

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

2025–26

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HC 54

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England

Annual Report and Accounts 2025–26

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Annual Report and Accounts 2025–26

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1 Foreword

1.1 Chair's introduction

I am pleased to present the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's Annual Report and Accounts for 2025–26, a year in which we have continued to deliver our core statutory role of completing reviews of the electoral arrangements of local authorities across England.

The year has been shaped by a period of change, not least in respect of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) which is taking place across parts of the country and which has necessitated the Commission to be agile and flexible in its response. We have provided our expertise and experience to support both the local government community and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), particularly in relation to their consideration of the councillor numbers for new authorities and the interim electoral arrangements that will underpin their first elections.

We have retained focus on our electoral review programme and have started nine reviews as planned, which is fewer than in previous years, reflecting our decision not to undertake reviews in those areas that have been invited to submit proposals for new unitary authorities. We completed 15 reviews during the year, affecting the electoral arrangements for 2.1 million electors. We have also agreed one related alteration to improve alignment between council and parish warding.

We remain highly dependent on, and greatly appreciative of, the active engagement of local authorities, residents and organisations in our review process, and their views and insights are vital in helping to ensure that our recommendations are informed by local needs, views and circumstances. We are once again grateful to all those who have participated in our reviews this year.

In addition, we have continued to keep our processes under review and have identified and implemented improvements to how we work. This has included commissioning stakeholder research to help us better understand how well people understand our role in local democracy and to test the effectiveness of our current messaging and engagement approaches. The findings from this will be used to inform work over the coming period to improve how we talk about reviews and support people to engage with us and our work.

We have also continued to develop our organisational capacity and resilience by assessing our current digital capability and developing a strategy which will guide us in how we use the available technology to work as effectively and efficiently as we can, both now and into the future.

As well as continuing to deliver a programme of reviews to provide fair electoral and boundary arrangements for local government electors in England, over the next year we will continue to deliver the ambitious improvement and innovation agenda set out in our Corporate Plan. This focuses on making best use of technology to maximise our capacity and effectiveness, and on enhancing how we engage with local authorities and local communities to make it easier for people to understand and get involved with the review process.

Joining the Commission as Chair in January 2026, I would like to pay testament to the work of the previous Chair and Commissioners who have overseen the majority of the work in 2025–26.

I am grateful for the continued commitment and expertise of my fellow Commissioners and our staff team, and look forward to continuing to work with them and our partners in local and central government and local communities over the coming year.

Bev Smith

Chair, Local Government Boundary Commission for England

2 Performance report

2.1 Overview

This year we have once again carried out a programme of electoral reviews, and have also worked to develop our people and our systems to ensure we are best placed to deliver the remit given to us by Parliament.

We have demonstrated flexibility in how we work, starting nine reviews alongside responding to Local Government Reorganisation, making available our expertise to support the process. We have also taken forward a number of continuous improvement projects to help ensure that we are working as efficiently and effectively as we can, both now and into the future.

We continue to depend on and value the main insight from local stakeholders to ensure our reviews are well-evidenced and locally driven. To make it as straightforward as possible for people to express their views and ideas, we continually keep the ways that we engage with local councils, organisations, communities and residents under review. This year we commissioned an external review of our communications approaches and the findings from this, and from our stakeholder research, have informed a new communications strategy.

To ensure we are making full use of the available technology, maximising the benefits and minimising the risks that it creates, we completed a digital maturity assessment, enabling us to understand better where we are now and where developments are needed. The findings of this have shaped a digital strategy which will underpin how we work over the remainder of the Corporate Plan period.



2.1.1 Who we are and what we do

We are an independent statutory body, directly accountable to Parliament. We conduct electoral reviews of local authorities in England and make recommendations for local boundary arrangements.

We carry out different types of electoral reviews:

Request reviews

We aim to be responsive to requests from local authorities and carry out reviews where asked and where we can support the delivery of effective and convenient local government



Periodic electoral reviews

We aim to review each local authority every three to four electoral cycles, ensuring that we meet our statutory duty to review all local authorities 'from time to time'



New local authorities

We will continue to support the establishment of new local authorities, as agreed by Government and Parliament, and help to ensure that they have fair electoral and boundary arrangements



Intervention reviews

Where a local authority has poor levels of electoral equality, with some councillors who represent many more or many fewer electors than others in the same area, we carry out a review to address these imbalances



Principal area boundary reviews

We will consider carrying out reviews of the external boundaries of local authorities, such as where local authorities jointly request a change to the boundary between two areas



All of our electoral reviews:

Are informed by local needs, views and circumstances

Aim to ensure that, within each authority, each councillor represents a similar number of electors

Seek to create boundaries that are appropriate and reflect community ties and identities

Aim to support the delivery of effective and convenient local government

In carrying out our work, we are guided by our values:



Impartial

We give equal consideration to all views



Objective

Our recommendations are based on evidence



Responsive

We listen to local opinion and take account of the views we hear in developing our recommendations



Transparent

We follow clear and open processes, making information available to support people to engage in our work



Professional

We are reliable, efficient and helpful, delivering our work effectively and to a consistently high standard



Inclusive

We value diversity and the benefits different perspectives and experiences bring to our work

2.1.2 Risk and our risk appetite

It is important to understand and manage our risks and to be aware of the extent of our influence and how the external environment impacts on our work.

We are all responsible for having regular risk conversations that:

- Are open, straightforward and purposeful
- Approach risk management to achieve set outcomes
- Ensure risks are considered across the whole organisation
- Provide results that enable effective, evidence-based decision-making

Our risk appetite shows where we are willing to engage with higher levels of risk for a greater benefit, for proportionality or to achieve our strategic objectives.

Risk appetite scale

Averse	Minimal	Cautious	Open	Eager
Avoid actions with associated risk	Willing to consider low-risk actions which support delivery of priorities and objectives	Willing to consider actions where benefits outweigh risks	Receptive to taking difficult decisions when benefits outweigh risks	Ready to take difficult decisions when benefits outweigh risks

Strategic risks

We have identified five strategic risks for the organisation:

Strategic risk	Appetite category	Appetite threshold	Current score	Key mitigations
Reputational damage Declining trust and engagement may undermine confidence in our work	Minimal	6	6	Structured engagement with local authorities and representative bodies (e.g. Local Councils Network, and County Councils Network), as well as the Speaker's Committee and MHCLG; robust review programme management, with milestones, escalation points and contingency planning; communications strategy; internal and external audit programme; Annual Report and Accounts

Strategic risk	Appetite category	Appetite threshold	Current score	Key mitigations
Financial Financial pressures or planning weaknesses could cause budget shortfalls and reduce confidence in our financial management	Minimal	6	4	Business Plan and Main Supply Estimate; quarterly performance reporting to the Board, including year-to-date spend and year-end forecast; monthly monitoring by the Leadership Team of actual spend and forecast
Changes in demand Shifts in political or local government landscape may impact workload and statutory delivery	Cautious	8	6	Horizon scanning and proactive liaison with MHCLG to help anticipate changes; monitoring of LGR developments; flexible work planning to allow reprioritisation of activities to balance the effective delivery of core reviews, LGR activity and improvement projects
Core/Functional delivery Capacity, process or skills limitations may affect delivery standards	Open	12	4	Quarterly Board performance reporting; monthly Leadership Team management reporting; desk instructions and templated processes; performance management framework, including annual and mid-year appraisals, personal development plans and annual mandatory training
Cyber-security Cyber threats or weaknesses in information management could compromise systems, data or operational capability	Averse	4	4	Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation; data policy and breach reporting process; business continuity planning policy; monthly firewall vulnerability assessments; regular penetration testing

Following the Board’s approval of an updated risk management framework in July 2025, we implemented a thematic programme of risk deep dives, which focused on the first two of our three strategic objectives during 2025–26.

Strategic objective deep dive	Reviewed	Outcome
SO1: We will deliver high-quality electoral reviews that are fair and take account of local communities and needs	November	Assured
SO2: We will work collaboratively with local authorities and local communities to make it easier for people to understand and engage with the review process	February	Assured

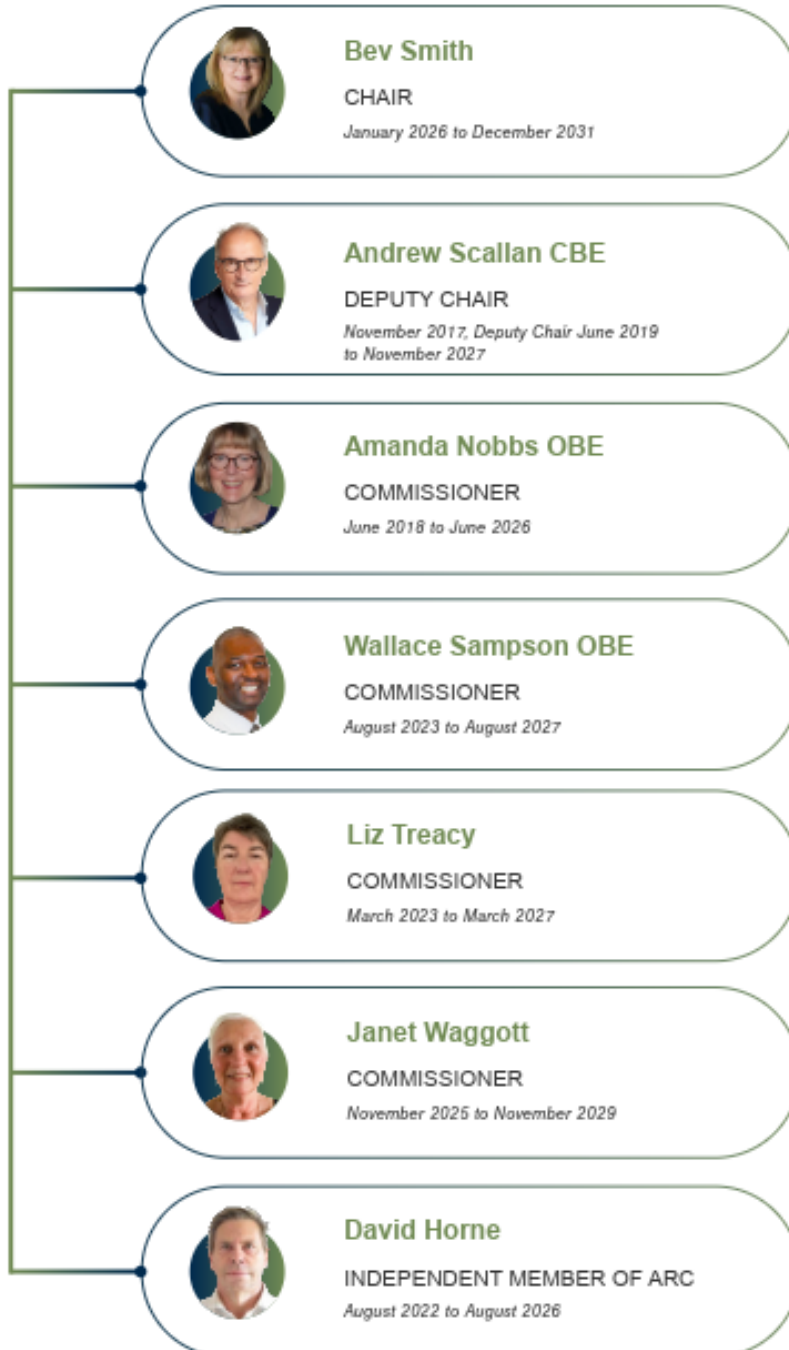


2.1.3 Commission's organisational structure

The Commission Board comprises six Commissioners. There is also an Independent Member on our Audit and Risk Committee (ARC).

Roles and functions are described in the Accountability report (Section 3).

Commissioners and Independent Member as of 31 March 2026



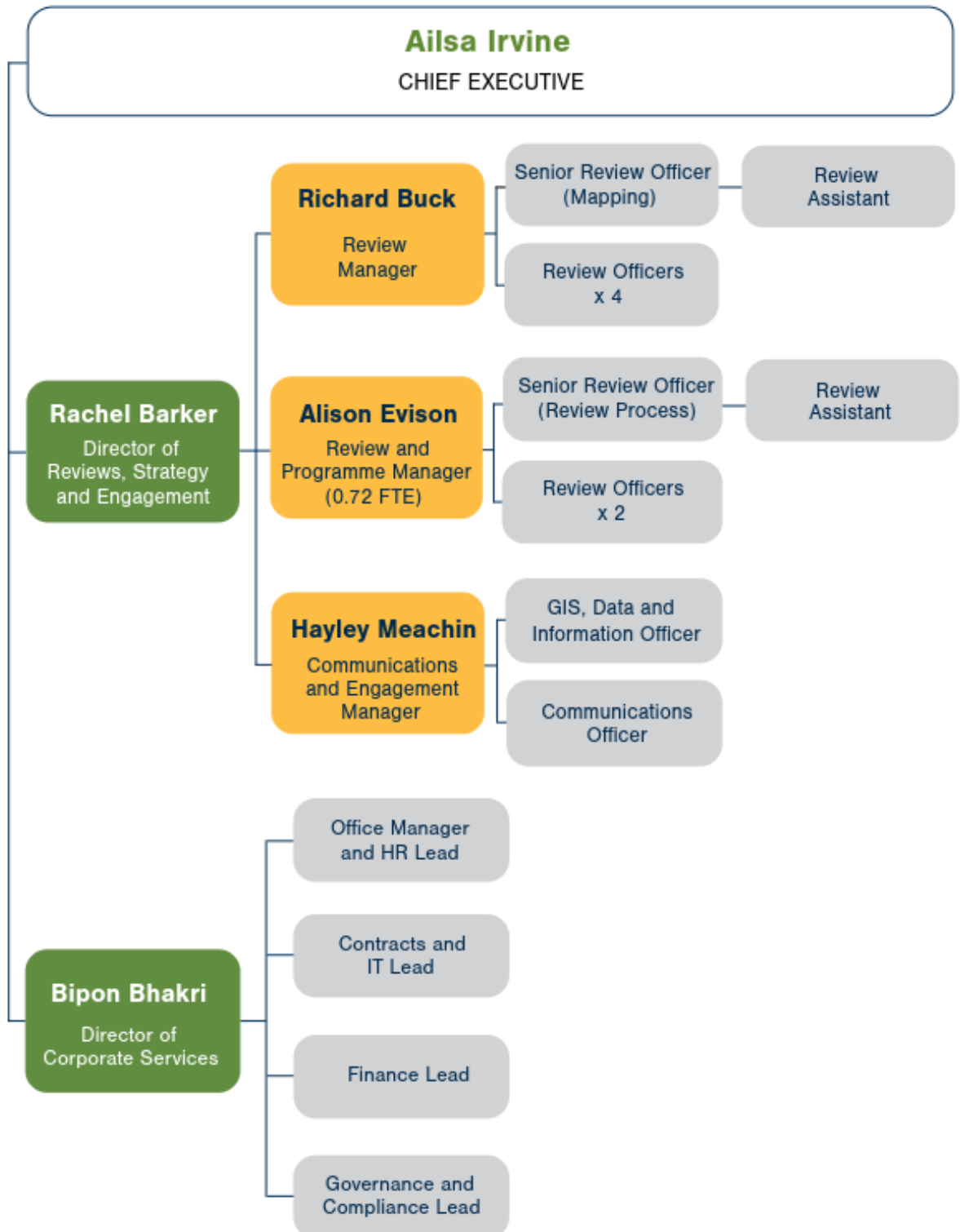
Former Board members

Professor Colin Mellors OBE, Chair – January 2016 to December 2025

Steve Robinson, Commissioner – November 2017 to November 2025

Staff organisational structure (as at 31 March 2026)

Our organisational structure to support the Commission Board in its work is set out below.



Objective **1** We will deliver high-quality electoral reviews that are fair and take account of local communities and needs

Objective **2** We will work collaboratively with local authorities and local communities to make it easier for people to understand and engage with the review process

Objective **3** We will continue to improve our efficiency, ensuring we have the resources and processes we need in place and are using them effectively

2.1.5 Performance summary

This has been the first year of delivery against our Corporate Plan for 2025–26 to 2029–30.

We have continued to deliver our rolling programme of reviews in 2025–26, ensuring that we not only continue to review local authorities from ‘time to time’, as we are required to do, but can also undertake reviews to address electoral inequality. When the Corporate Plan was developed, we anticipated that local government structures would be a key issue over the life of the plan and this has indeed been the case and is reflected in the activity that has been delivered this year.

Developments arising from the English Devolution White Paper, published in December 2024, significantly impacted on our work programme over 2025–26. The Government’s issuing of statutory invitations to two-tier and small unitary authorities to submit new unitary proposals, in February 2025, led us to pause or not commence 40 ongoing or planned reviews. This affected our review programme for 2025–26, which saw us start nine reviews, fewer than in previous years.

The capacity created by this approach helped us to support the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process, enabling us to provide our expertise and experience to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the local government community. We have also been able to continue to review and refine our review and communications process, focused around how we can maximise capacity without compromising quality and make it easier for people to understand and engage with the review process.

