

# 2017/18 Business Plan

## Foreword

The large-scale electoral events of recent years have made the period from 2015 to 2017 one of the busiest in the history of the Commission. Working with others from the electoral community, we have overseen and delivered a series of both scheduled and unscheduled elections and referendums across the UK. Alongside these peaks of activity, we have continued to deliver and improve our regulatory functions around political finance; responded proactively to the changing devolution agenda across the UK; delivered in-year savings; and changed the ways we work to address the needs of voters.

The Electoral Commission's Business Plan for 2017/18 outlines our goals for the financial year and how we plan to accomplish them. We take into account the likely impact of scheduled polls in May 2017 and 2018, as well as the potential effect of any unscheduled polls – such as that scheduled for March 2017 in Northern Ireland – on our ability to deliver the strategic goals of the organisation.

This Business Plan also marks the transition to a new period of development and modernisation for the organisation. This document provides detail on the first phase of the Commission's new Corporate Plan, which will be published in spring 2017 and will set out an ambitious programme of work until 2023. Both documents are the result of the strategic review of priorities which the Commission has conducted over the past 12 months, a key part of which was seeking the views of our stakeholders. That consultation exercise provoked a broad range of detailed and considered responses from the electoral community, and gave us a clear sense of the challenges, the pressures and the questions to which the Commission is best placed to respond.

This plan represents the first stage in that response. The Commission's vision and goals for the period covered by the Corporate Plan, which are set out here, are designed to give us renewed focus on our overall priorities: by innovating, delivering value and getting right what matters most to voters and legislators, we will ensure that voters can continue to have trust and confidence in electoral processes and the party funding regime in the future.

In working towards 2023 and the achievement of our goals, success will depend upon close collaboration with others both within and beyond the electoral community. The ever-changing external landscape poses new challenges for the improvement of the system of electoral registration, voting, and political finance. The Commission aims to be well placed to work with partners to address the former, and to seize the latter, to ensure that our democratic processes remain fair, transparent and relevant to our society.

John Holmes

Claire Bassett

## Our role

The Electoral Commission is the independent body which oversees elections and regulates political finance in the UK. We work to promote public confidence in the democratic process and ensure its integrity.

## Our vision

Our vision is to be a **world-class public sector organisation – innovative, delivering great value and getting right what matters most to voters and legislators.**

We plan to achieve this vision through a five year work programme with three goals:

- To enable the continued delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible
- To ensure an increasingly trusted and transparent system of regulation in political finance, overseeing compliance, promoting understanding amongst those regulated and proactively pursuing breaches
- To be an independent and respected centre of expertise, using knowledge and insight to further the transparency, fairness and efficiency of our democratic system, and help adapt it to the modern, digital age

This business plan sets out what we will do in 2017/18 to achieve these goals. Our full five year work programme will be launched in the 2017-23 Corporate Plan.

The development of our five year plan is the product of our Strategic Review, which we undertook during 2016/17. 16 years after the Commission was established, we wanted to take stock and make sure that we are as prepared as we can be not only to react to, but to help shape, the next generation of change. We consulted our key external stakeholders to seek their views on what we should do, and how we should deliver our work. We undertook the strategic review to ensure we can continue to deliver an excellent service and that voters continue to have trust and confidence in our electoral processes and our political funding regime for the next 15 years and beyond.

## Looking ahead

Over the next few years we will concentrate on projects and initiatives aimed at improving the electoral system and the regulation of political finance. We will do this by working with other organisations where appropriate. Our plans have been formulated to allow for flexibility in the event of an unscheduled event, such as the Northern Ireland Assembly election in March, so that we can shift our focus to

support its successful delivery in the short term, whilst still working effectively on our longer-term strategic goals.

The impact of further devolution in Scotland and Wales is key to our planning for the next year and beyond. As responsibility for Scottish Parliament elections is transferred to the Scottish Parliament (local government elections are already their responsibility), we will proactively work with the Parliament and stakeholders to support this transition and establish an operational model that is effective and practical. In Wales, the Wales Act 2017 provides that legislative competence for local government and Assembly elections be transferred to the National Assembly for Wales. We will work closely with all concerned to support this change, and ensure any resulting changes to electoral processes are effective. Our newly established advisory groups in Scotland and Wales will support this work.

Following our successful delivery of the EU Referendum last year, we have also reviewed our future plans in the context of the UK leaving the European Union. This is likely to directly impact on our work through the change in focus in the legislative schedule and uncertainty regarding the political landscape.

## 2017/18 Plan

The following pages set out the work we will undertake in 2017/18 in order to meet our three strategic goals, and how we will measure our success against them.

