

Strategic Objective Ref.	Lead Team/SP Action Ref.	Assigned to	Strategic Objectives and Actions	30/04/2024	31/05/2024	30/06/2024	31/07/2024	31/08/2024	30/09/2024	31/10/2024	30/11/2024	31/12/2024	31/01/2025	28/02/2025	31/03/2025	30/04/2025	31/05/2025	30/06/2025	31/07/2025	31/08/2025	30/09/2025	31/10/2025	31/11/2025	31/12/2025	31/01/2026	28/02/2026	31/03/2026	30/04/2026	
S1	CST		We will engage meaningfully with our stakeholders and the public to promote high standards in public life and adherence to the principles of public life in Scotland. We will take on board feedback, listen to others' views and work constructively to improve our systems and processes.																										
	a	ESC	Develop and ensure each team understands key messages for stakeholders																										
	b	SMT	Develop a stakeholder engagement plan, using the Boston Matrix approach.																										
	c	SIO/HIO PAM	Develop a programme of activity with key stakeholders inclusive of training on and promotion of the principles of public life in Scotland for those already in public life and those considering it.																										
	d	SIO/HIO PAM	Increase opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback to us through online surveys, including anonymous stakeholder surveys, focus groups etc. and report publicly on the results.																										
	e	SMT	Ensure we communicate effectively with all stakeholders, using plain English wherever possible, and other accessible methods such as Easy Read, BSL and video.																										
	f	SMT	Ensure we are as accessible as possible to complaint users and others, regularly reviewing our approach and making reasonable adjustments wherever required.																										
	g	SMT	Listen and take account of the feedback received from stakeholders using the methods above, and reporting transparently on the results and actions taken to improve our systems and processes and, where not taken, why not.																										
S2.1	CST		We will ensure that we have sufficient staff and resources in place to deliver on all of our objectives, building resilience and flexibility across roles and remits.																										
S2.2	CST		We will also work with other Parliamentary Officeholders with a view to embracing efficiency and innovation through shared services.																										
S2.3	CST		We value people and recognise that unless we have staff who are valued and supported to maintain their wellbeing, feel happy in and proud of our work and the way in which we do it, we will have failed.																										
	a	HCS	Ensure a robust workforce plan is in place to provide resilience and sufficient resources within all teams that sets out clear strategies for workforce profiling, succession planning, sickness absence, role progression and recruitment.																										
	b	SMT	Ensure a bespoke Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is in place covering all key processes within each team.																										
	c	SMT	Ensure an appropriate Scheme of Delegation (SoD) is in place within each team.																										
	d	ESC SMT	Map out and explore opportunities for cross functional working across the different sections of the office.																										
	e	HCS	Have each section of the office contribute to budgetary submissions to the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) to ensure appropriate resources are in place to continue to meet demands.																										
	f	HCS	Review sufficiency of current arrangements (modelling of capacity in teams based on different parameters in complaint volumes, appointment activity and other core functions).																										
	g	HCS	Engage regularly with other Officeholders to explore options for pooling and sharing expertise and resources.																										
	h	HCS	Ensure continuing external wellbeing support is available for staff.																										
	i	HCS	Survey staff on their wellbeing and act on the results.																										

