

# Houses of the Oireachtas Service Strategic Plan 2025-2027

A Democratic Parliament Working Effectively for the People



Coimisiún Thithe  
an Oireachtais  
Houses of the  
Oireachtas Commission



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## Foreword by the Ceann Comhairle and Cathaoirleach

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On behalf of the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission, we welcome the publication of the Strategic Plan 2025-2027 for the Houses of the Oireachtas Service (the Service). This plan sets out the Service's strategic priorities for the next three years, focusing on delivering high-quality parliamentary administrative and support services to the Houses of the Oireachtas, their Committees and members, to support them in fulfilling their constitutional roles.

The commencement of this strategic plan aligns closely with the beginning of the 34th Dáil and the 27th Seanad. With the addition of fourteen members, the new Dáil comprises 174 Teachtaí Dála. Against this context of an evolving parliamentary environment, the strategy's vision of 'A Democratic Parliament Working Effectively for the People' is particularly appropriate. This vision will serve as the core organising principle for the work of the Commission and the Service over the next three years. The strategy's delivery will be further underpinned by the efficient and responsible allocation of human and financial resources.

The strategy builds on the achievements delivered under the Service's previous strategic plans, focusing on matters that are relevant to the Houses and their members today. As always, the continued provision of excellent parliamentary services, which are essential to the delivery of the democratic mandate of the Houses of the Oireachtas and their members, remains at the forefront. The plan also recognises Ireland's scheduled assumption, in July 2026, of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Preparing for, and delivering upon, the parliamentary dimension of the Presidency will be a key focus under this strategy.

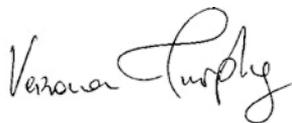
The strategy reaffirms the Service's commitment to the health and wellbeing of all who work in the parliamentary community, and to the principles of dignity and respect, and equality, diversity and inclusion. We particularly welcome the goal to advance the recommendations of the Forum on a Family Friendly and Inclusive Parliament. The objective of the recommendations is to make participation in national politics more accessible, enhancing representation in our democracy.

Recent years have seen an increase in abusive behaviour towards politicians and others involved in political life. We are pleased to note the strategy's commitment to strengthening the security of the parliamentary environment and implementing the recommendations of the Task Force on Safe Participation in Political Life. Tackling these challenges effectively will help to enhance the representativeness of the Houses of the Oireachtas with the aim of ensuring that safety concerns do not deter anyone from participation in Irish political life.

Ensuring ease of public access to information on the proceedings and workings of the Houses and their Committees is essential, particularly as misinformation and disinformation become increasingly prevalent in online spaces. We are pleased to note that transparency and accountability remain a priority under this plan. The strategy also looks externally, emphasising the status of the Houses of the Oireachtas as an internationally engaged and connected parliament which actively participates in international organisations and networks and engages with regional, provincial and state legislators and officials, with an emphasis on areas with large Irish diaspora. We look forward to continuing to strengthen relations with parliamentary colleagues around the world over the next three years.

We welcome also the commitment made in this plan to continue expanding the bilingual and Irish Sign Language services provided by the Service over the strategy's lifetime. This will strengthen the capacity of members of the public, including those in the deaf community, to engage with the Houses of the Oireachtas through the Irish language and through Irish Sign Language.

The Houses of the Oireachtas will face new challenges and opportunities over the next three years, and this strategic plan positions the Service to respond to these as they arise, while continuing to deliver and improve upon the services already provided to the Houses, their members, and the public. We look forward to supporting the Service to implement this strategy over the next three years.



**Verona Murphy T.D.**  
*Ceann Comhairle of Dáil Éireann*



**Senator Mark Daly**  
*Cathaoirleach of Seanad Éireann*

## Foreword by the Clerk and Secretary General

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**Peter Finnegan**  
Clerk of the Dáil and  
Secretary General

I am pleased to introduce the Strategic Plan 2025-2027 for the Houses of the Oireachtas Service (the Service). This is our ninth strategic plan and was developed in consultation with our stakeholders and within the wider context in which the Service operates.

During the period of this strategic plan, the Service will continue into its third decade of supporting the Houses of the Oireachtas, its Committees, and the members of the Houses. This Statement of Strategy was prepared by the Service for approval by the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission (the Commission) in line with its founding legislation, the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission Act 2003. It has further been prepared in alignment with the Commission's budget allocation for 2025-2027.

Over the next three years, the Service will be guided by our vision of 'A Democratic Parliament Working Effectively for the People'. The plan sets out the goals and outcomes that will be pursued by the Service, under the direction of the Commission, in encouragement of this vision. Our mission is to support our parliamentary democracy by providing excellence in our parliamentary services.

This plan was developed during a period of significant change. Following the 2024-2025 Dáil and Seanad General Elections, 174 Teachtaí Dála and 60 Senators joined the 34th Dáil and 27th Seanad. A key priority for us during the lifetime of this strategy will be to continue to demonstrate excellence in the delivery of our parliamentary services while having regard to available resources and the need for us to be resilient in the face of uncertainty and changing demands.

We take pride in the quality of the services we provide to the Houses of the Oireachtas, their Committees and members. This plan further identifies measures that will allow us to continue to excel in effectively supporting the legislative process and achieve value-for-money while doing so.

This plan has at its core the ongoing recognition that our parliamentary community is what truly enables us to be an effective and excellence driven parliament. Our parliamentary community is made up of elected representatives and supporting staff, Service staff and our service providers. Service staff, in particular, provide outstanding work in the context of supporting the work of parliament and are the key drivers of excellence in the delivery of our services.

