



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

**Scottish Parliamentary
Corporate Body**

Annual Report, 2009

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Annual Report, 2009

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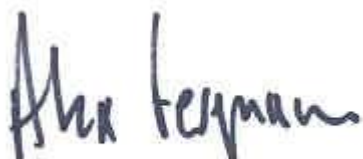
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Foreword by the Presiding Officer

The purpose of the SPCB Annual Report is to provide feedback to Members of the Scottish Parliament on the issues the SPCB has been engaged with over the past year. This year's report covers the work which was undertaken from 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009.

During this reporting period, the SPCB continued to provide the property, staff and services that enable and support the Parliament and its Members in carrying out their parliamentary duties. We dealt with a wide range of issues including the review of the Members' Allowances Scheme, preparations for the 10th Anniversary celebrations and the development of the Corporate Change Programme.

I hope this report provides a useful summary of our work over the last year and I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues on the Corporate Body for all their hard work and assistance.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Alex Ferguson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Presiding Officer and Chair of the
Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body**

INTRODUCTION

Timing of the Report

This year's annual report covers the period from 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009. The membership of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) remains unchanged, comprising: Alex Fergusson MSP (Presiding Officer and Chair of the Corporate Body), Alex Johnstone MSP, Tricia Marwick MSP, Tom McCabe MSP and Mike Pringle MSP.

Policies, Procedures and Portfolio Arrangements

We agreed to continue the portfolio arrangements as SPCB members found this had helped them to build on their knowledge of the issues within their areas of responsibility. However, Members should feel able to approach any member of the Corporate Body on any matter.

Details of the portfolio arrangements can be found below:

- **Alex Johnstone MSP**

Technology and facilities management issues including building maintenance, IT and local office support

- **Tom McCabe MSP**

Resources issues covering procurement, allowances and finance offices

- **Tricia Marwick MSP**

Access and information issues covering visitor services, events, public information, education and outreach, Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) and the editorial content of the website and intranet as well as broadcasting and the broader aspects of media relations

- **Mike Pringle MSP**

Office Holders/Commissioners and corporate issues including governance, equalities and personnel issues.

EFFECTIVE SUPPORT OF MEMBERS AND PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS

The following section gives an overview of the key issues considered and decisions taken by the Corporate Body relating to the provision of support to Members.

Supporting Members

1.1 Members' Needs Survey

This was the third Members' Needs Survey undertaken on behalf of the Corporate Body aimed at improving services to Members. Unlike the previous surveys which used self-completion questionnaires to obtain the views of MSPs and their staff, the 2008 survey used face-to-face interviewing and focus groups as the main means of collecting information.

Several of the short term actions have already been implemented and work is ongoing to complete the longer term actions. For example, the speed of the internet connection that local offices use to connect to the Parliament servers has been increased and an information board has been installed at the entrance to the Members' block to improve information to Members about forthcoming events. A Holyrood desktop computer refresh programme has been implemented and officials are also looking at how better support can be offered to local offices.

The full report and action plan is available on the Parliament's website: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/corporate/spcb/publications/2008/2008MembersneedssurveyPart1.pdf>

1.2 Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme

A new system for reimbursing MSPs' expenses necessarily incurred in carrying out their parliamentary duties was introduced on 1 October 2008.

This followed receipt of a report by an independent review panel, set up by the SPCB and chaired by Sir Alan Langlands, and a subsequent parliamentary debate on 12 June 2008 on the report recommendations. We were pleased to note that the report recognised the transparency of the previous allowances scheme in place at the time of the report and the high standards of accountability which it achieved. Among the 68 recommendations made by the review panel were abolishing, at the end of the current parliamentary session, mortgage interest rate payments on Edinburgh accommodation; separate provision being made to meet the salary costs of staff who support Members in carrying out their duties; and the introduction of a new register for declaring the employment of close family members.

1.3 Committee Advisers – Extension of Advisers’ Contracts

Under the process for appointing an adviser, committees, with Bureau approval, may appoint advisers to provide services for up to 15 days at a standard rate without referral to the SPCB. Where a committee wishes to extend an adviser's contract beyond the 15 days or pay a rate higher than the agreed level, approval must be sought from the SPCB.

During the course of the year, the SPCB considered and approved two such applications; one from the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee and one from the Finance Committee.

1.4 Parliamentary Questions

It is important that Members are kept informed of the work which is being done to support them and have the opportunity to scrutinise SPCB decisions. One of the ways in which Members can access information is through the use of written parliamentary questions (PQs).

Over the period of this report, the SPCB answered a total of 60 PQs, up from 42 last year. These covered subjects as diverse as the Commission on Scottish Devolution, British Sign Language and cycling.

In addition to answering written PQs, we have continued the practice of holding oral question times in the Chamber. There were two sessions scheduled during the period of this report – one held in October 2008 and another in March 2009.

Copies of all the oral and written PQs answered by the SPCB can be found on the Parliament’s website:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/pqa/index.htm>.

1.5 Parliamentary Travel

In accordance with the Parliament’s Code of Conduct, where MSPs are in receipt of travel and hospitality which has been approved in advance by the SPCB, this does not have to be registered with the Register of Members’ Interests. During the period of this report, the SPCB considered and approved seven parliamentary travel papers. These applications covered:

- A visit to Wexford, Ireland by four MSPs to attend the 36th Plenary Session of the British Irish Inter Parliamentary Body;
- A visit to Gibraltar by four MSPs to attend the 39th British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference;
- A visit to Ottawa, Canada for the 20th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Seminar by one MSP;
- One MSP attending a seminar at Westminster on International Parliamentary Governance;
- Attendance at the 54th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Annual Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia by two MSPs; and

- A visit to the USA and Canada by the Presiding Officer and four MSPs to participate in Scotland Week activities.

1.6 Office Holders

This year we have seen a considerable amount of activity in relation to the officeholders that we support. We have seen the term of office of a number of officeholders come to an end and work being undertaken to recruit new officeholders.

We support six bodies:

- The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman;
- The Scottish Information Commissioner;
- The Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland;
- The Commissioner for Public Appointments in Scotland;
- The Scottish Commission for Human Rights; and
- The Scottish Parliamentary Standards Commissioner.

