

# 2018-19 Business Plan

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

## Foreword from Claire Bassett

Dear Colleagues

I am really pleased to be sharing this Business Plan with you. I really hope that you can spare the time to take a look at it. It sets out what we are planning to achieve over the rest of the year and how you can be a part of this.

Our five year Corporate Plan sets out our vision for the future of the Commission and the four goals we want to achieve. The four goals reflect four areas of our work; supporting the administration of polls, political finance regulation, thinking about the future of elections and regulation and finally making sure we are equipped and supported as an organisation to do this.

This business plan takes each of the goals and spells out the work we will be doing during 2018-19 to move us close to making them a reality. To do this we must continue to deliver our operational work alongside important improvement and delivery projects. We will not realise our goals if we just keep doing the same, although we will not be able to innovate and develop if we are not getting the day to day business right either. So, it is only when these different types of work come together and we focus on it all that we will succeed.

One of our big challenges is making sure we use our limited resources well. This means that we need to make sure each of you understands your role, has a plan of your own and the right support to deliver it. The SLG is committed to making sure that there is a “golden thread” from this plan, through operational and project plans down to your personal development plans.

One of the challenges we face is how we do more with the same amount of people and resources. There are two things we can do about this. We can stop doing things that are no longer a priority or we can do things more efficiently. A really good recent example of this is the daily press cuttings email. This used to take a member of the comms team at least an hour to do. Changes to what it includes and how it is done have reduced this to less than half an hour. That is a saving of over three and a half weeks of someone's time over the course of a year.

The key to this will be all of us having good conversations and being responsible for our own work. The SLG has committed to supporting this and the work we are doing on our values is part of it. However, SLG cannot deliver this alone. We need individual team members to be proactive by identifying how we can work better and sure we do all the things we want to in this plan.

The last few years have been very challenging and successful ones for the Commission. The new Corporate Plan and this Business Plan set out how we will continue this and move forward into the next stage of our life. One where we don't just deliver but also lead and innovate to deliver meaningful and lasting changes to elections in this country.

## Our vision and goals

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 four 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
- To provide value for money, making best use of our resources and expertise to deliver services that are attuned to what matters most to voters

## Our environment

The last five years have seen significant changes driven by the increase in the number of planned and unplanned, complex electoral events; cuts to public sector funding; and ensuring the integrity of elections.

- **Delivering well run elections – an increasing challenge.** Recent years have seen an increase in the number of elections overall, including unscheduled elections in Northern Ireland and in the UK as a whole. Although we – and the wider electoral community - have responded well, it is important to recognise the increasing challenge of delivering well run elections, especially when polls are unplanned and where local authorities are faced with reduced resources and a growing number of skilled professionals leaving the profession. As we work to support local authorities, we will continue to explore routes to enhance processes and systems to deliver savings and efficiencies where possible, while still ensuring the delivery of well-run elections and electoral registration services.
- **Voters' expectations in a digital world.** Accessing public services and information online is an expectation of many voters – ease of access and use is vitally important in encouraging voter participation. We need to consider how registering and voting can be updated to meet voters' needs and expectations in our digital society, whilst ensuring the democratic system remains secure and protected from fraud.

- **The urgent need to modernise electoral law.** The legislation governing the UK's elections is significantly out of date, complex and inconsistent. We very much welcome the reforms outlined by the Law Commissions in 2016 and would like to see progress by the UK's governments towards implementing their recommendations, including proposals to modernise electoral offences and simplify the process of challenging elections. Implementing the Law Commissions' proposals, as well as other recommendations that we have made in recent years, would help to improve confidence in the security and integrity of elections.
- **The changing nature of modern campaigning.** Over the last few years, we have seen an increased use of digital campaigning methods, such as targeting particular groups of voters with specific messages. We need to remain alert to this trend, ensuring that there is maximum transparency and accountability, as voters have a right to know who is trying to influence them and who is spending money to do so. The way we monitor and regulate their activities needs to ensure continued transparency in our regulatory system.
- **Leaving the EU.** We have reviewed our future plans in the context of the UK leaving the European Union. This is likely to impact directly on our work through the change in focus in the legislative schedule. On a practical level, there will be changes to the framework supporting the delivery of electoral events across the UK with the disappearance of the European Parliamentary Regional Returning Officers' structure.