**Goal 1: To enable the continued delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible**

### **Delivering well-run electoral events**

We will continue to support the delivery of well-run electoral events through reporting on the administration of major polls, the accuracy and completeness of electoral registers, and allegations and cases of electoral fraud. We will support electoral administrators, candidates and parties across the UK by providing guidance and tailored advice where necessary, working closely with our audience to ensure that whatever we provide will meet their needs. We will continue to use our performance standards frameworks for EROs and ROs to monitor their planning for and delivery of well-run electoral registration services and electoral events, but will also review our approach to ensure that we can both support and challenge them effectively where needed.

We want to ensure that the UK's electoral registers support and enable effective participation in elections and referendums for all, and help to maximise electoral registration. We do this by delivering effective, value for money, voter registration campaigns across the UK, targeting in particular under registered groups such as recent home movers, young people, students, Black and Minority Ethnic groups and overseas voters. We will continue working in partnership with public, private and voluntary organisations to expand our public awareness activities.

We will continue to engage with the Cabinet Office led *Modern Electoral Registration Programme*, contributing on a number of projects including pilots designed to inform potential permanent changes to the annual canvass.

We will also work in support of the electoral law reform recommendations from the England and Wales, Scotland and the Northern Ireland Law Commissions, and hope that these can be implemented through legislation as soon as governmental and parliamentary or Assembly legislative programmes permit.

More specifically, we will in 2017/18:

- Support and report on the planned electoral events in May 2017, which are the **English, Scottish and Welsh local government elections**, along with the unplanned Northern Ireland Assembly election in March 2017. We will also begin preparing for the May 2018 English local government elections.
- Publish our **report on the EU Referendum costs** in autumn 2017.
- Begin work on ensuring we deliver **modern, accessible and sustainable guidance** for the electoral community. This will include guidance for Returning Officers (ROs), Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), political parties, non-party campaigners and candidates and agents. Our work in 2017/18 will focus mainly on **a full review of guidance currently in use**, and an **extensive consultation with stakeholders** on how digital tools could be utilised to support the delivery of well-run elections.
- Review how our **English regional teams** work to **improve pilot with EROs and ROs across England**.
- Identify good practice in the delivery of electoral registration and elections and **develop mechanisms to share this good practice** on a continuous basis, to improve delivery across the UK. We will work closely on this with the Association of Electoral Administrators and others in the electoral community. In 2017/18, we will focus specifically on **sharing good practice on electoral registration and election counts**.
- Work with the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Office towards **the introduction of performance standards** for electoral registration and events there.

### **Tackling electoral fraud**

We welcomed the review of electoral fraud published by Sir Eric Pickles in 2016, which supported many of the recommendations we have previously highlighted. The UK Government response to Sir Eric's review announced that it intended to take forward a number of measures to prevent electoral fraud, including piloting voter ID requirements in polling stations at local elections in 2018.

We will continue to monitor and support the work of EROs, ROs, police forces and prosecutors to tackle electoral fraud, so voters can be confident that fraud is deterred or prevented and that any allegations are appropriately investigated and prosecuted.

We will continue to collect, analyse and publish data from police forces about cases of alleged electoral fraud, which will also help us to focus our monitoring and support in areas where there is higher risk. We will also work with the UK Government and Parliament to consider how to strengthen the current voluntary *Code of Conduct for Campaigners in Great Britain*.

More specifically, in 2017/18, we will:

- Put in place a **cross-organisational approach to preventing and detecting electoral fraud**. This will involve working with our partners and stakeholders to review and further strengthen our approach to tackling electoral fraud.
- Work with the UK Government and other partners to **support the implementation of policy changes following Sir Eric Pickles' electoral fraud review**. This will include planning to evaluate any electoral integrity pilot schemes at elections in 2018.

**Goal 2: To ensure an increasingly trusted and transparent system of regulation in political finance, overseeing compliance, promoting understanding amongst those regulated and proactively pursuing breaches**

### **Ensuring transparency**

Voters should be able to see and understand clearly how political parties and campaigners are funded, and what they spend on campaigning. Our continuing work to deliver transparency in this area includes publishing information about donations and loans, annual accounts from registered parties, and campaign spending which parties and others are required to report to us. We will continue to make the case for transparency about donations to political parties in Northern Ireland. We also register political parties and other campaigners, and maintain an online database of registered political parties and other campaigners.

We are also responsible for administering policy development grants to eligible political parties, in line with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). We distribute these grants to help parties develop policies to include in manifestos for certain elections. We will continue to ensure there are appropriate controls over the distribution and use of these public funds.

