

The Llywydd's Committee

The Electoral Commission have provided the following additional information on 15 October 2020 to assist the Committee with its scrutiny of the financial estimate:

1. What percentages of indirect costs will be charged to each of the Welsh, UK and Scottish Consolidated Funds and do those percentages relate to full population sizes or populations of voting age only?

The percentages of overheads are Scottish Parliament 8.18%, Senedd 4.72%, and Speaker's Committee 87.1%.

Following discussions with Scottish and Welsh officials, we are using total population. We chose this basis, rather than 18+ or some other basis, as published ONS age bands cut across voting ages. In practice it made less than 0.1% difference to the relative shares of population, so the effect is immaterial.

Detail:

- relevant age bands are 15-19 and 20-24; thus impossible to identify younger voters (or even just 'adults') accurately as those categories cross the published demographic categories
- NB that shares of overheads differ from the overall funding shares, which also includes estimates of work attributable to specific funders.

2. How is the Speaker's Committee's responsibility for English elections and UK elections factored into the apportionment of indirect costs?

Speakers Committee has responsibility for UK-wide and reserved powers. This includes Northern Ireland elections, which are a reserved power. The cost to the Commission of specific reserved elections is directly allocated; operational staff time is allocated according to estimates of where there time will be spent, in line with methodology for other funders. Speaker's Committee's share of the overheads is the share of population for England and Northern Ireland – in total 87%.

3. Please provide rationale for depreciation being included in the estimate

The UK public sector budgeting system (also used by the devolved authorities), includes elements of double counting. For example capital expenditure appears first in capital budgets and subsequently in current budgets as depreciation. To avoid funding the same item twice a choice has to be made whether to fund capital expenditure directly or depreciation. In developing the proposed approach we, along with officials from both Scotland and Wales, had been working on the assumption that the system would fund capital expenditure and exclude depreciation. However another, very important, consideration for devolved colleagues was that the funding

system should line up as closely as possible with the transfer from Westminster to devolved funding blocks to fund the transfer of responsibilities from Westminster. The clear advice from colleagues in HM Treasury was that this would be much more easily achieved if the funding formula was based on current expenditure including depreciation. We have therefore chosen to go that route.

4. Are translation costs included in the figures?

The cost of day to day translation of material into Welsh is factored into the Wales budget line. This covers the salary of a full-time Welsh translator. Some translation costs for specific projects, such as improving the provision of online guidance, is also included in the budget lines related to the relevant activity.

5. Please provide additional detail explaining what each budget line relates to and whether there are multiple types of costs below these budget lines

Included in table that follows.

Additional detail explaining each budget line

Direct costs	Amount in 2021-22	Additional detail explaining what budget line relates to	Explanation of costs below these budget lines	Budget line breakdown further details
	£000s			
Electoral Administration				
Wales	230	<p>Activities undertaken by the Electoral Commission, Wales office in relation to electoral activity and events in Wales.</p> <p>This includes :</p> <p>Preparing for the 2021 Senedd and 2022 local government elections in Wales</p> <p>Developing and delivering guidance, resources and support for candidates, agents and ROs/EROs, and electoral administrators for specific elections and regular electoral activities such as electoral registration.</p> <p>Engaging with local authorities and Returning Officers to support and challenge their delivery of electoral events using our performance standards.</p>	<p>This represents the Committee's share of the pay and non-pay costs for the Commission's Wales office, based on our estimate that staff will spend approximately two-thirds of their time on specifically Welsh activity and the remainder on other (UK-wide or Commission corporate activity). Note that some non-pay costs (e.g. IT infrastructure) are included in the indirect cost category.</p>	<p>Of which attributable pay £215k; attributable non-pay £15k</p>

		<p>Working with the electoral community in Wales through the various stakeholder groups that we manage or are involved in.</p> <p>Providing advice to governments on electoral matters including electoral reform processes and associated legislation.</p> <p>Working with partners to communicate our message to voters.</p>		
Support	5	<p>This would primarily be the handling of applications for accreditation of electoral observers. The process is managed by the NI team who check applications and make recommendations for approval.</p> <p>Additional support can also be provided to the Wales office through the provision of staff to help with public information queries and electoral administration queries.</p> <p>Staff from the NI team also are available to observe electoral events in Wales as Commission representatives.</p>	<p>This represents a small share of the costs of the NI Team in providing support to the Commission's work in Wales.</p>	Immaterial
Guidance	92	<p>This involves the drafting and publication of guidance to support the May 2022 polls for Returning Officers, as well as the drafting of guidance to support Electoral Registration Officers with the delivery of the canvass in 2022.</p> <p>Additionally, this covers the provision of advice to the Wales Office in response to individual electoral practice queries from administrators in Wales, and any expert advice required as part of</p>	<p>This represents the Committee's share of the costs of the Commission's Guidance Team based on our estimate of how their time will be spent. Note that this reflects the work of that team in support our Wales Office in producing guidance that is specific to Wales.</p>	<p>Of which attributable pay £66k; attributable non-pay £26k</p>