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	j	HCS	Achieve one or more accreditations to recognise our status as a good employer.																									
	k	HCS	Improve employee experience through the use of streamlined HR processes and systems.																									
	l	SMT	Improve employee voice and engagement to build on the strong sense of community within ESC	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
S3	CST		We will ensure that our staff are properly trained, supported and developed to fulfil the requirements of their role and their career progression.																									
	a	HCS	Provide appropriate line manager training to ensure appropriate support for each staff member by way of regular performance review conversations.																									
	b	HCS	Ensure office wide training is available as required and each team has capacity to participate.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	c	Line Managers	Develop a bespoke personal development plan for each staff member.																									
	d	Line Managers	Identify areas for development and ensure all staff have access to on-going training and development relevant to their work.	•	•																							
	e	Line Managers	Ensure all staff have opportunities to undertake [peer] reviews and other types of quality assurance work as part of their on-going career development.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	f	HCS	Identify appropriate sources to provide training and ensure funding in place.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	g	HCS	Utilise the wide range of skills available within the PAA team to facilitate organisational and individual training and development	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	h	Line Managers	Provide opportunities for professional development in specialised areas (eg paralegal, governance, application of Articles of the European Court of Human Rights and associated case law, recruitment and selection and equality, diversity and inclusion etc).	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	i	Line Managers	Provide opportunities for staff to attend relevant conferences and webinars etc both on-line and in person.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	j	HCS	Ensure performance management framework is in place, kept updated and adhered to in supporting and developing staff.																									
S4	CST		We will make the best use of up to date and secure digital technology to support our work, enhance our users' experience and safeguard our systems.																									
	a	HCS	Adopt scalable systems – adaptable to staffing changes and scope of business.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	b	HCS	Enhance the fully hybrid working experience (e.g. same for everyone no matter location; removing remote desktop).																									
	c	HCS	Develop a user IT reference and support hub (ESC's own KnowledgeHub).																									
	d	HCS	Develop systems that work with the team, not against.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	e	HCS	Develop resilient systems with minimum downtime which are data secure/safe.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	f	HCS	Migrate to the Cloud; this would involve transferring all data and some systems currently held on the server to M365/Sharepoint.																									
	g	HCS	Maintain Cyber Essentials+ accreditation.																									
	h	HCS	Update the website to ensure secure and enhanced experience (upgrading and introducing 2 Factor Authentication).																									
	i	SIO/HIO	Make improvements to our existing Complaints Management System (CMS) to ensure it better supports the standards team to work more efficiently.	•	•	•																						

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	j	SIO/HIO	Explore options to replace the CMS, including engaging with potential suppliers and develop a bespoke specification that meets the future requirement of a complaints management system.																										
	k	HCS	Develop new approaches to improve the retention and deletion of records and ensure existing records are managed in accordance with records management policies.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	l	HCS	Ensure all staff engage in and are regularly trained on and familiar with guidance on all aspects of cyber security and other digital matters relating to their role.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
S5	Standards	Standards	We will operate highly efficient and effective complaints handling processes that deliver consistent, evidence-based responses: ensuring fair and trusted outcomes.																										
	a	SIO/HIO	Clear the cases that have waited over two months for initial assessment and put in place Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to drive greater efficiency in case disposals.																										
	b	SIO/HIO	Ensure systems in place to prevent a backlog arising and systems in place to clear a backlog where one arises and monitor any impact that this may have on the quality of investigations carried out.																										
	c	SIO/HIO	Continue to manage a robust system of proactive complaint management that efficiently organises new complaints, so they are either dismissed, redirected or readied for assessment.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	d	SIO/HIO	Ensure all complaints and cases continue to follow all relevant stages set out in the Investigations Manual but adopting a flexible approach to ensure that investigatory activity is proportionate to the facts and circumstances of each case.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	e	SIO/HIO	Review, revise and update the Investigations Manual on a regular basis and seek opportunities for appropriate third-party peer review on an annualised basis.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	f	SIO/HIO	Develop additional outputs to sit alongside the manual as required, such as the creation and maintenance of a KPI tracker to monitor and report on KPIs.																										
	g	SIO/HIO	Monitor and report on performance through use of KPIs with a view to either meeting or exceeding stretch targets .	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	h	SIO/HIO	Provide refresher trainer to all staff on the investigations manual.																										
	i	SIO/HIO	Seek new ways of working which enhance efficiency, effectiveness and quality of our work as part of our commitment to continuing improvement.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	j	SIO/HIO	Benchmark our investigations procedures and KPIs from equivalent external bodies and ensure they are externally validated.																										
	k	SIO/HIO	Conduct research to identify trends in public appointments and complaint volumes and report publicly on our findings. Use the results of that same research for strategic and business planning purposes.																										
S6	CST		We will ensure appropriate systems of governance, quality review frameworks and robust external accreditation are in place, providing assurance to the public and stakeholders that our objectives are being met. We will also demonstrate our commitment to acquitting our environmental and social responsibilities.																										
	a	HCS	Develop a single governance framework document.																										
	b	HCS	Ensure that risks are identified and managed in accordance with our policies and procedures.																										
	c	HCS	Develop a robust policy management process to ensure that no policy is "stale" and all are reviewed within stated timescales.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