More specifically, in 2017/18, we will:

- Improve the **usability and efficiency of our current database *Political Finance and Regulation Online*** with the aim of increasing usage of the site. Having completed a thorough review of the system, we will begin re-development of the site with continuing input from stakeholders.
- Continue to **improve registration and oversight of political parties and campaigners through a more pro-active approach**. Our key focus for the next year will be completing a review of all descriptions on the register of political parties and removing any which do not meet the description requirements. We will focus on ensuring party constitutions and financial schemes are current and reflect how parties actually operate.

## Good regulation

We will continue to provide high quality advice and guidance to support parties, candidates and campaigners to comply with the rules. Alongside working to promote the rules around political finance, we will also continue to take action, and where appropriate, sanctions, when the rules are broken, in accordance with the statutory Commission Enforcement Policy. We will also continue to improve our compliance monitoring, working towards real-time monitoring where we can intervene as soon as an issue is identified. We will also continue to publish all outcomes of investigations.

More specifically, we will in 2017/18:

- We will create **new regulations and Codes of Practice**.
- Improve our **regulatory casework** to ensure **robust outcomes** with a high impact on compliance, not least by using our full range of statutory investigation and sanctioning powers as appropriate. To support this we will continue to develop our **comprehensive quality management system** to ensure it reflects current best practice and implement a system of audits of regulatory casework.

**Goal 3: To be an independent and respected centre of expertise, using knowledge and insight to further the transparency, fairness and efficiency of our democratic system, and help adapt it to the modern, digital age**

## Innovation and Development

The increasingly digital nature of society provides an opportunity and challenge for us - we want to consider how technology can provide an improved, modern and efficient service to voters, whilst bearing in mind the resource pressures on those delivering the service, and the potential vulnerability of some of the technology. We also need to recognise fully, and adapt to, how the increasing use of technology changes the way candidates, parties and non-party campaigners interact with their audiences.

Part of this work involves looking ahead to understand how registration and voting could be modernised to meet voters' needs and expectations in our digital society, if appropriate decisions were made. We also want to scope the landscape of public democratic engagement aimed at improving voter confidence and participation.

In 2017/18, we will:

- Undertake scoping work to understand the **needs and expectations of voters, and how registering and voting could be modernised**. This work will involve research and policy analysis work looking at digital solutions, and drawing fully on evidence from international experience and the modernisation of other public services in the UK.
- Assess the interactions and interventions which **drive engagement in voting to understand better how participation in democracy could be increased**. We will also work with our partners to understand what others are doing to



encourage participation and try to identify gaps and opportunities. Work in 2017/18 will begin with a full literature review and stakeholder consultation.

### **Strengthening our evidence base and use of this evidence**

We will continue to undertake research and report on the accuracy and completeness of the UK's electoral registers and monitor changes to the system of electoral registration. We will also continue to use post-election opinion surveys and an annual UK-wide survey to monitor the public's view on electoral issues and their experiences when taking part in elections, and monitor the public's response to our public awareness campaigns. For next year, these reports will specifically focus on the Northern Ireland Assembly election and the English, Scottish and Welsh local government elections.

We will also continue to scrutinise new electoral legislation and provide expert briefings to Governments, Parliaments and Assemblies on legislative proposals.

More specifically, in 2017/18, we will:

- Undertake an **evaluation** of the UK Government's 2016 pilot scheme on the **annual canvass**. In 2016, three local authority areas participated in the pilot scheme, which was designed to trial proposed changes to the annual canvass, allowing local authorities to use their local knowledge and data. We will publish our evaluation of this in June 2017. The Government has also announced that 18 additional pilots will take place during the autumn 2017 canvass. We will publish a full evaluation report on this scheme by June 2018.
- Work closely with the **Scottish Parliament** to manage and develop an **operational model** which allows us to report and account to the Scottish Parliament. We will work closely with the National Assembly for Wales **and Welsh Government** to respond to electoral developments in Wales such as the Llywydd's review into the number of Assembly Members and the Local Government White Paper.

### **Supporting the organisation**

Key to our success over the next year and beyond is ensuring we have the right services in place to support the delivery of this ambitious work programme. This includes providing consistently high quality HR, finance, planning, support and ICT functions. We will develop our three year *People Strategy* which sets out the activities we will undertake to support the delivery of our Corporate Plan and ensure we promote a culture where staff are able to perform their roles effectively.

More specifically, in 2017/18, we will:

- Implement a new integrated HR/Finance system. This will provide us with a cross-organisational view of how we are using our resources, promote stronger collaboration between teams and generate greater efficiencies and cost savings.