Additionally, we have continued to invest in our people, systems and organisational structures to support effective delivery and strengthen our resilience. Alongside developing skills and capability across the organisation and improving our digital and information management systems, we completed the implementation of a number of structural changes. These changes have increased our organisational capacity, resilience and sustainability, helping to ensure that the Commission is well placed to respond flexibly to future pressures while maintaining the quality and robustness of our work. Financial controls have remained robust, and prompt payment targets were once again met. Additionally, staff engagement has remained strong, providing assurance that the Commission has the capability and culture required to deliver its remit.

2.1.6 Our year in numbers



2.8m

electors in
authorities with
improved electoral
arrangements



9

electoral reviews
started



8

community
briefings held with
local organisations



62

Councils
supported with
LGR enquiries



16

meetings with
local authority
leadership



9

orders laid in
Parliament to convert
our recommendations
to law



15

consultations
initiated with local
organisations and
residents



1,086

submissions
received

2.1.7 Performance analysis

This section provides a detailed assessment of our performance during 2025–26 against the strategic objectives set out in our Corporate Plan for 2025–26 to 2029–30.

2.1.8 Strategic objective 1

We will deliver high-quality electoral reviews that are fair and take account of local communities and needs

This objective includes three, interconnected, areas of activity: developing and delivering a rolling programme of reviews; reviewing and refining our processes to maximise our capacity; and innovating in how we deliver reviews.

In 2025–26, we have also made available our expertise to support local authorities and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) with their work on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

1. We will continue to develop and deliver a rolling programme of reviews

Our aim

We will continue to carry out reviews ‘from time to time’, in line with our statutory duty, while also maintaining the capacity to look at the electoral arrangements in areas where some councillors represent many more or many fewer electors than others in the same area.

We also want to ensure we can respond positively to requests for reviews.

Additionally, we are committed to continuing to support central and local government by bringing our expertise where it can assist with the delivery of effective and convenient local government.

What we delivered in 2025–26

In 2025–26 we started nine reviews and completed 12 reviews. Eight of the reviews commenced in 2025–26 were periodic electoral reviews and one was an intervention and request review.

Reviews started in 2025–26
Bristol
Darlington
Dorset
Herefordshire
Knowsley
North Somerset
Sheffield
Warrington
York

Reviews completed in 2025–26 ¹	
Breckland ²	North Yorkshire
Cheshire East ³	Sandwell ³
Dacorum ²	Somerset
East Riding of Yorkshire ³	Thanet ²
Middlesbrough ³	Westmorland & Furness ³
Milton Keynes ³	Wirral

All orders giving effect to our final recommendations were made in time for the effective election date identified at the start of the review process.

We have made one related alterations order (which ensures wards and divisions match new parish boundaries following local community governance reviews).

We have continued to take account of local communities and their needs in delivering our electoral reviews. In 2025–26, we received 1,086 submissions from local councils, residents and organisations. These views are vital in building our understanding of local communities and needs and are central to shaping and informing our recommendations.

¹ South Tyneside, Swindon and Solihull reviews were completed in 2024–25, but were laid in 2025–26
² Order laying paused as a result of LGR.
³ Order laid.

We have continued to work closely with local authorities and communities, and held sessions with Leaders, Group Leaders and full council in all areas under review. This year we hosted eight community briefings on the review process and undertook six in-person tours.

To support LGR, we have worked closely with both MHCLG and local authorities to provide our expertise in support of their work on councillor numbers and interim electoral arrangements for new authorities.

The seven webinars we delivered were provided in collaboration with MHCLG and other key stakeholders from across the local government community, including the District Councils' Network (recently renamed as the Local Councils Network), County Councils Network and the Local Government Association. Our input has been well-received, with 100% of those completing a feedback survey after the MHCLG-hosted webinars saying that they had found the sessions useful. In addition to these webinars, we have engaged directly with 62 councils, answering queries and signposting to relevant advice and guidance.

We were also included as a named consultee in the Government's consultations on proposals for new unitary authorities that did not use existing districts as building blocks. We responded to each of these consultations, which related to 23 proposals for 16 county areas in England.

2. We will review and refine our processes to maximise our capacity and the number of reviews that we can carry out

Our aim

We will be able to start a minimum of 25 reviews each year.

We will look at the timetable for a review to explore whether it would be possible to shorten the overall length of the review process without compromising quality and the level of engagement. Additionally, we will consider our approach to intervention reviews and whether we could deliver these in a different way.

What we delivered in 2025–26

While LGR has resulted in us delivering fewer reviews than in previous years, we have been able to use our available resource and capacity to take forward work to review and refine our processes, to start to build capacity for the future, including the expected peak of activity to review newly established authorities before their subsequent elections.

We have taken forward work to process map the review process and are starting to use this to identify areas where the review process could be shortened without compromising quality or levels of engagement. We have also this year established a review database and dashboard which provides detail and analytics on all reviews completed by the Commission, giving us a strong basis for identifying and sharing examples of good practice.

A number of our activities in 2025–26 have been focused on how we work with councils during the review process, helping to ensure that all relevant stakeholders have a good understanding of how a review works from the outset. We have updated our preliminary materials and content for workshops with council officers and have also strengthened our engagement with the communications and engagement teams at the councils we are working with.

3. We will be innovative in how we deliver reviews

Our aim

We will identify opportunities afforded by emerging technology to support the effective delivery of electoral reviews, including reviewing our mapping infrastructure to ensure the solutions we use maximise the efficiency and accuracy of our review processes.

The effective use of available data will be central to how we work, and as part of this we will seek to improve further the accuracy of our five-year forecasting.

We will also keep our guidance and resources under review to ensure they remain robust and easy to use.

What we delivered in 2025–26

We have continued to develop our mapping capabilities over the course of the year. The way that we use these tools has also continued to evolve and is modernising the boundary review process, replacing manual processes with automated, rule-based editing. In practical terms, we are now able to undertake rapid scenario testing, strengthening recommendations and reducing task times.

Our five-year forecasting has improved from 2024–25. The decrease in accuracy seen last year reflected reviews conducted in 2019–20, with the forecasting agreed prior to Covid when housing development across the country slowed significantly. However, we have also commenced a project this year which has started to assess our forecasting tools and support review staff to critically assess the information provided to us by local authorities. We will also be incorporating into this work consideration of the potential impact of proposed changes to the franchise, such as in relation to votes at 16.

We have updated a range of guidance and resources including the communications material we use at the preliminary stages of a review and introduced a data sharing agreement to underpin the sharing of stakeholder information to help support the promotion of reviews and encourage participation from across the area under review. In addition, and in response to LGR, we developed a set of FAQs with links to relevant guidance about councillor numbers, which we made available on our website.

Measuring impact

We identified a range of measures in our Corporate Plan to help us to understand how we are delivering against our objectives:

- Number of reviews started each year
- Orders in place in time for implementation of the new electoral arrangements at the scheduled election
- Improving levels of confidence in the review process
- Increasing levels of positive feedback from local authorities on the review process

KPI	2025–26	2024–25	2023–24
Number of reviews started each year	9	25	26
Orders in place in time for implementation	100%	100%	100%
Levels of confidence in the review process	51%	N/A	N/A
Levels of positive feedback from local authorities	65%	N/A	N/A

The number of reviews started and orders in place in time for implementation are in line with the targets we had set at the start of 2025–26. Although the number of reviews started in 2025–26 is lower than in previous years, this reflects the impact of LGR on our review programme.

The KPIs relating to levels of confidence in the review process and levels of positive feedback from local authorities are new metrics which were introduced at the start of 2025–26, which means there is no baseline from previous years' performance. Reporting against these has been supported by data collected through a new stakeholder survey, which has received higher levels of response than our previous survey achieved in 2024–25, and which has been designed to ask more targeted questions of respondents so that we can better understand, and therefore respond to, the feedback that we receive.

The qualitative feedback obtained through the survey helps to illustrate the drivers for the levels of confidence in the review process and levels of positive feedback from local authorities. Key themes emerging from the responses relate to awareness of consultations, a lack of understanding about how decisions are taken and a desire for transparent feedback. These themes have helped to shape the development of our Business Plan for 2026–27, with planned activity focusing on improving our communications materials and website in a user-led way, improving available information and navigation, and providing visible feedback about how views have shaped our decision-making.

2.1.9 Strategic objective 2

We will work collaboratively with local authorities and local communities to make it easier for people to understand and engage with the review process

This objective is focused on three areas of activity relating to how we engage local authorities and local communities in the review process: developing our understanding of people's views about us and the review process; improving how we talk about electoral reviews and their process; and seeking a broad and diverse range of views to inform our recommendations.

1. We will develop our understanding of people's views about us and the review process

Our aim

We will launch new stakeholder surveys to gather views from local authorities, local communities and local people and use these to inform further improvements to our processes and practices.

We will also identify further ways to gain feedback from local authorities who have completed the review process, including how good practice can be identified and shared with other local authorities.

What we delivered in 2025–26

A new stakeholder survey was launched in April 2025, and this new approach has generated significantly more feedback than the previous survey achieved (292 responses in 2025–26, compared to 28 responses in 2024–25). Feedback can now be attributed to different stakeholder groups, and the additional information we have requested has enabled us to understand better the responses we have received. We are using this feedback, alongside that achieved through our review evaluation process, to inform further improvements to our review processes.

2. We will improve how we talk about electoral reviews and their process

Our aim

To help people understand why reviews matter to them, we will make our communications more accessible and easier to understand.

We will carry out research using a focus group-type approach to test approaches and messages with different audiences and use the outcomes to help us update our tools and templates.

We will improve our website, listening to the needs of users and using the findings from our website survey to identify and take forward improvements.

What we delivered in 2025–26

We commissioned independent focus group work to understand how effective our messaging is and how it can be refined and improved. This work involved the in-depth participation of 64 people across eight different focus groups, taking place both online and in person. The focus groups not only sought the views of those who are currently civically engaged but also from a range of diverse groups who may not be civically engaged but who do have valuable lived experience and perspectives that could help to inform our work. The findings from this work have highlighted specific areas where we can make improvements to the way that we describe reviews and present our materials, and in 2026–27 we will use these to update our approach to consultation communications.

The research findings will also inform the development of our new website, which is planned for 2026–27. The new website, the tender documentation for which was in development in 2025–26, will additionally be shaped by the findings of a year-long website survey which concluded in summer 2025. We received over 1,100 responses to the survey, the findings from which have also been used to inform immediate improvements to the review pages of our current website to enhance usability.

3. We will seek a broad and diverse range of views to inform our recommendations

Our aim

We will review the channels we use for communication, to ensure we are using the mechanisms that maximise our ability to engage with local authorities and their communities and encourage a diverse range of responses to our consultations.

We will develop a social media strategy, helping us to ensure we use available platforms to promote our reviews and engage with those who are interested in our work.

We will also develop relationships across the local government sector, raising awareness of our work and the role of electoral reviews in supporting local democracy.

What we delivered in 2025–26

We commissioned an independent communications audit which has helped us to understand our strengths and identify future areas of focus to support us to deliver against the objectives in our Corporate Plan. The audit highlighted the need for a communications strategy for the Commission which sets out our overall approach to communications and engagement, which will in turn be supported by a specific digital engagement strategy. This communications strategy has been developed during this year and will be considered by the Board in early 2026–27.

We have also focused on ensuring that we have the best possible tools to support our communications activity. Email remains a key channel for our work, and we have moved to a new email marketing platform which will provide us with improved analytics and audience segmentation capability. This new platform, along with refreshed and amended messaging and materials, will assist us in ensuring that we can engage with local authorities and communities and ensure a wide and diverse range of responses to our consultations.

In order to raise awareness of our work across the local government sector, we engaged with a range of key stakeholders at both the Local Government Association’s and Association of Electoral Administrators’ conferences which we attended in 2025–26. In addition, we have delivered a number of webinars about our role in the LGR process in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Local Government Association, the Association of Electoral Administrators, the County Councils Network and the District Councils’ Network (renamed the Local Councils Network).

Measuring impact

We identified a range of measures in our Corporate Plan to help us to understand how we are delivering against our objectives:

- Maintained or improved levels of engagement with our consultations
- Increasing percentage of people feeling they have the information they need to be able to participate in the review process

KPI	2025–26	2024–25	2023–24
Average number of submissions per review	87	N/A	N/A
Increasing percentage of people feeling they have the information they need to be able to participate in the review process	82%	N/A	N/A

The average number of submissions per review is a new metric introduced in 2025–26. This will form the baseline for measurement of the KPI relating to maintaining or improving levels of engagement with our consultations.

The KPI relating to people feeling they have the information they need to be able to participate in the review process is a new metric which was introduced at the start of 2025–26, which means there is no baseline from previous years’ performance. Reporting against this has been supported by data collected through a new stakeholder survey, which has been designed to ask more targeted questions of respondents so that we can better understand, and therefore respond to, the feedback that we receive.

The qualitative feedback obtained through the survey helps to illustrate the drivers for whether people felt they had the information they needed to be able to participate in the review process. Across the year, 82% of respondents stated that they felt they did have the information they required to participate and cited in particular the detailed information and comprehensive accompanying guidance that was available. A key theme for those who did not feel that they had the information they needed was that information was hard to find or difficult to understand, which we aim to address through our planned work in 2026–27.



2.1.10 Strategic objective 3

We will continue to improve our efficiency, ensuring we have the resources and processes we need in place and are using them effectively

This objective is centred on three enabling areas of activity: continuing to embed value for money across the Commission; making effective use of technology and data; and attracting, retaining and developing the people that we need to deliver our objectives.

1. We will continue to embed a value-for-money culture into how we work

Our aim

We will continue to seek to identify efficiencies in how we work, capturing any savings we are able to make, whether cashable or non-cashable.

We will develop new processes to enable us to better understand the costs of reviews.

We will continue to embed the principles of sustainability into our activities, exploring how our working arrangements can contribute to reducing our carbon footprint.

What we delivered in 2025–26

Throughout the year, we proactively identified opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness without compromising quality or robustness, delivering both cash-releasing and non-cash-releasing efficiencies, the details of which are set out in the value-for-money section below.

Our approach to supporting Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) demonstrates the efficient use of our resources, with available capacity and capability re-deployed from the direct delivery of reviews to support the work of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and local authorities in relation to LGR, avoiding the need to bring in additional resource to deliver this activity.

We continued to maintain strong internal controls over our core financial and transactional processes, receiving a substantial assurance rating from our internal auditors. Payment performance also remained strong: we met the government target of paying 90% of small and medium suppliers within five days, and 100% of all suppliers were paid within our standard 30-day terms. This helped us maintain supplier confidence and uphold good commercial practice. We have also enhanced our governance arrangements through more structured monthly reporting to the Leadership Team, ensuring earlier visibility of any delivery risks and financial pressures.

To support us in developing our sustainability, we commissioned our internal auditors to review our existing sustainability arrangements and identify opportunities to strengthen them. The review confirmed that there is good practice in place and that we continue to meet all legal and regulatory requirements and also provided recommendations which will help us further shape our approach in 2026–27 and beyond.

2. Making full use of technology and data

Our aim

We will develop a digital strategy to provide a framework for maximising the opportunities, and minimising the risks, of different forms of technology, including the potential use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence to support how we work.

We will continue to maintain a robust IT infrastructure, ensuring there are strong cyber-security arrangements in place.

We will invest in the development of our SharePoint system during 2025–26 to ensure it remains fit for purpose and supports effective records management.

We will review our approach to information and knowledge management, ensuring that we retain a strong corporate memory and minimise the risks of single points of failure inherent in a small organisation.

What we delivered in 2025–26

During the year, we took a more fundamental look at how we use data and technology across the organisation. This included completing a digital maturity assessment and a digital skills assessment, giving us a clearer understanding of our current capability, confidence and risks. The findings from this work are now being used to shape our emerging digital strategy and to help us prioritise future investment in a proportionate and evidence-based way.

We tested new ways of working through targeted pilots, including the use of artificial intelligence. These pilots focused on improving efficiency, governance and analytical tasks, while maintaining appropriate controls and oversight. The lessons learned will be used to shape our approach during 2026–27 and beyond.

We continued to strengthen our digital infrastructure to support delivery, resilience and transparency. During the year, we strengthened cyber-security and resilience through regular testing, proactive scanning and independent assurance, and achieved Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation for a second successive year. We have also updated our IT environment, including hardware, software and security controls, and used independent benchmarking to confirm the robustness of our controls. System uptime remained consistently high, ensuring the organisation had reliable and secure tools in place to support it in delivering its objectives.

We delivered our records management project, improving how documents are stored, found and maintained, and ensuring stronger version control and compliance with data protection requirements. In addition, we completed the migration from Classic to Modern SharePoint and progressed the second phase of development of the platform. This included improving integration with Microsoft Teams to support collaboration, refining the accessibility of review materials for Commissioners to strengthen oversight and decision-making, and integrating mapping software within the SharePoint environment to improve access to spatial information and reduce duplication.

