

Electoral Office for Northern Ireland

Report of the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland 2024/2025

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Presented to Parliament pursuant to
section 9(1) of the Northern Ireland
(Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on 11 November 2025

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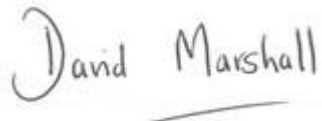
The Rt Hon Hillary Benn MP,
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland,
Northern Ireland Office,
1 Horse Guards Road,
LONDON
SW1A 2HQ

30 September 2025

Dear Secretary of State for Northern Ireland,

In accordance with section 9(1) of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006, I present this Report on how I discharged the duties of Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland for the financial year ending 31 March 2025.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "David Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "David" and the last name "Marshall" clearly legible. A horizontal line is drawn underneath the signature.

Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland

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FOREWORD

This Annual Report covers the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. It was a year of significant delivery for the Electoral Office, most notably the administration of the **2024 United Kingdom General Election**, held on **4 July 2024**.

To support this major event, the Electoral Office recruited **6,000 poll and count staff**, printed and delivered **1.4 million poll cards**, and issued ballot papers across **605 polling places**, using **1,409 ballot boxes**. The overnight count was conducted at **three centres**—Belfast, Craigavon, and Magherafelt—and concluded with the return of **18 new Members of Parliament** (listed in Annex C).

The election was conducted with the **largest-ever parliamentary register** in Northern Ireland. In total **1.365 million electors** were registered - an increase of **5.4%** compared to the 2019 election. A total of **136 candidates** stood across the 18 constituencies.

Running an election of this scale is a huge logistical exercise, especially given the centralised structure of electoral administration in Northern Ireland, which is unique within the UK. Further detail on the General Election is provided in Section 3 of this report.

I would like to extend my thanks to all Electoral Office staff - permanent and temporary - for their hard work and dedication. I am also grateful for the support of local councils and their Chief Executives, some of whom served as Deputy Returning Officers, as well as the Electoral Commission, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, and numerous other public sector bodies who played a vital role in ensuring the smooth delivery of the election.

Electoral Registration

In parallel with election delivery, the Office maintained strong performance in business-as-usual activities. The 2024/25 year saw record levels of electoral registration, with **120,000 registration applications by the public reviewed** - up 10% on the previous year. Remarkably, **98% (118,220) were submitted online** - www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.

This increase was driven by the **General Election** and targeted **outreach campaigns**, particularly aimed at **young voters and recent movers**. In November 2024, the Electoral Office contacted 220 secondary schools and issued 32,300 letters encouraging 16–18-year-olds to register to vote. This campaign alone resulted in 8,000 new registrations. Additionally, 38,000 electors identified through administrative data as likely having moved

house were contacted to update their registration, further enhancing the register's accuracy and completeness.

During the year, the Electoral Office completed the implementation of provisions under Elections Act 2022, including a review of European Union electors to confirm eligibility.

Digital Services

The Electoral Office also partnered with a local contractor to **develop and launch a new website** - www.eoni.org.uk - delivered in January 2025. This upgrade includes improved cybersecurity, a modern content management system, enhanced mobile compatibility, and better accessibility features for disabled users.

One part of the website is the “**Am I Registered**” **service** (www.eoni.org.uk/Am-I-Registered) which was built in-house. This allows voters to check their registration and request their Digital Registration Number - needed to apply for a postal / proxy vote. Launched in March 2024, the **tool was used 64,000 times in 2024/25**, confirming 47,000 registrations and prompting 17,000 people to update their registration. Notably, 51,000 checks occurred in the lead-up to the General Election, demonstrating the tool's value.

In March 2025, the Office launched a **new online Electoral Identity Card application service** (www.eoni.org.uk/ID-card). While based on the Great Britain model, this system was tailored to meet local voter ID laws. Since its launch, 2,500 applications have been received. The service improves access and enhances fraud prevention measures.

A Year of Delivery

Last year has been defined by delivery - both in administering the General Election and continuing to modernise electoral services. None of this would have been possible without the dedication of staff, the support of stakeholders - including political parties, elected representatives, and the public - and the hard work of many partners. I thank them all.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the retirements of Peter Mullan and Janet Goodall, who served the Electoral Office with distinction for 23 and 16 years respectively. I wish them both a long and fulfilling retirement.

