SPPAC/S7/26/8/2

Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee
Thursday 12 November 2026
8th Meeting, 2026 (Session 7)

Electoral Commission Scotland - Annual Report 2025/26

Note by the Clerk

1. The Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee leads on scrutiny of all devolved electoral law, which pertains principally to the conduct of Scottish Parliament and Scottish local government elections.

2. The UK Electoral Commission was established as a body corporate in Part 1 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) with statutory responsibilities to regulate elections and referendums and associated campaigning activity across the UK. It also provides advice and guidance on these matters, and wider issues pertaining to electoral law, to Governments, political parties and the general public.

3. The UK Electoral Commission is required under PPERA to report annually on its performance and accounts. The most recent Annual Report and Accounts for the financial year 2025/26 was published on 16 July.

4. The Electoral Commission Scotland (ECS) is the Scottish division of the UK-wide organisation. The ECS carries out its statutory functions in a Scottish context, including the regulation of devolved elections. As per requirements in section 15 of the Scottish Elections (Reform) Act 2020, the ECS is funded through the budget of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body.

5. Further background information on the relationship between the ECS and the Scottish Parliament can be found in this explainer from the Scottish Parliament Information Centre.

6. The session on 12 November will be the Committee's first opportunity in this session to hear from the ECS about its current work, its budget and what it perceives as its main challenges for the future, as set out in its Annual Report and Accounts 2025/26, including challenges to democratic proesses and to trust in politicians and political institutions..

7. The session is also an opportunity for the Committee to discuss with the ECS its recent report on the running of the 2026 Scottish Parliamentary elections. According to the report, "overall, the election was well run and delivered without significant issues."

Clerks to the Committee
November 2026