During the year, we strengthened our approach to information and knowledge management through a series of internally-led projects designed to build organisational resilience. We also mapped our review processes to understand the end-to-end processes and how the workflow is handled between teams, in order to reduce duplication. Alongside this we updated our desk instructions to reduce single points of failure.

3. Attracting, retaining and developing the people we need

Our aim

We will refresh our People Strategy, ensuring that we continue to attract, retain and develop the people we need.

We will maintain and improve our high standards of leadership and management, with a focus on developing our people.

We will continue to invest in learning and development, to ensure we have a skilled and resilient workforce.

We will continue to refine our approach to hybrid working, providing us with the framework we need to deliver our work most effectively and supporting our organisational and individual wellbeing.

We will also further embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work.

What we delivered in 2025–26

We refreshed a number of our people focused policies and strengthened the support available to staff, including through raising awareness of our employee assistance programme and introducing an Occupational Health provider. We continued to invest in leadership and management capability through a programme of coaching for the Leadership Team, and ensured all staff had mid-year and end-of-year appraisals, personal development plans and access to learning aligned to their development needs.

To develop our long-term capability, we undertook a skills and digital capability assessment with staff and Commissioners, providing insight into training needs and levels of digital confidence. These findings will inform future learning and development activity and contribute to the refresh of our People Strategy which we will take forward in 2026–27.

Feedback from our review of hybrid working confirmed that the model remains appropriate, while also highlighting opportunities to strengthen collaboration and support colleagues working across different environments. In response, we increased opportunities for in-person interaction, including team-led awareness sessions and training on priority activities.

We expanded our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and wellbeing activity, strengthening our approach to neurodiversity through training and policy updates, hosting wellbeing sessions – including one on loneliness delivered with the Marmalade Trust – and extending our Mental Health First Aider programme. We also enhanced onboarding for new staff and Commissioners, embedding in-person induction sessions covering team activities and core systems, helping them feel equipped and connected from the outset.

We also achieved full completion of mandatory EDI training, renewed our Disability Confident accreditation and agreed updated lines to take, which we use in our interactions with councils, reflecting how EDI is embedded in our electoral reviews.

Measuring impact

We identified a range of measures in our Corporate Plan to help us to understand how we are delivering against our objectives:

- Continued identification of efficiencies, both cashable savings and non-cashable benefits
- Maintained high levels of staff engagement

Details of the cash-releasing and non-cash-releasing efficiencies identified in 2025–26 can be found in the value for money section below.

KPI	2025–26	2024–25	2023–24
Maintained high levels of staff engagement	64%	70%	80%

Staff engagement remained strong during 2025–26, continuing to perform well against the Civil Service mean (61%). However, the headline score for staff engagement is lower than our own previous year comparators.

Feedback from the 2025 staff survey highlighted continued clarity of purpose and strong commitment to the Commission’s work, alongside more mixed views in relation to leadership, workload balance and opportunities for development. The results also reflected a period of significant change, with the impact of Local Government Reorganisation on our work programme coupled with organisational change, including the embedding of structural changes and an enhanced focus on continuous improvement projects.

The Leadership Team considered the findings in detail and discussed them with staff, using this feedback to shape targeted actions focused on workload planning, clarity of roles and responsibilities, leadership behaviours, learning and development, and wellbeing. These actions are being taken forward through team planning for 2026–27. The feedback will also help to inform the development of a refreshed people strategy.

2.1.11 Value for money

Using resources efficiently and proportionately

In 2025–26, the Commission continued to take careful, evidence-based decisions on how public resources were allocated. This was supported by the introduction of enhanced monthly performance and financial reporting, enabling earlier identification and management of any emerging delivery risks or financial pressures.

Supplementary Estimate

At the time of developing our Main Supply Estimate for 2025–26, the scope and pace of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) were uncertain, making it challenging for us to accurately identify the work and resource that we would need to respond to LGR and its impacts. As a result, we included specific provision of £500k in anticipation of potential demands arising from the English Devolution White Paper and, specifically, LGR.

This provision aimed to ensure that the Commission would be equipped to respond swiftly and effectively to any requests for support. It was intended to provide flexibility, allowing us to bring in temporary staff or specialist expertise, such as legal advice, to meet emerging needs.

In the event, we were able to complete this activity without the need for additional staff and within our core resources. This was achieved by making effective use of capacity within our review teams, facilitated by a reduced review programme following our decision to pause activity in areas invited to submit proposals for new unitary authorities.

Accordingly, we returned the full £500k provision through the Supplementary Estimate process, reflecting our commitment to only spend what is necessary to deliver our objectives.

Our approach to value for money

The Commission is committed to delivering economy, efficiency and effectiveness in how we use public money. Our approach is proportionate to our size and statutory remit and is overseen by the Commission Board and the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC).

During 2025–26, we strengthened our alignment with the Government Efficiency Framework, which sets out four drivers relevant to our operating model:

1. Organisation and workforce
2. Service re-design and alternative delivery mechanisms
3. Technology and data
4. Asset and commercial management

Efficiencies achieved in 2025–26

The Commission delivered a range of efficiencies across the four drivers. These included both non-cash-releasing (productivity) efficiencies and cash-releasing (financial) savings. The improvements were achieved without compromising the quality, accuracy or robustness of our work.

1. Organisation and workforce

- Cross-training across teams improved resilience and supported flexible deployment of capacity during changes to the review programme.
- Updating of process documentation and desk instructions reduced duplication, clarified handoffs and strengthened business continuity.
- Cashable impact: Internal efficiencies helped absorb LGR activity without external recruitment, avoiding the need for temporary staffing or consultancy support that the £500k LGR provision was designed to facilitate.

2. Service redesign and alternative delivery mechanisms

- Centralising travel and accommodation bookings reduced the number of process steps required and improved control.
- Refining end-to-end review processes through workflow mapping strengthened consistency and reduced re-work.
- Productivity impact: Streamlined processes resulted in staff time savings which have been redirected to core review activity and improvement work.

3. Technology and data

- Further development of mapping tools, including the Esri Sweet application, reduced manual calculations and delivered more efficient, consistent analytical outputs.
- Improved use of SharePoint and Teams enhanced information management and collaboration.
- **Productivity impact:** Automated scenario testing and enhanced data handling reduced task times and improved accuracy.

4. Asset and commercial management

- More efficient use of office accommodation and a rent-free period following the office move contributed to lower property costs.
- Printing on demand reduces waste and maximises the impact of our spend.
- Changing insurance provider reduced premiums while maintaining appropriate levels of cover.
- **Cashable impact:**
 - rental: £96k saving due to rent-free period
 - insurance: £0.2k saving through reduced premiums following a provider change; and
 - waste reduction: £18.3k savings from lower printing volumes due to on-demand printing and reduced discretionary spend on stationery/printing.

Forward look

In 2026–27, the Commission will continue to plan, track and report efficiencies using the Government Efficiency Framework. Key areas of focus will include:

- Implementing our new digital strategy, improving our resilience and efficiency.
- Developing a costing framework for electoral reviews to enhance our understanding of the cost implications of our approach and to support better financial planning.
- Further refining core processes and digital tools.
- Strengthening organisational capability through skills development and cross-training.

2.1.12 Sustainability

The Commission is committed to working in an environmentally responsible way and to minimising the environmental impact of our operations.

However, as a small organisation operating a hybrid working model and occupying a small rented office space within a multi-tenant building, our direct environmental footprint is limited. Utilities, waste management and building-level environmental systems are controlled by the landlord and fall outside our operational influence.

As a result of our operating model, the Commission falls within the de minimis exemptions set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and the supporting HM Treasury Sustainability Reporting Guidance. This position was confirmed by an advisory internal audit review undertaken this year, which noted that the Commission's size, structure and accommodation model inherently constrain the extent of data collection and environmental influence available to us. Regardless, we seek to be transparent about our environmental impact, reporting proportionately and explaining where environmental indicators fall outside our operational control.

What we delivered in 2025–26

During the year we continued to take practical and proportionate steps to operate sustainably and to reduce the environmental impact of our work where we are able to do so.

An advisory internal audit review concluded that the Commission demonstrates an appropriate focus on sustainability for an organisation of our scale, with responsible practices embedded in day-to-day operations.

We will continue to prioritise proportionate improvements that support responsible resource use, digital working and energy efficiency, consistent with our Corporate Plan commitment to embed the principles of sustainability into our activities.

Office footprint

Our 1,000 sq ft office space – representing approximately 1% of the building – supports hybrid working and limits on-site energy use. The landlord has implemented energy-efficient LED lighting and heat-optimisation measures as part of wider net-zero ambitions for the building.

We reviewed our office accommodation arrangements in 2025 and concluded that the office space continued to support our hybrid working arrangements and delivery of our objectives. We subsequently agreed to a new licence to occupy, which runs until July 2026.

Working with our landlord

We work collaboratively with our landlord and other building occupants to monitor the environmental performance of the premises. As with other organisations operating in shared or serviced office environments, our ability to influence building-level environmental measures, while limited, are pursued through regular engagement with the landlord.

Reducing waste and supporting digital working

We continue to reduce reliance on physical materials by promoting digital ways of working.

- Board and Audit and Risk Committee meetings are primarily conducted virtually, with electronic meeting packs.
- Commissioners and staff use digital annotation tools, reducing printing needs.
- Paper materials are produced only where specifically requested by stakeholders.

Travel

As a small organisation without a vehicle fleet, our overall business travel emissions remain limited. For most meetings and engagements, we make extensive use of virtual platforms and, where practical, public transport. However, electoral review tours require in-person attendance and often involve the use of personal or hire cars where public transport is not viable. We continue to minimise our carbon footprint, promoting shared travel where appropriate, and using virtual approaches where appropriate to minimise the environmental impact.

Looking ahead

We will continue to take forward practical steps to reduce our environmental impact, where this is within our control, including:

- Integrating sustainability considerations into business planning and policy development.
- Encouraging staff to identify improvements that reduce waste, energy use or resource consumption.

Our aim is to continue operating in a responsible and proportionate way, consistent with our duties under the FReM and with the expectations placed on small arm’s-length bodies.

2.1.13 Complaints and Freedom of Information requests

In 2025–26 we completed a scheduled review of our policies and procedures relating to complaints handling and Freedom of Information requests.

We receive few complaints, but we look into each one carefully and ensure that we provide an appropriate response in time. This year, we were able to respond fully to both complaints we received at stage 1.

	Received		Target response time	Responded within the deadline			
	2025–26	2024–25	Working days	2025–26	2024–25	2025–26	2024–25
Complaints (stage 1)	2	2	15	2	2	100%	100%
Complaints (stage 2)	0	1	20	-	1	-	100%
Complaints (stage 3)	0	1	20	-	1	-	100%
Freedom of Information requests	12	10	20	12	10	100%	100%

2.1.14 Financial Review – how we use resources to deliver outcomes

Funding framework

The Commission’s funding is provided by Parliament under Schedule 1(11) of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. Parliamentary approval for our spending plans is through a Main Supply Estimate (MSE), laid in the House of Commons by the Speaker, specifying estimated expenditure required to deliver our statutory functions, and requesting a vote for the necessary funds.

For Parliamentary control purposes, expenditure is classified as either Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL) or Annually Managed Expenditure (AME). DEL covers spending that can be planned and controlled within agreed limits, including day-to-day operating costs (DEL resource) and capital investment in assets such as IT systems and equipment (DEL capital). AME covers expenditure that is more volatile or demand-led and cannot be reliably forecast in advance.

The final Main Supply Estimate for 2025–26 provided for a net resource requirement of £3,168k, comprising a DEL resource budget of £3,168k to fund the Commission’s operating activities, a DEL capital budget of £50k for capital investment, and no AME resource, reflecting the nature of the Commission’s activities.

Supplementary Estimate

During the year, the Commission submitted a mid-year Supplementary Estimate in order to return £500k budget provision which had been included in the original MSE. This provision had been included to ensure we would be able to respond swiftly and effectively to any requests for support relating to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), at a time when the scale and nature of this work were not yet clear.

In practice, the LGR-related activity required during the year was delivered within existing core resources, without the need for additional staffing or external expertise. This was achieved by redeploying capacity within the review teams, facilitated by pausing and not commencing reviews in those areas invited to submit proposals for unitary authorities.

Use of resources to support delivery

Delivering high-quality electoral reviews

A significant proportion of our spending supports the design, planning and delivery of electoral reviews. This includes staff costs, data analysis, mapping technology, forecasting capability and quality assurance processes. Investment in digital tools supports accuracy, consistency and efficiency across the review lifecycle.

Improving efficiency, capability and resilience

We continued to invest in our people, organisational systems and digital infrastructure. This included enhancing our IT estate, strengthening our records management environment, modernising SharePoint and streamlining internal processes. These improvements support operational resilience, reduce administrative burden and ensure we continue to provide value for money.

Financial summary

The table below summarises our final outturn for 2025–26 against the Main Supply Estimate, including the variance and a short explanation of the key contributing factors.

£000	MSE	Spend	Variation	Explanation
DEL Resource	3,168	2,699	469	The underspend primarily reflects the impact of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) on the review programme. Planned review activity was lower than originally forecast, resulting in reduced spending on associated staff, consultancy and programme costs.
AME Resource	0	0	0	The Commission did not incur any Annually Managed Expenditure in the year, which is consistent with its activities and funding framework.
DEL Capital	50	18	32	Capital expenditure was lower than forecast due to the timing and final cost of planned digital investment. Key upgrades were delivered within the approved capital budget, including upgrading the software that supports the Commission's website (Drupal 11) and replacing core network infrastructure.
Total	3,218	2,717	501	

Cash

During the year, the Commission received a £44k refund from the Government Property Agency relating to prior-year service charge reconciliations. The receipt is non-budget and non-retainable.

The Commission reduced its draw-down of Parliamentary Supply accordingly, returning value to Parliament through an under-issue of Supply in 2025–26. For Supply and Consolidated Fund purposes, the amount is treated as Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts (CFERS). As at 31 March 2026, the balance was outstanding and is disclosed as a liability pending formal surrender to the Consolidated Fund in accordance with HM Treasury procedures.

The Commission's cash requirement amounted to £2,604k in 2025–26 to finance its activities, which was £522k less than the sum of £3,126k approved by Parliament in the Supplementary Estimate.



Accounting Officer and auditors

In accordance with Schedule 1(16) of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, the Speaker's Committee appointed Ailsa Irvine, the Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer from 1 January 2024. Responsibilities as Accounting Officer are set out in Section 3.1.1.

The Comptroller and Auditor General was appointed as the Commission's external auditor under Schedule 1(15) of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. A non-cash cost of £48,350 (2024–25 £37,180) was incurred on external audit. Internal audit and other services were provided by The Mersey Internal Audit Agency (MIAA) Ltd at a cost of £18,240 (2024–25 £17,940; services provided by The Internal Audit Association (TIAA)).

Payment practice

The Commission has a target of paying 90% of undisputed and valid invoices within five working days of receipt of goods or services, or within five working days of receipt of the invoice, whichever is later.

Additionally, the Commission aims for payment of 100% of undisputed and valid invoices within 30 days (UK Prompt Payment Code).

	% paid within 30 days	% paid within 5 days
2025–26	100%	89%
2024–25	100%	n/a

While performance against the five-day target was marginally below the 90% target, all invoices were paid within 30 days.

It takes us on average 5.5 working days to pay suppliers. We calculate this number using the number of payments run in a year and dividing this into our average value and number of daily purchases.

	Working days to pay suppliers
2025–26	5.5
2024–25	5.3

Interests, gifts and hospitality

Commissioners and staff abide by a code of conduct and register any gifts or hospitality that they have received or been offered. They list external interests through a register of interests for Commissioners and directors. This is updated annually and available on the Commission's website. The gifts and hospitality register is provided for review at each Audit and Risk Committee meeting. There were no gifts or hospitality received during 2025–26.



Ailsa Irvine, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, 15 June 2026

3 Accountability report

This part of our Annual Report and Accounts sets out how we meet our accountability requirements and comprises three sections.

Staff costs comprise salaries and wages, social security costs and pension contributions. Further details of staff numbers, remuneration and staff costs are set out in the Remuneration and staff report and the related staff costs note to the financial statements.

The Corporate governance report sets out how we governed the Commission during 2025–26, including membership and organisation of our governance structures and how they support achievement of our objectives.

The Remuneration and staff report sets out our pay policies and how they have been implemented for the period, including salary and pension information.

The Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report brings together key information to support accountability to Parliament and includes the Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House of Parliament.

3.1 Corporate governance report

3.1.1 Statement of Commissioners' and Accounting Officer's Responsibilities

Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, Commissioners are required to prepare resource accounts detailing the resources acquired, held or disposed of during the year, and the use of resources during the year. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and of its income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Commissioners and Accounting Officer are required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM), and in particular to:



Observe the Accounts Direction issued by HM Treasury, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis



Make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis



Prepare the accounts on a going concern basis



State whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the FReM have been followed and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts



Confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable

The Speaker's Committee appointed Ailsa Irvine, Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer of the Commission on 1 January 2024.