This strategy also sees us furthering our goal of being a People-Focused parliament. During the next three years, we will progress initiatives to promote a values-driven culture in a now well established hybrid-working environment, including by reinforcing our culture of dignity

and respect, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). Another key priority for the Service is to further develop and strengthen the secure environment, including by supporting the implementation of recommendations arising out of the report of the Task Force on Safe Participation in Political Life.

During the next three years, we will renew our emphasis on delivering on our sustainability and climate action commitments. To become a sustainable parliament, we will publish a Sustainability Strategy, release annual Climate Action Roadmaps, and pursue initiatives in the areas of waste, water, travel, and biodiversity, including via the Houses of the Oireachtas Green Team.

An important objective of this plan is to develop public confidence and promote active involvement and engagement with the Houses of the Oireachtas in all areas of society. The plan includes a number of measures aimed at promoting greater accessibility with the Houses of the Oireachtas and at fostering a broader understanding of our role in enabling democracy. This reflects our ambition of becoming a transparent, accessible, and internationally engaged parliament.

Likewise, we will create and implement a comprehensive plan that best reflects an internationally engaged parliament, and deliver, during the lifetime of this strategy, on the Parliamentary Dimension of Ireland's hosting of the EU Presidency in the second half of 2026.

Our Digital Transformation Programme will remain key to the delivery of cohesive, reliable and secure digitisation and innovation. Continuous, responsible investment on technology and innovation to support parliamentary activity and inform the public will remain a key focus for us. During the next three years, we will also identify new opportunities for data integration, and develop an Artificial Intelligence (AI) responsible framework for the Houses of the Oireachtas.

Finally, we will seek to do more through our first official language, the Irish language. We aim, over time, to be a parliament in which members of the Houses and the public can readily conduct their day-to-day business through Irish or English.

Throughout the lifetime of this Plan there will no doubt be new challenges to overcome as well as new opportunities arising. We will remain committed to ensuring that the best and most effective supports continue to be provided to the Houses and their members in the exercise of their constitutional mandates, whilst at the same time ensuring that the resources of the Commission, both financial and staffing, are optimised and used as efficiently and carefully as possible.

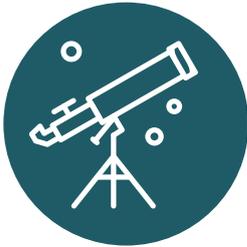
This is an ambitious and deliverable strategic plan. With the support of the Commission and the outstanding work by staff of the Service, I look forward to the delivery of this plan over the next three years.



**Peter Finnegan**  
Clerk of the Dáil and Secretary General

## Vision, Mission, Values

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### Vision Statement

'A Democratic Parliament Working Effectively for the People.'

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### Mission Statement

'We support our parliamentary democracy by providing excellence in our parliamentary services.'

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### Values

- Excellence
  - People-Focus
  - Inclusivity
  - Innovation
  - Impartiality
  - Accountability
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## Statement of Values

The core values below set out the behaviours we live by on a day-to-day basis in our interactions with members of the Houses of the Oireachtas and their staff, our staff, members of the public, and other stakeholders.



### Excellence

We take pride in our professionalism and the high quality of the services we provide, and we take action based on evidence and robust decision-making.



### People-Focus

We work together, we believe in a workplace that is fair, and we recognise people as our greatest asset by developing capability and supporting wellbeing.



### Inclusivity

We value and treat people with dignity and respect, and we embrace a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion across the parliamentary community.



### Innovation

We embrace innovation in our ambitions, we learn continuously, and we proactively find new ways to deliver on our goals.



### Impartiality

We are independent, we conduct ourselves with integrity at all times, and we serve all members of the Houses of the Oireachtas and the public fairly and objectively.



### Accountability

We act with transparency, we honour our commitments, and we are publicly accountable for our work and for what we do.

The Civil Service core values of independence, respect, integrity, impartiality, fairness, and equality are integral to our work, and further underpin our approach to our vision, mission, and the delivery of our functions.

## Our Governance Framework

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The **Houses of the Oireachtas Service** (the Service) is the public service body that provides parliamentary administration services to the Houses of the Oireachtas on behalf of the **Houses of the Oireachtas Commission** (the Commission). It provides advice and support services to the Commission, the Houses and their Committees, and to members of the Houses. The Service's approach to corporate governance is underpinned by legislation (principally the *Houses of the Oireachtas Commission Acts 2003 to 2024*) and is detailed in our *Corporate Governance Framework*.

### Houses of the Oireachtas Commission

The Commission is the independent statutory body responsible for the running of the Houses of the Oireachtas. As the Service's governing body, it considers and determines Service policy and oversees the implementation of that policy by the Secretary General. The Commission has eleven members. It is chaired by the Ceann Comhairle of Dáil Éireann and its Chief Executive is the Clerk of the Dáil. All other Commission members are members of Dáil Éireann or Seanad Éireann.

The Commission meets monthly when the Houses are sitting. It is funded triennially from the Central Fund by primary legislation. The allocation for 2025-2027 is €565m. The Commission is accountable to the Houses of the Oireachtas and presents Annual Reports on its activities, which include its financial accounts. These are audited annually by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

### Sub-Committees of the Commission

The Commission has two sub-committees. The **Finance Committee** monitors ongoing expenditure and considers quarterly reports on expenditure, budgets and outputs. It also reports and makes recommendations, as appropriate, to the Commission. It meets at least four times each year and is chaired by the Cathaoirleach of Seanad Éireann.

The **Audit Committee** ensures that effective arrangements are in place for governance, audit and risk management. It advises the Commission on corporate governance matters and advises the Secretary General on financial matters. It meets at least four times each year and submits its annual report to the Commission.