In addition to determining the terms and conditions of appointment of the six officeholders mentioned above, we also determine them for the Auditor General for Scotland (the Scottish Commission for Public Audit scrutinises the funding of the Auditor General's office).

1.6.1 Review of SPCB Supported Bodies Committee

An ad-hoc Parliamentary committee – the Review of SPCB Supported Bodies (RSSB) Committee – was established during the period of this report with the following remit:

- to consider and report on whether alterations should be made to the terms and conditions of the officeholders and the structure of the bodies supported by the SPCB;
- to consider how any proposals, including the addition of any new functions, for future arrangements should be taken forward, including by way of a Committee Bill; and
- to make recommendations accordingly.

We submitted written evidence to the RSSB Committee and Tom McCabe MSP, on behalf of the SPCB, appeared before the Committee on two occasions to provide evidence. The Committee reported its findings in May 2009.

Details of papers and evidence taken can be found on the Committee's webpage: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/rssb/index.htm>.

1.6.2 Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Professor Alice Brown wrote to the Presiding Officer in June 2008 indicating her intention to stand down as the first Scottish Public Services Ombudsman on 31 March 2009 after a period of six and a half years in office.

The recruitment of a new Ombudsman commenced in January 2009. A parliamentary selection panel interviewed candidates in March. We recognised that Professor Brown demitting office on 31 March could leave a short period without an Ombudsman and in the circumstances, we used our powers under the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002 to appoint Mr Eric Drake as the acting Ombudsman from 1 April until 30 April 2009. The new Commissioner, Jim Martin, took up office on 18 May 2009.

1.6.3 Commissioner for Children and Young People

Kathleen Marshall, the first Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland wrote to the Clerk/Chief Executive on 31 August 2008 intimating that she did not wish to be considered for reappointment and would demit office on 25 April 2009 after five years in office.

The recruitment of a new Commissioner commenced in January 2009. A parliamentary selection panel interviewed candidates in March. Again, we recognised that Professor Marshall demitting office on 25 April could leave a short period without a Commissioner and in the circumstances, we used our powers under the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2003 to appoint Mrs Maire McCormack as the acting Commissioner from 26 April until 17 May 2009. The new Commissioner, Tam Baillie, took up office on 18 May 2009.

1.6.4 Scottish Parliamentary Standards Commissioner for Scotland

The Scottish Parliamentary Standards Commissioner Act 2002 provides that the Commissioner will be appointed by the SPCB with the agreement of the Parliament.

The first Scottish Parliamentary Standards Commissioner, Dr Jim Dyer's second and final term in office came to an end on 31 March 2009. The part-time post was advertised in January 2009 and we received 45 applications which demonstrated a high level of interest in the post. From a strong field of candidates, we unanimously recommended to Parliament the appointment of Stuart Allan for a term of two years. The recommendation was subsequently endorsed and Mr Allan took up office on 2 April 2009.

1.7 Scottish Parliament and Business Exchange

The SPCB is a member of the Scottish Parliament and Business Exchange (SPaBE), an independent, educational charity, established as a company funded by its own members, the purpose of which is to support the

development of knowledge and understanding between business and the Scottish Parliament.

The Exchange was very active in 2008-09, with seventeen MSPs involved in attending a number of one to three day programmes at member companies, and through a major inward programme at the Scottish Parliament. Preparations were made during the reporting year for further outward programmes involving more than 20 MSPs and for another inward event at the Parliament, all during the first quarter of the current year.

Membership of the Exchange held steady over the year, despite the difficult economic conditions, which is testament to the value placed on it by those involved.

1.8 Relocation of Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) Desk

In May 2008, SPICe relocated its main enquiry desk from the main SPICe room to the newly vacated former Post Office desk in the Garden Lobby. This was in response to user feedback from Members and staff and aimed at increasing accessibility.

The new service point has worked well, with 500 additional enquiries received in the first year.

1.9 Dewar Reading Room

Measures were taken to improve the accessibility of the Dewar Reading Room. The door was fitted with a proximity reader so Members and staff are no longer required to ask SPICe staff for the key when they wish to access the room. The room is intended as a quiet reading area for Members on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

On Mondays and Fridays the room is available more widely, for visits and tours, and it is also available by arrangement for events and receptions. During 2008, the Dewar Room was used for two major events, the 2008 Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting and the End Child Poverty Reception.

Supporting Parliamentary Business

The following gives an overview of the key support provided to ensure the smooth running of Parliamentary business.

1.10 Supporting Parliamentary Business in the Chamber and Committees

SPCB staff continued to achieve all parliamentary business targets with no business lost during the period of this report. Procedural advice and other support was provided for 210 debates held in meetings of Parliament, and

direct assistance was also given to 26 Member's Bills and bill proposals; the lodging of 868 amendments to bills; 107 public petitions; 2,515 motions; 10,936 written Parliamentary Questions; and 1,996 oral Parliamentary Questions.

SPCB staff supported the Parliament's fourteen mandatory and subject committees and three ad hoc committees (which were staffed from within existing resources). This included making arrangements and providing papers for and giving procedural advice at 395 meetings lasting for a total of 863 hours. Overall, it has been a busy year for committees and SPCB staff support has enabled all planned business to proceed according to agreed timetables.

In line with the Parliament's wish to be open and accessible in all its work, clerks made arrangements for ten committee meetings to take place outside Edinburgh, including two meetings of the Public Petitions Committee in Easterhouse and Fraserburgh. As part of the arrangements for these meetings, staff worked with the local communities in advance of the meetings to enhance their knowledge and encourage participation.

Clerks also worked directly with a number of stakeholders to increase their understanding of the Scottish Parliament by running training seminars. These included work with staff from Scottish Government, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Audit Scotland, the Equalities and Human Rights Commission and further education Boards of Management.

The committee clerks also arranged on behalf of committees a number of stakeholder events. These included an event in Glasgow for the Local Government and Communities Committee at which local interest groups helped shape the direction of the inquiry into child poverty. As part of the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee's pre legislative scrutiny of the Climate Change Bill, clerks arranged a series of climate change seminars in the Parliament based around a practical demonstration of a carbon assessment tool which allowed Members and stakeholders to assess the carbon implications of different emission scenarios across the various sectors of the economy. That was followed by a major climate change event in the Chamber on 27 March 2009 involving a variety of stakeholders and speakers from across the world to discuss the international impact of climate change and Scotland's role in reducing emissions in relation to the Bill.