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	d	HCS	Improve retention and deletion of records – meeting legal obligations and streamlining processing of information requests.	█																											
	e	SIO/HIO	Develop and put in place a quality assurance framework covering hot, cold and peer reviews covering all aspects of the office's activities										█																		
	f	SIO/HIO	Introduce Root Cause Analysis (RCA) techniques to identify and resolve underlying cause of a particular issue.													█	█														
	g	SIO/HIO	Report publicly on the outcomes from quality reviews.																												
	h	SIO/HIO	Take forward a programme of work designed to ensure that our decision-making is in keeping with relevant case law, precedents and the decisions of relevant adjudicatory bodies, so we can evidence that the approach to our work remains consistent and stands up to external challenge.					█				█					█							█							
S7	Standards		We will contribute significantly to the maintenance of an effective ethical standards framework through supportive and constructive engagement with equivalent bodies both here and in other administrations.																												
	a	SIO/HIO	Engage with other Commissioners in the UK and other bodies with similar functions for learning and to share good practice.		█																										
	b	SIO/HIO	Work alongside the Standards Commission for Scotland to develop and deliver training, support and guidance for councillors and board members.																												
	c	SIO/HIO	Engage with COSLA, SOLAR, SOLACE and monitoring officers with a view to driving better conduct in public life.																												
	d	SIO/HIO	Provide opportunities for staff to stay updated with case and legislative developments in the ethical standards framework.																												
	e	SMT	Respond to or engage with future consultations and opportunities to input views to revisions/updates to the ethical standards framework and related topics both here in Scotland and further afield.																												
	f	SMT	Ensure constructive feedback from our stakeholders is recorded, considered and, where applicable, implemented to improve how we work.																												
S8	Public appointments		We will, through supportive and constructive regulation, make a significant contribution to a public appointments system that produces effective and diverse boards that are reflective of the communities that they serve																												
	a	PAM	Continue to support implementation of the 2022 Code of Practice, through supportive and constructive regulation, encouraging a learning mindset from all who are involved in making appointments, to develop and utilise good practice and innovation.																												
	b	PAM	Report publicly on the difference that the Code of Practice is making to the appointments process, for good or bad, with a view to improving on practices. We will do so by publicising instances of good practice or innovative practice and learning as well as areas for improvement.																												
	c	PAM	Seek to understand through our research the difference that board appointments make to the governance of the public body and the difference that diversity brings.																												
	d	PAM	Seek to monitor and report on compliance with the Code of Practice by way of research and thematic reviews. This will include, for example, an examination of published time commitment, remuneration and other aspects of the role of public appointees, building on previous research undertaken. We will report publicly on our findings																												
S9	Public appointments		We will strive to be recognised leaders in the regulation of a system that is effectively run to achieve the appointment of the most able people to our boards and that is managed in compliance with the highest ethical standards.																												
	a	PAM	Share our findings through the provision of guidance.																												

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b		PAM	Consult extensively on and revise and republish Diversity Delivers (including new recommendations for the achievement of greater board diversity).																										
c		PAM	Develop our own learning and understanding about great practice in recruitment and selection by reaching out to other organisations and administrations and by conducting our own research.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
d		PAM	Ensure that our PAAs can cascade that guidance to selection panels by keeping them updated on the latest good practice in the making of appointments																										

KEY

- Scheduled
- Completed
- Underway
- Outstanding
- Ongoing action - scheduled
- Ongoing action - completed
- Ongoing action - underway
- Ongoing action - outstanding