### Clerk of the Dáil and Secretary General

The Secretary General, who is also the Clerk of the Dáil, is the head of the Service. The Secretary General is accountable to the Commission for the implementation of its policies and is subject to its direction, other than in relation to the management of staff and the role of Clerk of the Dáil. As **Accounting Officer** for the Houses of the Oireachtas, the Secretary General is answerable to the Dáil and has an obligation to appear and give evidence to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on certain specified matters.

## Management Board

The Secretary General is also the Chairperson of the **Management Board**, which provides strategic direction and oversees and accounts for the performance of the Service through collective leadership. It is supported by five **Strategic Committees**, each chaired by a member of the Management Board:

- Governance, Performance and Accountability Strategic Committee (GPA);
- Technology and Digital Transformation Strategic Committee (TDT);
- Engagement, Sustainability and Campus Development Strategic Committee (ESCD);
- People and Organisation Strategic Committee (P&O);
- Coiste Straitéiseach an Oireachtais Dhátheangaigh (CSOD).



## Operating Environment – Risk Management

Effective risk management is one of the mechanisms put in place by the Secretary General and Accounting Officer to provide appropriate assurance about the regularity, propriety and efficiency of the Houses of the Oireachtas Service’s operations. During the 2025-2027 strategic plan period, ongoing review and improvement of risk management will continue to be essential in managing the Service’s key challenges and opportunities.

The Service encourages the taking of reasonable risk to achieve our strategic objectives, provided that the resultant exposures do not infringe on the operating procedures and legal and regulatory requirements. Strong leadership by the Management Board further supports sensible risk taking.

The Service’s approach to risk management is governed by its *Risk Management Strategy and Framework*. The Chief Risk Officer (CRO), with support from the Risk Office, has responsibility for the oversight of risk management at strategic and operational level, promoting a risk aware culture across the Service and reporting on performance quarterly to the Governance Performance & Accountability Strategic Committee (GPA), the Management Board and the Audit Committee.

### Key Challenges and Opportunities for the 2025-2027 Period

<p><b>Parliamentary Democracy</b></p>	<p>We are operating against a background of changing political, social, economic and technical demands. Following the 2024-2025 Dáil and Seanad General Elections, 174 Teachtaí Dála, the largest number of TDs ever elected, and 60 Senators, joined the 34th Dáil and 27th Seanad. In addition to the increase in members and political staff, the 34th Dáil and the 27th Seanad also saw the expansion of the Committee system to include five new Committees. Considering the added pressures of a post-election changing political environment, a key challenge for us is, within our available resources, to continue to deliver excellence and enable democracy through our parliamentary services while ensuring that institutional knowledge and procedural capability are maintained.</p> <p>Amongst these changes, the democratic and parliamentary process must remain transparent and understandable to members and the public. We play an important role when it comes to the functioning of a healthy parliamentary democracy and addressing issues such as misinformation and disinformation. This role can only be fulfilled if we continue to enhance our collaboration with all our stakeholders.</p>
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## Key Challenges and Opportunities for the 2025-2027 Period

### Security of the Parliamentary Community

Risks to the security of the parliamentary community have escalated due to increased protests, as well as to societal and political unrest, which has led to increased aggression towards elected representatives.. Security risks have also reached a wider dimension, which includes but is not limited to security of information, security of premises, and security of people. The next three-year period provides us with the opportunity to further develop and strengthen the secure environment.

The report of the Task Force on Safe Participation in Political Life made proposals on how to safeguard and support participation and promote civil discourse in political life. Leadership by the Service is deemed critical to build on and maintain the momentum of the work of the Task Force.

### A Workplace of Choice

In the next three years, recruiting and retaining staff, promoting ourselves as a workplace of choice and ensuring that our staff feel connected and supported in a hybrid working environment will remain a priority. The same can be said for meeting the needs of the parliamentary community in a way that considers the realisation of not only a cohesive and shared culture, but also an inclusive, diverse and changing workforce.

### Business Continuity – Reliable ICT Services

The ongoing digitalisation of our work processes offers many advantages in terms of the efficiency and accessibility of our work. We remain aware that increased reliance on critical digital systems for our work also increases the potential negative impacts of ICT services failures. We will keep prioritising our critical ICT infrastructure within the scope of available resources, while balancing other organisational demands.

## Key Challenges and Opportunities for the 2025-2027 Period

### Cyber Security

Cyber security is an organisation-wide challenge, requiring collaboration, change, and support from all. In the context of an increasingly digital world and workplace, the maintenance and continuous enhancement of robust, adaptive cyber security capability and expertise is essential. We are further aware of our obligations under the NIS 2 Directive (Directive (EU) 2022/2555). The Service will continue to deliver on its cyber security commitments to ensure business continuity, to protect our data and to protect the parliamentary community.

### Artificial Intelligence

The rapid development of the capabilities of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in recent years offers both challenges and opportunities. Like other parliaments, we will continue to take a risk-based approach to AI (including Generative AI). This involves developing a Responsible AI Framework for the Houses of the Oireachtas taking into consideration our compliance and literacy obligations under the EU Artificial Intelligence Act and the Guidelines for Responsible use of AI in the Public Service.

### Data and Information

Data and information are vital assets in everything that we do and in supporting evidence-based decision-making. We must develop a data strategy to manage our data and information to enable the Houses of the Oireachtas, their Committees and their members to discharge their constitutional functions.

We must also consider, and act upon, the implications for parliament of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) decision in Case C-33/22 Österreichische Datenschutzbehörde v. WK, which decided that personal data within procedural units is within the scope of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). This will include working with stakeholders to develop bespoke parliamentary processes to give effect to GPDR obligations.

## Key Challenges and Opportunities for the 2025-2027 Period

### Governance

We must maintain the trust of stakeholders, including members of the public, elected representatives, and other public service organisations. Keeping robust and evidence-informed governance procedures, which are continually enhanced in line with best practice guidance will be critical for us during this strategic period.

