

The background of the slide features a large, light blue outline of the Coat of Arms of the Government of Nunavut. The crest is a shield divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a stylized sun with rays. The top-right quadrant shows a stylized flower or plant. The bottom-left quadrant shows a sailing ship on wavy lines representing water. The bottom-right quadrant shows a stylized bird or eagle with spread wings. Above the shield is a crown with four points, each topped with a flower. A banner at the bottom of the shield contains the text "ANNE FOR A'".

AGENDA ITEM

6

Electoral Registration Update



Agenda Item 6

CENTRAL SCOTLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Subject: Electoral Registration Update
Meeting: Central Scotland Valuation Joint Board
Date: 23rd September 2016
Author: Pete Wildman, Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is to update the Board on Electoral Registration work that has been carried out
- 1.2 The report also provides an update on ongoing and future work

2.0 REGISTER OF ELECTORS

- 2.1 The first full issue of Household Enquiry Forms (HEFs) under the new Individual Electoral Registration (IER) system was carried out between August 2015 and December 2015. Following which the new Register was published on 1st December 2015.
- 2.2 The Register at 1st December had 222,192 Local Government Electors and 217,636 Parliamentary Electors.
- 2.3 The steps to be taken by the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) when issuing HEFs are prescribed in legislation and have resulted in an increase in printing and postage costs.
- 2.4 The purpose of the HEF is to establish what changes have occurred in each household. It is not a registration form. If new names are added to the form we have to individually invite the new people to register. If names are scored off then we have to make further enquires before a person is removed from the Register.
- 2.5 Whilst the Household Enquiry phase is complete by 1st December the invitation process continues all year.

- 2.6 IER saw the introduction of online registration. This now results for approximately 78% of all applications
- 2.7 We worked with the education departments at the three Councils to promote the registration of young electors to reflect the reduction in franchise age for Scottish Parliamentary and Local Government Elections.
- 2.8 We met the performance standards set by the Electoral Commission.

3.0 SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT ELECTION – MAY 2016

- 3.1 There was good partnership working with the Electoral Commission for this election.
- 3.2 There was also close working with the three Returning Officers and I was included in their election planning teams. We also held regular joint meetings with the Returning Officers staff and Police Scotland.
- 3.3 There were 227,298 eligible electors on the Register used on Polling Day.
- 3.4 Postal and proxy vote applications were dealt with in accordance with the statutory timescale. As with the UK Parliamentary Election in 2015 the office dealt with a number of Emergency Proxy applications on Polling Day.
- 3.5 Overall there were no significant registration issues with this election.

4.0 EUROPEAN REFERENDUM – JUNE 2016

- 4.1 Again there was close working with the Electoral Commission and the three Counting Officers for this event.
- 4.2 The electorate on Referendum Day was 221,333
- 4.3 Overseas electors were eligible to vote and we saw an increase from 356 on 1st December to 673 on Polling Day.
- 4.4 The online registration website crashed just before the registration cut –off and following emergency legislation the deadline was extended by two days. With a consequent knock on effect of reducing the time for us to check and print the ballot box registers for supply to the Counting Officers.
- 4.5 There were no issues on Referendum Day but again there was a constant stream of Emergency Proxy applications to be processed.

5.0 ONGOING AND FUTURE WORK

- 5.1 The issue of HEFs for the 2016 canvass commenced at the start of August and return rates are in line with our predictions.
- 5.2 We have recruited temporary door to door canvassers to assist us with the requirement to visit all properties where no form has been returned. There were fewer applicants than last year for these posts.
- 5.3 We are continuing to engage with the three education departments, the university and care homes to maximise registration. We are also engaging with private landlords and social housing landlords to promote registration and identify potential electors who are not on the register
- 5.4 Work has commenced on preparing for the 2017 Local Government Elections. As a member of the Electoral Management Board for Scotland I'm also involved at a national level.
- 5.5 There is a recognition that the new IER process is unduly bureaucratic and is more costly than the household system it replaced. The Cabinet Office is running three pilot schemes this year and plans to expand this to 22 pilots for 2017. The aim of the pilots is to reduce costs and to focus resources efficiently.
- 5.6 Along with all EROs in Great Britain I have been invited to apply to take part in one of these pilots. I have submitted an application to take part in a pilot trialling the use of e-mails rather than paper forms where we hold e-mail addresses for households. I would ask that the Board notes that application.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 Members are invited to note and comment on this report.
- 6.2 Members are asked to note the application to take part in a 2017 canvass pilot.

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Pete Wildman
Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer
Date: 23rd September 2016