The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including the responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the Commission's assets, are set out in Managing Public Money published by HM Treasury.

As the Accounting Officer, I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Commission's auditors are aware of that information. So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware. The Accounting Officer and the Commissioners confirm that this Annual Report and Accounts is fair, balanced and understandable. As Accounting Officer, I take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

3.1.2 Governance statement

This section brings together the principal sources of assurance that inform the Accounting Officer's assessment of the effectiveness of the Commission's governance, risk management and internal control arrangements. It draws on management assurance, committee oversight and independent audit findings considered during the year.

Scope of responsibility

The Commission was established as an independent public body under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 on 1 April 2010. It previously formed part of the Electoral Commission as a separate Committee. We are accountable to Parliament directly through the Speaker's Committee, chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons.

The Chief Executive/Accounting Officer is personally responsible to Parliament for the organisation and quality of management in the Commission, including our use of public money. In discharging our overall responsibility, the Commission Board is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of our affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of our functions, including arrangements for the management of risk, the maintenance of a sound system of internal control, and the review of its effectiveness. These arrangements are aligned with the main principles set out in the Orange Book: Management of Risk.



This statement explains how the Commission complies with its governance framework and meets the governance requirements in Managing Public Money published by HM Treasury

The purpose of the governance statement

The Commission has a corporate governance framework, which sets out our purpose, aim and behaviours, how we are accountable, and how we conduct business. This is consistent with the principles of Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of good practice, published by HM Treasury and the Cabinet Office in April 2017, so far as is relevant.

The governance framework comprises the behaviours, aims, systems and processes by which the Commission is directed and controlled. It enables the Commission to monitor achievement of strategic objectives and to consider whether the objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective reviews.

The Board has reviewed the Commission's compliance with the principles and provisions of the Corporate Governance Code. The Commission has complied with the Code throughout the year, and no departures have been identified.

Accounting Officer assurances feeding into the governance statement

This section summarises the principal sources of assurance that inform the Accounting Officer's assessment of the effectiveness of governance, risk management and internal control during the year. These assurances are considered collectively and reflect the Commission's size, risk profile and operating model.

We have used our governance assurance framework this year to support the Accounting Officer in considering the robustness of the governance arrangements in place. The assurance framework has been considered by the Accounting Officer and their Leadership Team throughout the financial year and at our Audit and Risk Committee. The consideration also seeks to highlight those areas where improvement is required.



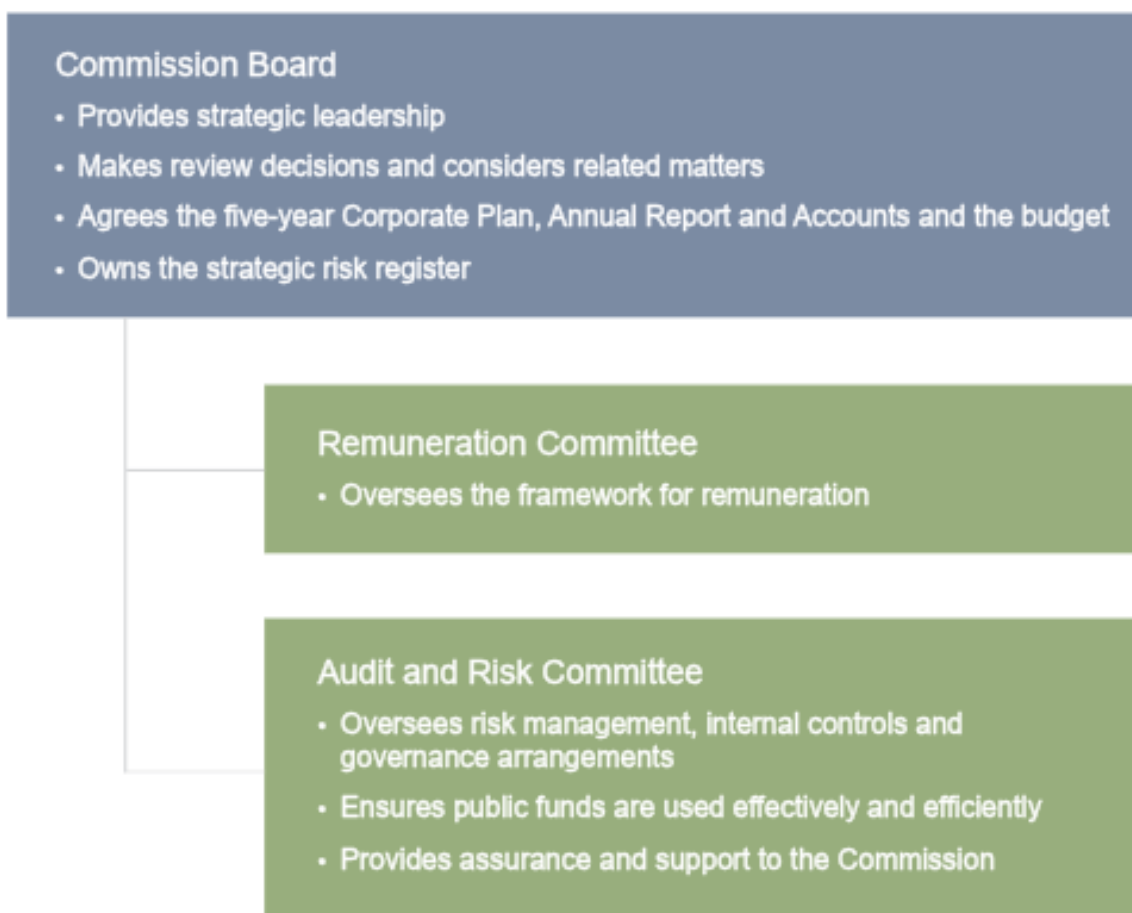
Proportionality

The Commission recognises and accepts the need to comply with legislation and regulations. We are also aware that as a small organisation we must carefully allocate our resources to strike an appropriate balance between meeting our governance responsibilities and delivering our operational programme. The Commission (specifically through delegation to the Audit and Risk Committee) continually assesses whether its application of governance arrangements and requirements are proportionate to an organisation of the Commission's size.

Mission and objectives

The Commission has set out Who we are and what we do (see [Section 2.1.1](#)), reflecting our role in law and underpinned by our aims and behaviours. The Nolan Principles (the basis of ethical standards expected of public office holders) are adopted by Commissioners and, where relevant, all staff.

Our Board and Committee



Accountability

Commissioners, acting as a Board, are accountable to the Speaker's Committee and provide strategic leadership and decision-making on electoral reviews and related matters. They also agree the five-year Corporate Plan, our Annual Report and Accounts and our annual Business Plan and budget, and own the Commission's strategic risk register. The Commission Board sets the Commission's risk appetite each year.

The Speaker's Committee

The Speaker's Committee was established under Section 2(1) of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. Its functions in relation to the Commission are set out in Schedule 1 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and include:

- Examining the annual financial estimates and laying them before the House of Commons, with or without modification – our Main Supply Estimate for 2025–26 was agreed by the Speaker's Committee on 19 March 2025 and laid before Parliament on the 22 April 2025
- Examining the five-year plan and forward resource estimates and laying them before Parliament, with or without modification – the Corporate Plan for 2025–26 to 2029–30 was agreed on the 19 March 2025
- Receiving the Annual Report and Accounts – our Annual Report and Accounts for 2024–25 was laid in Parliament on the 15 July 2025
- Receiving reports from the Comptroller and Auditor General on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of our use of resources each parliamentary term – the most recent report was concluded in 2024–25 and provided to the Speaker's Committee in February 2025, informing its scrutiny of the Commission's Corporate Plan for 2025–26 to 2029–30.
- Designating the Commission's Accounting Officer
- Reporting to the House of Commons on how it has carried out its functions

Our Board and Committees

The Commission Board provides strategic leadership, ensures that we discharge our statutory functions and maintains oversight of risk, performance and resource use. The Board is supported by two committees – the Audit and Risk Committee and the Remuneration Committee – which provide focused assurance on governance, risk management, internal control, audit and people-related matters.

Together, these structures ensure the Commission operates with transparency, accountability and proportionality, consistent with the expectations placed on small arm's-length bodies.

Commission Board

No. of meetings in the year	13 meetings	
Membership and attendance	Colin Mellors (Chair to 31 December 2025)	10/10
	Andrew Scallan (Deputy Chair)	12/13
	Amanda Nobbs	13/13
	Steve Robinson (Commissioner to 5 November 2025)	8/8
	Wallace Sampson	12/13
	Liz Treacy	13/13
	Janet Waggott (Commissioner from 12 November 2025)	4/5
	Bev Smith (appointed Chair on 1 January 2026)	3/3

Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)

No. of meetings in the year	4 meetings	
Membership and attendance	Steve Robinson (Chair to October 2025)	2/2
	Liz Treacy (Member to November 2025; Chair from November 2025)	4/4
	Amanda Nobbs	4/4
	David Horne (Independent Member)	4/4
	Wallace Sampson (from September 2025)	2/2

Remuneration Committee

No. of meetings in the year	1 meeting	
Membership and attendance	All members of the Commission Board	1/1

Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) Workplan

During 2025–26, the work of ARC was informed by its annual plan. Its report to the Commission Board is summarised below.

Audit and Risk Committee

Objective	ARC provides assurance to the Commission and supports the Accounting Officer by ensuring that the most efficient, effective and economic risk control and governance processes are in place
How achieved?	ARC is clear and transparent ARC plans and reports on its annual activities ARC reviews and considers its own performance ARC conducts deep-dive reviews of risk areas
Outcome	Plan for the year was achieved Conducted a review of ARC effectiveness and agreed an associated action plan Reviewed the risk framework Scrutinised risk deep dives Oversaw cyber-security controls, informed by dedicated training

Annual Report and Accounts and external audit

Objective	ARC scrutinises the year-end processes and production of the Commission’s Annual Report and Accounts in advance of formal approval by the Commission Board
How achieved?	ARC meets with our external auditors ARC reviews audit planning documents and interim audit work ARC scrutinises draft and final versions of the Annual Report and Accounts, including the governance statement, service charge refund treatment, disclosures, accounting treatments and major judgements ARC reviews the suitability and application of accounting policies and significant estimates, including technical areas such as leases and intangible assets

ARC considers audit findings, management responses, and any required improvements

ARC satisfies itself that the Commission's internal control framework and governance arrangements are robust

Outcome

Discussed lessons learnt from the 2024–25 audit

Scrutinised draft and final versions of the Annual Report and Accounts and confirmed the appropriateness of governance, controls and disclosures

Held an annual meeting with auditors without officers present

Oversaw the timetable for producing the Annual Report and Accounts and confirmed readiness for approval by the Commission Board and subsequent laying in Parliament

Reviewed the external audit planning report and noted that interim audit work raised no issues requiring action

Considered technical accounting updates including lease treatments, service charge refund treatment, dilapidations provisions and assessments of intangible assets

Reviewed a submission for the Public Accounts Committee relating to the accountability of smaller bodies and the challenges of compliance with reporting requirements

Policy reviews and updates

Objective

ARC reviews and strengthens the Commission's governance policies to ensure they remain up to date, effective, and compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements

ARC ensures that policies support strong governance, transparency, and effective operational delivery

How achieved?

ARC receives updated and new policies for review, challenge and endorsement

ARC considers reports on policy implementation, compliance, and any issues identified through internal audits, risk management, or operational feedback

ARC monitors the development of new or revised policies through supporting projects (e.g., SharePoint migration, records management programme and cyber-security improvements)

Outcome Reviewed and strengthened policies across multiple areas in line with ARC annual plan, ensuring they remained current and aligned with internal audit recommendations and organisational governance developments

No policy breaches were reported during the year

Significant updates were agreed to EDI, records management, health and safety, finance and procurement policies

Updates to information governance policies confirmed, supported by SharePoint migration activity and the organisation's records management project

Internal audit

Objective ARC works closely with our internal auditors who provide assurances on internal controls across the organisation

How achieved? ARC agrees the risk-based internal audit strategy and annual plan and monitored delivery through ARC cycle

ARC considers the findings of audit reports and oversees delivery of recommendations

ARC monitors relevant internal audit performance indicators

Outcome Reviewed the internal auditor's Annual Report and Accounts

Held a private meeting with the internal auditors without officers present to discuss themes and independence

Received assurance on the effectiveness and independence of working arrangements between internal and external audit

Supported the onboarding of the new internal auditors (MIAA)

Reviewed and approved the audit plan for 2025–26

Monitored progress against the 2025–26 audit plan

Received high assurance on risk management, substantial assurance on key financial controls, cyber organisational controls and maintained oversight of implementation of recommendations

Received an advisory report on the sustainability arrangements

Considered a draft audit plan for 2026–27 to ensure forward coverage remains risk-based and proportionate

Scrutiny of business activities

Objective ARC scrutinises key operational activities and cross-cutting enablers (e.g. IT, health and safety and compliance monitoring) in order to provide assurance that arrangements are effective, compliant and support delivery

How achieved? ARC considers business control arrangements
ARC considers the Commission's performance framework to help ensure value for money is achieved in our use of resources

Outcome Received regular IT performance and cyber-security updates, including on system resilience, improvement work and digital risks
Received quarterly health and safety updates, covering statutory checks, compliance activities and any required improvements
Monitored progress with development of the digital strategy, focusing on governance, dependencies and associated risks
Received regular updates on standing items relating to procurement, spend controls and information governance

Significant internal control issues

During the year, ARC did not identify any significant internal control weaknesses. The Committee was satisfied that the Commission's governance, risk management and internal control arrangements remained proportionate and effective for a small arm's-length body.

Internal control questionnaires

Each year, questionnaires are issued to all staff, and the responses are used to identify areas where internal control weaknesses may exist and if any training or policy amendments are necessary.

In 2025–26, actions were completed to address the issues identified in the responses to the previous year's questionnaire. These included:

Area identified for action	Action taken
<p>Operating within the Commission’s records management policy</p>	<p>Staff awareness has been increased through active engagement in the Commission’s records management project and work undertaken to apply specific retention policies across the Microsoft estate (SharePoint, Outlook and OneDrive). A revised records management policy was approved by Leadership Team and endorsed by ARC in July 2025. This policy was then issued to all Commissioners and staff as a mandatory read in August 2025.</p>
<p>Understand the procedure to follow when the building evacuation alarm sounds</p>	<p>Building evacuation procedure was issued as a mandatory read to all staff and Commissioners.</p>
<p>Knowledge of what to do in a Business Continuity Policy (BCP) situation</p>	<p>During the year, the Leadership Team reviewed the Commission’s BCP arrangements, with a particular focus on accessibility of information, clarity of roles and alignment with the Commission’s cyber-security risk. Interim measures were put in place to improve access to critical information and ensure that continuity arrangements could be operated in the event of disruption. The findings from the review, alongside advice from internal audit, highlighted that further work was required to ensure that business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements remain proportionate, clearly understood and aligned with the Commission’s risk appetite. This work will be taken forward during 2026–27 and will include further review, testing and staff engagement.</p>

The questionnaire for 2025–26 was completed by all staff, and the results discussed by the Leadership Team. The issues identified and proposed actions in response are reported below.

Question topic	Issue identified and action required
<p>Knowing what to do in a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) situation</p>	<p>Fully 73% Partially 27%</p> <p>The results show strong overall awareness of the Commission’s business continuity arrangements, but they also indicate that a notable number of staff feel less confident about the specific actions expected of them during a disruption. This creates a risk that responses during a critical continuity event may be inconsistent, leading to gaps in cover or delays in carrying out essential tasks.</p> <p>To address this, we will commission an external review of the BCP and IT Disaster Recovery Plan, run a Cyber Incident Response Exercise, and communicate any resulting changes to staff and Commissioners. The refreshed BCP will also be issued as a mandatory read to ensure everyone is clear about their responsibilities during a continuity incident.</p>
<p>Records management and use of approved systems</p>	<p>Fully 82% Partially 18%</p> <p>The results show that most staff use approved systems and storage locations for documents, but some continue to work on drafts locally before saving them to SharePoint or other approved platforms. This creates a risk that documents may be stored inconsistently, which could lead to version control issues, misplaced information, or gaps in the audit trail that affect information governance and organisational assurance.</p> <p>To address this, we will re-communicate expectations for document storage, including clear guidance on approved systems, and responsibilities for maintaining accurate records, ensuring consistent practice across the organisation.</p>

Question topic	Issue identified and action required
<p>Understanding how risk management applies in practice</p>	<p>Fully 86% Partially 14%</p> <p>The results show good understanding of risk management within individual areas of work, but some staff are less clear about how risks should be managed and escalated across the Commission. This creates a risk that issues may not be identified or escalated consistently, which could weaken oversight and reduce the effectiveness of the Commission’s risk management framework.</p> <p>To address this, we will deliver a risk awareness session to explain the Commission’s risk management framework, including how operational risks connect to strategic risks and when escalation is required.</p>
<p>High-level input to budget setting</p> <p><i>Leadership Team only</i></p>	<p>Fully 60% Partially 40%</p> <p>The results show good overall engagement in the budget-setting process but also indicate that some Leadership Team members are less involved than others. This creates a risk that financial plans are not fully robust, assumptions are inconsistent, and opportunities to reprioritise resources early are missed.</p> <p>To address this, we will strengthen the annual business planning cycle by having earlier discussions on budget requirements, holding regular forecasting meetings to review expected outturn, and using the monthly performance report to manage variances and agree any corrective actions needed to ensure sound financial stewardship and continued value for money.</p>

Standing orders/delegated powers and financial policies

These provide a procedural framework within which the Commission discharges its business.

