

8. Underpinning this work in Wales | Electoral Commission Search

8. Underpinning this work in Wales You are in the Corporate Plan for Wales 2022/23 to 2026/27 section Home Our plans and priorities Corporate Plan for Wales 2022/23 to 2026/27 On this page 1. We demonstrate independence and integrity 2. We are a skilled organisation where diversity is valued 3. We are a learning organisation where improvement is continuous and resources are used efficiently First published: 25 April 2022 Last updated: 25 April 2022 Summary The preceding sections of this Corporate Plan summarise the work we will undertake to achieve our five strategic objectives. We will ensure we are equipped as an organisation to meet these objectives, focussing on the key enabling activities summarised below. 1. We demonstrate independence and integrity The electoral system depends on the Electoral Commission being an independent non-partisan body, and we therefore hold ourselves to high standards of integrity. We work hard to ensure we are respected for our expertise, and that our advice and decision making are free from bias. Given our unique role, our integrity needs to be clear and demonstrable. We will continue to demonstrate our integrity by: taking decisions on the evidence and being transparent about the reasons for them basing our policy positions and recommendations on analysis of evidence effectively communicating our work and views providing responsive services to those we support maintaining effective governance arrangements Taking decisions on the evidence and being transparent about the reasons for them In making decisions, of a regulatory nature or otherwise, we will proceed based on the law, evidence, fairness and proportionality, and in accordance with sound governance processes. Our published policies, such as our Corporate Governance Framework and Enforcement Policy, provide a clear understanding of how we operate and make decisions. Wherever and to the extent it is appropriate for us to provide reasons for decisions we will do so, including in accordance with freedom of information and data protection law. To that end we will continue to publish the outcome of every investigation, and highlight instances where learning from investigations could assist other campaigners in understanding and applying the law. We are accountable to the Courts for our decisions and the reasons for them, as well as being accountable to parliaments. Basing our policy positions and recommendations on analysis of evidence Our recommendations must be evidence-based and underpinned by research if they are to be trusted, adopted and taken forward. We will continue to conduct research to understand how elections and referendums have been run and experienced. We will continue to develop our evidence base on all issues that impact the electoral system – from voters' perceptions of the legitimacy of elections, to challenges faced by electoral administrators. We will embed the horizon-scanning approach that underpins our policy development work, and will continue to identify challenges and recommend solutions. Effectively communicating our work and views We want to ensure our work and our considered views have impact. We will therefore continue to ensure all information relevant to Wales is published in and Welsh. We will use plain and Clir, avoid jargon to aid understanding, and will communicate clearly to all audiences. We will continue to make our services and the information we provide accessible. Providing responsive services to those we support We support our stakeholders – including voters, campaigners, and electoral administrators – with accessible information and guidance on all aspects of the electoral system. They come to us for advice and support, and expect a responsive service that meets their needs. We will continue to consult our stakeholders to understand their expectations of our services, and will make improvements based on their needs. We will maintain high standards of customer service. Maintaining effective governance arrangements We

outline our governance arrangements in Section 12 of this Corporate Plan. 2. We are a skilled organisation where diversity is valued. We want our workforce to feel valued and be supported to achieve their potential. In the next five years we will:

- implement refreshed working practices to reflect wider changes in our work environment and culture
- attract, retain and develop the people we need
- maintain and improve high standards of leadership and management, with a focus on developing our people
- further embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work
- ensure the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language

Implement refreshed working practices to reflect wider changes in our work environment and culture. The coronavirus pandemic has impacted our working practices and resulted in new behaviours and approaches. We will learn from this to ensure that we retain the benefits, embedding more flexible working in ways that benefit our people, the Commission as a whole and our stakeholders. We will ensure our culture and behaviours reflect these values. We will also strengthen our approach to internal communications, working hard to keep our people connected, informed and motivated. We provide more information about how we will utilise technology to support new working practices below.

Attract, retain and develop the people we need

Our people are the core of our organisation. We will enable them to be skilled, with the diverse expertise needed to deliver our work. We will ensure they are capable, with a focus on being effective in everything they do, and committed, with a passion for democracy and our role in supporting it. We don't take these qualities for granted, and we will continue to implement our People Strategy to ensure we continue to attract, retain and develop the best team possible.