- Develop a new accommodation strategy. This will support the organisation in setting out a plan for the future and ensuring we have a flexible working environment to support the delivery of effective and efficient work.
- Carry out a programme of work to improve the ways in which we manage and share information and knowledge and investigate better ways of making our data available for re-use by others.

# Organisation and resources

Trained, skilled people are the most significant resource requirement for the Commission. We also need to invest in facilities, systems and external resources so that staff can work to the best of their abilities and focus on delivery of the Commission's plans.

In 2017/18 we will manage the delivery of our activities in three categories:

- **Business delivery:** This includes all those activities that are an essential part of our work as regulator of political finance and supporter of the delivery of the electoral cycle.
- **Improvement projects:** Improvement projects are activities aimed at transforming the way we do things. These projects have agreed outcomes and plans in place to deliver them.
- **Innovation and development projects:** These projects are strategic areas of work aimed at positioning the Commission as an authoritative source of knowledge, analysis and reflection on changing circumstances, expectations and concerns in the electoral field. They are also projects still in the scoping stage where we may not yet have a clear view on what the outcomes might be or what further work will be needed.

As part of development of our plans following the Strategic Review, our financial requirements and budgets were established using Zero Based Budgeting. Our business delivery budgets include event expenditure on the preparation and delivery of electoral events, and reporting on them. In 2017/18 these events are:

- **March 2017:** Elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly – reporting on campaign expenditure after the elections
- **May 2017:** Supporting English, Scottish and Welsh local government elections. The costs of activities undertaken on Scottish local government elections are recharged to the Scottish Government and offset against income
- **May 2018:** Preparing to support the English local government elections
- **Reporting on the costs of the June 2016 EU Referendum**

Planned capital expenditure in 2017/18 is £500,000. This includes a significant investment of up to £200,000 in the Commission's online *Party and Election Finance* portal used by stakeholders to maintain their organisational details and report their financial returns to the Commission. The capital plan also includes investments to scope activity on digital tools to deliver modern, accessible and sustainable guidance for the electoral community, updating the Commission's websites and replacing business systems and infrastructure.

In addition to the Commission's operational costs, we continue to administer the policy development grant scheme which provides for £2,000,000 of grants to be paid to eligible political parties to assist in developing policies for inclusion in their manifestos.

The Commission's spending plans for 2017/18 are summarised in the table below.

	Resource		Income	Capital	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Business delivery:					
Electoral events:					
June 2016 EU Referendum	0.190				
March 2017 Northern Ireland Assembly	0.017				
May 2017 England and Wales LG	0.617				
May 2017 Scottish local government	0.768		-0.768		
May 2018 England local government	0.776				
Other business delivery	10.386		-0.016	0.025	
Total business delivery		12.754	-0.784	0.025	11.995
Improvement projects (non-pay only)		0.194		0.475	0.669
Innovation and development activities (non-pay only)		0.177			0.177
Total operational costs		13.125	-0.784	0.500	12.841
Policy Development Grants		2.000			2.000
Total spending plans		15.125	-0.784	0.500	14.841

The funded establishment for 2017/18 is 124.6 FTE (2016/17: 141.0 FTE).

# Measuring success

Performance management and reporting is key to the success and delivery of our Business Plan and strategic vision. We have developed a set of measures and indicators by which we will measure our performance. We will use this set of measures and indicators to monitor our progress regularly, with the Commission Board reviewing this information on a quarterly basis.

For each of our three goals, we have identified our top level activities which contribute to the goal and included a corresponding performance measure, which we will use to measure the quality of our work. Beneath the activities and measures we have also included a suite of impact indicators which complement the performance measures, illustrating the context in which we work and highlighting the impact we ultimately want our work to contribute towards.

## **Supporting the vision: Organisational Enablers**

Alongside these goals, in order to support and deliver our vision, we will ensure that our IT, Finance, HR and planning teams are effectively supporting the organisation. We measure the performance of these teams through a series of measures, but at a corporate level, there are two areas we specifically focus on:

- Value for money. We want to ensure that budget holders feel supported and able to manage their budget and resources efficiently. We have a target to ensure that we maintain a budget variance that is not greater than 5%.
- People. We plan to deliver our three year *People Strategy* which includes ensuring staff have appropriate access to training, are supported to manage performance effectively and are able to perform to the best of their ability.