Other policies and procedures

The Commission has agreed policies and procedures that underpin its governance and internal control arrangements. These sit across finance, governance, health and safety, people and information management. All policies and procedures are reviewed, and their effectiveness considered periodically.

Whistleblowing arrangements

The Commission's whistleblowing policy was in operation throughout the year and sets out the arrangements for staff to raise concerns about behaviours and practices within the organisation. The policy is supported by detailed procedural guidance and is accessible to all staff and Commissioners.

As part of the Commission's programme of regular policy reviews, the whistleblowing policy was reviewed in July 2025 and confirmed to remain appropriate and fit for purpose. No concerns were raised under the Commission's whistleblowing arrangements during 2025–26.

Personal data-related incidents

There were no significant breaches of information security that required reporting to the Information Commissioner's Office over the financial year.

All information security breaches (however minor) are considered by the Data Protection Officer, discussed by the Leadership Team, and reported to the Audit and Risk Committee.

UK Data Protection Act 2018 (including GDPR)

During the year, a number of relevant policies were reviewed and updated to ensure they remained compliant to the legislation. These included the following:

- Information management and personal data
- Records management
- Freedom of Information and publication scheme
- External complaints
- Correspondence handling

All complaints and Freedom of Information requests were dealt with within our target timeframe.

Risk management

During the year, the Commission Board has considered our risk appetite statement and also approved an updated risk management framework in July 2025. The Board received monthly assurance on Leadership Team-led deep dives into our operational risks and, through the quarterly performance report, maintained oversight of strategic and operational risks.

The Audit and Risk Committee supported this oversight by receiving deep-dive reviews of the risks associated with the Commission’s strategic objectives, providing challenge and assurance on the effectiveness of mitigations and informing the Board’s ongoing consideration of risk.

Governance assurance framework

The governance assurance framework serves to define the primary governance areas within the Commission. The framework is structured around specific governance objectives which are evaluated for their effectiveness by assessing the range of controls and assurances identified under the three lines of defence.

The framework contains 18 objectives which were evaluated during 2025–26 by the Risk Management Group.

Key to assurances

Substantial
Reasonable
Ineffective

Governance objective	Assurance rating	Key outcomes
1. Ensure accountability to the Speaker’s Committee and the NAO through effective planning, managing resources effectively and following oversight rules	Substantial	Regular financial, performance and risk reporting – supported by external audit and Board oversight – provides evidence of effective planning, resource management and compliance expectations

Governance objective	Assurance rating	Key outcomes
2. Ensure transparency by laying accurate and timely Annual Reports and Accounts before Parliament and being open to scrutiny	Substantial	Audit scrutiny, the year-end governance processes, Board approval and regular performance/assurance reporting ensure that the Annual Report and Accounts are accurate, timely and suitable for Parliamentary scrutiny
3. Staff are appropriately trained, skilled and professional	Substantial	Survey insights, appraisal reviews and ongoing monitoring of staff development confirm that staff capability is maintained and training needs are addressed
4. The Commission has effective performance management processes in place that enable staff to reach their full potential	Substantial	Performance reports against KPIs and team plans, policy oversight and appraisal reviews demonstrate consistent monitoring of organisation and individual performance and staff objectives
5. Processes are in place for staff to engage with Leadership Team and the Board on organisation-wide issues	Substantial	Survey results, Leadership Team review processes and engagement channels provide evidence that staff views inform leadership discussions and organisational decision-making
6. Effective operations of Commission Board, ARC and Remuneration Committee	Substantial	Terms of reference, Board and ARC effectiveness reviews, structured reporting and forward planning demonstrate strong governance, informed decision-making and effective committee operation
7. Identify, measure, control and monitor risks that impact achievement of the Corporate Plan	Substantial	Comprehensive risk management framework, regular risk reporting, deep dives and approval of risk appetite demonstrate that key risks are identified, monitored and managed across the organisation
8. The Commission has a clear complaints policy and procedure	Substantial	Policy oversight and regular monitoring through performance reporting show that complaints are handled consistently and transparently

Governance objective	Assurance rating	Key outcomes
9. The Commission is committed to an equal, diverse and inclusive culture	Substantial	Established EDI working group, survey findings, policy oversight and training governance demonstrate progress toward fostering an inclusive and equitable working environment
10. The Commission complies with the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009	Substantial	Performance oversight, internal audit work and review of the electoral review programme provide assurance that statutory duties are met
11. The Commission complies with GDPR and FOI legislation	Substantial	Information governance reporting, policy review and SIRO oversight ensure appropriate handling of personal data and compliance with statutory transparency requirements
12. Effective separation of duties for financial controls	Substantial	Financial reporting, internal audit scrutiny and financial policy oversight confirm that key financial controls operate effectively and segregation of duties is maintained
13. Ensure the Commission's assets are securely maintained and accessible only to authorised personnel	Substantial	Asset register and regular IT, cyber and records management reporting – combined with SIRO oversight – provide assurance that assets are protected and access is controlled
14. Ensure robust IT security and business continuity	Substantial	Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation and established IT security arrangements overseen by third-party support, plus ARC scrutiny of IT updates and internal audit activity, demonstrate that cyber risks and continuity arrangements are actively monitored and maintained
15. Ensure accurate forecasting and co-ordinated budget planning	Substantial	Regular performance and financial reporting to the Leadership Team and Board, combined with Board approval of budgets, demonstrate that forecasting and planning are realistic and well-controlled

Governance objective	Assurance rating	Key outcomes
16. Staff and Commissioners' salary and expenses paid accurately and on time	Substantial	Internal audit review, Leadership Team oversight, dedicated financial systems and finance policy demonstrate that payroll processes operate accurately and consistently
17. Ensure adherence to procurement rules and timely supplier payments	Substantial	Financial reporting, dedicated financial systems, procurement policy and audit scrutiny confirm that procurement and payment activities comply with required standards
18. The Commission provides a safe working environment	Substantial	Regular health and safety reporting, policy oversight, statutory compliance checks, Leadership Team operational monitoring and ARC scrutiny provide assurance that workplace safety risks are identified and effectively managed

Principal risks and uncertainties (set out in [Section 2.1.2](#))

We regularly review and update our risks, risk scores, assurance framework and risk controls to ensure they reflect the Commission's operating environment and risk appetite.

The Leadership Team, acting as the Risk Management Group, undertakes a monthly deep dive of risks on the operational risk register, aligned to the strategic objectives. These reviews assess whether controls and mitigations remain effective and agree any corrective actions required to ensure risks remain within the Commission's defined risk appetite.

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) maintains regular oversight of the risk management framework. This includes reviewing the strategic and operational risk registers, receiving assurance on the operational risk deep dives completed by the Risk Management Group, and undertaking thematic reviews of the strategic risks associated with the Commission's strategic objectives.

The Commission Board receives monthly updates on the strategic risk register, together with reports on the deep dives undertaken by the Risk Management Group into operational risks and ARC into strategic risks.

Review of ARC effectiveness

During 2025–26, ARC undertook a formal self-assessment of its effectiveness, reflecting recognised good practice. The review, led by the Independent Member, drew on survey responses, one-to-one discussions and an assessment against established criteria for governance, risk, audit and assurance oversight.

The assessment concluded that ARC continues to operate effectively, with members highlighting strong leadership, constructive discussion and the quality and timeliness of Committee papers as key strengths. Members reported a positive culture that supports informed challenge and noted that the Committee receives appropriate coverage across internal audit, external audit, risk, IT, health and safety and wider governance matters. Relationships with both internal and external auditors remain constructive and are supported by private sessions to maintain independence and candour.

The review also identified several improvement opportunities to enhance the Committee's contribution. These include increasing time spent on forward-looking strategic risks, refining the annual work plan to focus ARC time on the most material governance issues, and strengthening alignment with Board priorities. Members also noted the value of additional targeted training – particularly in digital, cyber, data governance and sustainability – and the benefit of streamlining meeting materials to improve clarity and focus. Enhanced tracking of follow-up actions and maintaining at least one in-person meeting each year were also highlighted as ways to further strengthen Committee effectiveness.

An action plan has been agreed to address these areas, with measures including deeper thematic risk reviews aligned to strategic objectives, a structured annual Board–ARC alignment discussion, improvements to paper templates and meeting packs, development of a targeted training plan, and the introduction of a strengthened action-tracking process. These actions will support continued improvement in the Committee's oversight and assurance.

Review of Commission Board's effectiveness

The Commission Board reviewed its effectiveness as part of the annual appraisal process for Commissioners and in a separate externally facilitated exercise in February 2025, in which it considered both its own role and its relationship and effectiveness throughout the organisation. The Board agreed an action plan in April 2025 to take forward the improvements it had identified, which included refining its approach to considering governance business, ensuring appropriate opportunities for strategic conversations, improving the induction process for new Commissioners, and building a strong, single organisational culture.

The members of the Commission Board also met in February 2026 to discuss its ways of working and effectiveness, considering examples of current effective practice alongside areas that could be improved. The outcomes from this session will continue to shape how the Board operates over 2026–27, ahead of the next scheduled formal review of effectiveness which will take place in October 2026.

Reporting and quality of information used by the Board

Financial monitoring and budget information is reviewed quarterly by Commissioners. Risks, assurances and processes are reviewed at each Commission Board meeting, at each ARC meeting, and at monthly Leadership Team meetings. The effectiveness of policies and procedures is reviewed on a regular and scheduled basis and updated by both ARC and the Commission.

The Commission Board finds the quality of the data used by the Commission to be acceptable. Any changes to information received are explained clearly and management information produced is summarised from detailed data that is available if required. ARC is tasked with gaining assurance that the Commission can rely on the processes, procedures and information the Commission uses.

Internal audit

The Commission's internal auditors are the Mersey Internal Audit Agency (MIAA) Ltd. Internal audit work is conducted in accordance with the Global Internal Audit Standards (UK public sector).

The risk-based programme of audits for the year was discussed and approved by ARC. For completed audits, the internal auditors provide reports identifying their key findings, an indication of the level of assurance that can be placed on our controls and recommendations for action. Internal audit reports are distributed to the Leadership Team, ARC and the Commission's external auditors, and implementation of recommendations is monitored by ARC.

During the year, ARC considered the findings from internal audit work across key risk and control areas, including risk management, cyber security and key financial controls. Overall, the audits delivered assurance ratings ranging from substantial to high, indicating that the Commission has effective control arrangements in place.

Internal audits 2025–26		Recommendations			
Area	Rating	Critical	High	Medium	Low
Key financial controls	Substantial	0	0	2	0
Cyber review	Substantial	0	0	1	2
Risk management	High	0	0	0	0
Sustainability	Advisory	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Overall internal audit opinion

MIAA, the internal auditors, have provided the following audit opinion:

Substantial Assurance can be given that that there is a good system of internal control designed to meet the organisation's objectives, and that controls are generally being applied consistently.

This opinion is based upon and limited to the work performed, on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's risk management, control and governance processes.

I am satisfied that there are no significant deficiencies in financial management, internal control, risk management or governance that affected the achievement of our key objectives.



Internal audit opinion

The Mersey Internal Audit Agency (MIAA) Ltd is required to provide an annual internal audit opinion based on the work carried out throughout the year.

External audit

The National Audit Office (NAO) completed the statutory audit of the Commission's Annual Report and Accounts and issued an unqualified opinion.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ailsa Irvine'.

Ailsa Irvine, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, 15 June 2026

3.2 Remuneration and staff report

This part of our Annual Report and Accounts sets out our remuneration policy and provides details on remuneration and staff that Parliament considers key to accountability.

3.2.1 Remuneration report

The following parts of the Remuneration Report are subject to audit: **senior management and Commissioner remuneration, pay multiples, pension benefits, exit packages, and staff, Commissioner and Independent Member related costs and numbers. All other disclosures within the Remuneration and staff report are not subject to audit.**

Commissioners

Commissioners are appointed by Royal Warrant to exercise the Commission's functions described in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. Together, the Commissioners ensure that the Commission discharges its functions as set out in the Act and associated legislation. They monitor the Commission's performance and are responsible for ensuring that it acts within its statutory remit.

The Chair is appointed by HM The King on the recommendation of the House of Commons. Other Commissioners are appointed by His Majesty on the recommendation of the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State may designate a Commissioner to be Deputy Chair. The Chair is appointed for a period of five years with the possibility of reappointment. Commissioners are generally appointed for a period of four years with the possibility of reappointment. There is a statutory minimum of four Commissioners, excluding the Chair, with 11 as a maximum.

A Commissioner may cease to serve or be removed on the grounds set out in Schedule 1, paragraph 1 of the Act. Appointments will terminate at the end of the period specified for each Commissioner, unless the Commissioner is reappointed before the period expires. Appointments may also be terminated at the request of the Commissioner.

Commissioners were paid a daily fee of £420 (2024–25 £404) for each day worked during 2025–26. The Chair was paid a daily rate of £478 (2024–25 £460). It was agreed that the incoming Chair would move to a salaried basis, which came into effect on their appointment in January 2026. Commissioners are not salaried and are not eligible to join the Commission’s Civil Service Pension Scheme. Commissioners’ fees increase on 1 April each year informed by the percentage increase paid to High Court Judges as part of the Senior Salaries Review Body’s work. In 2025–26 Commissioners received a 4% (2024–25 6%) fee increase.

The fees received by the Commissioners during the year are set out below. These amounts include fees earned during the period, but not yet paid.

Commissioner fees

This section is subject to audit.

Commissioner	2025–26	2024–25
Colin Mellors (Chair) (left 31 December 2025)	£25,674	£30,199
Bev Smith (Chair) (started 1 January 2026)	£10,350 ⁴	£0
Andrew Scallan (Deputy Chair)	£18,420	£20,443
Amanda Nobbs	£22,671	£21,698
Steve Robinson (left 5 November 2025)	£11,057	£19,222
Wallace Sampson (started August 2023)	£14,350	£15,428
Liz Treacy (started March 2023)	£19,181	£17,830
Janet Waggott (started 12 November 2025)	£6,147	£0
Total Commissioners	£127,850	£124,820
Independent Member of ARC		
David Horne	£3,122	£3,334
Total Independent Member	£3,122	£3,334
Total fees	£130,972	£128,154

⁴ The Chair is remunerated on a salary basis, with a full-year equivalent (FYE) salary of £41,400.

Staff

In setting remuneration, we have regard to the following considerations:

Needing to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified people

Our improvement plans, including the requirement to meet our output targets for the delivery of our service within available funds

Paragraph 7(6) of schedule 1 to the 2009 Act, which requires us to have regard to the desirability of keeping the remuneration and other terms or conditions of employment of our employees broadly in line with civil servants

Wider economic considerations and affordability of recommendations

Directors' salaries plus the pension entitlements are in the table below which is subject to audit.

The information in the table is based on remuneration payments made during 2025–26.

£000	CEO Ailsa Irvine	
	2025–26	2024–25 (restated) ⁵
Salary	125-130 FYE 125-130	120-125 FYE 120-125
Bonus payments	0	0
Pension benefits	33	71
Total	155-160	190-195

⁵ The 2024–25 comparative figures have been restated to reflect the impact of the Public Service Pensions Remedy (McCloud judgment).

£000	DRSE Rachel Barker ⁶	DCS Bipon Bhakri ⁷	DCS Kathryn Trower ⁸	
	2025–26	2025–26	2024–25	2024–25
Salary	70-75 FYE 85-90	85-90 FYE 85-90	5-10 FYE 80-85	140-145 FYE 140-145
Bonus payments	0	0	0	0
Pension benefits	28	34	3	n/a
Total	95-100	120-125	5-10	140-145

⁶ From 3 June 2025.

⁷ From 3 March 2025.

⁸ The DCS role was filled during 2024–25 by an interim, employed via an umbrella company arrangement.



Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary, non-consolidated award (exc. CEO) and overtime. No non-consolidated award, overtime payments or benefits-in-kind were paid in 2024–25 (2023–24 none).



Bonus payments

Bonuses are based on performance levels attained and are made throughout the year on a quarterly basis. Most bonuses relate to the performance in the year they become payable to the individual, but the final quarter of the year is paid in the following financial year.

