

# The Electoral Commission

December 2015

## Briefing note

### Campaign monitoring for the May 2016 Polls

As the independent regulator of party and election finance, we:

- make sure people understand the rules and monitor compliance with the rules
- investigate and impose sanctions when people do break the rules
- publish data on political funding and spending

This briefing note sets out our approach to campaign monitoring in the lead up to the elections taking place in May 2016 – for the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly, Northern Ireland Assembly, and the London Assembly, and the London and other directly elected Mayoral elections, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) elections and local government elections.

Monitoring compliance with the rules on campaign spending and political donations is part of our statutory remit. The purpose of this work is to promote compliance with the law by:

- raising campaigners' awareness of the rules and our role in applying them
- identifying emerging issues so we can offer advice and guidance to those we regulate; and if appropriate take enforcement action
- obtaining information on activity that we may refer to when looking at the financial disclosures submitted by campaigners

Monitoring also helps us understand the effectiveness of the rules on campaign spending and donations, and how they have affected trust and participation in the democratic process, and forms part of our evidence base for post-election analysis.

We monitor campaigning for each election by political parties, non-party campaigners and candidates. We will focus on those we anticipate will undertake significant levels of campaigning.

Our monitoring will use various sources, including press, broadcast and online media.

We will report after the poll on any issues or concerns arising from our campaign monitoring work.

Guidance for those campaigning at the elections is available on our website at <http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/party-or-campaigner>.