Fact finding visits, designed to inform committee scrutiny, were an important feature of committee work. The clerks organised and supported Members at 33 such visits. These included destinations across Scotland such as Malaig (the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee in connection with its inquiry into ferry services in Scotland); Arran (the Rural Affairs and Environment Committee in connection with its rural housing inquiry) and Motherwell (the Justice Committee in connection with its inquiry into community policing), as well as, where appropriate, abroad (for example the

Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee's fact finding visits to Austria and Iceland in connection with its tourism inquiry).

1,777 witnesses from 673 organisations were supported through the process of giving evidence. Witness and stakeholder liaison is an important part of the "behind the scenes" work of the committee staff who work with these groups to explain how to engage with committees and prepare themselves to give evidence. 92% of witnesses who completed the witness satisfaction questionnaires rated the service they received from the clerks as good or very good, against an agreed target of 80%.

European scrutiny remained an important element of committee work and during the year the Parliament's European Officer introduced the "Brussels Bulletin" which updated committees on the European Parliament's priorities and incorporated regular contributions from Scottish MEPs. A quarterly edition of the bulletin focused on specific themes. This is a valuable new service to committees to enhance their European scrutiny.

Staff of the European and External Relations Committee worked with officials from the European Parliament, European Commission and British Council to arrange a conference for around 100 school children on Europe Day 2008 focussing on issues raised in the Committee's international development inquiry.

ENCOURAGE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PARLIAMENT

2.1 Major Visits/Delegations

The Scottish Parliament continued to be of interest to Parliaments across the world. This was evident in the 120 inward visits during 2008/09, with Canada, Australia, Germany and Ireland sending the highest number of delegations. In addition to learning from, and sharing with each other on common issues, this year's engagement provided the Scottish Parliament with a wide international audience with which to promote its 10th Anniversary, as well as Scotland's Year of Homecoming.

There were many engagements with international Speakers and their delegations such as Alberto Perdomo, from the House of Representatives, Uruguay, in November 2008; and Trajko Veljanoski, from the Assembly of Macedonia, in December 2008. Mr Perdomo's visit centred around energy, climate change and health issues and Mr Veljanoski's related to a programme designed to assist Macedonia in the strengthening of their parliamentary procedures as part of their EU application process.

This year, the Scottish Consular Corps has again continued to play a valuable role in the Scottish Parliament's international engagement, and as part of the Parliament's Year of Homecoming programme the Presiding Officer hosted a special Burns Supper for the Corps in January. Joining the Corps were other international guests such as Peter Milliken MP, Speaker of the Canadian House of Commons, and John O'Donoghue TD, Speaker of the Dail Éireann.

During the reporting period the work of the CPA continued to go from strength to strength. The 2009 Commonwealth Day celebrations, under the theme "The Commonwealth@60 – serving a new generation", included a round table discussion with Scottish University students; a Members' Debate; and a Reception to promote the values of the Commonwealth and parliamentary democracy to a younger generation.

Other CPA activities included an outward visit by the CPA Scotland Branch in November 2008 to Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Québec with the aims of strengthening CPA links between Scotland and Canada. Discussions included common issues such as minority government and language policies; and promoting the Parliament's 10th Anniversary and Scotland's Year of Homecoming. In Nova Scotia – the province hosting the largest Scottish diaspora – the delegation joined the provincial legislature in celebrating their 250th anniversary, and visited St Francis Xavier University in Antigonish to promote both the Parliament and Homecoming. Other activities included the attendance by Tricia Marwick MSP and David Whitton MSP at the 54th CPA Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in August 2008; and Bill Butler MSP at the 20th CPA Seminar in Ottawa in June 2008.

Closer to home, relations with our UK and Irish counterparts were further strengthened through the work of the British Irish Parliamentary Assembly,

such as attendance at the Plenary Session in Newcastle in November 2008 and Committee meetings in London and Cardiff. It can be said that the Scottish Parliament played a key role in the reform of the Body (previously known as the British Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body), changes that reflected the development of the Body as the east-west parliamentary link in the British-Irish Good Friday agreement structures. In addition, Scottish/UK relations were enhanced through ongoing visit engagement, such as those by Helen Goodman, Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Leader of the House of Commons in June 2008 and Lord Dafydd Elis Thomas, Presiding Officer of the National Assembly for Wales in March 2009.

Finally, during 2008/09, a highly productive programme was arranged for the Presiding Officer and his delegation for Scotland Week in April 2009. The programme, part of the Scottish Parliament's Homecoming programme, saw visits to Québec and North Carolina as well as participation in the 11th Annual Tartan Day Parade in New York.

2.2 Events and Exhibitions

2.2.1 Review of Events Policy

Given the increase in the number of requests for events to be held in the Parliament, the SPCB agreed revised criteria and guidance on events. The number of Member sponsored events was increased to 425 per year and, where appropriate, the Main Hall, Garden Lobby and Members' Restaurant will now be used to accommodate large events.

2.2.2 Events and Exhibitions

The Parliament continued to support many events and exhibitions, some of the highlights from this reporting period can be found below.

2.2.3 Donald Dewar Memorial Debating Tournament

The Grand Final of the Donald Dewar Memorial Debating Tournament took place in the Debating Chamber on 12 June and was chaired by the Presiding Officer. The schools participating in the final were: Douglas Academy, High School of Dundee, Mearns Castle High School, and Robert Gordon's College. The event was won by Robert Gordon's College.

The Presiding Officer, at the same event, also presented a prize to the winner of the joint Scottish Parliament & Law Society for Scotland Essay Competition. As part of her prize, the winner later spent time in the Office of the Solicitor to the Parliament.

2.2.4 World Press Photo Exhibition 2008

The World Press Photo exhibition returned to the Parliament for a third time in 2008 exhibiting for three weeks from 8 - 30 August 2008.

Three Apple iMacs provided touch-screen interactive information on the winning photos, photographers and judging panel.

The exhibition attracted 31,517 visitors to the Parliament and received excellent feedback through the evaluation forms.

2.2.5 SQA Higher Art and Design Exhibition

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Higher Art and Design Exhibition was displayed in the Parliament's Main Hall from 15 October to 6 November, showcasing 180 exhibits in painting, sculpture, design, ceramics, fashion and jewellery. In total 98 schools and 3,195 students visited the Parliament as a result of hosting the exhibition.

