

Classification: Unprotected

Agenda Item no.3 (b)

Minutes of the meeting of the Electoral Commission held on Wednesday 6 July 2011 at 9.00am

Present: Jenny Watson (JW) Chair
Max Caller (MC)
Henrietta Campbell (HC)
David Howarth (DH)
Ian Kelsall (IK)
Lord Kennedy of Southwark (RK)
John McCormick (JMcC)
Rt Hon George Reid (GR) Tony Hobman (TH)

Liz Butler, Independent Chair of the Audit Committee (LB)

In attendance: Peter Wardle (PW)
Clare Ettinghausen (CE)
Carolyn Hughes (CH)
Alex Robertson (AR)
Andrew Scallan (AS)
Bob Posner (BP)
Kairen Zonena (KZ)

Louisa Parry (LP)
Dean Button (DB)

Clinton Proud

The Board stood for a minute's silence in memory of Clinton Proud,
Head of Campaigns and Public Information, who died on 26 May 2011.

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Lisa Klein.

2 Declaration of Interests

None were declared.

3 Audit Committee Annual Report (EC 49/11)

- 3.1 LB, as Independent Chair of the Audit Committee, introduced the report and drew attention to key points. This year had seen a significant improvement in the timeliness and quality of the annual resource accounts, an improvement which had been acknowledged in the external auditor's report. The auditors were expected to give their unqualified approval to the accounts.
- 3.2 Further improvements were still to be made in streamlining some of the systems and processes for producing the accounts, and it was hoped that these would be put in place as soon as practicable.
- 3.3 A full programme of internal audits had been carried out with the oversight of the Committee during 2010-11. These had been targeted at those areas of highest risk, but in spite of that had resulted in a satisfactory number of positive assurances. Most of the audit recommendations made had already been implemented, and of those still being completed, all were medium or low priority.
- 3.4 Risk management processes were robust, and had been developed further during the last year. The Committee felt that the organisation's risk management captured the risks arising from the organisation's activities.
- 3.5 LB summarised other points made in the report, and, looking forward, added that the Committee would carry out its annual review of effectiveness in November. She congratulated staff on the achievements made during the year, and invited questions.
- 3.6 TH asked if auditors had made an assessment of the risk maturity of the organisation. JW hoped that risk awareness did not limit the organisation's will to identify and benefit from opportunities.

Agreed: That the Audit Committee Annual Report be noted and endorsed, with thanks to the Committee and to the staff.

4 Annual Report and Resource Accounts 2010-11 (EC 50/11)

- 4.1 It was noted that the content of the Annual Report was based on the End of Year review which was presented to the May Board meeting and that the Resource Accounts had been reviewed by the Audit Committee. DB noted that there were minor rounding changes to be made to the version of the draft accounts that had been circulated, but that otherwise the accounts were as before the Board. There were no questions.

Agreed: That: –

- (a) The Commission's Annual Report 2010-11 be approved for publication and be laid before the UK Parliament; and
- (b) The Resource Accounts 2010-11 be adopted as recommended by the Audit Committee, to be signed by the Accounting Officer and submitted to the Comptroller and Auditor General before being published and laid as part of a single report with the Annual Report.

The meeting ended at 9.20 am.

Chair