In preparing this business plan, we are mindful of the changing nature of working in the political environment and ensuring that this plan encompasses appropriate flexibility to enable us to respond to unscheduled external events, recognising that we may need to reprioritise our work accordingly.

## How we work

In order to deliver our activities, and maintain a balance across all areas, we divide our work into three categories:

- **Business delivery:** At the core of our work are activities as a regulator of political finance and supporter of the delivery of the electoral cycle. We are mindful of the need to retain focus on these statutory functions and on the important role that we play in delivering a successful electoral cycle and healthy democratic system.
- **Improvement projects:** Activities in this category intend to make transformative interventions in the way we do things. These projects have agreed outcomes and plans in place to deliver them and – whether working alone or with others – the Commission is central to their successful delivery.
- **Innovation and development projects:** These projects are varied in their content, but each seeks to address strategic challenges which face us, the

wider sector, or our democratic systems overall. In most cases, we will need to work closely with others to develop the scope and ambition of the projects.

To provide a framework for the organisation, and to ensure we are delivering work to achieve our vision, we have aligned activities to at least one of our four key goals. As well as providing a unifying objective to work within each area, the goals enable us to take a broad view and review the balance of work across our responsibilities. In our Corporate Plan, we have 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.

We will also use the metrics outlined in this Business Plan to track our work through the year, to ensure it stays on time for delivery, to budget and to the appropriate quality. The Executive Team will monitor these metrics on a monthly basis. As this Business Plan covers a limited period, the metrics focus on outputs, rather than outcomes, which are difficult to identify over the life of this plan.

### **Working across the UK**

As a public body that works across all parts of the UK, we are flexible and proactive in adapting our approach to suit the demands and requirements of different governments, legislatures and electorates. Since the creation of the Commission, we have fully embraced devolution in our areas of responsibility, providing a tailored service to each nation but drawing strength from our joint expertise in elections and political finance regulation.

Following the Scotland Act 2016, responsibility for Scottish Parliament elections transferred to the Scottish Parliament in May 2017, adding to their existing responsibility for local government elections. The Wales Act 2017 provided for the legislative competence for local government and Assembly elections to be transferred to the National Assembly for Wales from April 2018.

These changes mean a further evolution for us, in the ways we report and are held accountable for our work in Scotland and Wales. We will continue to work with the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales to establish this accountability in terms of both budget and operational delivery.

In England, the devolution of power to local government has grown over the last few years, with 'devolution deals' and directly elected mayors. Our work to develop the role of our English regional teams will help us to ensure we are able to work effectively across the different structures across England and will enable us to continue to work collaboratively with local authorities.

# 2018-19 Plan

The following sections set out the work we will undertake in 2018-19 in order to meet our 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**

To support the delivery of well-run electoral events in 2018-19, we will:

- Support and report on the planned electoral events in May 2018, which are **local government elections across parts of England**. We will also prepare for the May 2019 English local government and Mayoral elections and Northern Ireland local government elections.
- Support electoral administrators, candidates and parties across the UK by **providing guidance and tailored advice**. We will also ensure we are fully prepared to respond to any **unscheduled events** that may arise during the period of this plan.
- Use our **performance standards frameworks** for Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Returning Officers (ROs) to support and challenge their planning for, and delivery of, well-run electoral registration services and electoral events. We will also start work to **review our standards for EROs**, with a new framework to be in place by May 2020, to ensure that we can both support and challenge them effectively where needed.
- Work with the **Elections Coordination and Advisory Board (ECAB)** to **review** the current regional **coordination structures** that will cease to exist in England following the UK's exit from the European Union, and **develop a new approach to fill this gap**.
- Work with the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Office towards **the introduction of performance standards** for electoral registration and electoral events.
- Produce a **new code of practice on electoral observers**, taking into account international best practice and lessons learnt from the experience of the first ten years in operation of our statutory observers' scheme.