An education programme was developed by Education and Community Partnerships staff working with the Art Curator/ Exhibitions Manager that included a tour of the Parliament's Art Collection. Sixty-two schools visited the Parliament to participate in self-guided tours of the exhibition. Thirty-six schools took part in 65 sessions of the self-guided tour of the exhibition plus a guided tour of the Art Collection. The Presiding Officer also hosted two evening receptions for the students represented in the exhibition and their parents and teachers, with MSPs also in attendance.

Visitor numbers over the duration of the exhibition were 22,677.

2.2.6 As Others See Us Exhibition

The launch of the 'As Others See Us' Exhibition marked the beginning of the Parliament's series of activities and events to mark Scotland's Year of Homecoming and the Parliament's 10th Anniversary. The exhibition contained photographs of noteworthy Scots and their response to a chosen Burns work, demonstrating how his work continues to inspire centuries later. Sitters ranged from a clan chief and an Ayrshire farmer to musicians and writers such as Eddi Reader and Christopher Brookmyre.

2.2.7 Tartan Design Competition

In January 2009, the Presiding Officer launched a competition to design an official Scottish Parliament tartan. The competition was open to all current textile and design students studying at thirteen Further and Higher Education establishments across Scotland.

The winning design will be exclusively used by the Scottish Parliament for items sold in the Parliament shop, for marketing and publicity, and has been registered with the Scottish Tartans Register as "the official Scottish Parliament tartan".

2.2.8 International Women's Day Conference

On 7 March 2009, 300 women from across Scotland gathered at the Scottish Parliament to mark international Women's Day 2009. The event was chaired by the Deputy Presiding Officer, Trish Godman MSP. The theme of the event was 'Violence Against Women' with a number of speakers including the Rt Hon Thabitha Khumalo MP from Zimbabwe; the Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP; Lily Greenan, Manager, Scottish Women's Aid; Agnes Tolmie, Chair, Scottish Women's Convention; Fiona Hyslop MSP; Annabel Goldie MSP; and Cathy Peattie MSP.

2.2.9 Canongate Wall Competition

In March 2009, the Presiding Officer launched a competition to find a new quotation for the Canongate Wall. Members of the public were asked to nominate a well-loved or significant piece of writing that highlighted ideas or values relevant to Scotland. The winning quotation has been carved in the Wall alongside the existing 24 quotations, many of which commemorate the work of Scotland's leading writers.

2.3 Festival of Politics

The fourth Festival of Politics took place at the Parliament from 20-23 August 2008. Following the abridged Festival held in 2007 – resulting from the Scottish General Election – the 2008 Festival returned to the original format, featuring a range of events held across the Parliamentary campus.

For the first time in the Festival's history, the 2008 Programme – which consisted of over 25 events – followed an underlying theme: Global Issues – National Perspectives. In keeping with this theme, headline Chamber events included: internationally renowned peace campaigners Arun Gandhi (grandson of Mahatma Gandhi) and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Mairéad Corrigan-Maguire discussed how conflict can be transformed to peace; an analysis of the turmoil in the global economy, undertaken by a panel of economic experts including the BBC's Evan Davis; author and Daily Mail journalist Peter Osborne provided his perspective on the consequences of the war in Iraq; and commentator and journalist Polly Toynbee examined inequality within British society.

The 2008 Festival also saw a highly diverse range of events brought forward in co-operation with both the Parliament's Cross Party Groups and external stakeholder organisations. Topics covered by these included: an examination of climate change from a young person's perspective; the impact of international human trafficking within Scotland; how Scots perceive the law; the importance of "new philanthropy" to society; and the best way to deliver elections in a modern world.

2.4 Scotland's Futures Forum

Scotland's Futures Forum was created by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body to help Members, along with policy makers, businesses, academics and the wider community of Scotland, look beyond immediate horizons, to some of the challenges and opportunities we will face as a country in the future. Our contribution to the funding of the Forum is reported in the Annual Accounts, and I, as Presiding Officer, chair the Forum. During the reporting period, the Forum continued to bring members of the public and MSPs together in useful debate through its monthly cafes, lectures, workshops and conferences.

In 2008, the Forum began working on its core project looking at what sustainable communities might look like in 2025. Working with St Andrews University and a range of public and private sector organisations, the Forum will publish its findings in late 2009. Central to this work has been the Forum's engagement with local people, groups and communities, including Tiree, the most westerly Scottish Island. The Forum has also been developing new tools to help community groups consider their own futures, further stimulating public policy debate at Holyrood.

As in previous years the Forum continued, through its events, to challenge and stretch our thinking and helped our members consider new ideas, research and emerging trends.

Forum publications, papers, research and audiocasts are available for free at www.scotlandfutureforum.org.

2.5 Scottish Parliament Art Collection

2.5.1 Art Advisory Group

The Art Advisory Group has continued its role in maintaining and improving the Parliament's Art Collection and sought ways for the public to benefit from what is available. During the reporting period, two members of the Art Advisory Group resigned.

2.5.2 Acquisitions

Two pieces of art work by Scottish artists were purchased during the period of this report. The first, 'Broken Linen Line 1', a tapestry by Sara Brennan draws its inspiration from landscape, focusing on the horizon and its changing appearance due to varying weather conditions. The second, 'Annie and Snowy', a photograph by Mark Neville explores aspects of Scottish identity by looking at the complicated relationship between the Stuart family, landowners and the farmers who worked the land at Mount Stuart. The artist also loaned the Parliament another photograph entitled 'Fancy' from the 'Fancy Pictures' series and two from the Port Glasgow Book Project; 'Ferguson's Shipyard' and 'Betty'.

2.5.3 Provision of Public Tours of the Parliament's Art Collection

Tours of the Parliament's Art Collection are now available to the public on the first Saturday of every month. This hour-long tour features some of the paintings, photographs, sculptures and installations that form part of the Scottish Parliament Art Collection.

During the tour, visitors can find out about how key themes - the importance of our relationship with the sea, our relationship to the land and our identity - run through many of the artworks on the tour, which will normally include a look at works by Ian Hamilton Finlay, the Boyle family, Alison Watt and John Bellany.

