

Minutes of the meeting of the Electoral Commission held on Wednesday 6 August 2008

- Present:
- Sam Younger (SY) Chair
 - Max Caller (MC)
 - Henrietta Campbell (HC)
 - Ian Kelsall (IK)
 - John McCormick (JM)
 - Karamjit Singh (KS)
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- Peter Wardle (PW)
 - Clare Ettinghausen (CE)
 - Carolyn Hughes (CH)
 - Stephen Rooney (SR)
 - Andrew Scallan (AS)
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- Bob Posner (BP)
 - Vera Markos (VM)
 - Carole Scrivener (CS) (Minutes)
 - Tom Hawthorn (TH) – Items 1, 2
 - Michael Gallagher – Item 3
 - Julie Humphreys (JH) – Items 3, 4
 - Tony Stafford (TS) – Items 3, 4
- Apologies: Lisa Klein

1. Minutes

- 1.1 The Commission agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2008 (EC69/08), subject to amendments to paragraph 2.2.
- 1.2 With regard to item 3, (Performance standards for Electoral Registration Officers) TH reported that there had so far been a response rate of 80% to the baseline performance survey for the 2008 local elections and 49% return rate on the financial information survey.

2. Findings of examination of the structure of electoral administration in the UK and final Scotland draft

- 2.1 AS provided an overview of the UK and Scotland reports outlining the findings of the Commission's examination of electoral administration structures.
- 2.2 The Commission were content to approve the reports subject to drafting changes.
- 2.3 The Commission noted the proposed handling arrangements for publication of the reports. The reports would be published by the end of August.

3. Political Parties and Elections Bill (summary report and discussion of policy issues)

- 3.1 TS recorded the Commission position on issues raised by the Political Parties and Elections Bill (PPE Bill), and noted further provisions the Commission would like to see included in the Bill.
- 3.2 The Commission supported the recommendations discussed.
- 3.3 The Commission agreed the proposed line on two issues that PEF was seeking to take forward via amendments to the Bill while retaining adequate regulatory control by the Commission:
- Include the current forfeiture sanction within proposed new sanctions arrangements
 - Amendments to previous provisions to reduce dual reporting to the Commission and to legislatures.

4. PEF update (with oral forfeiture update)

- 4.1 The Commission received and noted an update from JH on the PEF allegations casework.

5. Update on Boundary Committee work

- 5.1 MC and AS updated the Commission on Boundary Committee work with regard to Devon, Suffolk, Norfolk and Cornwall reviews.
- 5.2 The Commission noted that a full presentation would be given at the next Commission meeting in September 2008.

6. Q1 performance and finance report

6.1 CH and VM briefly presented the highlights of the Commission's financial and operational performance for the period from April – June 2008.

6.2 The Commission noted the report.

7. Any Other Business

7.1 MC and AS reported on the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) conference they attended which took place in late July 2008 in Vienna.