Pay multiples – subject to audit

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid director in the Commission in the financial year 2025–26 was £125k to £130k (2024–25 £120k to £125k). This is the highest band for this financial year. This was 2.9 times (2024–25 2.9 times) the median remuneration of the workforce, 3.1 times the 25th percentile of the workforce (2024–25 3.1 times) and 2.5 times the 75th percentile of the workforce (2024–25 2.5 times).

In 2025–26, 0 (2024–25 0) employees received remuneration more than the highest-paid director. Remuneration ranged from £34k to £130k (2024–25 £32k to £125k).

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated pay awards, performance-related pay and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

	2025–26	2024–25
Band of highest-paid director	£125k-£130k	£120k-£125k
25 th percentile of all staff pay	£40,790 Salary component (£40,790) Total remuneration (£40,790)	£39,320 Salary component (£39,320) Total remuneration (£39,320)
25 th percentile pay ratio	3.1	3.1
Median of all staff pay	£44,433 Salary component (£44,433) Total remuneration (£44,433)	£42,075 Salary component (£42,075) Total remuneration (£42,075)
Median pay ratio	2.9	2.9
75 th percentile of all staff pay	£51,967 Salary component (£51,967) Total remuneration (£51,967)	£48,818 Salary component (£48,818) Total remuneration (£48,818)
75 th percentile pay ratio	2.5	2.5
<p>Total remuneration figures in 2025–26 contain a cost-of-living increase for eligible staff of 3.25%</p> <p>In 2025–26 the highest paid member of staff includes a cost-of-living increase of 3.25%</p> <p>£125k-£130k is the highest band in this financial year</p>		

The Commission considers that the median pay ratio for the year is consistent with its pay, reward and progression policies which are based on defined pay bands, incremental progression and role-based responsibilities. Within this context and the Commission’s small size and organisational structure, the median pay ratio remains stable and proportionate.

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the percentage change from the previous financial year in respect of the highest-paid director and the average percentage change from the previous financial year for employees of the entity taken as a whole.

	2025–26	2024–25	% Change
Band of highest-paid director	£125k-£130k	£120k-£125k	4%
All employees	£52,512	£49,551	6%
Commissioners	£18,710	£18,308	2.2%

Based on FTEs as at 31 March 2026

Cost-of-living award made in 2025–26, vacant posts filled and full-time DCS role now part of establishment

Commissioners’ figures include the Independent Member and reflect fees paid during the year. Commissioners are not employees of the Commission.

Commissioner fees reflect a cost-of-living award of 4% made in 2025–26.

Civil Service Pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. Before 1 April 2015 was the Principal Civic Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS), which is divided into a few different sections – classic, premium, and classic plus provide benefits on a final salary basis, whilst nuvos provides benefits on a career average basis. From 1 April 2015 a new pension scheme for civil servants was introduced – the Civil Service and Others Pension Scheme or alpha, which provides benefits on a career average basis. All newly appointed civil servants, and the majority of those in service, joined the new scheme.

The PCSPS and alpha are unfunded statutory schemes. Employees and employers make contributions (employee contributions range between 4.6% and 8.05%, depending on salary). The balance of the cost of benefits in payment is met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions in payment are increased annually in line with the Pensions Increase legislation. Instead of the defined benefit arrangements, employees may opt for a defined contribution pension with an employer contribution, the partnership pension account.

In alpha, pension builds up at a rate of 2.32% of pensionable earnings each year, and the total amount accrued is adjusted annually in line with a rate set by HM Treasury. Members may opt to give up (commute) pension for a lump sum up to the limits set by the Finance Act 2004. All members who switched to alpha from the PCSPS had their PCSPS benefits 'banked', with those with earlier benefits in one of the final salary sections of the PCSPS having those benefits based on their final salary when they leave alpha.

The accrued pensions shown in this report are the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach normal pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over normal pension age. Normal pension age is 60 for members of classic, premium, and classic plus, 65 for members of nuvos, and the higher of 65 or State Pension Age for members of alpha. The pension figures in this report show pension earned in PCSPS or alpha – as appropriate. Where a member has benefits in both the PCSPS and alpha, the figures show the combined value of their benefits in the two schemes but note that the constituent parts of that pension may be payable from different ages.

When the Government introduced new public service pension schemes in 2015, there were transitional arrangements which treated existing scheme members differently based on their age. Older members of the PCSPS remained in that scheme, rather than moving to alpha. In 2018, the Court of Appeal found that the transitional arrangements in the public service pension schemes unlawfully discriminated against younger members.

As a result, steps are being taken to remedy those 2015 reforms, making the pension scheme provisions fair to all members. The public service pensions remedy is made up of two parts. The first part closed the PCSPS on 31 March 2022, with all active members becoming members of alpha from 1 April 2022. The second part removes the age discrimination for the remedy period, between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, by moving the membership of eligible members during this period back into the PCSPS on 1 October 2023. This is known as 'rollback'.

For members who are in scope of the public service pension remedy, the calculation of their benefits for the purpose of calculating their Cash Equivalent Transfer Value and their single total figure of remuneration, as of 31 March 2023 and 31 March 2024, reflects the fact that membership between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022 has been rolled back into the PCSPS. Although members will in due course get an option to decide whether that period should count towards PCSPS or alpha benefits, the figures show the rolled back position i.e., PCSPS benefits for that period.

The partnership pension account is an occupational defined contribution pension arrangement which is part of the Legal & General Mastertrust. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 8% and 14.75% (depending on the age of the member). The employee does not have to contribute but, where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.5% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).



Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk

The Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV)

This is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the pension benefits they have accrued in their former scheme.

The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the member has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their buying additional pension benefits at their own cost.

CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

The real increase in the value of the CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV that is funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

CETV figures are calculated using the guidance on discount rates for calculating unfunded public service pension contribution rates that was extant at 31 March 2026.

The Pension Benefits for the Directors in the table are subject to audit.

£000	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31 Mar 2026	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age	CETV at 31 Mar 2026	CETV at 31 Mar 2025	Real increase in CETV
Ailsa Irvine (from January 2024)	50-55	0-2.5	838	776	13
Bipon Bhakri (from March 2025)	0-5	0-2.5	32	2	23
Rachel Barker (from June 2025)	0-5	0-2.5	20	0	15

Commission contributions

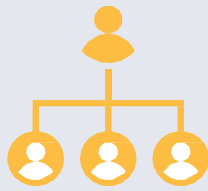
The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) and the Civil Servant and Other Pension Scheme (CSOPS) – known as alpha – are unfunded multi-employer defined benefit schemes, but the Commission is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The Scheme Actuary valued the PCSPS as at 2020.



You can find details in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation
civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/about-us/

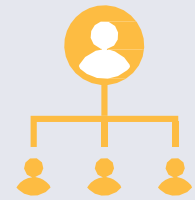
For 2025–26, employers' contributions of £326k were payable to the CSOPS (2024–25 £260k) at a single rate of 28.97% of pensionable earnings.

The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions usually every four years following a full scheme valuation. The contribution rates are set to meet the cost of the benefits accruing during 2025–26 to be paid when the member retires and not the benefits paid during this period to existing pensioners.



Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions of £0 were paid to one or more of the panels of three appointed stakeholder pension providers. Employer contributions are age-related and would range from 8% to 14.75%.

Employers also match employee contributions up to 3% of pensionable earnings. In addition, employer contributions of £0, 0.5% of pensionable pay were payable to the CSOPS to cover the cost of the future provision of lump sum benefits on death in service or ill health retirement of these employees.



Contributions due to the partnership pension providers at the balance sheet date were £0. Contributions prepaid at that date were £0.

3.2.2 Staff report

Staff, Commissioner and Independent Member related costs – subject to audit

£000	2025–26				2024–25
	Total	Employed staff	Other (agency staff)	Commissioners and Independent Member	Total
Wages and salaries	1,144	1,134	0	10	1,120
Commissioners' fees	121	0	0	121	128
Social security costs	169	154	0	15	112
Other pension costs	326	326	0	0	260
Total net costs	1,760	1,614	0	146	1,620

No non-cash benefits (benefits in kind) were provided during the year ended 31 March 2026. The estimated value of benefits in kind is £0 (nearest £100).

Staff, Commissioner and Independent Member numbers

	2025–26					2024–25
	Total	Directors	Employed staff	Other (agency staff)	Commissioners and Independent Member	Total
	Full-time equivalent (FTE)				Number	FTE
Total	28.7	3.0	18.7	0.0	7.0	26.9
Female	44%	66%	36%	0%	57%	38%
Male	56%	33%	64%	0%	43%	62%

FTE staff and the number of Commissioners and the Independent Member reflects the monthly average throughout 2025–26. The numbers as at 31 March 2026 were six Commissioners, one Independent Member and 21.7 Directors and staff FTEs (24–25 20.7 FTE). The average staff numbers and FTE at year end are subject to audit.

Turnover

There were no staff leavers and two Commissioner leavers in 2025–26 (2024–25 one staff, no Commissioners). The reason for leaving is categorised below.

Reason	Number	Female	Male
Commissioner term end	2	0 = 0%	2 = 33%

Staff policies

The Commission maintains a suite of human resources policies designed to provide clarity on roles, responsibilities and the standards expected of staff. These policies support consistent decision-making and ensure staff have access to clear guidance on matters such as performance, conduct, wellbeing and workplace behaviours. Policies are reviewed on a cyclical basis to ensure they remain proportionate to a small organisation and compliant with legal and regulatory requirements.

Disabled persons

The Commission gives full and fair consideration to applications for employment made by disabled people, having regard to their particular aptitudes and abilities.

The Commission's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is embedded across its policies and employment practices, and managers receive regular training to support inclusive leadership and decision-making.

The Commission is a Disability Confident Employer and is committed to supporting disabled staff, including through reasonable adjustments where appropriate. Where employees become disabled during their employment, the Commission seeks to ensure their continued employment and provides access to training, career development and promotion on an equal basis with other staff.

Off-payroll disclosures

The Commission monitors and reports on off-payroll engagements in accordance with FReM requirements.

There was one off payroll appointments during 2025–26.

	Day rate fees	Agency fees (based on day rate)	2025–26	2024–25 ⁹
Engagement	£625	n/a	£10.6k	£199k

Off-payroll arrangements	Number
Number of off-payroll workers engaged as at 31 March 2026	0
Of which, number that have existed for:	0
less than one year	0
between one and two years	0
between two and three years	0
between three and four years	0
four or more years	0

Off-payroll engagements	Number
Number of off-payroll workers engaged during the year	1
Of which, number assessed as within IR35	0
Of which, number assessed as outside IR35	1
Of which, number where the engagement was subsequently terminated	1

⁹ Interim support appointed via agency under an umbrella company arrangement. They were subject to off payroll legislation and determined as in scope of IR35.

Off-payroll engagements of Board members and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility

	2025–26	2024–25
Number of off-payroll engagements of Board members and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility	0	1
Total number of individuals on payroll and off-payroll that have been deemed “Board members and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility” during the financial year	10	9
No Board members or senior officials with significant financial responsibility were engaged off-payroll during the year (2024–25: one).		

Sickness data

Sickness absence levels remain low across the organisation.

	2025–26	2024–25
Days lost to sickness	49	30
Average per person	2.2	1.4

Consultancy spend

	2025–26	2024–25
Business ¹⁰	£59,075	£1,350
HR and payroll	£5,814	£1,888
IT ¹¹	£0	£29,040
Finance	£2,308	£0
Total	£67,197	£32,278

¹⁰ The increased spend during 2025–26 on business consultancy primarily relates to work undertaken on the digital maturity assessment and strategy development and preparatory work for the new website.

¹¹ IT consultancy spend in 2025–26 was recorded against a dedicated SharePoint programme cost code introduced during the year. There was no equivalent cost code in 2024–25, and comparative amounts are therefore not directly comparable.

People survey

We undertook our annual people survey in November 2025. We compared our results with the latest available Civil Service People Survey benchmarks. The findings demonstrate continued strengths in purpose, inclusion, workload, leadership and culture, with the overall engagement score remaining above the Civil Service benchmark. However, there were also several declines against our previous year's scores in relation to interpersonal, leadership and culture-related themes which highlighted areas in which we could make improvements. Actions have been identified and are being taken forward to try to address these.

	Commission 2025	Civil Service 2024
Employee engagement index	64%	61%
My work	83%	75%
Organisational objectives and purpose	98%	82%
My manager	77%	77%
My team	81%	82%
Learning and development	58%	57%
Inclusion and fair treatment	83%	79%
Resources and workload	88%	74%
Pay and benefits	49%	32%
Leadership and managing change	72%	48%



Trade union membership

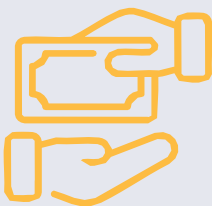
A proportion of our staff belong to the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS). We have a staff representative who can use work time for official duties, and union meetings take place in office time.

Health and safety

The Commission's health and safety policy is reviewed every year and is accessible to all our staff and Commissioners. We have established procedures, guidance and risk assessments covering our core activities, overseen by our health and safety officer, who provides quarterly reports to the Audit and Risk Committee.



We carry out regular physical inspections of our working environment to ensure arrangements remain suitable. We have also provided workstation guidance, undertaken scheduled Portable Appliance Testing (PAT), made use of a dedicated Teams channel for queries, and co-ordinated visual inspections for equipment when working remotely.



Reporting of Civil Service and other compensation schemes – exit packages – Subject to audit

Redundancy and other departure costs are paid in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme, a statutory scheme made under the Superannuation Act 1972. Exit costs are accounted for in full in the year of departure. Where the Commission has agreed early retirements, the additional costs are met by the department and not by the Civil Service pension scheme. Ill-health retirement costs are met by the pension scheme and are not included in the exit package figures.

There were no departures for 2025–26 with special payments (2024–25 none).

Diversity information

Our work on equalities, diversities and inclusion (EDI) has continued throughout the year.

We believe an inclusive culture enriches all we do.

We value diversity and the benefits different perspectives and experiences bring to all our work.

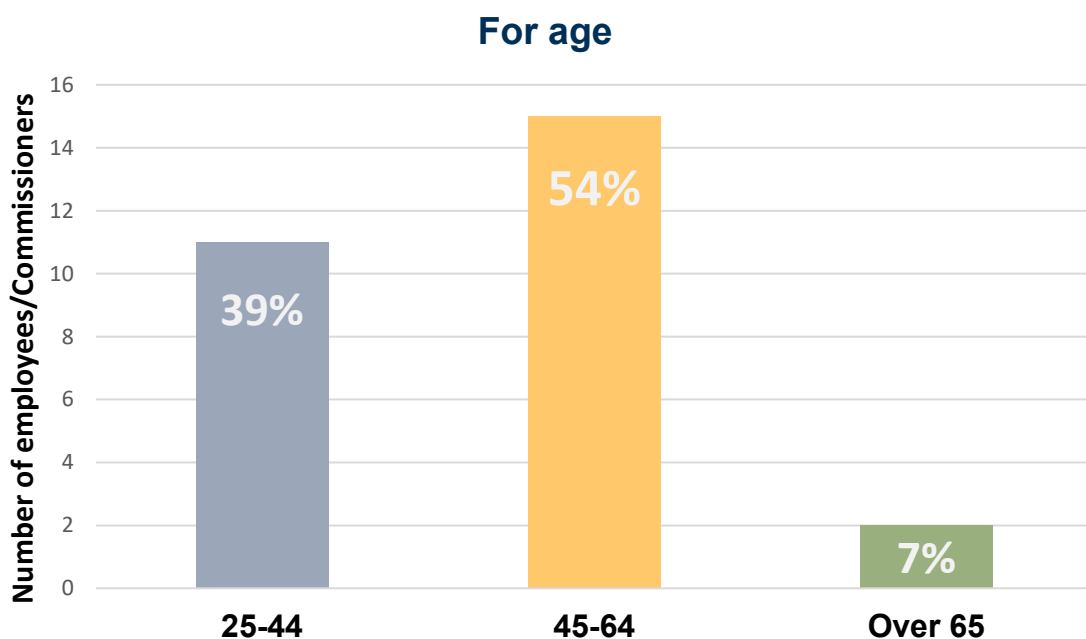
We are committed to being inclusive in the ways we work together and the way we engage with those contributing to our reviews.