2.6 Visitor Numbers

During the period of this report, a total of 338,168 people visited the Parliament. January to March in 2009 experienced an increase in visitor numbers compared to the same period in the previous year.

Over 70% of visitors using the First Minister's Questions overspill room facility were able to gain entrance to the Debating Chamber through Visitor Services' ticketing system. We continue to monitor this to ensure we are providing the best possible service for Members and visitors. A total of 23,290 visitors joined our Guided Tours programme during the same period.

2.7 Public Information Service

In the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009, the switchboard responded to almost seventy-seven thousand calls (76,884) and Public Information staff answered almost nine thousand seven hundred (9,695) enquiries received by telephone, text, email and letter.

The Public Information Service has continued to extend the range and scope of the information it provides. Members can request stock of Public Information materials for use with their constituents. The text messaging service, which provides another way in which members of the public can contact the Parliament for information, became a permanent feature following its successful trial last year. In early 2009 a new leaflet, Making the Scottish Parliament work for you, was published in English, Scots, Gaelic, Polish and five other Scottish community languages. All information resources are available in Braille, audio tape and CD, British Sign Language DVD and large print.

2.8 Freedom of Information

The SPCB continues to support openness and accessibility by publishing as much information as possible. Since July 2008, to increase the amount of information provided about the freedom of information requests received, SPICe, the Parliament's Information Centre, has been adding a copy of the full reply, including a copy of the documents provided, to the online disclosure

log. The disclosure log, available on the Scottish Parliament's website, is accessed over 1,000 times each month.

Between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2009 the Scottish Parliament received 176 requests for information; twelve reviews were requested and six resulted in appeals to the Scottish Information Commissioner. This compares to 317 requests received in 2007-2008 and 418 received in 2006-2007. Hopefully the continuing reduction in the number of requests reflects our ongoing efforts to make information readily available. An example of this is the publication of appropriate SPCB Reports.

In April 2008 the Scottish Parliament hosted and chaired a meeting of the Scottish Public Information Forum which provides an opportunity for those involved in freedom of information in Scotland to exchange ideas and views.

Links to our Publication Scheme and Disclosure Log and information on how to send us an FOI request can be found here:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/corporate/foi/index.htm>

2.9 Introduction of Gaelic – English Bilingual Logo

As part of the Parliament's Gaelic Language Plan, required under The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005, it was agreed that the Gaelic for 'Scottish Parliament', 'Pàrlamaid na h-Alba' be included in the Parliament's logo. In April 2008 a bilingual English – Gaelic logo was introduced and incorporated into new parliamentary publications.

EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION

3.1 Corporate Change Programme

The Corporate Change Programme was initiated to ensure that the organisation was structured appropriately to meet future challenges. It was therefore agreed that it was necessary to have a top management team focussed on high level strategic issues with staff at the next level taking greater responsibility for developing and delivering operational services. As part of this process a new structure was developed (see page 26), which was achieved without the need for compulsory redundancies. A Voluntary Early Retirement scheme was also offered to senior staff to reinvigorate the senior management structure and create opportunities for staff in the middle and lower management grades.

3.1.1 Interim Strategic Plan

As part of the Corporate Change Programme, we agreed the development of a Strategic Plan to replace the existing Management Plan. The interim Strategic Plan was published in November 2008.

The interim Plan set out, in broad terms, the strategic aims and direction for the Parliamentary Staff Service for the remainder of the parliamentary session. The plan does not provide an exhaustive list of the planned activities: it is necessarily selective, focussing on the areas of the greatest strategic importance, value or risk. Operational activities will continue to be planned and monitored at the appropriate levels and reported to the SPCB as necessary.

The interim Plan was superseded by the Strategic Plan (version 2.0) covering the period from April 2009 to the next scheduled Scottish Parliament elections in May 2011. A copy of this version can be found on page 27.

3.2 Security

Following the review of perimeter security, and on the advice of the Security Services, work to enhance security at the Parliament has been ongoing.

3.2.1 Chicane Installation

A chicane at the foot of Holyrood Road outside the service yard gates was completed in March 2009. The chicane was part of the improvements to perimeter protection and will ensure that all traffic reduces speed before reaching the gates.

3.3 Scottish Parliamentary Staff Service

Part of ensuring that the correct services are being provided to Members is ensuring that the correct support structure and staff are in place. A current chart of the organisation's structure, reflecting the various changes which took

place during 2008-09, can be found at page 26. The number of full-time equivalent staff in post at the end of March 2009 was 503; the staff turnover was 6.14%.

3.4 HR Change Programme

The implementation of the recommendations flowing from the functional and structural review of the Personnel Office has continued. New initiatives include:

- the creation of a new HR Advisory Team to provide a more robust consultancy service to Members; and
- the creation of a new enquiry handling and tracking system to provide an enhanced service to its customers.

The Human Resources office aims to be a proactive, quality focused and integrated service provider -

- delivering HR services that fully meet the needs of the SPCB, MSPs and SPCB managers and staff;
- developing and maintaining leading HR practice through efficient and effective policies and processes; and
- supporting the SPCB to develop an environment that realises our vision and strategic objectives.

Following approval of a business case in January, procurement of a new integrated HR and payroll system is underway. Together, these developments will substantially improve the delivery of HR services to Members, their staff and SPCB staff.

3.5 Health and Safety

3.5.1 Epilepsy Scotland "Best Practice Certificate for Epilepsy" Awarded

The SPCB was proud to be awarded the Best Practice Certificate for Epilepsy which recognises employers with policies and procedures in place for recruiting and supporting individuals with epilepsy. At the Parliament, this includes making reasonable adjustments at work such as adjusting lighting and room temperature, if possible, and offering a range of flexible working arrangements such as home working, flexible start/finish times, compressed or reduced working hours. In addition to this, the SPCB provides epilepsy awareness training to help to ensure that colleagues know how to react in the event that someone has a seizure and to ensure that they feel safe and supported at work.

3.5.2 Healthy Working Lives Silver Award

The SPCB was also successful in gaining the Healthy Working Lives Silver Award in recognition of its commitment to create a healthier workforce by operating robust Health & Safety policy and procedures; raising awareness of health issues and providing practical advice and support to encourage staff to follow a healthier lifestyle. We will be working towards achieving the 'Gold Award' in the future.