## **Maximising electoral registration**

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. In 2018-19, we will:

- Deliver **effective, value for money, voter registration campaigns** across the UK ahead of the **May 2019 polls**, targeting in particular under registered groups. We will work in partnership with public, private and voluntary organisations to expand our public awareness activities.
- Identify good practice in the delivery of electoral registration and elections and **develop mechanisms to share this** to improve delivery across the UK. We will work closely on this with the Association of Electoral Administrators, Scottish Assessors Association and others in the electoral community.

### Tackling electoral fraud

Voters are entitled to be confident that fraud is deterred and detected and to support this in 2018-19 we will:

- **Undertake a statutory evaluation of the voter ID pilot schemes** that took place at May 2018 polls and publish the report in July 2018.
- **Monitor and support** the work of EROs, ROs, police forces and prosecutors to tackle electoral fraud. 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.

### Modernising electoral registration

In 2018-19, we will:

- Encourage the UK's governments to work towards an electoral registration system which is **more joined-up** with other public services, to make registering to vote even simpler for the public and more efficient for EROs, including through engagement with the Cabinet Office led **Modern Electoral Registration Programme**.
- Evaluate **pilot schemes** designed to inform potential **reform of the annual canvass** and explore the feasibility of integrating applications into other public service transactions, making better use of **national data** to identify new electors or home movers.
- Deliver an implementation plan for **modern, accessible and sustainable guidance** for the electoral community, which will enable our new format of guidance to be available from 2019. This will include guidance for ROs, EROs, political parties, non-party campaigners, candidates and agents.
- Work with the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Office towards the launch of **online electoral registration**, in line with the rest of the UK.



## Goal 1 Corporate Plan & Business Plan 2018-19 Performance Measures.

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>

## Corporate Plan indicators

Impact indicators			
No electors are served by ROs or EROs who fail to meet our performance standards	Increasing public confidence in their understanding of and satisfaction with the system of registering to vote	Increasing public confidence in and satisfaction with the process of voting	The electoral registers in the UK maintain or improve current levels of accuracy and completeness
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

## 18/19 Milestones and Project metrics

Objectives	Performance Measures	
	Metrics	Milestones
Successful introduction of online registration in Northern Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our recommendation is implemented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of online registration - June 2018</li> </ul>
Deliver a revised observers scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All observer applications are processed within 7 working days.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult on a revised observer code of conduct – commence by end September 2018</li> <li>• Lay New Code for observers – by end December 2018</li> </ul>
Accurate and fair evaluation of voter ID pilots at the May 2018 polls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our conclusions are respected and make an effective contribution to the debate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of evaluation of voter ID - July 2018</li> </ul>
Accurate and fair evaluation of the canvass pilots from the May 2017 polls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our conclusions are respected and make an effective contribution to the debate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of evaluation of canvass pilots – June 2018</li> </ul>

### Developing our performance approach:

This goal focuses on the Commission's role in ensuring our elections are run with the interests of voters as a priority, delivering results that are accurate and can be trusted. To help us to achieve this, we have identified a range of activities which aim to support the delivery of well-run elections, maximise and modernise electoral registration and tackle electoral fraud.

Our key performance measures in the corporate plan focus on our business delivery work and are largely output based. These are supplemented by a series of operational measures in the business plan, which are designed to demonstrate progress with our improvement projects which aim to modernise and further secure the electoral process. Our impact indicators in the corporate plan complement these by looking at how voters and campaigners feel about our elections and electoral registration system, which allows us to see progress towards our goal and goes some way towards helping us to understand what effect our work is having on their experiences.

