Paper BCS/04

Finance Update

For information

1. A finance update is at Appendix A.

Discussion

2. Salaries are £16.2k plus VAT so £19.4k in total per month. A 1% pay rise was implemented in January 2025. We expect a £3.6k underspend on this budget line.
3. We are only expecting claims for the meetings on 21 February and UK Commissioners' meeting on 27/28 February 2025.
4. Quarter 3 rent (£6,958) is paid up-to-date. Q4 charge is expected in March 2025.
5. Quarter 3 Scottish Government Information & Technology Services Division (iTECS) recharge (£1427.53) plus vat is paid up-to-date. Q4 charge is expected in March 2025 (Included in Administration charges).
6. ESRI (Geographic Information System) - We have requested Scottish Government Procurement Directorate to obtain tenders for our GIS licenses. Say £5.5k for each commission.
7. DENTSU (Website upgrade - £2.5k) - We have postponed any website improvement work until 2025-26 i.e. After the Scottish Parliament Review.
8. Administration costs for January included:

	£
NLA Media Access Licence	407.55
Postage	16.15
iTECs	1713.02
Vodaphone	10.20
Total	**£2146.92**

9. The Scottish Government has recharged us £887 for flights and hotel charges in relation to the recent recruitment board.
10. Please see the attached letter from HM Treasury regarding Efficiencies and Savings and draft reply for approval. Please note that there is no agreement between the Scottish Government and Trade Unions on 2025 pay deals but any increase must be found with the £413k budget.
11. OSSS is working on phase 2 of the spending review due at end of February 2025 for Years 2026-29. The approach it has proposed for BCS is to keep costs fixed at £413k for the remainder of the SR (to 2029 and including pay rises).
12. The Commission is invited to note the finance update.

Secretariat
February 2025

Boundary Commission for Scotland Finance Forecast for 2024-25 Last Updated 07/02/2025

Boundary Commission for Scotland Finance Update - January 2025

	Budget	Actual Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Actual Spend to Date (£)	Feb-25	Mar-25	Forecast Spend Total (£)	Total Expected Spend	Budget less Total Spend
Secretariat Staff Costs	233,320	16,510	19,390	19,262	19,204	19,187	19,198	19,249	19,574	19,860	19,423	190,858	19,423	19,423	38,846	229,704	3,616
Commissioners' Fees and Expenses	5,055	0	0	586	0	169	0	0	0	1,546	0	2,301	0	2,022	2,022	4,323	732
Subtotal	238,375	16,510	19,390	19,848	19,204	19,356	19,198	19,249	19,574	21,407	19,423	193,159	19,423	21,445	40,868	234,027	4,348
																0	
Accommodation	26,000	0	0	0	0	6,894	0	7,095	0	0	6,958	20,946		7,095	7,095	28,041	-2,041
Admin	44,635	585	37	1,986	1,745	142	138	0	0	94	2,147	6,875	8,285	2,200	10,485	17,359	27,276
T&S	5,000	0	0	0	109	211	0	0	11	39	887	1,258		400	400	1,658	3,342
Review Costs		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal	75,635	585	37	1,986	1,854	7,247	138	7,095	11	133	9,992	29,079	8,285	9,694	17,980	47,059	28,576
																0	
Overall	314,010	17,095	19,427	21,834	21,058	26,603	19,336	26,344	19,585	21,540	29,415	222,238	27,708	31,139	58,848	281,085	32,925
Delegated Budget	408,000															281,085	126,915

HM Treasury, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Secretaries of State
By email

21 January 2025

Dear Colleague,

ARMS LENGTH BODY EFFICIENCIES AND SAVINGS AT SPENDING REVIEW 2025

1. Thank you for your department's ongoing work to deliver your Spending Review returns. As you continue to develop your phase 2 returns for SR25, I wanted to set out the importance of looking closely at your Arms Length Bodies (ALBs).

2. ALBs play a significant role in delivering public services and the Government's priorities, and they must play their part in improving efficiency across the public sector – it is critical that ALBs find and make efficiencies and savings in their budget, rather than passing on costs to businesses or users. I would be grateful for your support in ensuring ALBs scrutinise their spending, in the same way that you are scrutinising spending in your department.

3. As I set out in December, I am asking all departments to carry out a zero-based, line-by-line review of existing RDEL budgets and to deliver a minimum 1% year-on-year technical efficiency target. This approach must also be applied to all ALBs.

4. Please could you provide the following specific information on your ALBs in your SR return:

a. <u>ALB Responsibilities and Functions</u> – Savings options and consideration of where there is duplication, redundancy or low value spend across the ALBs within your departmental group.

b. <u>Headcount and expenditure</u> – A detailed line-by-line breakdown of headcount and expenditure across all of your department's ALBs covering 2024/25 to 2028/29.

c. Consultancy spend – a detailed breakdown of the level and type of consultancy spend across all of your department's ALBs, and plans to reduce expenditure where possible.

d. Cabinet Office procurement frameworks – a summary of how your ALBs engage with the CO procurement frameworks, and options to increase usage where this would enable savings.

e. Estates – An outline of your ALB estates, including occupancy data across sites where available and any potential areas for co-location and rationalisation.

f. Shared services – information on shared services uptake across your ALBs, broken down by corporate function.

5. In addition, I would encourage you to consider opportunities for consolidating ALBs where activities or functions are duplicated, best delivered by one organisation or where functions are now redundant.

6. I would be grateful if you could submit this information alongside your initial ZBR return by 27 February 2025. My officials stand ready to assist yours should they have any questions.

7. I am copying this letter to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Parliamentary Secretary at the Cabinet Office and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Yours Sincerely,

Darren Jones

RT HON DARREN JONES MP
CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY

Boundary Commission for Scotland

A) ALB Responsibilities and Functions

The Boundary Commission for Scotland was established in its current form by the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (the 1986 Act).

Our duties and powers are detailed in the 1986 Act (as amended). We are responsible for reviews of United Kingdom Parliament constituencies in Scotland.

We are an advisory Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored and funded by the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland (OSSS). We are an independent and non-political body.

B) Headcount

Post	**Full-time Equivalent 2024-25**	**Full-time Equivalent 2025-26**	**Full-time Equivalent 2026-27**	**Full-time Equivalent 2027-28**
Secretary	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Review Manager	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Deputy Review Manager	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Review Officer	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Finance and Governance Officer	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
IT Database Manager	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
General Office Manager	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Total	**3.1**	**3.1**	**3.1**	**3.1**

Expenditure

Financial Budget				
	2024-2025 £000s	2025-2026 £000s	2026-2027 £000s	2027-2028 £000s
Staff Costs	233	239	247	254
Commissioner's Fees and Expenses	7	7	7	7
Accommodation	28	30	32	34
Administration	139	136	126	117
Travel and Subsistence	1	1	1	1
Review Costs	0	0	0	0
Total	**408**	**413**	**413**	**413**

C) Consultancy Spend

None

D) Procurement Framework

A Boundary Commission for Scotland is based in Edinburgh and uses the Scottish Government HR and Finance system, it also uses the Scottish Government procurement system.

E) Estates

The Boundary Commission for Scotland is a sub-tenant of the Scottish Legal Aid Board and shares all estates costs with other ALB based in Thistle House, Edinburgh on a pro-rata basis.

F) Shared Services

All office and estate services are shared with the Scottish Legal Aid Board.

The Secretariat service is shared with Boundaries Scotland with the Scottish Government providing all HR, Finance and Procurement service.