3.5.3 Keep Edinburgh Clean Award

The Parliament achieved the Keep Edinburgh Clean Gold Award in July 2008. The award recognises the SPCB's work to improve the Parliament's environmental performance.

The Keep Edinburgh Clean Award is an Edinburgh City Council programme which allows businesses and public bodies to measure their environmental performance and to contribute to a cleaner and more sustainable city. The aim of the award is to engage organisations in their community, helping to instil a sense of pride, build a positive connection with the local area and contribute to their Corporate Social Responsibility requirements. We achieved the gold award for our work towards keeping the area clean and reducing waste by reducing, reusing and recycling.

This is the third award which recognises the significant efforts that are being made continuously to improve the sustainability of the organisation; the other two being ISO 14001:2004 and the Cycle Friendly Employers Award.

3.5.4 Energy Performance Certificate

An Energy Performance Certificate was produced for the Parliament in January 2009. The Parliament achieved an energy rating B based on how the building was constructed.

The energy rating is calculated using computer software to replicate the building. Information entered into the model includes building geometry, insulation values and heating and lighting systems. The energy rating allows different buildings to be compared as standardised-use patterns are assumed.

3.6 **SPCB Expenditure for the 12 Months Ended 31 March 2009**

We have prepared separate annual accounts for the 2008-09 financial year that comply with the accounting principles and disclosure requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual. The Auditor General for Scotland has audited these accounts and they were laid before the Parliament on 18 November 2009. A summary of the expenditure is set out below.

We continue to live within our budgets. Our net revenue expenditure on staff, property and administration costs in 2008-09 was £70.6m, £1.0m less than the available budget. Of the £1.0m difference from budget, £0.5m

represents lower funding requirements in the year for the Commissioners and Ombudsman and the remaining variation is due to lower general administration costs for the SPCB than budgeted.

The value of the Holyrood building was adjusted by use of RICS Tender Price Indices in 2008-09 resulting in a net decrease to the value of £7.9m. Capital expenditure in 2008-09 of £1.8m comprised £1.3m on IT software, work in development and hardware with £0.5m on Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment.

SPCB Expenditure for the 12 Months Ended 31 March 2009

	Actual	Budget Variance	
	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>
Revenue (Note 1)	72.0	73.0	1.0
Expenditure			
Less: Income	(1.4)	(1.4)	(0.0)
Net Revenue Expenditure	70.6	71.6	1.0
Capital Expenditure	1.8	1.8	0.0
Total Revenue and Capital Expenditure in 2007-08, excluding capital charges and exceptional items	72.4	73.4	1.0
Capital Charges and exceptional items (Note 2)	23.0	26.1	3.1
Total Expenditure in 2007-08, including capital charges and exceptional items	95.4	99.5	4.1

Notes

Note 1: Revenue expenditure of £72.0m in 2008-09 included parliamentary staff salaries of £24.7m and MSP salaries of £10.4m. Members' costs, which enable MSPs to secure staff and accommodation to assist them in the discharge of their parliamentary duties, were £10.5m. A further £7.1m was expended on funding the salaries and running costs of the Commissioners and Ombudsman. The remaining £19.3m relates to the administration and property running costs of the Parliament.

Note 2: Capital charges are required by the Government Financial Reporting Manual to reflect the depreciation in value of assets and the cost of capital. The charge for 2008-09 was £23.0m.

3.6.1 Financial Assistance for Registered Political Parties

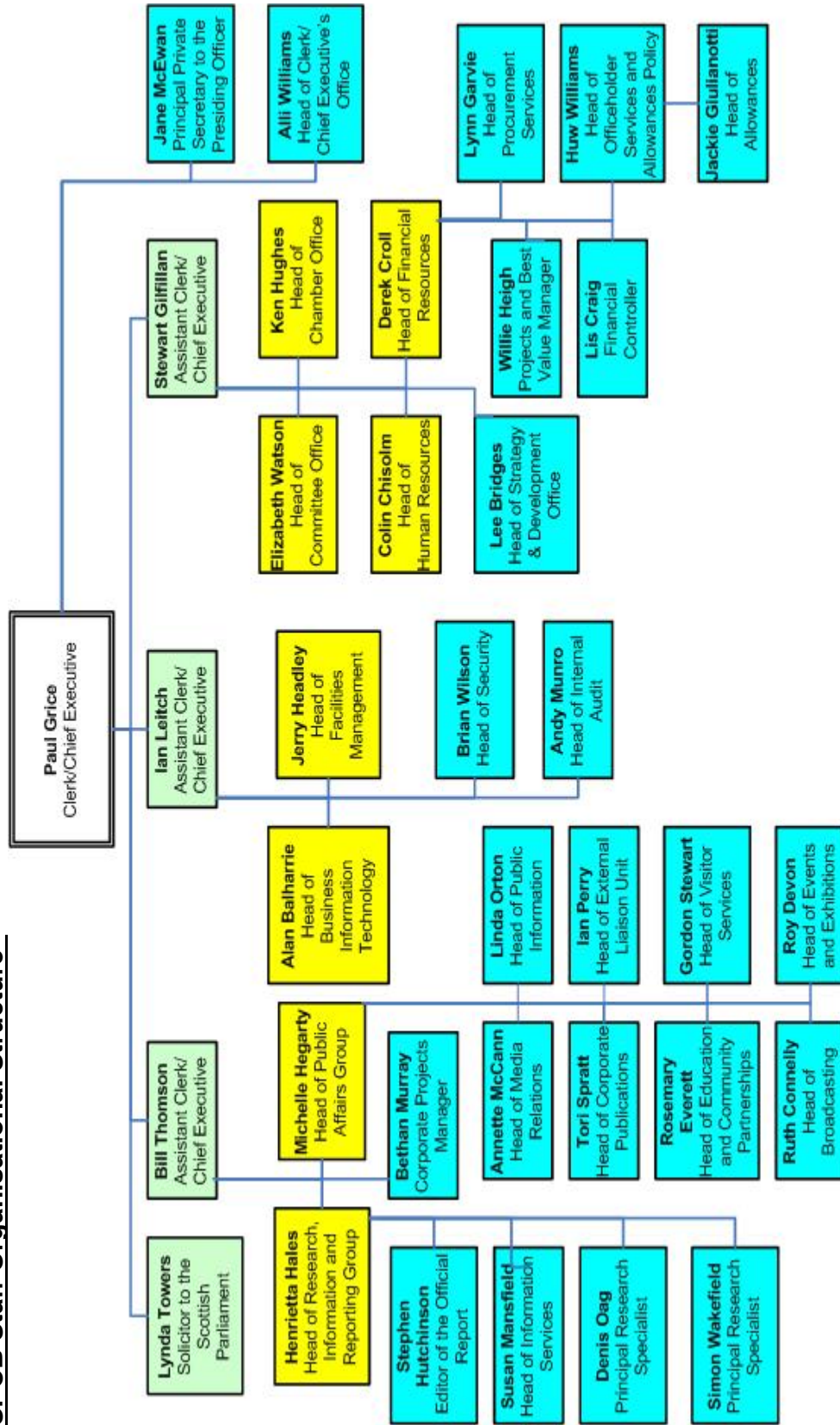
Under the Financial Assistance for Registered Political Parties Order 1999, the registered political parties in the Parliament are entitled to monies to assist their Members to carry out their parliamentary duties. The resource accounts to the financial year ended 31 March 2009 include costs of £521k under the terms of this Order.