### Interparliamentary Relations

As the international situation has become more fragmented and crisis driven, there is a need for stronger and renewed focus on international relationships, including interparliamentary and international diplomacy. We will also increase our engagement with regional, provincial and state legislators and officials, with an emphasis on areas with large Irish diaspora. During this strategic period, we will further strengthen our EU, UK and international relationships. Additionally, the opportunity to reinforce our interparliamentary relations is also timely considering that Ireland will be holding the EU Presidency during the lifetime of this Strategic Plan.

### Sustainability and Climate Action

In line with our legislative obligations under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, we will continue to put an increased emphasis on sustainability and climate change during this Strategic Plan. We will release annual Climate Action Roadmaps and deliver on additional sustainability initiatives, including through the Houses of the Oireachtas Service Green Team.

## Strategic Pillars, Outcomes and Goals

For the next three years, we will focus on a ‘pillars and outcomes’ strategic approach. This refers to priority areas we are focusing on, and outcomes we envisage emerging out of these areas.



Each of the six strategic pillars in this strategy is accompanied by distinct outcomes that will allow us to measure our progress and evaluate whether we have been successful in delivering this strategy. We consider each distinctive pillar and outcome to be intrinsically connected.



# Strategic Plan 2025-2027 Strategic Pillars and Outcomes

## Strategic Pillars

1

**Parliamentary services**

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2

**Our Parliamentary Community**

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3

**The Estate**

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## Strategic Outcomes

1

**An Effective and Excellence-Driven Parliament**

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2

**A Workplace of Choice and a People-Focused Parliament**

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3

**A Secure and Sustainable Parliament**

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1. Support and advise the Houses of the Oireachtas, their Committees and members in conducting business effectively.
2. Drive excellence in our initiatives to support an effective legislative process.
3. Deliver excellent research, analysis and information services to support the legislative, oversight and scrutiny functions of the Houses of the Oireachtas.
4. Provide support services of the highest quality to members to enable them in their role as parliamentarians.
5. Continue and enhance the support to the Houses of the Oireachtas and their Committees in their roles as a National Parliament under the EU Treaties in the context of the Irish EU Presidency in 2026.
6. Ensure the highest standards of professionalism and corporate governance, demonstrating value-for-money.

1. Promote the Houses of the Oireachtas as a workplace of choice and provide ongoing support and development opportunities for our staff.
2. Build the parliamentary workforce of the future.
3. Foster connection and a values-driven culture in a flexible blended working environment.
4. Reinforce our culture of dignity and respect and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).
5. Address outstanding recommendations of the Forum on a Family Friendly and Inclusive Parliament.

1. Further develop and strengthen the secure environment.
2. Implement the recommendations of the Task Force on Safe Participation in Political Life.
3. Develop an Estate strategy for the Houses of the Oireachtas.
4. Develop a costed programme of capital works for the Leinster House campus in partnership with the Office of Public Works (OPW).
5. Deliver on our sustainability and climate action commitments.

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**The Public and our International Relations**

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5

**Digital and Innovation**

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6

**Our Official Languages**

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4

**A Transparent, Accessible and Internationally Engaged Parliament**

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5

**An Innovative and Digital-First Parliament**

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6

**A Bilingually Enabled Parliament**

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1. Develop public confidence and promote active involvement and engagement with the Houses of the Oireachtas in all areas of society.
2. Create a comprehensive plan that best reflects an internationally connected parliament.
3. Improve our education programmes at every level and launch an outreach initiative to foster broader understanding of democracy, delivering inclusivity.
4. Enhance our collaboration with relevant external stakeholders and promote a deeper, clearer understanding of our role in upholding democracy.

1. Strengthen and mature our cyber security capabilities.
2. Deliver the next stages of our Digital Transformation Programme.
3. Deploy innovative solutions to modernise our parliamentary environment.
4. Provide effective and responsive technical supports to ensure the resilience and continuity of our digital systems.
5. Develop and implement a Responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) Framework for the Houses of the Oireachtas to foster innovation while ensuring safety and security.

1. Deliver on our Irish language obligations and policy.
2. Provide expanded bilingual services and facilitate an increase in the amount of Irish used in the Houses of the Oireachtas.
3. Maximise the role of technology in achieving bilingual service provision.
4. Drive training and development opportunities, and recruitment and retention of bilingual staff.

## Strategic Pillar 1: Parliamentary Services

### Strategic Outcome 1

#### An Effective and Excellence Driven Parliament

This strategic pillar and outcome are at the core of everything that we do. We take pride in the quality of the parliamentary services we provide to the Houses of the Oireachtas, their Committees and members, and we will continue to strive for excellence in this regard.

The services we provide include effectively supporting the legislative process, facilitating Chamber and Committee proceedings, providing research, analysis, information and legal services and ensuring that all parliamentary proceedings are made publicly available. Following the 2024-2025 Dáil and Seanad General Elections, 174 TDs and 60 Senators joined the 34th Dáil and 27th Seanad. This parliamentary term also saw the expansion of the Committee system to include five new Committees. Considering these changes, maintaining, developing and improving our services and structures through efficient resourcing allocation will remain a priority for us during this strategic timeframe.

To excel in our unique role as a parliamentary service, we will also drive excellence in further initiatives during the next three years to ensure we are resilient in the face of constant change. This will include developing a Procedural Capability Strategy for the Service, as well as developing a bespoke parliamentary response to the application of GDPR to core parliamentary functions.

Ireland will take on the rotating EU presidency in the second half of 2026. The Parliamentary dimension of an EU presidency involves the hosting, by the presidency's parliament, of several interparliamentary conferences. In preparation of the EU Presidency, we will review and strengthen the support we provide to the Dáil and Seanad (and their committees) in their roles as National Parliament under the EU Treaties.

