BL gave a presentation of the tracking research on the 'Don't do politics' campaign for the June 2004 elections. The campaign had been very successful in meeting its aims and objectives.
- 1.2 The key conclusions were:
 - This was the Commission's first national campaign, and it had scored high recognition
 - The advertisements had established a sensible, acceptable and informational tone, which should be retained
 - The message was powerful and motivational
 - The visual style was distinctive
 - Printed material must be more closely aligned with the TV campaign
 - The Commission should build on the success and public awareness of the message, tone and visual style, across all areas of the Commission's work and not just during election campaigns

- 1.3 **The Commissioners noted the results of the campaign and the conclusions, and thanked all those who had worked on the campaign.**

2. Minutes of the meeting of 11 August 2004.

- 2.1 The Commissioners confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 11 August 2004.

3. Minutes of the meeting of 12 August 2004.

- 3.1 The Commissioners confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 12 August 2004, subject to the following amendments:

Paragraph 6.2: delete as this issue was not relevant to Derbyshire.

Paragraph 12.2: the last part of the paragraph should read 'no new evidence had been submitted in relation to any particular proposed multi-member ward, or the issues raised had been previously considered.'

4. DCMS public consultation on party political broadcasting

- 4.1 SJ presented the report, which recommended a draft response to the public consultation. It was recommended that the Commission modified its previous position in relation to the working of the Broadcasters' Liaison Group. The Commissioners welcomed the approach to public service broadcasts.
- 4.2 **The Commissioners approved the draft response, subject to amendments as discussed, and authorised SY to sign off the final version of the response.**

5. Draft report on campaign spending at the Northern Ireland election 2003.

- 5.1 CW presented the report, which drew similar conclusions to the reports on the Scotland and Wales elections. KS referred to the recent meeting held with the Independent Monitoring Commission.
- 5.2 CW stated that questions had been raised by one party in relation to the expenditure of another party. The Commission could only rely on the information which it held, and it was clear from the report that the differences in levels of expenditure reflected the different campaigns

run by the main parties. The Commission would investigate further if evidence was provided of any alleged irregularity.

- 5.3 KS stated that the publication of the report had to be handled with care. The Commissioners acknowledged that it was essential to anticipate the issues which would be raised when the report was published and have suitable media lines ready.
- 5.4 **The Commissioners approved the report, subject to amendments as discussed, and authorised SY and KS to sign off the final version of the report.**

6. Matters for information

- 6.1 The Commissioners received the following items for information:
- Minutes of the LGA/Electoral Commission liaison meeting held on 15 July 2004
 - NIF quarterly report
 - Schedule of meetings 2004/5
- 6.2 GM referred to the NIF report, and advised that the Project Board was meeting on a quarterly basis, and that changes in the arrangements for evaluating applications had made the process more robust.