Dr David Marshall (Chief Electoral Officer Northern Ireland)

30 September 2025

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

- Elections in Northern Ireland are administered by and run under the responsibility of the Chief Electoral Officer. The postholder is a statutory office holder appointed by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.
- The Chief Electoral Officer is assisted by the staff of the Electoral Office – with a team of just over 20 officials. This administrative structure supports the Chief Electoral Officer in carrying out his/her duties. With the increased digitisation of services the resourcing (funding/staffing) of the Electoral Office has decreased by 60% in the last decade.
- In terms of elections, the Chief Electoral Officer is the Registration Officer for all constituencies and councils in Northern Ireland and Returning Officer for all elections and referendums in this jurisdiction.
- The main duties of the Chief Electoral Officer are:
 - to act as Electoral Registration Officer for all Northern Ireland constituencies / councils;
 - to act as Returning Officer for all Northern Ireland elections & referendums;
 - to act as Petition Officer for Northern Ireland recall petitions for the United Kingdom Parliament;
 - to recommend to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland by 16 April each year whether an electoral Canvass should be conducted;
 - to act as an assessor to the Parliamentary and Local Government Boundary Commission in Northern Ireland; and
 - to lead and manage the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland.
- The Chief Electoral Officer's duties and responsibilities are set out in the Electoral Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1962, the Representation of the People Act 1983, the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 and other accompanying legislation. The Accounting Officer of the Northern Ireland Office is responsible to Parliament for all expenditure incurred by the Chief Electoral Officer.
- The Chief Electoral Officer is required to report to the Secretary of State on an annual basis. Section 9(2) of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 requires the Chief Electoral Officer to include an assessment of whether the relevant registration objectives have been met. This report covers both duties.

SECTION 2 – REGISTRATION

- Under Section 9 of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 the Chief Electoral Officer is required to include in his Annual Report an assessment of the extent to which the relevant registration objectives have been met. These are

“to secure, so far as reasonably practicable –

- (a) that every person who is entitled to be registered in a register is registered in it,*
- (b) that no person who is not entitled to be registered in a register is registered in it,*
- (c) that none of the required information relating to any person registered in a register is false.”*

- On 1 December 2024, the total Electoral Register for Northern Ireland contained 1.398 million electors. This is the highest number in the history of the Electoral Office. To maintain the register over 120,000 registration and re-registration applications (paper and online) were processed between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. Again, outside a Canvass year, this is the highest number of annual registration applications on record. This is in part due to online registration which makes the process easy for the public. Last year the online register to vote system¹ (www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) collected data on 118,220 (or 98.1% of all applications) online applications to register to vote (between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025). These data (paper and online) were processed by the Electoral Office to determine inclusion on the electoral register.
- Alongside this the Electoral Office undertook targeted initiatives to improve registration. Last year the Office worked with the Department for Education, secondary schools and the Education Authority to improve registration of young people. In November 2024, the Electoral Office wrote to 220 secondary schools and issued 32,300 letters to householders to encourage 16–18-year-olds living in those households to register to vote. This exercise alone led to around 8,000 young people registering to vote over this short period.
- During the year, the Electoral Office received personal data (name & address) from the Health Service Business Services Organisation of people who changed their registration details with their family doctor. This was ‘matched’ with the electoral register and electors who had not moved/changed name on the electoral register were requested to amend their electoral registration details.

¹ The United Kingdom-wide online register to vote system is available at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

- There were two main elements of removing people from the electoral register. By law, the General Register Office (who maintain the Civil Register of births, deaths, marriages & civil partnerships) provides the Electoral Office with weekly lists of deaths registered here. The Electoral Office match this information with the electoral register. In 2024/25, this resulted in 15,000 deceased electors being removed from the electoral register. In addition following the General Election around 5,200 poll cards (out of 1.4m or 0.4%) were returned to the Electoral Office with the addressee noted as having gone away. Attempts were made to contact these electors by email/telephone/letter, with no update found 3,800 electors were removed from the electoral register.
- Taken together these initiatives along with a host of routine data quality steps continue to maintain the quality of the Electoral Register.
- By law, the Chief Electoral Officer must write to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland regarding the current quality of the Electoral Register and whether an Electoral Canvass is required. The letter for 2024/25 was sent to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on 15 April 2024 and was published on the Electoral Office website².
- The advice given to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland was **not** to hold an Electoral Canvass in 2024/25. This advice is based on a variety of evidence including the Electoral Commission report on the 2022 Electoral Register in Northern Ireland³. Importantly, the current Canvass law requires that everyone on the register at the start of the Canvass is removed from the electoral register prior to the Canvass period. This represents a huge risk to the electoral register as there is no guarantee any of these people will re-register. This is different to Great Britain and is the one of reasons why I could not recommend a Canvass in Northern Ireland. This year (May 2025) the Secretary of State noted that the Canvass law should be reformed⁴.
- Current register maintenance uses a data driven approach with targeted registration initiatives underpinned and verified by post, email and text-message driven data collection. By March 2026 I plan to set out proposals of what an alternative Canvass