Vision			
The Electoral Commission is a world-class public sector organisation – innovative, delivering great value and getting right what matters most to voters and legislators			
Goal			
To enable the continued delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focussing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible			
Activities to achieve this goal			
<b>Provide timely and accurate guidance and advice to ROs and EROs</b> to support their provision of high quality services	<b>Set performance standards frameworks</b> and support ROs and EROs to deliver well-run elections and registration to ensure their provision of high quality services	<b>Deliver public awareness campaigns and facilitate others' support for those campaigns</b> , so that people register to vote and are able to take part in elections and referendums	
<b>Monitor and support co-ordinated work between EROs, ROs, police forces and prosecutors to tackle electoral fraud</b> , so that fraud is prevented or deterred and any allegations of fraud are appropriately investigated and prosecuted	<b>Undertake and publish high quality research and reporting on elections and referendums and on electoral registration</b> , so that ROs, EROs and governments can identify changes which would improve the delivery of elections and referendums	<b>Scrutinise and comment on policy and legislative proposals ahead of scheduled polls</b> , so that Government delivers timely and workable legislation in relation to elections and registration	
Measuring our performance			
<b>We publish 100% of guidance products on time with no substantive errors</b>	<b>We provide accurate advice</b> to ROs and EROs within three working days of receipt of the request	<b>Additions to electoral registers</b> during our public awareness campaigns meet or exceed our targets.	
<b>We review 100% of integrity plans from local authorities identified to be at a higher risk of fraud</b>	<b>We publish 100% of our reports to planned deadlines</b>	<b>We comment on 100% of relevant legislation and policy proposals</b>	
Impact indicators			
No electors are served by ROs or EROs who fail to meet our performance standards	Increasing public confidence that registering to vote is straightforward, accessible and secure	Increasing public confidence that taking part in elections is straightforward, accessible and	The electoral registers in the UK maintain or improve current levels of accuracy and completeness

		secure	
All votes cast are included in the count for elections in the UK (votes rejected is as close to 0% as possible)	100% of our election and registration reports are responded to by the relevant government	The results of elections are trusted and accepted (the number of successful legal challenges is as close to zero as possible)	100% of required legislation for scheduled polls is clear six months before it is required to be implemented with no errors identified

Goal			
To ensure an increasingly trusted and transparent system of regulation in political finance, overseeing compliance, promoting understanding amongst those regulated and pro-actively pursuing breaches.			
Activities to achieve this goal			
<b>Publish financial returns from parties and others we regulate</b> so that voters can easily see how parties and campaigns are funded and how the money has been spent	<b>Check financial returns against the rules</b> on a sample basis so that voters can be confident parties and campaigners are following the rules	<b>Provide timely and accurate advice, guidance and support to parties and campaigners</b> so that they can understand and comply with the political finance rules	
<b>Maintain and publish accurate registers of political parties and campaigners</b> so that candidates can stand for election and the public can rely on the registers	<b>Take enforcement action where appropriate</b> so that parties and campaigners know they need to comply with the rules and voters can be confident they are complying	<b>Respond proactively to potential regulatory issues</b> so that we can work with parties and campaigners to bring them into compliance before any risks materialise	
Measuring our performance			
<b>We publish routine financial returns from parties and campaigners, including statements of accounts</b> , within 30 working days of receiving them	<b>We check a minimum of 25% of all financial returns</b> for accuracy and compliance each year	<b>We publish 100% of guidance products on time with no substantive errors</b>	<b>We provide accurate advice within five to 20 days</b> of receipt of the request, depending on the complexity of the advice
<b>We notify applicants of the outcome of their registration applications</b> within 30 days of a complete application 90% of the time	<b>We conduct timely and proportionate investigations</b> of which 90% are completed within 180 days	<b>We issue 90% of final notices setting out our sanctions</b> within 21 days of the deadline for representations. We publish the outcome of all our investigations.	<b>We make timely regulatory recommendations</b> that reflect the principles guiding our approach to effective regulatory framework
Impact indicators			
Increasing public confidence that	Increasing public confidence that	All donations and loans for larger	All campaign spending returns



the spending and funding of political parties and candidates at UK elections is open and transparent	appropriate action will be taken by the authorities if a campaigner is caught breaking the rules on campaign funding	parties are accurate and comply with the rules and are submitted on time	are accurate and comply with the rules and are submitted on time
--	--	--	--

Goal		
To be an independent and respected centre of expertise, using knowledge and insight to further the transparency, fairness and efficiency of our democratic system, and help adapt it to the modern, digital age		
Activities to achieve this goal		
<b>Evaluate Government proposals for changes to electoral registration and election processes and political finance regulation</b> , so that legislators have access to independent expert analysis of the impact of proposed policies.	<b>Use our expertise to identify long term trends and issues</b> so that policymakers and legislators understand and acknowledge the challenges to the efficiency of our democratic system and can make decisions	<b>Use our expertise to identify long term trends and issues</b> so that policymakers and legislators understand and acknowledge the challenges to transparency and fairness which may need to be addressed
Measuring our performance		
Publish our evaluation and response to the canvass pilot programme	Deliver a scoping project to understand the landscape of public democratic engagement to improve voter confidence and participation	Deliver a scoping project identifying how registering and voting can be modernised to meet voters' needs and expectations in our digital society, including the opportunities and risks involved
Impact indicators		
As the projects develop, we will formulate appropriate impact and indicator measures.		