Our commitment to excellence also extends to the quality of the support services we provide to members and to their political staff. During this plan, we will operate the Members' Feedback Committee (MFC) to provide feedback on how effective our services are at meeting Members' needs and to hear their views on how we are

supporting them in fulfilling their parliamentary duties.

Likewise, our high standard of professionalism further applies to our corporate governance functions. During the next three years, we will ensure that our services focus on the right priorities and are delivered in the most efficient manner, always recognising that we are spending public money. This will include the strengthening of our business continuity and risk management structures.

#### **Our key strategic goals under this pillar and outcome are to:**

1. Support and advise the Houses of the Oireachtas, their Committees and members in conducting business effectively.
2. Drive excellence in our initiatives to support an effective legislative process.
3. Deliver excellent research, analysis and information services to support the legislative, oversight and scrutiny functions of the Houses of the Oireachtas.
4. Provide support services of the highest quality to members to enable them in their role as parliamentarians.
5. Continue and enhance the support to the Houses of the Oireachtas and their Committees in their roles as a National Parliament under the EU Treaties in the context of the Irish EU Presidency in 2026.
6. Ensure the highest standards of professionalism and corporate governance, demonstrating value-for-money.

## Strategic Pillar 2: Our Parliamentary Community

### Strategic Outcome 2

#### A Workplace of Choice and a People-Focused Parliament

A truly People-Focused parliament can only be achieved if we are all committed to building and empowering our parliamentary community, which is made up of elected representatives and their supporting staff, Service staff and our service providers. In this regard, in the next three years, promoting ourselves as a workplace of choice and ensuring that our parliamentary community feels connected and supported in a hybrid working environment will remain a priority for the Service.

To build the parliamentary workforce of the future, we will, over the next three years, recruit and retain staff, develop new HR People and Learning and Development Strategies, and continue to implement our People and Organisation Development (POD) Programme. The commitments outlined in these strategies and programme are part of a long-term policy of supporting all staff across the organisation to achieve their full potential while enhancing organisational performance.

To foster connection and a values driven-culture in a now well-established hybrid working environment, we will further work to improve communications internally through the implementation of our Internal Communications Strategy and Action Plan. We will focus on strengthening cohesion and collaboration across the Service.

As an organisation, we further strive to be leaders in creating an environment where diversity is celebrated, and where everyone is treated equally and fairly. To reinforce our culture of dignity and respect and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), we will develop and implement our EDI Strategy for the 2025-2027 period, and further develop dignity and respect related activities.

While we have made strides in our inclusion journey, we still have a lot more work to do. In the next three years, this will include enhancing the accessibility of our environment to provide opportunities for all people in society to engage in events, public hearings, programmes and services. This includes building on our Oireachtas Work Learning (OWL) programme and on our Irish Sign Language (ISL) related work.

During this strategic timeframe, we will also review the outstanding recommendations of the Report of the Forum on a Family Friendly and Inclusive Parliament and address these. We have made progress in this area, including by adopting blended working practices and introducing a right to disconnect for staff, but we are conscious that there are outstanding issues to be addressed.

#### **Our key strategic goals under this pillar and outcome are to:**

1. Promote the Houses of the Oireachtas as a workplace of choice and provide ongoing support and development opportunities for our staff.
2. Build the parliamentary workforce of the future.
3. Foster connection and a values-driven culture in a flexible blended working environment.
4. Reinforce our culture of dignity and respect and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).
5. Address outstanding recommendations of the Forum on a Family Friendly and Inclusive Parliament.

## Strategic Pillar 3: The Estate

### Strategic Outcome 3

#### A Secure and Sustainable Parliament

We need to deliver robust solutions to ensure our estate is sustainable and fit for purpose for our parliamentary community. Considering the operating environment, the next three-year period also provides us with the opportunity to further develop and strengthen the secure environment.

The Task Force on Safe Participation in Political Life report made proposals on how to safeguard and support participation and promote civil discourse in political life. A Senior Officials Implementation and Oversight Group (SOIOG) has been established to oversee, drive and report on the implementation of Task Force recommendations, to be led by the Houses of the Oireachtas. Leadership by the Service is deemed critical to build on and maintain the momentum of the work of the Task Force.

During this strategic period, we will review and strengthen security arrangements and ensure mechanisms are put in place for enhanced cooperation and information sharing with An Garda Síochána (AGS).

Our working environment is important for all in our parliamentary community. This working environment is sustained through the implementation of essential works and the development of long-term plans. The development of an Estate strategy will support us in strengthening our estate and facilities. Likewise, during this strategy, we will develop a programme of capital works for the Leinster House campus in partnership with the Office of Public Works (OPW).

Following the improvements we made in recent years in how we operate to reduce the impact we have on the environment, we will put an increased emphasis on delivering on our sustainability and climate action commitments during this Strategic Plan.

To become a sustainable parliament, we will publish a Sustainability Strategy, release annual Climate Action Roadmaps and pursue a range of sustainability initiatives in the areas of waste, water, travel, procurement and biodiversity, including through the Houses of the Oireachtas Service Green Team.

This will include maintaining, and where needed, investing in the estate to achieve reduction in carbon emissions and embed sustainable development thinking across the organisation. It will further include continuously making changes to how we think about and manage energy use.

#### **Our key strategic goals under this pillar and outcome are to:**

1. Further develop and strengthen the secure environment.
2. Implement the recommendations of the Task Force on Safe Participation in Political Life.
3. Develop an Estate strategy for the Houses of the Oireachtas.
4. Develop a costed programme of capital works for the Leinster House campus in partnership with the Office of Public Works (OPW).
5. Deliver on our sustainability and climate action commitments.