Looking ahead, we want to develop additional measures which focus more on the direct outcomes of our work and enable us to better measure the impact of our activities - for example, we not only want to ensure that we comment on 100% of relevant legislation and policy proposals in the future but will also be seeking to put

in place more qualitative measures which will help us to understand the impact of those comments.

## **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. To support this in 2018-19, we will:

- **Publish timely information** about **donations and loans**, **annual accounts** from registered parties and campaign spending which parties and others are required to report to us.
- **Register** political parties and other campaigners and maintain an **online database** of registered political parties and other campaigners.
- Deliver a **new online portal for party registration and finance** with the aim of increasing usage of the site, and reducing paper transactions. We aim to phase in the new system, which is being developed in conjunction with key stakeholders, in early 2019.
- Review all **descriptions** on **the register of political parties** and remove any which do not meet the description requirements.

### **Good regulation**

In 2018-19, we will:

- Provide **high quality advice and guidance** to support parties, candidates and campaigners to comply with the rules.
- Take **action** and, where appropriate, impose **sanctions** when the rules are broken in accordance with the statutory Commission **Enforcement Policy**. We will also continue to improve our compliance monitoring and real-time monitoring where we can intervene as an issue is identified.
- **Complete enforcement activity** on **investigations** relating to the EU Referendum and the UKPGE held in June 2017.
- Consider the development of a **prosecution policy**, which will look at our ability to conduct criminal investigation and prosecutory powers we might exercise.
- Undertake a **review of our Quality Management Framework**, which we use to manage our **enforcement casework process**, to ensure it is up-to-date and reflects best practice.
- Work with the Northern Ireland Office to achieve the **retrospective transparency** on **donations and loans** from January 2014.

## Goal 2 Corporate Plan & Business Plan 2018-19 Performance Measures

Measuring our performance			
<b>We publish routine financial returns from parties and campaigners, including statements of accounts</b> , within 30 working days to comply with statutory deadlines. (Target 100%)	<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 (Target 90%)
<b>We notify applicants of the outcome of their registration applications</b> within 30 days of a complete application 75% 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

## Corporate Plan indicators

Impact indicators			
Increasing public confidence that the spending and funding of political parties and candidates at UK elections is open and transparent	Increasing public confidence that appropriate action will be taken by the authorities if a campaigner is caught breaking the rules on campaign funding	All donations and loans for larger parties are accurate and comply with the rules and are submitted on time	All campaign spending returns are accurate and comply with the rules and are submitted on time

## 18/19 Milestones and Project metrics

Objectives	Performance Measures	
	Metrics	Milestones
Improve regulation of digital campaigning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our conclusions are respected and make an effective contribution to the debate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication of report on digital campaigning and initiative for improved regulation – July 2018</li> </ul>
Robust and proactive approach to registration, focusing on compliance with rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register of parties contains only descriptions that meet the PPERA definitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of the review of party descriptions work - March 2019</li> </ul>
New approach to enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to successfully conduct criminal investigations and prosecutions where rules have been broken</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consideration of prosecutions policy by Commission Board - September 2018</li> </ul>
Increased access to information on donations and loans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive feedback from user group and stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PFR Online – Test stage July 2018</li> <li>Phased launch of new system – January 2019</li> </ul>

### Developing Our Performance Approach:

This goal reflects the Commission's responsibilities as the UK statutory regulator to oversee, monitor and take steps to ensure the rules on political finance are properly applied and followed. In delivering such we take an impartial, proportionate and fair, evidence based approach, whilst being robust in our regulatory activities.

Our key performance measures and indicators encompass the range of functions that are required to achieve the above outputs. That is, our role as Registrar of political parties and other regulated entities or persons, political finance compliance on donations and spending with transparency by publication of such information, monitoring of political campaigning, and enforcement work. It also includes policy and legal development through recommendations to government and legislatures, and scrutiny of emerging legislation.