3.7 **Payment Performance**

There has been a dramatic improvement in the number of invoices paid promptly which is crucial not only to meet the cash flow requirements of our suppliers but also in terms of the reputation of the Parliament.

Our policy is to comply with the Confederation of British Industry's Prompt Payers Code. The target is for payment to be made within agreed payment terms or 30 days of receipt of invoices not in dispute for goods and services received. Average payment performance achieved for 2008-09 was 97.6%, compared to 79.4% in 2007-08. In 2008-09 a voluntary initiative was introduced to further improve payment and support business. Under this initiative, introduced by the SPCB in December 2008, the aim was to make payment to the supplier within 10 days of receipt of invoice. SPCB paid 88.5% of its invoices for the period from 1 December 2008 to 31 March 2009 within 10 days.

SPCB Staff Organisational Structure





The Scottish Parliamentary Service

Strategic Plan

Version 2.0

April 2009 - March 2011



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Foreword by the Presiding Officer



I am pleased to introduce the Strategic Plan for the Scottish Parliamentary Service.

On 12 May 2009, the Scottish Parliament will reach its 10th anniversary. Ahead of this milestone, the Corporate Body decided that the time was right to look again at our future strategy and direction. We wanted to take stock and make sure we are continuing to focus on the Parliament, its members, and the Scottish public, and that we are sufficiently dynamic and agile to respond to changing demands.

This strategic plan is one output of this review of our strategy and direction. It sets out high level aims and strategic targets for the organisation, all underpinned by our core values of integrity, impartiality, professionalism and equality. Our performance against the plan will form the basis of future SPCB annual reports.

The aims and targets we are setting ourselves are undoubtedly challenging. But I have every confidence in the staff of Scottish Parliamentary Service to deliver.

ALEX FERGUSSON MSP
Presiding Officer



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Foreword by the Clerk/Chief Executive



I am delighted to join the Presiding Officer in introducing our Strategic Plan.

The plan is a key output from the organisational change programme we are undertaking, to ensure that we are appropriately structured and resourced to meet the challenges of this parliamentary session and beyond.

The first phase of this programme brought about a number of important changes to our senior management structures, communications mechanisms and approach to risk management. The second phase, which is now underway, includes a high level review of our systems and processes and further development work on risk and organisational performance management. The change programme continues to develop in close tandem with our response to the major survey of Members that was carried out over Summer 2008.

The strategic plan is intended to be a dynamic document. It will continue to develop to reflect changing circumstances, as existing strategic programmes conclude and others come onstream, and as we agree further performance measures and targets for the future.

PAUL GRICE
Clerk/Chief Executive

Our Purpose

The Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) was established by the Scotland Act 1998. Its main function is to provide the Scottish Parliament with the property, staff and services required for the Parliament's purposes.

The staff of the Scottish Parliamentary Service (SPS) are employed by the SPCB to deliver its requirements.

To do so, we in the SPS:

Aim

to excel as a parliamentary service

Deliver

resilient, high quality, continuously improving services that meet the needs of Parliament, its Members and the public

Value

our principles of integrity, impartiality, professionalism and equality

The work of the SPS is led by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), which is responsible for the delivery of organisational strategy as defined by the SPCB, and for the strategic management of organisational performance and risk.

Aim

Our aim is to excel as a parliamentary service, maintaining the highest standards for legislatures in the UK and internationally. We will be responsive to evolving needs of Members and public expectations of the Scottish Parliament. In doing so, we will always seek value for money.

Deliver

In seeking to meet this aim, our efforts are focussed on three key areas:

- (1) parliamentary business;
- (2) supporting Members;
- (3) public engagement.

These efforts are underpinned by a fourth element – organisational health – which recognises that sustained success is built on a well-led, high quality workforce and robust systems.

For each of the four areas, we have identified a key outcome that represents core service delivery. Underneath, we have listed the main activities that we will undertake in order to deliver these outcomes and produce continuous improvements in service delivery.

Value

We are committed to the highest standards of conduct in carrying out our work. These standards are reflected in our values. Our values form a fundamental part of our performance management systems and an integral part of our identity as an organisation.

Integrity	We demonstrate high standards of honesty and reliability.
Impartiality	We are fair and even-handed in dealing with Members, the public and one another.
Professionalism	We provide high-quality professional advice and support services focussed on meeting the needs of Members and the Parliament. In doing so we actively pursue value for money and encourage innovation.
Equality	We work together to embed principles of equality and diversity and promote a culture of openness and fairness in everything we do.