## Strategic Pillar 4: The Public and our International Relations

### Strategic Outcome 4

### A Transparent, Accessible and Internationally Engaged Parliament

Developing public confidence and promoting active engagement with the Houses of the Oireachtas in all areas of Irish society, with the broader civil service, and internationally is vital in ensuring that we can carry out our mission of supporting parliamentary democracy.

Likewise, the democratic and parliamentary process must remain transparent and understandable to all. We play an important role in terms of the functioning of a healthy parliamentary democracy and addressing issues such as misinformation and disinformation. Over the next three years, we will work to ensure that all areas of society can connect to parliament while having the confidence and skills to engage with the parliamentary process in a manner that is accessible and transparent.

This will include developing a new parliamentary communications strategy for the Houses of the Oireachtas and strengthening our emphasis on accessibility. During this plan, we will also improve our education programme at every level and launch a new outreach initiative to foster a broader understanding of democracy, delivering inclusivity by increasing the reach of our engagement.

We will enhance our collaboration with relevant external stakeholders, including government departments and civil service networks, to promote a deeper, clearer understanding of what we do and of our role in upholding democracy.

We will also create and deliver on a comprehensive plan that best reflects an internationally engaged parliament. This will focus on international relationships, including interparliamentary and world diplomacy, in response to the increasingly fragmented and crisis-driven global landscape.

As we host the EU Presidency, we will use this opportunity to strengthen our international relations engagement during the life of this Strategic Plan.

#### **Our key strategic goals under this pillar and outcome are to:**

1. Develop public confidence and promote active involvement and engagement with the Houses of the Oireachtas in all areas of society.
2. Create a comprehensive plan that best reflects an internationally connected parliament.
3. Improve our education programmes at every level and launch an outreach initiative to foster broader understanding of democracy, delivering inclusivity.
4. Enhance our collaboration with relevant external stakeholders and promote a deeper, clearer understanding of our role in upholding democracy.

## Strategic Pillar 5: Digital and Innovation

### Strategic Outcome 5 An Innovative and Digital-First Parliament

The ongoing digitalisation of our work processes offers many advantages in terms of the efficiency, effectiveness and accessibility of our parliamentary services. Our Digital Transformation Programme is key to the delivery of cohesive, reliable and secure digitalisation and innovation. This programme is also key to the delivery of essential ICT services to the parliamentary community. Continuous, responsible investment on this programme will remain a key focus for us.

As our Digital Transformation progresses, we will upgrade existing infrastructures and technologies and implement new services to create a truly interconnected and resilient organisation. This digital modernisation programme is not just about technological advancement, but also about mitigating risks, managing unique challenges, and ensuring the continuity of operations and responsiveness of technical supports in a dynamic political environment. We will also continue to address accessibility requirements, including requirements under the Web Accessibility Directive.

Given our increased reliance on digital infrastructure to conduct our work, the maintenance and continuous enhancement of robust, adaptive cyber security capabilities is essential. We are further cognisant of our obligations under the NIS 2 Directive. We will continue to invest in cyber security to ensure business continuity and protect our data and the parliamentary community.

We will also identify new opportunities for data integration and in relation to Artificial Intelligence (AI). Over the scope of this plan, we will continue to take a risk-based approach to AI, including by developing a Responsible AI Framework for the Oireachtas considering our compliance obligations under the EU Artificial Intelligence Act, fostering innovation while ensuring safety and security.

#### Our key strategic goals under this pillar and outcome are to:

1. Strengthen and mature our cyber security capabilities.
2. Deliver the next stages of our Digital Transformation Programme.
3. Deploy innovative solutions to modernise our parliamentary environment.
4. Provide effective and responsive technical supports to ensure the resilience and continuity of our digital systems.
5. Develop and implement a Responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) Framework for the Houses of the Oireachtas to foster innovation while ensuring safety and security.

## Strategic Pillar 6: Our Official Languages

### Strategic Outcome 6

#### A Bilingually Enabled Parliament

Progress has been made during our previous strategic plan to grow our capacity to work through the first official language of the State, the Irish Language. We finished implementing the Rannóg 2024 Plan with the objective of progressing the publication of official translations of the Acts of the Oireachtas, and we built on our Stráitéis na Gaeilge and the Oireachtas Language Scheme 2018.

However, we are cognisant that more needs to be done in terms of delivering on our Irish language obligations and policy, and in terms of providing bilingual services to the parliamentary community. These services range from services to members to services for the general public, and indeed, services for staff of the Service.

In the next three years, we will work to provide expanded bilingual services and facilitate an increase in the amount of Irish used in the Houses. In doing so, we will maximise the role of technology in achieving bilingual service provision. Likewise, we will take the opportunity to keep driving training and development opportunities and enhancing recruitment and retention of bilingual staff.

Our activities in this regard will be informed through implementation of our Bilingualism Action Plan 2024-2025. This Action Plan summarises recommendations and conclusions arising from the following three initiatives:

- Internal Research on Bilingual Parliaments,
- ‘An Ghaeilge sa Teach’ – Dáil and Seanad Steering Groups, and;
- The Houses of the Oireachtas Colloquium on Bilingual Parliaments.

The ultimate objective of our efforts in regard to Irish language and bilingual service provision is to improve our capacity to function as a bilingually enabled parliament and to create, in parallel, an organisation and workplace which is comfortable and, indeed, welcoming for both official languages.

#### **Our key strategic goals under this pillar and outcome are to:**

1. Deliver on our Irish language obligations and policy.
2. Provide expanded bilingual services and facilitate an increase in the amount of Irish used in the Houses of the Oireachtas.
3. Maximise the role of technology in achieving bilingual service provision.
4. Drive training and development opportunities, and recruitment and retention of bilingual staff.