Maintain and improve high standards of leadership and management, with a focus on developing our people

Learning is a key part of our people's day to day work, and we are committed to supporting their development. We will continue to achieve high standards of leadership, management and people development, consulting our people to ensure we support their specific needs. Further embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work. We value diversity, and aim to be an open and inclusive organisation. We celebrate the breadth of thinking, skills and experience that our people bring to our organisation. And, we are committed to being an inclusive regulator, with strategies and processes that reflect the diversity of those we serve. We will deliver a renewed equality, diversity and inclusion strategy. We will implement the Business in the Community Race at Work Charter. And, we will work to increase and support diversity at senior levels, including representation on our Commission Board.

Ensure the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language

We are committed to treating the Welsh and English languages equally in all our work. We will continue to ensure that people in Wales can access our services and all information we publish which relates to Wales in both Welsh and English. We will continue to fulfil our statutory responsibility by meeting the Welsh Language Standards, set by the Welsh Language Commissioner through the Compliance Notice. We plan to strengthen our commitment to these standards, and the Welsh language more generally, by implementing a new Welsh Language Compliance Plan. This will include appointing a senior owner of the Welsh Language Standards within the Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission in Wales will continue to lead and support other teams throughout the UK to uphold the Welsh Language Standards.

3. We are a learning organisation where improvement is continuous and resources are used efficiently. The world around us is changing rapidly. We need to adapt fast to be successful. In order to do this we aim to be rigorous in learning from experience and seek continuous improvement in all that we do. With pressures on public spending set to continue, it is crucial that we continue to manage our costs

and make effective use of our technology, funding, time and resources. In the next five years we will: procure and implement value for money IT systems that improve service delivery maintain our financial strategy to keep the Commission within approved budgets continue to develop techniques to learn from experience, seek continuous improvement and become more efficient and effective develop a corporate environmental strategy that meets policy and legislative requirements for reduced environmental impact We will do this through effective leadership and management within a five-year financial plan that is aimed at costs of no more after inflation in 2026/27 than it does in 2021/22. Procure and implement value for money IT systems that improve service delivery Technology and data are crucial to our work. Our website and Political Finance Online database allow us to publish vital information which is in the public interest, bringing transparency to our democracy. Our internal systems are key to ensuring the quality of our work, and enable us to effectively manage risk. We will continue our programme to procure and implement new IT systems. We will ensure our infrastructure is up to date and fit for purpose. We will launch our new Political Finance Online database to make it easier and faster for parties and campaigners to submit financial data. We will also implement a new customer relationship management tool. Maintain our financial strategy to keep the Commission within approved budgets We detail our financial strategy in Section 8. With pressures on public spending and a need to ensure value for money, our spend on core services will be no higher in real terms at the end of the Corporate Plan period than it is at the beginning. We will work to increase the value we deliver for parliaments. Continue to develop techniques to learn from experience, seek continuous improvement and become more efficient and effective Technology enables us to run an efficient workplace, but our processes are also key to ensuring the quality of our work. We will embed quality management processes across all our services and functions. We want to improve the way we make decisions, and will also make better use of our knowledge. We will develop and implement a new knowledge management framework. We want to meet the needs of voters, parties and campaigners, electoral administrators and parliaments, and will undertake research to understand their expectations of our services. Develop a corporate environmental strategy that meets policy and legislative requirements We outline our plans to reduce the environmental impact of the electoral system in sections 2 and 5 of this Corporate Plan. We are also committed to reducing the environmental impact of our organisation. We will enhance our expertise, ensuring we have the environmental skills we need. We will carry out an environmental audit. We will develop and implement an action plan to achieve our environmental targets in line with legislation. This will include reducing waste and increasing recycling where possible. Navigation 7. A modern and sustainable electoral system in Wales Section 7 of our 2022/23 to 2026/27 corporate plan for Wales 9. Managing our costs in Wales Section 9 of our 2022/23 to 2026/27 corporate plan for Wales