

Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010: statement for 2024/25

Scottish Law Commission Return for Financial Year 2024/25

Under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 the Commission, along with other public bodies in Scotland, has a duty to publish an annual statement relating to our expenditure in the following areas:

- Public relations
- Overseas travel
- Hospitality and entertainment
- External consultancy

There are further duties to publish certain information relating to the purchasing of goods, the remuneration of employees and the steps we have taken to improve efficiency, effectiveness and economy in our performance as well as the promotion of sustainable growth.

Our statement covering the financial year 2024-25 (1/4/2024–31/3/2025) is set out below:

Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010	
Scottish Law Commission Expenditure for Financial Year 2024/25	
Activity	Spend 2024/25
Public Relations	Nil
Overseas Travel	Nil
Hospitality and Entertainment	Nil
External Consultancy	£360

Notes:

1. Some travel and subsistence costs were settled in 2024 but applied to the preceding financial years of 2022/3 and 2023/4 and have been included in previous Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 statements.
2. External consultancy comprised IT support services.

Payments in excess of £25,000 (2024/2025)			
Payee	Amount	Date	Description
Avison Young (acting on behalf of the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service)	£25,000	09/05/2024	Occupancy costs for premises in Parliament House covering period July to September 2024.

Avison Young (acting on behalf of the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service)	£25,000	19/08/2024	Occupancy costs for premises in Parliament House covering period October to December 2024.
Avison Young (acting on behalf of the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service)	£25,000	10/03/2024	Occupancy costs for premises in Parliament House covering period January to March 2025.
Avison Young (acting on behalf of the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service)	£25,858.83	31/03/2025	Occupancy costs for premises in Parliament House covering period April to June 2025.

Remunerations received in excess of £150,000	Nil
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Sustainability, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy Statement

Under the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 the Commission, along with other public bodies in Scotland, has a duty to publish an annual statement of the steps it has taken that year to:

- promote and increase sustainable growth through the exercise of its functions;
- improve efficiency, effectiveness and economy in exercise of its functions.

The Scottish Law Commission has a statutory function, which is to recommend to Ministers ways of simplifying, updating and improving the law of Scotland. Most of our work is carried out in accordance with our Programme of Law Reform. The Programme is prepared following extensive consultation, including discussions with Government. The Programme is submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval, and is laid before the Scottish Parliament. The Commission also from time to time receives references from Ministers to carry out law reform projects.

The Scottish Government's Economic Strategy published in November 2006 included "By sustainable growth we mean building a dynamic and growing economy that will provide prosperity and opportunities for all, while ensuring that future generations can enjoy a better quality of life too."

In exercising its functions the Commission contributed to the Scottish Government's overall objectives and National Outcomes on Fair Work and Business, the Economy, Communities, Human Rights and Children and Young People.

In particular law reform projects worked on during the financial year 2024/5 have the following purposes:

- publishing a report on reform of the law relating to damages for personal injury to modernise the law to better reflect current Scotland, increase access to justice and remove unfairness in the law;
- publish a report on the Tenancy of Shops (Scotland) Act 1949 concluding that the Act is no longer fit for purpose and should be repealed;
- review of homicide law to update long-standing common law rules to make them fit for modern society;
- reform of law on tenement property, regarding the establishment of compulsory owners' associations as a mechanism which may assist in addressing concerns about disrepair in tenement buildings;
- proposals for civil remedies for domestic abuse to simplify, update and make the law more effective including considering the impact on children and young people;
- heritable securities: reviewing the legal regime around heritable securities (mortgages), to better reflect the societal and economic changes that have taken place in Scotland in the last 50 years;
- reviewing the law relating to the execution of documents to reflect changes in a modern digital environment and deal with practical issues both making Scotland a more attractive place to do business and protecting consumers, including vulnerable people.

The Commission's sole source of funding comes from the Scottish Government. In the financial year around 90% of the Commission's costs were staff and Commissioner costs, 1.7% were IT, telephone and postage costs and 5.5% was accommodation costs, including maintenance and utilities.

To continue to improve efficiency, effectiveness and economy the Commission seeks to operate on a shared costs basis wherever possible and this includes:

- a continuing agreement with the Scottish Government Legal Directorate on the provision of a shared library service to the Commission by the Scottish Legal Information Centre;
- a service level agreement with the Government Legal Service for Scotland for the provision of resourcing and learning & development services to the Commission;
- moving to use the Scottish Government's shared service oracle business system for finance and HR
- continued participation in Scottish Government collaborative procurement agreements,
- reducing travel to meetings unless this is essential for business reasons
- on staff training, continued reliance for compulsory professional development and for general staff development on shared training, for example seminars organised by the Scottish Government and the Government Legal Service for Scotland.
- working on moving towards using a Scottish Government shared service for electronic filing.