

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO
THE ELECTIONS (POLICY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS SCHEME) (AMENDMENT)
ORDER 2014

2014 No. 556

1. This explanatory memorandum has been prepared by the Cabinet Office and is laid before Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

2. Purpose of the instrument

- 2.1 As a consequence of the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration, the annual canvass in Great Britain, which would normally have concluded with the publication of revised electoral registers by 1st December 2013, was postponed. Under the Elections (Policy Development Grants Scheme) Order 2006, the Electoral Commission would use these electoral registers as part of their calculations regarding the allocation of funds to parties under the policy development grants scheme.
- 2.2 Because of the canvass being postponed, revised registers were not published by that date (except for in Northern Ireland). This Order therefore amends the relevant date for the calculation and publication by the Electoral Commission of the number of people on the electoral registers. Those numbers will be used for the allocation of funds under the scheme.

3. Matters of special interest to the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments

- 3.1 None.

4. Legislative Context

- 4.1 This Order amends the Elections (Policy Development Grants Scheme) Order 2006. Under s12 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, the Electoral Commission is charged with administering the policy development grants scheme.
- 4.2 The Electoral Commission must keep the Scheme under review, and may make recommendations to the Secretary of State or the Lord President of the Council. The Electoral Commission have recommended that, as a consequence of the postponement of the 2013 annual canvass, the relevant dates for calculation and publication of the number of electors on the register should be revised for the year ending on 31st March 2015. The relevant date for calculation is the date for publication of the revised electoral register in each part of the United Kingdom.

5. Territorial Extent and Application

- 5.1 This instrument extends to all of the United Kingdom.

6. European Convention on Human Rights

- 6.1 As this Order is subject to negative resolution procedure and does not amend primary legislation, no statement is required.

7. Policy background

- 7.1 Policy development grants are prescribed under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. They are awarded to help parties in developing policies to include in manifestos for elections. The total grant is £2m per year and distributed via a formula based on representation and performance at European, national and devolved legislature elections. To be eligible for the grant, a party must have at least two sitting Members of the House of Commons and have taken the oath of allegiance provided by the Parliamentary Oaths Act 1866.

8. Consultation outcome

- 8.1 The Order gives effect to a recommendation of the Electoral Commission dated 5th March 2014.

9. Guidance

- 9.1 The Electoral Commission provide advice on how to it administers policy development grants via its website.

10. Impact

- 10.1 A full regulatory impact assessment has not been prepared for this instrument because no, or no significant impact on the private or voluntary sector is foreseen.

11. Regulating small business

- 11.1 The legislation does not apply to small business.

12. Monitoring & review

- 12.1 These are minor amendments and there are no plans to undertake a formal review of their impact.

13. Contact

James Copeland at the Cabinet Office, Tel: 0207 271 2756, email: James.Copeland@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk can answer any queries regarding the instrument.