We recognise there is more we need and want to do towards enhancing trust and transparency in political finance regulation. Specific current initiatives include a major re-development of the digital online financial reporting system, building our forensic financial accounting and auditing capacity, taking forward codes of practice as well as a prosecutions policy, and research work on public understanding and priorities.

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**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**

In 2018-19, we will:

- Undertake scoping work to understand the **needs and expectations of voters**, and how the process of **registering** to vote could be **modernised**. This work will involve research and policy analysis work looking at digital solutions, drawing fully on evidence from international experience and the modernisation of other public services in the UK.
- Assess the **interventions that drive engagement** in voting to understand how participation could be improved. This will involve consulting and working with stakeholders, including electoral commissions and other bodies around the world, to understand what others are doing and identify opportunities.
- Engage in the debate on electoral reform in Scotland and provide the Scottish Government and Parliament with expert advice on any potential legislative and policy changes arising from the Scottish Government's consultation on electoral reform
- Work closely with the **National Assembly for Wales** and **Welsh Government** on their respective **modernisation proposals** for Assembly and local government elections.
- Produce a report on the **regulation of digital campaigning**, which brings together our research and insights on this topic, along with recommendations for future initiatives to improve regulation of this developing area.
- Work closely with the **Scottish Parliament** and Welsh Assembly to manage and develop an **operational model** that allows us to report and account to the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales.

### Goal 3 Corporate Plan & Business Plan 2018-19 Performance Measures

Measuring our performance		
Publish our evaluation and response to the 2016 and 2017 annual canvass pilot programme	Deliver a project to understand the landscape of public democratic engagement in the UK	Deliver a project to develop and explore the feasibility of proposals to modernise electoral registration and meet voters' needs and expectations in our digital society
Publish our evaluation and response to the 2018 voter ID pilots	Work in support of the electoral law reform recommendations from the England and Wales, Scotland and the Northern Ireland Law Commissions	

### Corporate Plan indicators

Impact Indicators
Our expert evidence and views are referenced in public debate about our democratic system and processes, and government proposals reflect our priorities and recommendations for change.

### 18/19 Milestones and Project metrics

Objectives	Performance Measures	
	Metrics	Milestones
Understand the quality of electoral registers and identify under-registered groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accurate report produced on time and to budget.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of accuracy and completeness report – July 2019</li> </ul>
Understand the landscape of public democratic engagement in the UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive engagement with the project from targeted organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations paper to Commission Board – March 2019</li> </ul>

### Developing our performance approach:

This goal seeks to capture the Commission's role as a thought leader on the development of our democratic system. This is delivered through the innovation projects that we develop and take forward ourselves and through the recommendations we develop and make for others to consider or implement. It is the goal under which we are likely to see the greatest shift in Commission activity during the period covered by the Corporate Plan.



Our current KPIs focus on the successful completion of project activity which falls within this goal. As these will be measured at an individual level, project by project, we will consider a broader measure which looks across the range of projects. Such a measure might assess overall timeliness of delivery and the balance across the projects of work on transparency, fairness, efficiency, as noted in the goal. In terms of the recommendations we make – and, in particular, those we chose to actively promote – we will consider measuring the extent to which we are able to progress these recommendations over the period of a business plan or corporate plan.

In order to measure ‘independent’ and ‘respected’ we must look at public and stakeholder perception. This is important, not for its own sake, but for the impact it has on stakeholders’ likelihood to respond positively to Commission insights and recommendations. Our current KPIs note ‘positive engagement with stakeholders’ as a measure for one project, and we might consider how to expand this, whether through existing means (such as the Winter Tracker survey) or through further research, particularly amongst key target groups (such as parliamentarians).