## Draft Main Estimate 2017/18

**Main Supply Estimate****2017-18****for the year ending 31 March 2018****Supply Estimate  
The Electoral Commission**

Presented to the House of Commons pursuant to  
Paragraph 14(5) of Schedule 1 to the Political Parties,  
Elections and Referendums Act 2000

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed XXXXX

**Contents****Page****Introduction****3****Main Estimate****4**

<b>Introduction</b>	<p>Paragraph 14 of Schedule 1 to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 requires the Electoral Commission to submit to the Speaker's Committee each financial year an estimate of the Commission's income and expenditure. After concluding its examination and making modifications (if any) to the Estimate the Speaker's Committee shall lay the Estimate before the House of Commons.</p> <p>Supply Estimates are the means by which the Electoral Commission seeks authority from Parliament for its spending each year. The Main Estimate starts the process and is presented to Parliament around the start of the financial year to which it relates. This Main Estimate is presented in resource, capital and cash terms.</p>
<b>Main Estimate Part I</b>	<p>The Estimate is structured as follows—</p> <p>Part I of the Estimate contains the net provision sought (i.e. the amount of expenditure in resource and capital terms by budgetary category and the net cash requirement) for the coming financial year; a formal description of the services to be financed from each budget boundary and any income to be retained (known as the Ambit); who will account for the Estimate; and any resources and cash which have already been allocated in the Vote on Account.</p>
<b>Part II</b>	<p>Part II sets out in a tabular matrix format the resources required. Each of the columns numbered 1 to 11 is expressed in accruals terms.</p> <p>Columns 1 to 6 fall within the Resource Budget. Columns 1 and 4 show direct gross resource expenditure and include amounts in respect of the current consumption of assets but do not include the amounts associated with the acquisition of assets. Columns 2 and 5 show income that may be used to offset gross resource expenditure and are deducted from the amounts in columns 1 and 4 to give a net total amount (columns 3 and 6).</p> <p>Columns 7 and 8 show the capital (i.e. non-resource) elements of the Estimate. Column 7 shows capital acquisitions and column 8 shows any income related to capital expenditure, such as income from the disposal of fixed assets. Column 9 gives the net total capital.</p> <p>The final two columns of the table show the net total resource and capital provision for the previous year. These figures are for comparative purposes and are adjusted as far as possible to be consistent with the structure for the coming year.</p> <p>A detailed explanation of the reconciliation between the net resource total and the net cash requirement, which includes capital expenditure, removes any non-cash items, adjusts for Non-Departmental Public Bodies, reflects movements in working balances and removes non-voted budget items, is shown in the second section of Part II.</p>
<b>Part III</b>	<p>Part III shows the Forecast Operating Cost Statement and reconciliation table, any income received to offset gross spending, any extra income and receipts payable to the Consolidated Fund and details of the Accounting Officer's responsibilities.</p>
<b>Income</b>	<p>The source of all types of income, both resource and capital, is explained in Part I and analysed in a Note to the Estimate.</p>
<b>2017-18 Main Estimates</b>	<p>The 2017-18 Main Estimates are presented in six booklets. This booklet covers the Main Estimate for the Electoral Commission. Four separate booklets have been presented to Parliament for the main central government departments (HC 967), The House of Commons (Administration) (HC 935), the National Audit Office (HC 878), Local Government Boundary Commission for England (HC 970) and the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (HC 966).</p>
<b>Parliamentary Procedure</b>	<p>Full details of Parliamentary procedure for the voting of resources are given in the Main Estimate booklet for central government departments (HC 967) presented on XXXXX.</p>

## Part I

	£		
	Voted	Non-Voted	Total
<b>Departmental Expenditure Limit</b>			
Resource	14,310,000	253,000	14,563,000
Capital	500,000	-	500,000
<b>Annually Managed Expenditure</b>			
Resource	31,000	-	31,000
Capital	-	-	-
<b>Total Net Budget</b>			
Resource	14,341,000	253,000	14,594,000
Capital	500,000	-	500,000
<b>Non-Budget Expenditure</b>	-		
<b>Net cash requirement</b>	<b>14,597,000</b>		

