Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body
Thursday 8 October 2026 (Session 7)

Session 7 Strategic Plan – approval for publication

Executive summary

1. This paper asks the SPCB to approve the Session 7 Strategic Plan (Annexe A). The Senior Executive Team (SET) has agreed the plan, and it has been updated to reflect the discussion with SPCB members at the planning day on 31 August 2026.

2. The Strategic Plan sets out what the Scottish Parliamentary Service will focus on over the Session to support the Parliament and its Members. The more detailed Delivery Plan, setting out how the priorities will be achieved and how success will be measured, will come to the SPCB next month alongside the 2027-28 budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

3. The SPCB is invited to approve the Strategic Plan, and to note the next steps and how progress will be reported.

Issues and options

Why we have a Strategic Plan

4. Under the Scotland Act 1998, the SPCB is responsible for providing the Parliament with the property, staff and services it needs. The Clerk/Chief Executive carries out the day-to-day functions on the SPCB's behalf under delegated authority.

5. The Strategic Plan is how the SPCB sets the direction for that work over the Session. It gives staff a clear and shared sense of what matters most, helps us make choices about where to put our time and money, and gives the SPCB a basis for holding us to account.

6. The plan is written mainly for staff of the Parliament, as it is the Parliamentary Service that will deliver it. However, it is the SPCB's plan. SPCB approval and visible support matter because the plan will shape budget bids, workforce decisions and investment across the Session.

What the plan says

7. The plan is built around four priorities:

    - **Delivering our services** – doing the day-to-day job well, so that Members, committees and the public get reliable, high-quality advice, support and facilities.

- **Strengthening Parliament** – supporting Members, the new Presiding Officer team and committees to scrutinise, legislate and hold the Government to account effectively.

- **Building trust** – widening public participation, putting the Inclusive Parliament Review recommendations into practice and refreshing the Members' learning offer.

- **Transforming how we work** – making better use of technology, data and our buildings, and redesigning services to create the capacity to meet rising demand.

8. Each priority beyond day-to-day service delivery has a named SET lead, so responsibility for delivery is clear.

What the plan means in practice

9. The plan has some important implications that the SPCB should be aware of:

- **Core services come first.** Delivering our day-to-day services well remains our main priority. Our staffing levels reflect what we need to run Parliament We have some capacity within this to make improvements, often this work is through time limited projects and may require additional temporary staff resource to implement.

- **Capacity through change, not growth.** We will meet new demands mainly by redesigning services, using technology better and improving productivity. An increase in permanent staff numbers will only be proposed where there is a clear strategic or statutory case and other options have been fully considered.

- **Prioritisation.** The plan will be used to decide which projects go ahead and when.

- **Link to the budget.** The strategic plan, Delivery Plan, Medium Term Financial Plan and Strategic Workforce Plan have been developed together. Future budget proposals to the SPCB will be set against the plan's priorities.

Monitoring progress

10. Progress will be monitored through the quarterly performance reports that already form part of the Clerk/Chief Executive's updates to the SPCB. SET reviews these reports quarterly before they come to the SPCB.

11. These reports will cover both how well our day-to-day services are performing and progress against the change priorities. This will give the SPCB a regular and consistent view of whether the plan is on track, and early warning where it is not.

Governance

12. The Strategic Plan is the SPCB's plan for the Parliamentary Service. SPCB approval confirms the direction of travel for the Session. Responsibility for

delivery sits with the Clerk/Chief Executive, as Accountable Officer, supported by SET.

13. We review the plan regularly and it can be adapted if circumstances change and new priorities arise. This often necessitates reprioritising what can be delivered within our staff capacity and approved budgets.

14. Strategic risks linked to the plan will be reflected in the updated Principal Risk Register, which is subject to review by SET and the Advisory Audit Board.

Resource implications

15. There are no direct costs from approving the Strategic Plan. The resources needed to deliver it will be set out in the Delivery Plan, the 2027-28 budget proposal and the MTFP, which will come to the SPCB for decision next month.

Publication Scheme

16. This paper can be published once the Strategic Plan has been published.

Next steps

17. Subject to SPCB approval, we will:

- finalise the design of the Strategic Plan and publish it on the Parliament's website
- share the plan with all Members and staff
- bring the Delivery Plan to the SPCB next month as part of the package of information supporting the rationale for the 2027-28 budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- report progress to the SPCB through the quarterly performance reports in the Clerk/Chief Executive's updates.

Decision

18. The SPCB is invited to approve the Session 7 Strategic Plan at Annexe A.

Office of the Deputy Chief Executive
October 2026