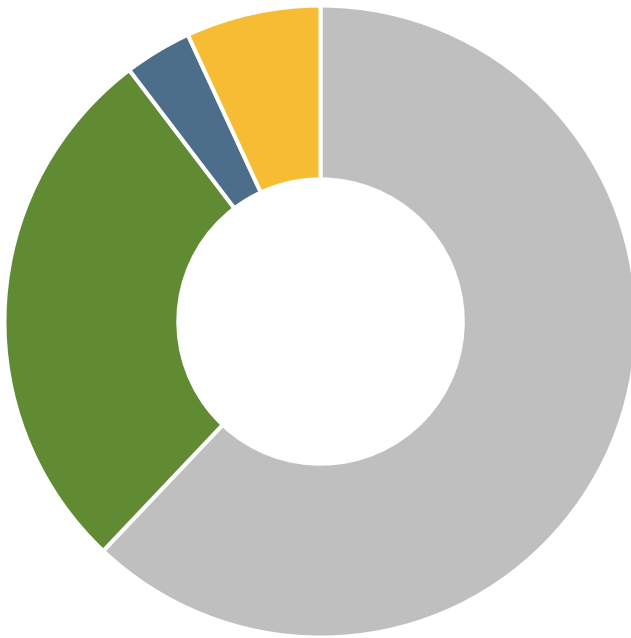
We have an EDI and equal pay policy to promote equality for staff, Commissioners and customers, the impacts of which are regularly reviewed.

Our EDI compliance is overseen by the Leadership Team, Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), our EDI working group, staff champion and Commissioner champion.

The diversity data below summarises the information provided voluntarily by 97% of staff and Commissioners who chose to share their details in 2025–26.

Of the 97% of employees and Commissioners who shared their data

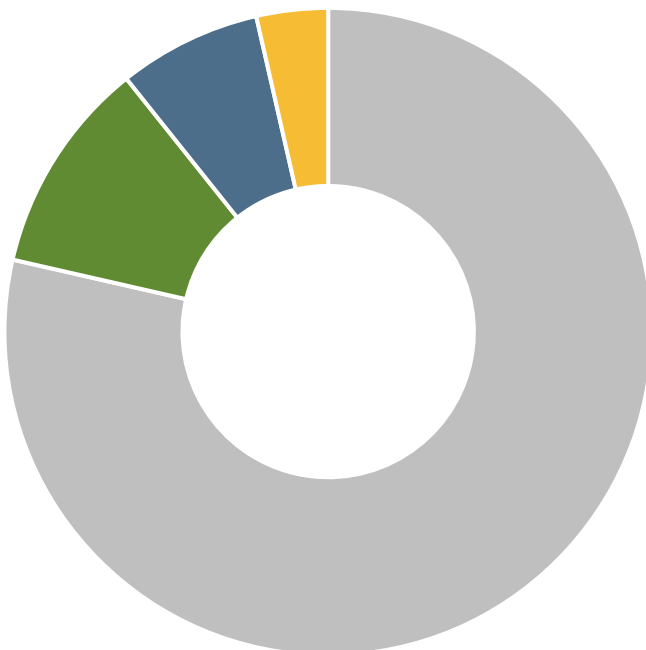




For caring responsibilities

- 62% None
- 27% Primary <18
- 4% Primary disabled child
- 7% Secondary

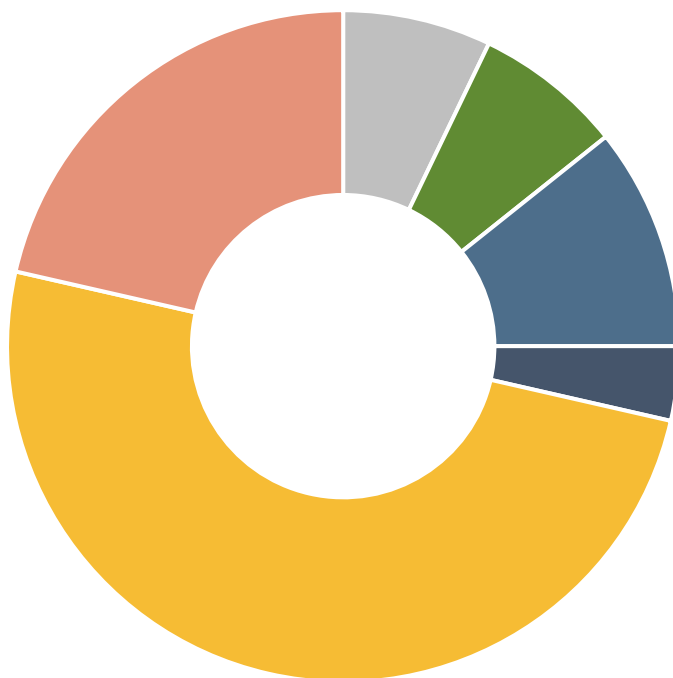
For disability



For ethnicity

- 78% White
- 11% Asian/Asian British
- 7% Black, African, Caribbean, Black British
- 4% Any other ethnic group

For gender

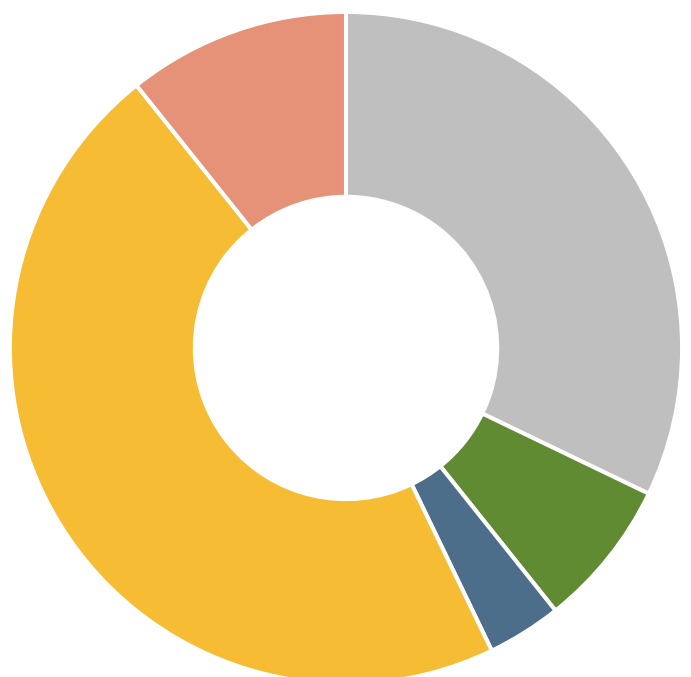


For relationship status

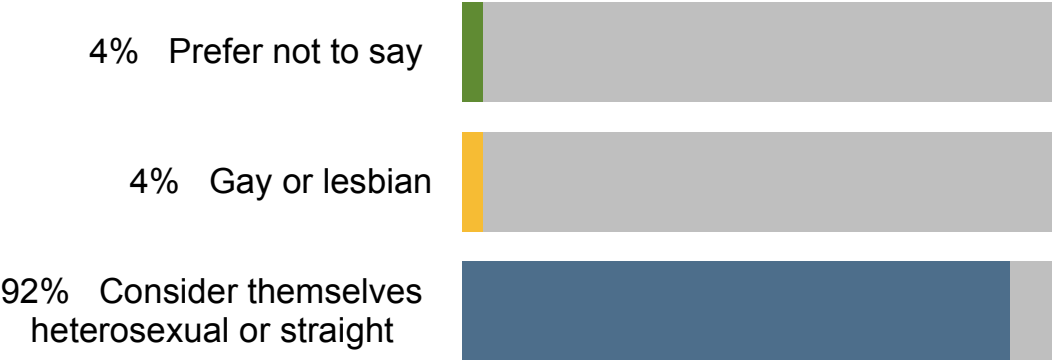
- 7% Civil partnership
- 7% Cohabiting
- 11% Divorced or civil partnership dissolved
- 4% Widowed or surviving partner from civil partnership
- 50% Married
- 21% Single

For religion

- 32% Christian
- 7% Hindu
- 4% Muslim
- 46% No religion
- 11% Prefer not to say



For sexual orientation



Ailsa Irvine, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, 15 June 2026

3.3 Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report

3.3.1 Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply (SOPS)

In addition to the primary statements prepared under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) requires the Commission to prepare a Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply (SOPS) and supporting notes.



The SOPS and related notes are subject to audit, as detailed in the Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House of Parliament.

The SOPS is a key accountability statement that shows, in detail, how an entity has spent against their Supply Estimate. Supply is the monetary provision (for resource and capital purposes) and cash (drawn primarily from the Consolidated Fund) that Parliament gives statutory authority for entities to utilise. The Estimate details our monetary provision and is voted on by Parliament at the start of the financial year.

Should an entity exceed the limits set by their Supply Estimate, called control limits, their accounts will receive a qualified opinion.

The format of the SOPS mirrors the Supply Estimates, published on gov.uk, to enable comparability between what Parliament approves and the final outturn.

The SOPS contain a summary table, detailing performance against the control limits that Parliament have voted on, cash spent (budgets are compiled on an accruals basis and so outturn won't exactly tie to cash spent) and administration.

The supporting notes detail the following: Outturn by Estimate line, providing a more detailed breakdown (note 1); a reconciliation of outturn to net operating expenditure in the SOCNE, to tie the SOPS to the financial statements (note 2); a reconciliation of outturn to net cash requirement (note 3); and an analysis of income payable to the Consolidated Fund (note 4).

The SOPS and Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, which is similar to, but different to, IFRS. An understanding of our budgeting framework and an explanation of key terms is provided in the financial review section of the performance report.

Further information on the Public Spending Framework and the reasons why budgeting rules are different to IFRS can also be found in chapter 1 of the Consolidated Budgeting Guidance available on gov.uk.

The SOPS provides a detailed view of financial performance, in a form that is voted on and recognised by Parliament. The financial review in the Performance report provides a summarised discussion of outturn against estimate and functions as an introduction to the SOPS disclosures.

Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply

Summary table £000

Type of spend	SOPS note	Outturn		Estimate		Outturn v Estimate saving / (excess)		Outturn 2024–25
		Voted ¹²	Total	Voted	Total	Voted	Total	Total

Departmental Expenditure Limit

Resource	1.1	2,699	2,699	3,168	3,168	469	469	2,552
Capital	1.2	18	18	50	50	32	32	39
Total		2,717	2,717	3,218	3,218	501	501	2,591

Annually Managed Expenditure

Resource	1.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	(58)
Capital		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total								(58)

Total budget

Total resource		2,699	2,699	3,168	3,168	469	469	2,494
Total capital		18	18	50	50	32	32	39
Total budget expenditure		2,717	2,717	3,218	3,218	501	501	2,533
Non-budget expenditure		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total budget and non-budget expenditure		2,717	2,717	3,218	3,218	501	501	2,533

All expenditure is designated as programme costs and therefore there are no administration costs. The DEL resource underspend primarily reflects lower expenditure than forecast during the year, mainly due to reduced levels of review activity, which resulted in lower staff, review-related and other operating costs. In addition, depreciation was lower than expected, reflecting the timing of capital investment. The final outturn reflects the budget position approved through the Supplementary Estimate process.

Note: The Estimate column reflects the final voted position following the Supplementary Estimate approved during the year, rather than the original Main Supply Estimate.

¹² The voted column covers the control limits voted by Parliament. Refer to the Supply Estimate guidance manual available on gov.uk for detail on the control limits voted by Parliament.

Net cash requirement 2025–26 £000

Item	SOPS note	Outturn	Estimate	Outturn v Estimate saving / (excess)	Outturn 2024–25
Net cash requirement	3	2,604	3,126	522	2,533

Note: The Estimate reflects the final cash requirement approved through the Supplementary Estimate process.

Notes to the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply (SOPS)

SOPS 1 Outturn detail, by Estimate line

SOPS 1.1 Analysis of resource outturn by Estimate line

£000

Type of spend (resource)	Resource Outturn Programme			Estimate	Outturn v Estimate saving / (excess)	Outturn 2024–25
	Gross	Net	Total	Total ¹³	Total	Total

Spending in Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL)

Voted expenditure

A - LGBCE	2,699	2,699	2,699	3,168	469	2,552
Total voted DEL	2,699	2,699	2,699	3,168	469	2,552
Total spending in DEL	2,699	2,699	2,699	3,168	469	2,552

¹³ No virements have occurred. Virements are the reallocation of provision in the Estimates that do not require parliamentary authority (because Parliament does not vote to that level of detail and delegates to HM Treasury). Further information on virements is provided in the Supply Estimate Manual, available on gov.uk.

£000

Type of spend (resource)	Resource Outturn Programme			Estimate	Outturn v Estimate saving / (excess)	Outturn 2024–25
	Gross	Net	Total	Total	Total	Total

Spending in Annually Managed Expenditure

A - LGBCE	-	-	-	-	-	(58)
Total voted AME	-	-	-	-	-	(58)
Total spending in AME	-	-	-	-	-	(58)

SOPS 1.2 Analysis of capital outturn by Estimate line

	Outturn		Estimate	Outturn v Estimate saving / (estimate)	Outturn 2024–25
	Gross	Net	Total	Total	Total

Spending in Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL)

Voted expenditure

A - LGBCE	18	18	50	32	39
Total voted DEL	18	18	50	32	39
Total spending in DEL	18	18	50	32	39
Total Capital	18	18	50	32	39

SOPS 2 Reconciliation of resource outturn to net operating expenditure

Item	Reference	Outturn total	Prior year Outturn Total 2024–25
Total Resource outturn	SOPS 1.1	2,699	2,494
Less Income payable to Consolidated Fund	SOPS 4	44	-
Net Expenditure in the Statement Comprehensive Net Expenditure	SOCNE	2,655	2,494

As noted in the introduction to the SOPS, outturn and the estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, which is similar to, but different from, IFRS. Therefore, this reconciliation bridges the resource outturn to net operating expenditure, linking the SOPS to the financial statements.

The income payable to the Consolidated Fund represents a refund for accommodation costs incurred in the prior year. HM Treasury determines this refund should be surrendered to the Consolidated Fund rather than retained by the Commission.

SOPS 3 Reconciliation of net resource outturn to net cash requirement

As noted in the introduction to the SOPS, outturn and the Estimates are compiled against the budgetary framework, not on a cash basis. Therefore, this reconciliation bridges the resource and capital outturn to the net cash requirement.

£000	SOPS note	Outturn	Estimate	Outturn v Estimate saving (excess)
Total Resource outturn	1.1	2,699	3,168	469
Total Capital outturn	1.2	18	50	32
Adjustments to remove non-cash items				
Depreciation		(16)	(12)	(4)
Amortisation		(28)	(32)	4
External audit fee		(48)	(48)	-
Other non-cash items (nil in year)		-	-	-
Adjustments to reflect movements in working balances				
Increase in receivables		22	-	(22)
Increase in payables		(43)	-	43
Total		(113)	(92)	21
Net cash requirement		2,604	3,126	522

SOPS 4 Amounts of income to the Consolidated Fund

	Outturn 2025–26		Prior year 2024–25	
	£'000 Accruals	£'000 Cash	£'000 Accruals	£'000 Cash
Refund outside of ambit of Estimate	44	44	-	-
Total amount payable to the Consolidated Fund	44	44	-	-

HM Treasury has classified a refund received in respect of prior year accommodation costs as income payable to the Consolidated Fund, as the Commission does not have an income ambit. The Commission does not collect income as an agent of the Consolidated Fund.

3.3.2 Parliamentary Accountability Disclosures

Regularity of expenditure –
subject to audit

The Accounting Officer is able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds. To the date of this statement, there have been no instances of irregularity, impropriety or non-compliance discovered during the financial year.

Remote contingent liabilities –
subject to audit

There are no remote contingent liabilities to report.

Other payments –
subject to audit


There are no other significant payments to report.

Losses and special payments –
subject to audit

There are no losses or special payments to report.

Fees and charges –
subject to audit

The Commission is unable to charge for services so there are no fees and charges to report.



Ailsa Irvine, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, 15 June 2026

3.3.3 The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (the Commission) for the year ended 31 March 2026 under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

The financial statements comprise the Commission's:

- Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2026;
- Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year then ended; and
- the related notes including the significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Commission's affairs as at 31 March 2026 and its net operating cost for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and HM Treasury directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects:

- the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply properly presents the outturn against voted Parliamentary control totals for the year ended 31 March 2026 and shows that those totals have not been exceeded; and
- the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 *Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom (2024)*. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's *Revised Ethical Standard 2024*. I am independent of the Commission in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the Commission's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Commission's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

The going concern basis of accounting for the Commission is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual, which requires entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it is anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

Other information

The other information comprises information included in the Annual Report but does not include the financial statements and my auditor's certificate and report thereon. The Accounting Officer is responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my certificate, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion the part of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit have been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009;
- the information given in the Performance and Accountability Reports for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Commission and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance and Accountability Report.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the Commission or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual have not been made or parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited is not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Commissioners' and Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for:

- maintaining proper accounting records;
- providing the C&AG with access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- providing the C&AG with additional information and explanations needed for his audit;
- providing the C&AG with unrestricted access to persons within the Commission from whom the auditor determines it necessary to obtain audit evidence;

- ensuring such internal controls are in place as deemed necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view, in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009;
- preparing the annual report, which includes the Remuneration and Staff Report, in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009; and
- assessing the Commission's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by the Commission will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud. The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud is detailed below.