Section 1: Parliamentary Business

What we will deliver: Chamber and Committee business that takes place as scheduled and is resilient to disruptions and threats

How we will deliver it:

1.1	Support the successful delivery of Chamber business as agreed by Parliament, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing Chamber business accommodation• Providing the required clerking, reporting, technical and security staff to support Chamber business• Providing the required equipment and facilities to support, broadcast and report Chamber business
1.2	Support the successful delivery of Committee business as agreed by Parliament, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing Committee business accommodation• Providing the required clerking, reporting, technical and security staff to support Committee business• Providing the required equipment and facilities to support, broadcast and report Committee business
1.3	Ensure that the business of Parliament can continue with minimum disruption in the event of emergency, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing and maintaining robust and up-to-date plans for business continuity, incident management and disaster recovery• Having contingency arrangements in place for alternative parliamentary accommodation• Maintaining parliamentary systems and supplies in the event of emergency

How we will further improve our ability to deliver:

1.4	Complete Business Continuity development programme and implement agreed testing arrangements by January 2010
1.5	Complete agreed programme of security works by March 2011

Section 2: Supporting Members

What we will deliver: The necessary facilities, technology and support services to enable Members to carry out their parliamentary and representative functions and their roles as employers

How we will deliver it:

2.1	Provide a high quality service to support Members in their parliamentary role, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of the facilities, technology, connectivity and technical support required to support parliamentary offices effectively• Provision of accurate, impartial and timely advice, research and information
2.2	Support Members in their representative role by providing a high quality service to local parliamentary offices, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of the facilities, technology, connectivity and technical support required to support local offices effectively• Annual visits to local offices by parliamentary staff to discuss support needs, address emerging issues and identify opportunities for service improvements
2.3	Support Members in their role as employers by providing high quality support and advice services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effective provision of payroll services for MSPs and their staff• Provision of support and advice to Members around legal obligations, good employment practice and staff development
2.4	Effectively administer the Members' Expenses Scheme as agreed by Parliament, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of accurate and prompt advice on the administration of the Scheme• Prompt payment of invoices and claims• Quarterly publication of information on MSP expenses

How we will further improve our ability to deliver:

2.5	Complete all agreed actions from last MSP survey by March 2010
2.6	Improve responsiveness to Members' needs by commencing a rolling programme of MSP surveys by April 2010
2.7	Enhance the quality, flexibility and reliability of IT services to Members by initiating and delivering technology refresh programme, including completion of Holyrood desktop refresh project by May 2010

Section 3: Engagement

What we will deliver: Increased public awareness of the Parliament and engagement with the parliamentary process in Scotland

How we will deliver it:

3.1	<p>Support and promote public engagement activity at Holyrood, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving opportunities for schools to engage with local MSPs and the Parliament’s work through the “Visit Your Parliament” programme • Hosting and supporting MSP-sponsored events at Holyrood • Hosting and supporting the annual Festival of Politics
3.2	<p>Support Members in promoting local engagement activity, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving opportunities for schools to engage with local MSPs and the Parliament’s work via the “Your Parliament, Your School” programme • Delivering an annual programme of Committee outreach events • Increasing parliamentary participation opportunities for previously under-represented groups via the Community Partnerships Project
3.3	<p>Provide accessible, accurate and up-to-date information to the public about the Parliament and its work, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a comprehensive Public Information service • Providing relevant, accessible and up-to-date parliamentary information and learning resources via the Scottish Parliament website • Offering parliamentary information and translation services in Gaelic, British Sign Language and other community languages in Scotland • Promoting awareness of the Parliament through a programme of partnership working with local and national media organisations
3.4	<p>Provide opportunities for direct public participation in the parliamentary process, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the work of the Public Petitions Committee and e-petition system • Supporting Committee consultations, events and calls for evidence

How we will further improve our ability to deliver:

3.5	<p>Improve coordination of engagement work through development and launch of new public engagement strategy by September 2009</p>
3.6	<p>Increase opportunities for the public to visit and learn about the Parliament through introduction of free guided tours by September 2009</p>
3.7	<p>Redesign Scottish Parliament website to improve design, accessibility, usability and relevance by August 2010</p>

Section 4: Organisational Health

What we will deliver: An organisation that:

- works efficiently, effectively and progressively towards a shared aim
- secures value for money
- minimises negative environmental impacts
- operates in a safe and secure environment

How we will deliver it:

4.1	<p>Through high quality leadership, drive continuous improvement in organisational effectiveness and efficiency, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and implementing a programme of high level training, coaching and performance management for senior managers • Detailed scrutiny of projects, budgets and expenditure to make best use of resources • Comprehensive and transparent financial and procurement policies, encompassing responsible purchasing, active contract management and prompt payment of suppliers • Comprehensive financial, performance and risk reporting to the SPCB and Audit Advisory Board
4.2	<p>Comply with all of our legal responsibilities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting requirements • Health and Safety/Fire Safety legislation • Employment law • Equalities duties • Freedom of Information legislation • Data Protection legislation
4.3	<p>Recruit, develop, retain and support high quality staff through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair, transparent and inclusive recruitment procedures • Progressive employment policies and practices that promote staff welfare and work/life balance • Provision and promotion of wide-ranging training and development opportunities for SPS staff, including leadership development
4.4	<p>Maintain robust arrangements for physical and information security, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining close links with police and security services • An ongoing commitment to training and development for security officers • Comprehensive policies on information management and security

4.5	<p>Continue to improve environmental performance by reducing pollution and resource consumption, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing energy use in parliamentary buildings and maximising the use of renewable energy • Minimising waste by identifying ways to reduce, reuse, repair and recycle materials • Maintaining an environmental management system that complies with the International Standard for Environmental Management (ISO 14001)
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How we will further improve our ability to deliver:

4.6	Enhance leadership capability in the SPS by completing high level programme of leadership training, coaching and development by June 2009
4.7	Improve information sharing and organisational efficiency through implementation of new internal communications strategy (June 2009) and rolling programme of information management projects
4.8	Improve efficiency and effectiveness through reviews of functions, systems and processes by March 2010
4.9	Improve efficiency and capacity of HR function by putting new office structure and systems in place by April 2011
4.10	Develop new performance indicator for legal compliance by March 2010

CONTACTS

Our previous Annual Reports are available on the Scottish Parliament website at: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/corporate/anrep-accts/index.htm#spcb>.

If you have any questions about the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) in general or this Annual Report in particular, please contact the Secretariat as follows:

Judith Proudfoot, on ☎ 0131 348 5307 or
Jonathan Orr, on ☎ 0131 348 6222

(Calls via RNID Typetalk welcome)

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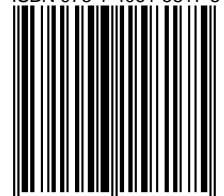
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