## Strategic Planning Framework: Deliver, Review and Report

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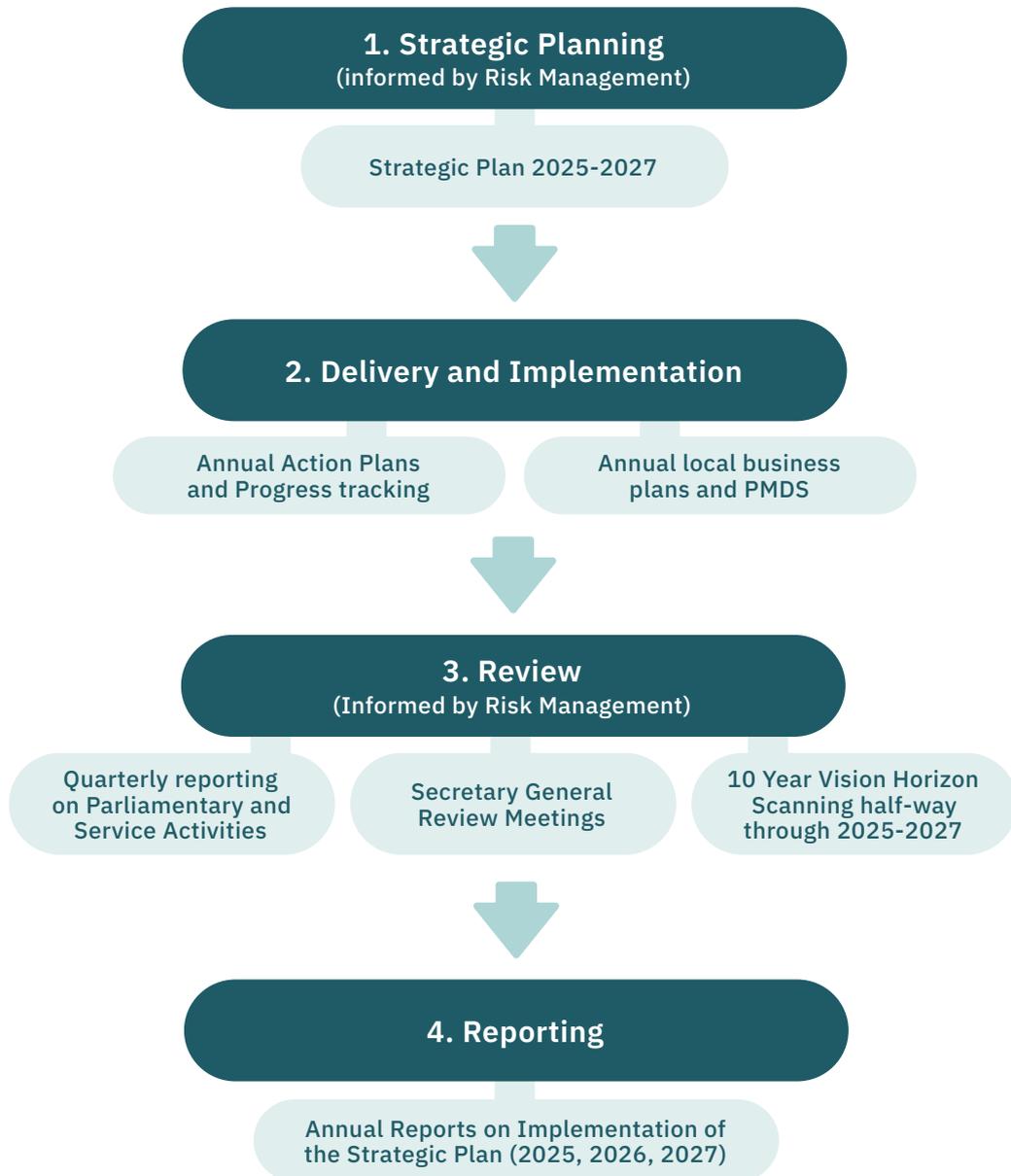
Our strategic pillars and envisaged outcomes will be reviewed as part of a continual process to identify if actions are facilitating the achievement of the strategic goals and outcomes. The overarching strategic planning framework developed by the Service is designed as an integrated process for implementing, reviewing and reporting on the delivery of this Strategic Plan.

To achieve the outcomes and goals set out in this Strategic Plan, we will publish yearly action plans setting out our work programmes under each strategic pillar and outcome. We will track progress made under these action plans on a quarterly basis. These action plans will inform our local business plans and the performance management and development of individual members of staff.

The implementation of this Strategic Plan will be underpinned by a review process led by the Secretary General. This process will focus on the delivery of our annual Action Plans and will be accompanied by our Performance Evaluation Framework, which includes detailed quarterly reporting on parliamentary and service activities.

Additionally, when we reach the half-way point of delivering this Strategic Plan, we will undertake a long-range horizon-scanning strategic exercise and develop a 10-year Vision and Statement of Intent. This will replace the 10-year Vision and Statement of Intent in our 2022-2024 Strategic Plan.

Finally, each year, as required under the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission Acts, the Secretary General will report to the Commission in writing on the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Implementation Report will then be published within the Annual Report of the Commission, which is laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas and published on the Houses of the Oireachtas website.



## Statement on the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

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The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty places a statutory obligation on public bodies to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and protect human rights of staff and of those to whom they provide services. The Duty is set out in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

As a public body that provides professional advice and support services to the Commission, the Houses of the Oireachtas and their Committees, and members of the Houses, the Service is required to set out in its Strategic Plan an assessment of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to its functions, and the actions it is taking or proposes to take to address those issues.