		consultation work in response to draft legislation from Welsh Government.		
Support & Improvement	80	This involves the development, implementation and ongoing management and support of the Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer Performance standards frameworks. This includes the development and coordination of monitoring systems and resources for ROs and EROs, which are then delivered by the Wales Office, and the reporting of relevant performance by ROs and EROs.	This represents the Committee's share of the costs of the Commission's Support and Improvement team based on our estimate of how their time will be spent. Note that the Support & Improvement Team mainly operates in England, with the equivalent functions in Wales discharged by our Wales Office. This therefore represents the contribution of expertise to support our Wales Office, when required.	Of which attributable pay £79k; attributable non-pay £1k
TOTAL	407			
Legal				
Legal	97	This will include providing legal support to the Commission's advice, guidance and regulation functions and real-time legal advice during the May 2021 poll. Supporting post-poll regulation and the development of any policy recommendations. General and on-going legal advice on Welsh legislation and support of the Commission's functions as they relate to Wales (including registration, regulation, policy,	This represents the Committee's share of the costs of the Commission's Legal team based on our estimate of how their time will be spent.	Of which attributable pay £97k

		electoral administration, governance, and compliance with Welsh Language Standards).		
Regulation	109	Developing guidance for the relevant Welsh elections for candidates and agents. Providing advice to integrity leads (police) campaigners and candidates in Wales Publishing financial data in Wales and any compliance and enforcement work arising from relevant activity in Wales.	This represents the Committee's share of the costs of the Commission's Regulation directorate based on our estimate of how their time will be spent. This includes time spent advising and supporting the Wales Office team on regulatory matters.	Of which attributable pay £108k; attributable non-pay £1k
TOTAL	206			
Communication, policy & research				
Campaigns & Corp Identity	559	This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • media creative and media planning and buying for relevant voter registration campaign • media creative and media planning and buying for any franchise campaign • Partnership work across Wales encouraging a range of stakeholders to engage with the voter registration materials 	This represents the Committee's share of the costs of the Commission's campaigns team based on our estimate of how their time will be spent. It also includes the costs of the early phase of the Commission's public awareness campaigns for the May 2022 elections.	Of which attributable pay £87k; attributable non-pay £472k (predominantly public awareness).

<p>Digital communication & learning</p>	<p>64</p>	<p>This represents the Committee's share of the costs of the Commission's Digital Communication and Learning team based on our estimate of how their time will be spent. It includes cost relating to the development of website functionality and content for our stakeholders in Wales, including voters, electoral administrators and our regulated community. Recent functional improvements which are available for Welsh stakeholders include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A postcode lookup tool to enable voters to locate their polling station, and contact details for postal and proxy vote applications • An eligibility tool to enable voters of all ages and nationalities to determine which elections they can vote in • A data visualisation tool to enable users to compare and contrast the amount candidates spent at the general election in 2019 – this tool will be updated for Welsh elections. <p>This budget line also includes costs relating to the development of learning resources (educators' handbooks, student workbooks, and digital assets) for those eligible and soon to be eligible to vote in Wales. These resources supplement political literacy resources</p>	<p>This represents the Committee's share of the costs of the Commission's Digital communication & learning team based on our estimate of how their time will be spent. It includes the costs of the Commission's website.</p>	<p>Of which attributable pay £39k; attributable non-pay £25k</p>
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		developed by the Welsh Government and Senedd.		
External communications	34	For press this covers handling reactive enquiries and carrying out proactive media engagement through routine regulatory publications for instance, and the publication of reports and other Commission work. While some of this is picked up by the team in Wales, this represents a share of the UK-wide work. For public affairs it includes responding to relevant enquiries.	This represents the Committee's share of the costs of the Commission's External communications (press office and public affairs) team, based on our estimate of how their time will be spent.	Of which attributable pay £14k; attributable non-pay 20k
Research	63	The research programme around the 2021 Senedd elections is likely to include surveying of candidates, the collection of electoral administration data (eg volumes of postal votes) and gathering of feedback from Returning Officers and others. It also includes the costs of research into public attitudes to voting and elections.	This represents the Committee's share of the costs of the Commission's Research team, based on our estimate of how their time will be spent. It includes the costs of research into public attitudes to voting and elections.	Of which attributable pay £58k; attributable non-pay £5k
Policy	89	This will include analysis and reporting on the May 2021 Senedd elections to identify trends and issues for consideration by policymakers. It will also include support to the Welsh government and Senedd in developing policy for the local government elections in May 2022, including reviewing draft secondary legislation before it is laid by Ministers for approval.	This represents the Committee's share of the costs of the Commission's Policy team, based on our estimate of how their time will be spent.	Of which attributable pay £89k; attributable non-pay £0
TOTAL	809			
Total direct Costs	1,422			

Indirect Costs				
Resource	255	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information technology and security; • Executive team and central administrative support; • facilities and accommodation; • governance planning and assurance; • human resources and training; • finance and procurement. 	<p>This represents the Committee's share of the Commission's overheads and other costs that cannot be directly attributed to specific funders. The share is based on population.</p>	<p>Of which Information technology & security £64k; executive team & central admin support £53k; facilities & accommodation £44k; governance planning & assurance £35k; human resources & training £30k; finance & procurement £26k; other £3k</p>
Depreciation	73		<p>This represents the Committee's share of the Commission's annual depreciation charge. The share is based on population.</p>	-
Total indirect Costs	328			
Total contribution	1,750			