Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee
Thursday 5 November 2026
7th Meeting, 2026 (Session 7)

Scottish Information Commissioner – Annual Report 2025/26

Note by the Clerk

1. The Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee leads on scrutiny of freedom of information law and regulation in the Scottish Parliament.

2. The Scottish Information Commissioner is an independent public officeholder of the Scottish Parliament with responsibilities to uphold freedom of information laws in Scotland. Further information on the work of the SIC is available here.

3. The Commissioner was establish in Part 3 of the Freedom of Information Act 2002 with statutory functions to enforce the Act and environmental information regulations, and to provide advice to individuals and public authorities on their rights and obligations under these regimes. Part 4 of the 2002 Act confers a number of enforcement and investigatory powers to support the Commissioner in carrying out their statutory duties.

4. David Hamilton is the current Scottish Information Commissioner. He was appointed to this post in 2023 and will serve a fixed term of six years.

5. The Commissioner published his Annual Report for 2025/26 on 15 September. The report sets out details of his office's operational and financial performance over the past year. This includes progress towards the office's wider objectives described in its Strategic Plan 2024-28.

6. At its meeting on 5 November, the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee will take evidence from the Commissioner on his Annual Report and Strategic Plan. The Committee will also take this opportunity to discuss any topical matters relating to the work of the Commissioner, such as:

    - Increasing demand for freedom of information, and any implications this has had on the workload and resources of the Commissioner and his office;
    - Alongisde this, the impact of artificial intelligence on freedom of information requests;
    - Specific enforcement actions taken by the Commissioner, and overall compliance amongst public authorities with freedom of information law;
    - The state of existing legal frameworks for freedom of information, and whether reforms are required.

7. Evidence gathered at this meeting will support the Committee's ongoing scrutiny of freedom of information and of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body's budgetary responsibilities towards independent officeholders funded by it, such as the Scottish Information Commissioner.

Clerks to the Committee
November 2026