Amounts required for the year ending 31 March 2018 for expenditure by the Electoral Commission on:

### Departmental Expenditure Limit:

Expenditure arising from: registration of political parties, recognised third parties and permitted participants; regulation and reporting of the income and expenditure of political parties, candidates, third parties and permitted participants; making grants to eligible parties for policy development; reviewing and advising on the administration and law of elections and encouraging best practice; providing guidance, and reporting, on the conduct of elections and referendums; determining standards of performance for those administering electoral registration, elections and referendums, and collecting information in relation to those standards and to expenditure on elections etc; conducting certain referendums and promoting public awareness of electoral systems.

Income arising from: registration and re-registration of political parties; providing guidance, and reporting, on the conduct of elections and referendums; determining standards of performance for those administering electoral registration, elections and referendums, and collecting information in relation to those standards and to expenditure on elections etc; conducting certain referendums and promoting public awareness of electoral systems; and any other non-cash items.

**Annually Managed Expenditure:**

Expenditure arising from: provisions, impairments and other non-cash costs arising in AME.

**The Electoral Commission** will account for this Estimate.

			£
	<b>Voted Total</b>	<b>Allocated in Vote on Account</b>	<b>Balance to complete</b>
<b>Departmental Expenditure Limit</b>			
Resource	14,310,000	11,109,000	<b>3,201,000</b>
Capital	500,000	200,000	<b>300,000</b>
<b>Annually Managed Expenditure</b>			
Resource	31,000	-	<b>31,000</b>
Capital	-	-	-
<b>Non-Budget Expenditure</b>	-	-	-
<b>Net cash requirement</b>	14,597,000	11,107,000	<b>3,490,000</b>



## Part II: Subhead detail

£'000										
2017-18 Plans									2016-17 Provisions	
Resources						Capital			Resources	Capital
Gross 1	Administration Income 2	Net 3	Gross 4	Programme Income 5	Net 6	Gross 7	Income 8	Net 9	Net 10	Net 11
<b>Spending in Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL)</b>										
<b>Voted expenditure</b>										
-	-	-	15,094	-784	14,310	500	-	500	15,234	301
<i>Of which:</i>										
A	Electoral commission expenditure					500	-	500	15,234	301
			15,094	-784	14,310	500	-	500	15,234	301
<b>Non-voted expenditure</b>										
-	-	-	253	-	253	-	-	-	8,219	-
<i>Of which:</i>										
B	Commissioners fees					-	-	-	282	-
			253	-	253	-	-	-	282	-
C	EU Referendum					-	-	-	7,937	-
			-	-	-	-	-	-	7,937	-
<b>Total Spending in DEL</b>										
-	-	-	15,347	-784	14,563	500	-	500	23,453	301
<b>Spending in Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)</b>										
<b>Voted expenditure</b>										
-	-	-	31	-	31	-	-	-	26	-
<i>Of which:</i>										
D	AME Expenditure					-	-	-	26	-
			31	-	31	-	-	-	26	-
<b>Total Spending in AME</b>										
-	-	-	31	-	31	-	-	-	26	-
<b>Total for Estimate</b>										
-	-	-	15,378	-784	14,594	500	-	500	23,479	301
<i>Of which:</i>										
Voted expenditure										
-	-	-	15,125	-784	14,341	500	-	500	15,260	301
Non-voted expenditure										
-	-	-	253	-	253	-	-	-	8,219	-

## Part II: Resource to cash reconciliation

	£'000		
	2017-18 Plans	2016-17 Provisions	2015-16 Outturn
<b>Net Resource Requirement</b>	<b>14,594</b>	<b>23,479</b>	<b>21,557</b>
<b>Net Capital Requirement</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>383</b>
<b>Accruals to cash adjustments</b>	<b>-244</b>	<b>-280</b>	<b>-705</b>
<i>Of which:</i>			
<i>Adjustments to remove non-cash items:</i>			
Depreciation	-330	-316	-492
New provisions and adjustments to previous provisions	-23	-50	37
Departmental Unallocated Provision	-	-	-
Supported capital expenditure (revenue)	-	-	-
Prior Period Adjustments	-	-	-
Other non-cash items	78	60	35
<i>Adjustment for NDPBs:</i>			
Remove voted resource and capital	-	-	-
Add cash grant-in-aid	-	-	-
<i>Adjustments to reflect movements in working balances:</i>			
Increase (+) / Decrease (-) in stock	-	-	-
Increase (+) / Decrease (-) in debtors	-	-	194
Increase (-) / Decrease (+) in creditors	-	-	-502
Use of provisions	31	26	23
<b>Removal of non-voted budget items</b>	<b>-253</b>	<b>8,219</b>	<b>222</b>
<i>Of which:</i>			
Consolidated Fund Standing Services	-253	8,219	222
Other Adjustments	-	-	-
<b>Net Cash Requirement</b>	<b>14,597</b>	<b>31,719</b>	<b>21,457</b>