**Goal 4: To deliver excellent value for money, achieving more with less and getting it right first time; making best use of our resources and expertise to deliver services that are attuned to what matters most to voters and legislators**

### **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. In 2018-19, we will:

- Work to redevelop our **corporate website** to ensure that the site is built on the needs of our users and allows them to complete the tasks they come to the website for as easily as possible.
- Complete **upgrades to our HR system** to ensure we are maximising our use and capability of the system.
- **Develop our *People Strategy*** that sets out the activities we will undertake to support the delivery of our Corporate Plan and ensure we promote a culture where staff teams are able to perform their roles effectively.
- Consider the benefits from implementing a **new e-procurement system** and **e-board paper system** to make better use of our time and achieve savings in the ways we buy in goods and services.
- Develop our **accommodation strategy** to support the organisation in setting out a plan for the future, ensuring we have a flexible working environment to support the delivery of effective and efficient work.

## Goal 4 Corporate Plan & Business Plan 2018-19 Performance Measures

Measuring our performance		
Learn practical lessons from current home and remote working practices and design future accommodation accordingly.		Identify options, costs and benefits of e-procurement and implement a new system accordingly.
Stakeholder and staff satisfaction with IT tools	Maintaining high staff engagement scores in the annual staff survey and ensuring indicators such as staff turnover are at appropriate levels	Monitoring significant variances on all budgets and where appropriate reducing these variances over the five-years of this plan

### No impact indicators

### 18/19 Milestones and Project metrics

Objective	Performance Measures	
	Metrics	Milestone
Improve access to information on the electoral process for stakeholders and the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive feedback from stakeholders</li> <li>• Increase in traffic to web pages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint agency to redevelop new corporate website - July 2018</li> </ul>
Deliver future accommodation strategy to provide the greatest benefits for staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful adoption of options appraisal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff workshops – June 2018</li> <li>• Accommodation and technology requirements, and options appraisal – November 2018</li> </ul>

### Developing our performance approach:

This goal supports the other goals by focussing our attention not just on what we are going to achieve but how we manage ourselves to achieve it. It is not a 'corporate services' goal but reflects the Commission's commitment to be both effective and efficient. We have an ambitious corporate plan that includes 'flat cash' budgets over the next five years.

Delivery of our corporate plan to budgets is the best indicator that we are providing value for money. We will report annually on our progress and will make our reporting more accessible and informative.

Our most important resource is our staff and we will continue to report key performance measures to the Board quarterly. In addition to this the new People Strategy will set new targets and ambitions.

To ensure our plans remain relevant, we will also keep our plans under review through the annual business planning process. Our planning will be led by our research and understanding of what matters most to voters, informed by our expertise to determine where our activities can have most impact.

Our projects approach allows us to integrate business as usual activity with initiatives to address specific issues. We will continue to develop our approach to allow us to flexibly resource priorities within the budgets available to us. In addition we maintain a range of corporate indicators on staffing and spending to monitor our efficiency and effectiveness. Where appropriate we will use benchmarking with similar public bodies to help inform our plans and budgets.

# 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.

Planned capital expenditure in 2018-19 is £992,000. This includes a significant investment of up to £400,000 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 that provides for £2,000,000 of grants to be paid to eligible political parties to assist in developing policies for inclusion in their manifestos.

Our spending plans for 2018-19 are summarised in the table below.

	Resource		Income	Capital	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<b>Business Delivery</b>					
Electoral events:					
UKPGE June 2017	0.157				0.157
May 2018	0.950				0.950
May 2019	0.936				0.936
2019 European Parliamentary	0.829				0.829
Other (EU Ref)	0.506				0.506
Other Business Delivery	11.048		-0.016		11.032
<b>Total business delivery</b>		<b>14.426</b>	<b>-0.016</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>14.410</b>
<b>Improvement projects</b>		0.066			0.066
<b>Innovation and development activities</b>		0.064		0.972	1.056
<b>Total operational costs</b>		14.556	-0.016	0.972	15.512
<b>Policy Development Grants</b>		2.000			2.000
<b>Total spending plans</b>		<b>16.556</b>	<b>-0.016</b>	<b>0.972</b>	<b>17.512</b>

The funded establishment for **2018-19 is 144.45 FTE** (2017/18: 124.6 FTE)