Identifying and assessing potential risks related to non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, I:

- considered the nature of the sector, control environment and operational performance including the design of the Commission's accounting policies.
- inquired of management, the Commission's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to the Commission's policies and procedures on:
 - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations;
 - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud; and
 - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or noncompliance with laws and regulations including the Commission's controls relating to the Commission's compliance with the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and Managing Public Money;
- inquired of management, the Commission's head of internal audit and those charged with governance whether:
 - they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
 - they had knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud,
- discussed with the engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, I considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the Commission for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: posting of unusual journals, complex transactions, and bias in management estimates. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), I am required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

I obtained an understanding of the Commission's framework of authority and other legal and regulatory frameworks in which the Commission operates. I focused on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the Commission. The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, Managing Public Money, Supply and Appropriation (Main Estimates) Act 2025, employment law, pensions legislation and tax legislation.

Audit response to identified risk

To respond to the identified risks resulting from the above procedures:

- I reviewed the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described above as having direct effect on the financial statements;
- I enquired of management concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- I reviewed minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board; and internal audit reports; and
- I addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements on estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential risks of fraud to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at:

www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

Other auditor's responsibilities

I am required to obtain appropriate evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply properly presents the outturn against voted Parliamentary control totals and that those totals have not been exceeded. The voted Parliamentary control totals are Departmental Expenditure Limits (Resource and Capital), Annually Managed Expenditure (Resource and Capital), Non-Budget (Resource) and Net Cash Requirement.

I am required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control I identify during my audit.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Gareth Davies
Comptroller and Auditor General

16 June 2026

National Audit Office
157–197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London SW1W 9SP

4 Financial statements

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2026

£000	Note	2025–26	2024–25
Programme expenditure			
Staff costs	2	1,760	1,620
Other costs	2	895	935
Provision (release) / expense	2	-	(58)
Gain on lease	2	-	(3)
Net operating cost for the year		2,655	2,494
Total expenditure for the year		2,655	2,494

All expenditure relates to continuing operations.

The notes from page 119 to page 132 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2026

	£000	Note	2025–26	2024–25
Net current assets	Property, plant and equipment	3	44	47
	Intangible assets	4	59	81
	Total non-current assets		103	128
Current assets	Trade and other receivables	6	133	90
	Cash and cash equivalents	7	23	59
	Total current assets		156	149
	Total assets		259	277
Current liabilities	Trade and other payables	8	(86)	(92)
	Accruals and earned leave liability	8	(126)	(92)
	Total current liabilities		(212)	(184)
	Total assets less current liabilities		47	93
	Total non-current liabilities		-	-
	Total assets less liabilities		47	93
Taxpayers' equity	General fund		47	93
	Total taxpayers' equity		47	93

The notes from page 119 to page 132 form part of these accounts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ailsa Irvine', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Ailsa Irvine, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, 15 June 2026

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 March 2026

£000	Note	2025–26	2024–25
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net operating cost		(2,655)	(2,494)
Adjustment for non-cash transactions (including lease interest)	2	92	84
Increase in trade and other receivables	6	(43)	(25)
Less movement in receivables not passing through the SoCNE	6	21	-
Increase in trade and other payables and other liabilities	8	28	1
Less movement in payables not passing through the SoCNE	8	15	3
Net cash (outflow) from operating activities		(2,542)	(2,431)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	3	(13)	(39)
Purchase of intangible assets	4	(6)	-
Net cash (outflow) from investing activities		(19)	(39)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Capital repayments of lease liabilities		-	(63)
Interest expense in respect of lease liabilities		-	(1)
From the Consolidated Fund (Supply) – current year		2,525	2,531
Net financing		2,525	2,467

£000	Note	2025–26	2024–25
Net (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period before adjustments for receipt and payments to the Consolidated Fund		(36)	(3)
Net (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period after adjustments for receipts and payments to the Consolidated Fund	7	(36)	(3)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	7	59	62
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	7	23	59

Movements in receivables and payables include elements relating to balances with the Consolidated Fund, including Supply receivables and amounts payable to the Consolidated Fund. In accordance with the FReM, these movements do not pass through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure and are therefore excluded from operating cash flows in the reconciliation above.

The notes from page 119 to page 132 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year ended 31 March 2026

£000	Note	General Fund
Balance as at 31 March 2024		16
Net Parliamentary funding – deemed		62
Net Parliamentary funding – drawn down		2,531
Supply (payable) / receivable adjustment	8	(59)
Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year		(2,494)
Non-cash adjustments		
Non-cash charges – external auditor remuneration	2	37
Balance as at 31 March 2025		93
Net Parliamentary funding – deemed		59
Net Parliamentary funding – drawn down		2,525
Supply (payable) / receivable adjustment	6	21
Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts (CFERS) payable to the Consolidated Fund	8	(44)
Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year		(2,655)
Non-cash adjustments		
Non-cash charges — external auditor remuneration	2	48
Balance as at 31 March 2026		47

The notes from page 119 to page 132 form part of these accounts.

4.1 Notes to the accounts

Statement of Accounting Policies

1.1 Introduction

These financial statements have been prepared in a form consistent with the accounts direction issued by HM Treasury in accordance with Paragraph 14 of Schedule 1 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, and in accordance with the 2025–26 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by HM Treasury. The accounting policies set out in the FReM apply UK-adopted International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector.

The Commission has reviewed the accounting policies applied to ensure they remain appropriate to its activities and sufficient to support a true and fair view. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the policy considered most appropriate to the Commission's circumstances has been selected and applied consistently to items material to the accounts.

In addition to the primary statements prepared under IFRS, the FReM requires the preparation of a Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply and supporting notes, showing outturn against Estimate in terms of the net resource requirement and the net cash requirement. This statement is included within the Parliamentary Accountability section of the Annual Report and Accounts.

1.2 Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified where required to reflect the revaluation of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets.

1.3 Accounting standards issued but not yet effective

Accounting standards are applied in accordance with their adoption and effective dates as set out in the FReM for 2025–26. During the year, the Commission reviewed new and amended accounting standards that are issued in advance of the 2025–26 reporting period, but not yet effective in the FReM, to assess their relevance and potential impact.

1.3A IFRS 18

Presentation and disclosure in financial statements will replace IAS 1 Presentation of Financial Statements and is effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after the 1 January 2027 in the private sector. The impact of IFRS 18 on the Public Sector is still being assessed, and a decision has not yet been taken on an implementation date.

1.4 Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment are recognised and accounted for in accordance with IAS 16 as adapted for the public sector. On initial recognition, assets are measured at cost, including costs directly attributable to bringing the asset into working condition.

The minimum level of capitalisation of an individual tangible non-current asset is £5,000. Items below this threshold are expensed as incurred.

Given the nature and scale of the Commission's operations, non-property operational assets are generally considered short-life or low-value assets and are held at depreciated historical cost where this is an appropriate proxy for current value. Assets and their useful lives are reviewed at least annually to ensure carrying amounts remain appropriate.

1.5 Intangible assets

Intangible assets are recognised and accounted for in accordance with IAS 38 as adapted for the public sector. Purchased software licences, website enhancement costs and associated implementation costs are capitalised where expenditure of £5,000 or more is incurred and where the asset is expected to provide future service potential.

Intangible assets are measured using a cost-based approach (purchase and development costs less accumulated amortisation and impairment). Intangible assets and useful lives are reviewed at least annually.

1.6 Depreciation/amortisation

Depreciation and amortisation are provided on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets, reducing carrying values to estimated residual values. Assets under construction are not depreciated or amortised until brought into use.

Indicative useful lives are:

Software and technology assets	Three years
Websites and developed software	Up to six years
Equipment	Up to 10 years
Software licences	Life of the licence

1.7 Operating income

The Commission does not generate operating income and is funded through Parliamentary Supply.

1.8 Expenditure (note 2)

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis in the period in which goods or services are received, including services provided by employees. Where expenditure has been recognised but not yet paid, a corresponding payable is recorded in the Statement of Financial Position.

1.9 Pensions

Past and present employees are covered by the Civil Service pension arrangements, as described in the Remuneration Report.

The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme, and the Commission is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. Employer contributions payable during the year are recognised as expenditure.

A partnership pension scheme is available as an alternative to the main Civil Service arrangements. Where applicable, contributions would be recognised as they fall due.

1.10 Leases (including office accommodation)

The Commission as a lessee.

In accordance with IFRS 16 Leases, as applied by the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM), contracts, or parts of contracts, are assessed to determine whether they convey the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time. Contracts for services are evaluated to determine whether they convey both the right to obtain substantially all the economic benefits from an asset and the right to direct its use. Where this is the case, the relevant part of the contract is treated as a lease.

The Commission vacated its former office accommodation at Windsor House in September 2024, which had previously been accounted for as a lease under IFRS 16.

The Commission currently holds a Licence to Occupy which has been assessed as conveying the right to control the use of an identified asset and is therefore within the scope of IFRS 16. However, the arrangement has a lease term of less than 12 months and does not include a purchase option. Accordingly, the Commission has elected to apply the short-term lease exemption permitted by IFRS 16.

As a result, the Commission does not recognise a right-of-use asset or a lease liability in respect of this arrangement. Payments made under the Licence to Occupy are recognised as expenditure on a straight-line basis over the term of the agreement.

This treatment is reviewed periodically to ensure it remains appropriate, particularly if the terms or duration of the accommodation arrangement change.

1.11 Value added tax

The Commission's activities are outside the scope of VAT. Output tax does not apply and input tax on purchases is generally not recoverable. Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the relevant expenditure category and expenditure is reported inclusive of VAT.

1.12 Operating segments

The Commission undertakes a single statutory function – electoral reviews. In line with IFRS 8 Operating Segments, the Commission is treated as a single operating segment and no further segmental analysis is required.

1.13 Going concern

The Commission is financed by amounts drawn from the Consolidated Fund, approved annually by Parliament. As with other statutory bodies, ongoing financing of activities and related liabilities is met by future Parliamentary funding. It is therefore appropriate to adopt the going concern basis in preparing these financial statements.

1.14 Accounting estimates and judgements

The preparation of the accounts requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of accounting policies and the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenditure.

Key areas considered include depreciation and amortisation estimates, accruals and provisions. Accruals are included at actual values where known, or estimated where invoices have not been received.

1.15 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise current balances held with the Government Banking Service

2 Expenditure

£000	2025–26	2024–25
Wages and salaries	1,134	1,120
Commissioners' fees	131	128
Social security costs	169	112
Other pension costs	326	260
Staff costs¹⁴	1,760	1,620
Depreciation	16	14
Amortisation	28	30
Depreciation on right-of-use asset ¹⁵	-	63
Gain on lease	-	(3)
Interest under accommodation operating lease (lease ceased in September 2024)	-	1
Auditor remuneration ¹⁶	48	37
(Decrease)/increase in provisions	-	(58)
Non-cash items	92	84
Printing and mapping	106	152
Business costs and contracts for services ¹⁷	448	452
Stakeholder engagement	102	33
Legal and professional fees	31	28

¹⁴ Staff costs are further analysed in the Remuneration and staff report in Section 3.2.

¹⁵ The Commission's lease arrangements for Windsor House ceased in September 2024. No right-of-use assets existed at 31 March 2025 or 31 March 2026. Further detail on the Commission's lease arrangements and accounting treatment is set out in Note 1.10 (Leases).

¹⁶ The external auditors (the National Audit Office) provided no non-audit services.

¹⁷ During 2025–26 the Commission received a £44k refund from the Government Property Agency relating to prior-year service charge reconciliations. This has been treated as a reduction in operating expenditure within business costs. For Parliamentary Supply purposes, the receipt is treated as income payable to the Consolidated Fund (CFERS) and is disclosed in SOPS 4 and Note 8.

£000	2025–26	2024–25
Travel, subsistence, and hospitality	20	20
Other staff costs	77	86
Internal audit	18	18
Bank charges	1	1
Other expenditure	803	790
Total	2,655	2,494
Total non-cash transaction as above	92	84
Non-cash items included in the reconciliation of net resources outturn to net Cash requirements	92	84

3 Property, plant and equipment

£000	Total
Cost or valuation	
As at 1 April 2025	56
Additions	13
Disposals	(11)
As at 31 March 2026	58
Depreciation	
As at 1 April 2025	9
Charged in year	16
Disposals	(11)
As at 31 March 2026	14
Net book value as at 31 March 2026	44
Net book value as at 31 March 2025	47
Cost or valuation	
As at 1 April 2024	93
Additions	39
Disposals	(76)
As at 31 March 2025	56
Depreciation	
As at 1 April 2024	70
Charged in year	14
Disposals	(75)
As at 31 March 2025	9
Net book value as at 31 March 2025	47
Net book value as at 31 March 2024	23

All assets included in the note above related to equipment owned by the Commission. As at 31 March 2026 there were no fully depreciated assets still in use (2024–25 £0k).

4 Intangible assets

£000 – Website and software	Total
Cost or valuation	
As at 1 April 2025	177
Additions	6
Disposals	(49)
As at 31 March 2026	134
Amortisation	
As at 1 April 2025	96
Charged in year	28
Disposals	(49)
As at 31 March 2026	75
Net book value as at 31 March 2026	59
Net book value as at 31 March 2025	81
Cost or valuation	
As at 1 April 2024	187
Additions	-
Disposals	(10)
As at 31 March 2025	177
Amortisation	
As at 1 April 2024	77
Charged in year	30
Disposals	(11)

As at 31 March 2025	96
Net book value as at 31 March 2025	81
Net book value as at 31 March 2024	110

As at 31 March 2026, there was no fully amortised asset still in use (2024–25 £43k).

Material asset – Website	Remaining value £38,738	End of life 31/12/2027
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5 Financial instruments

All cash requirements are met through the Estimates process and are drawn down from the Consolidated Fund, and financial instruments play a limited role in creating risk.

Most financial instruments relate to contracts for non-financial items in line with the Commission's expected purchases and usage requirements and the Commission is therefore not exposed to significant credit, liquidity, or market risk.

6 Trade and other receivables

£000	2025–26	2024–25
Amounts falling due within one year		
Other receivables ¹⁸	1	-
Prepayments and accrued income	111	90
Trade and other receivables	112	90
Supply receivable ¹⁹	21	-
Total receivables	133	90

¹⁸ Other receivables include amounts recoverable from staff in respect of Cycle to Work scheme loans, which are repayable through monthly payroll deductions.

¹⁹ Supply receivable comprises amounts due from the Consolidated Fund in respect, of an under issue of Parliamentary Supply at year end and will be resolved through the normal Supply process in 2026–27.

7 Cash and cash equivalents

£000	2025–26	2024–25
Balance at 1 April	59	62
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	(36)	(3)
Balance at 31 March	23	59

All cash balances are held with the Government Banking Service.

8 Trade payables, accruals and other liabilities

£000	2025–26	2024–25
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade and other payables	42	33
Accruals and deferred income	107	71
Short-term staff benefits (earned leave liability)	19	21
Total Operating Payables	168	125
Amounts issued from the Consolidated Fund for Supply but not spent at year end (prior year deemed Supply) ²⁰	-	59
Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts due to be paid to the Consolidated Fund ²¹	44	-
Total Payables	212	184

²⁰ Following the year-end reconciliation of Parliamentary Supply, no amount is payable to the Consolidated Fund in respect of unspent Supply. An under-issue of Supply is recognised instead as a receivable and is disclosed in Note 6

²¹ The balance represents non-retainable income arising from a Government Property Agency prior year service charge refund received during the year. As the Commission has no income retention authority, the amount is payable to the Consolidated Fund and disclosed as a liability at 31 March 2026, pending formal surrender in accordance with HM Treasury procedures.

9 Capital and contractual commitments

The total undiscounted future minimum payments to which we are committed, analysed by the period during which the payments will be made, are shown below:

£000	Capital		Contractual		
	2025–26	2024–25	2025–26	2024–25	
Not later than one year	-	-	55	52	IT service contract and internal audit contract
Later than one year and not more than five years	-	-	46	97	IT service contract and internal audit contract
Later than five years	-	-	-	-	
Total	-	-	101	149	

10 Related party transactions

The Commission is an independent statutory body overseen and monitored by the Speaker's Committee. The Speaker's Committee acts in lieu of a government department as the body to which the Commission is accountable and is responsible for approving the Commission's rolling five-year Corporate Plan and annual budget. The Chair of the Commission, the Chief Executive and the Director of Corporate Services attend the Speaker's Committee as required to answer questions on the Commission's plans and performance, including the Annual Report and Accounts.

The Chief Executive is appointed by the Commission. None of the Commissioners, members of the Leadership Team, staff or other key management personnel had any material transactions with the Commission during the year, other than remuneration and associated benefits, which are disclosed in the Remuneration and staff report (see Section 3.2).

11 Events after the reporting date

In accordance with the requirements of IAS 10, events after the reporting period are considered up to the date on which the accounts are authorised for issue which is the date of the audit certificate. As of the date of the Comptroller & Auditor General's certificate, there are no events which impact upon our financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2026 that are not disclosed.

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