



Meeting of the Civil Service Commission Board

Monday 24 November 2025 12.30 - 4.00pm

Attendees:

Gisela Stuart	First Civil Service Commissioner	Chair
Elizabeth Hambley	Commissioner	Board Member
Paul Kernaghan	Commissioner	Board Member
Lea Paterson	Commissioner	Board Member
Chris Pilgrim	Commissioner	Board Member
Sarah Pittam	Commissioner	Board Member
Tony Poulter	Commissioner	Board Member
Martin Spencer	Commissioner	Board Member
Elizabeth Walmsley	Commissioner	Board Member
Neil Wooding (via Google Meet)	Commissioner	Board Member
Kate Owen	Chief Executive Officer	Board Member

Apologies: Atul Devani and Stephen Cohen.

1. Welcome

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed attendees. Apologies were received from Stephen Cohen and Atul Devani.

2. Minutes, actions and forward look

- 2.1. The board approved the July 2025 Board minutes and the September 2025 Board development minutes.

- 2.2. The secretariat updated on actions from the previous Board meeting and outlined key upcoming dates in the forward look.

3. First Civil Service Commissioner update

- 3.1. The Chair updated the Board on:

- The Annual Report and Accounts, due to be published on 27 November 2025.
- The Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee's inquiry into ethics and integrity.
- The public-facing work of the Commission, including the publication of the 2025-27 strategy document and panel event featuring the First Civil Service Commissioner and Atul Devani at the Institute for Government.
- The first round of the Commission's training programme which has concluded with high attendance numbers.

4. CEO update

- 4.1. The Chief Executive provided an organisational update, including changes resulting from the closure of ACOBA and assumption of Business Appointment Rules (BARs) administration for civil servants, a financial update, and continued AI integration into team processes.

5. CSC in the public update

- 5.1. The Press Officer updated the Board on recent publications and public engagements. She discussed the wider ethics and integrity landscape and the added interest in the Commission due to the assumption of advisory responsibility in relation to the BARs.

6. CSC strategy update

- 6.1. The secretariat introduced an update paper on the 2025-27 strategy, which has now been published on the website and features new priorities added to reflect the CSC's new BARs responsibilities.

7. Joint Operations Committee (JOC) and Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) updates

- 7.1. The First Civil Service Commissioner updated the Board on the work of the



JOC.

7.2. The ARC Chair updated the Board on its work.

8. Operational update

8.1. The secretariat provided an update on the operational dashboard. All service level agreements continue to be met.

9. BARs next steps - audit and policy review

9.1. The secretariat introduced plans for a policy review of the BARs and the introduction of a BARs departmental audit.

10. Exceptions review one year on - update and next steps

10.1. The secretariat updated on exceptions. The secretariat outlined how exceptions had successfully been used effectively to fill skill gaps across a number of departments. The Board agreed with proposals to conduct and publish a light touch review of the delegated exceptions report.

11. Strategy 2025-27: Commissioner role in interim appointments

11.1. The First Civil Service Commissioner introduced a paper outlining techniques Commissioners can use in chairing competitions to ensure competitions with an interim candidate (an individual on temporary promotion into the role advertised) are fair and open. Suggested techniques would be added to the Commissioner FAQ document to assist with best practice in competitions.

12. Meeting wrap-up and actions

12.1. The Chair thanked attendees and provided a summary of agreed actions.