## Part III: Note A - Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Reconciliation Table

	£'000		
	2017-18 Plans	2016-17 Provisions	2015-16 Outturn
Gross Administration Costs	-	-	-
<i>Less:</i>			
Administration DEL Income	-	-	-
<b>Net Administration Costs</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Gross Programme Costs	15,378	23,694	<b>21,799</b>
<i>Less:</i>			
Programme DEL Income	-784	301	<b>-242</b>
Programme AME Income	-	-	-
Non-budget income	-	-	<b>-71</b>
<b>Net Programme Costs</b>	<b>14,594</b>	<b>23,995</b>	<b>21,486</b>
<b>Total Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure</b>	<b>14,594</b>	<b>23,995</b>	<b>21,486</b>
<i>Of which:</i>			
Resource DEL	14,594	21,391	<b>18,184</b>
Capital DEL	-	-	-
Resource AME	-31	-26	<b>14</b>
Capital AME	-	-	-
Non-budget	-	-	71
<i>Adjustments to include:</i>			
Departmental Unallocated Provision (resource)	-	-	-
Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts in the budget but not in the SOCNE	-	-	-
<i>Adjustments to remove:</i>			
Capital in the SOCNE	-	-	-
Non-Budget Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts in the SOCNE	-	-	-71
Other adjustments	-	-	-
<b>Total Resource Budget</b>	<b>14,563</b>	<b>21,365</b>	<b>18,198</b>
<i>Of which:</i>			
Resource DEL	14,563	23,453	<b>18,184</b>
Resource AME	31	26	<b>14</b>
<i>Adjustments to remove:</i>			
Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts in the resource budget	-	-	-
Other adjustments	-	-	-
<b>Total Resource (Estimate)</b>	<b>14,594</b>	<b>23,479</b>	<b>18,198</b>

## Part III: Note B - Analysis of Departmental Income

	£'000		
	2017-18 Plans	2016-17 Provisions	2015-16 Outturn
<b>Voted Resource DEL</b>	<b>-784</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>-242</b>
<i>Of which:</i>			
Programme			
Sale of goods and services	-784	301	-242
<i>Of which:</i>			
Section A: Electoral Commission	-784	301	-242
<b>Total Voted Resource Income</b>	<b>-784</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>-242</b>

### Part III: Note C - Analysis of Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts

In addition to income retained by the Department the following income is payable to the Consolidated Fund:

	£'000					
	2017-18		2016-17		2015-16	
	Plans		Provisions		Outturn	
	Income	Receipts	Income	Receipts	Income	Receipts
Income in budgets surrendered to the Consolidated Fund (resource)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Income in budgets surrendered to the Consolidated Fund (capital)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-budget amounts collectable on behalf of the Consolidated Fund (in the SoCNE)	-	-	-	-	-71	-71
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-71</b>	<b>-71</b>

#### Detailed description of CFER sources

	£ '000					
	2017-18		2016-17		2015-16	
	Plans		Provisions		Outturn	
	Income	Receipts	Income	Receipts	Income	Receipts
<b>Non-budget</b>						
Penalties paid by Political parties	-	-	-	-	-71	-71
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-71</b>	<b>-71</b>

### **Part III: Note D - Explanation of Accounting Officer responsibilities**

The Accounting Officer prepares resource accounts for each financial year.

**The Speakers' Committee has appointed Claire Bassett, the Chief Executive of the Commission, as Accounting Officer of the Electoral Commission.**

The Chief Executive has personal responsibility for the proper presentation of the Electoral Commission's resource accounts and their transmission to the Comptroller & Auditor General, and is also responsible for the use of public money and stewardship of assets.

In discharging these responsibilities, particular regard is given to:

- observing any accounting and disclosure requirements (including any Accounts Direction) and applying suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- making judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- stating whether applicable accounting standards, as set out in the Financial Reporting Manual (FReM), or an organisation's version of it, have been followed, and explain any material departures in the accounts; and
- preparing the accounts on a going concern basis.

The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for regularity and propriety of the public finances for which an Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and safeguarding assets, are also set out in Chapter 3 of *Managing Public Money*.