During the development of our 2024 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy in 2022, the EDI team asked the parliamentary community to identify key equality and human rights issues affecting staff and people to whom the Houses of the Oireachtas provides services. These included:

- better reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.
- need to ensure human rights and equality are considered throughout the legislative process.
- need for more accessible buildings, communication, and information.
- need for more accessible and inclusive public outputs.

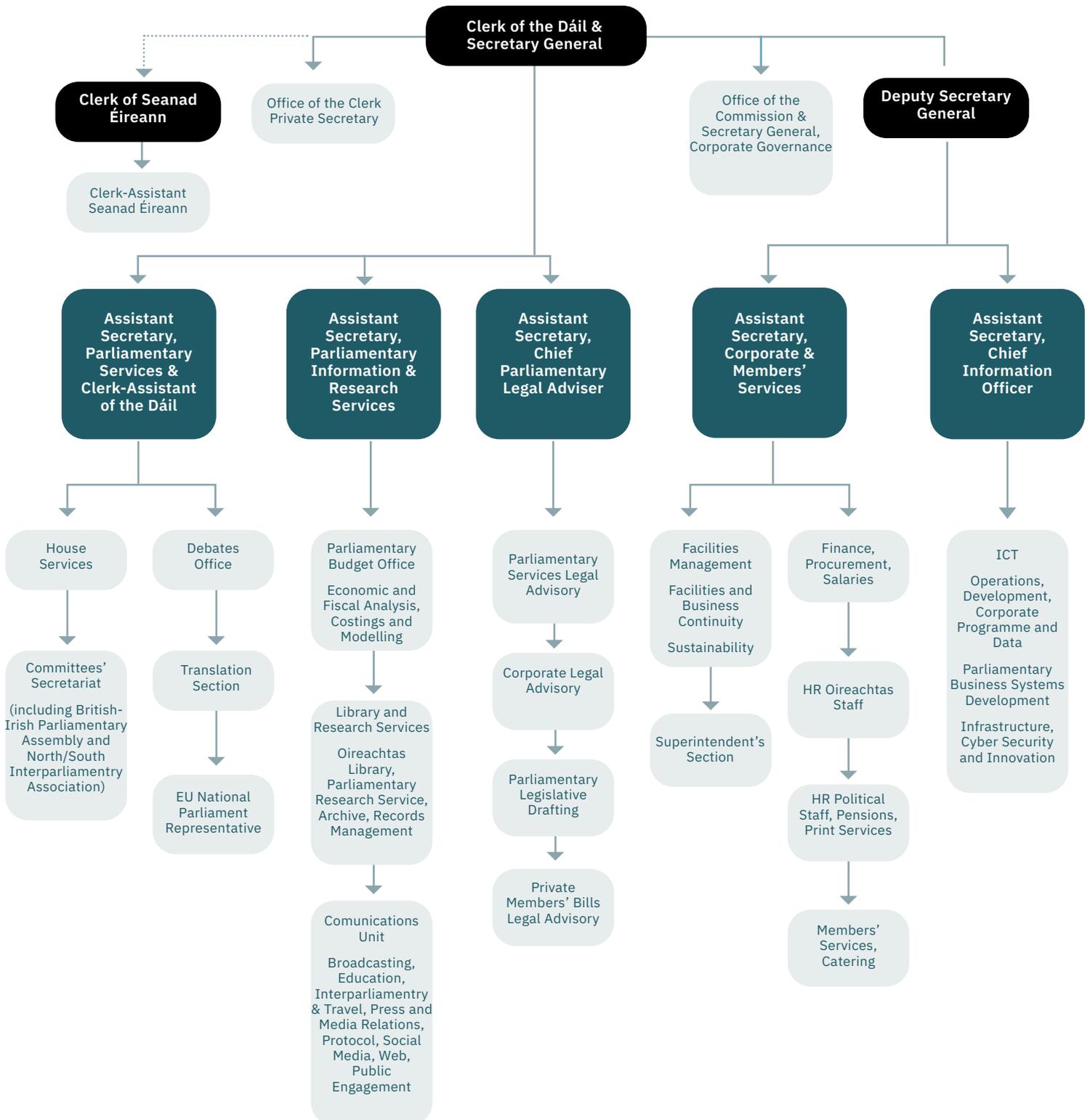
Key equality and human rights issues were further identified as part of the work to develop the report of the Forum on a Family Friendly and Inclusive Parliament, and these were included in our strategic goals and corresponding actions for the 2022-2024 period. Other relevant achievements during the 2022-2024 period have included work to achieve autism-friendly accreditation, the ongoing development of the Houses of the Oireachtas Work Learning (OWL) Programme for people with intellectual disabilities, and the delivery of the Irish Sign Language glossary of parliamentary terms.

During this strategic cycle, we will continue to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights of members, staff and service users by fulfilling our statutory obligations. We further recognise the requirement to incorporate plans and actions to address these issues in our strategic planning cycles and to report on the associated actions and achievements in our annual reports. We have ensured that this was considered throughout the consultation process for the development of this Strategic Plan.

Our 2025-2027 Strategic Plan sets out how we will work as an effective, impartial, transparently governed and accountable organisation. We will aim to be at the forefront in ensuring accessibility and inclusivity in our communications and service provision. Building on this, in this strategic period we will further reinforce our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, including through the development and implementation of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 2025-2027 Strategy.

Further commitments are set out in our Action Plan 2025, which include a number of actions, under our core strategic goals, to help us realise the envisaged outcomes under our strategic pillars. We will report on activities regularly, with data-informed leadership ensuring that we continue to set, meet and improve standards across all aspects of our statutory mandate.

# Houses of the Oireachtas Service Organisation Chart







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