² The statutory letter (April 2024) to the Secretary of State under section 10ZA of the Representation of the People Act (1983) is online at <https://www.eoni.org.uk/about-the-electoral-office/plans-and-reports/>

³ See online at <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/research-reports-and-data/electoral-registration-research/accuracy-and-completeness-electoral-registers/2023-report-electoral-registers-uk> for further details

⁴ The letter (May 2025) from the Secretary of State to the Chief Electoral Officer, noted the Government is committed to reform of the Canvass law in Northern Ireland prior to the next planned Canvass in 2030 – see <https://www.eoni.org.uk/about-the-electoral-office/plans-and-reports/>

might look like. However, it is my view that any future Canvass should use a data driven approach. I have labelled this a “Rolling Canvass” and I will document proposals for this approach in the 2025/26 Annual Report.

- Lastly, there were 5,000 Electoral Identity Cards issued between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. During the year, the Electoral Identity Card Service was reformed to bring it into line with the new Voter Authority Certificate service in Great Britain (introduced there following the Elections Act 2022). Further details are given in section 4.

SECTION 3 – ELECTIONS

2024 UK General Election

- Following the Prime Minister's announcement on 22 May 2024, the Electoral Office administered the **United Kingdom General Election in Northern Ireland on 4 July 2024**. This required:
 - recruitment of 6,000 polling and count staff
 - printing and distribution of 1.4 million poll cards and 1.4 million ballot papers
 - operation of 605 polling places housing 1,409 ballot boxes
 - simultaneous counts across three centres (Belfast, Craigavon and Magherafelt) on 4–5 July to elect 18 Members of Parliament.
- The election was conducted on the largest parliamentary electoral register ever recorded, with 1.365 million parliamentary electors (a 5.4% increase since the 2019 General Election). A total of 136 candidates contested the 18 seats. The list of elected Members of Parliament is available in Annex C and on the UK Parliament website at <https://members.parliament.uk/constituencies>

Digital Developments for the 2024 General Election

- To ensure communications were quickly and efficiently delivered enhanced email and text messaging communications was used for this election. This change improved communications with 6,000 staff, 600 premises and 136 candidates. This way of working saves time and acts to limit miscommunication during the election campaign.
- One issue identified and delivered during the short election period was the need to ensure postal vote processes (issuing of votes and opening of returned ballots) were efficient. This was important given the election was timed to run on 4 July – during the school summer holidays in Northern Ireland. Therefore to ensure the timely delivery of postal votes, an enhanced way of issuing and opening returned postal ballots was developed, tested and implemented. This ensured that postal votes in Northern Ireland for the General Election were managed in a way that did not cause issues for electors.

Digital Registration Number issues

- The 2023 Local Council elections highlighted difficulties for electors required to provide their Digital Registration Number⁵ when applying for a postal or proxy vote⁶. The Electoral Office reported on this issue in January 2024⁷, recommending a review of the Digital Registration Number legislation.
- Recognising that any change in the law will take time to implement, for the 2024 General Election a series of administrative mitigations were introduced, including:
 - simplified absent vote forms with better signposting to information on the Digital Registration Number;
 - quicker processing methods for absent vote applications;
 - faster communication of absent vote application outcomes; and
 - most importantly a new “Am I Registered” online service (www.eoni.org.uk/Am-I-Registered), which allows electors to retrieve their Digital Registration Number quickly using their personal details (see Section 4).
- These steps have in part alleviated issues, but it is my view that the law needs to be reviewed to address the partial nature of the Digital Registration Number.

Replacement of elected representatives

- The Electoral Office continued to administer the process for replacing Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and Councillors who leave their position. When this happens political parties⁸ nominate successors. In 2024/25, 24 representatives were replaced in this way (7 MLAs and 17 Councillors). A full list is provided in Annex B.

Planning for the 2027 combined elections

- With the Government’s stated position to hold the next Local Council and Assembly elections together on 6 May 2027, the Office has begun extensive planning for what will be the first combined election of this type in sixteen years. Further details are set out in the 2025/26 Business Plan.

⁵ More information and background to the Digital Registration Number is available in the Electoral Office January 2024 review paper.

⁶ See <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-66268221> for further details.

⁷ The report “2023 Local Elections - Digital Registration Number review Electoral Office for Northern Ireland - January 2024” – is available at www.eoni.org.uk/results-data/local-council-elections-2023-results/2023-local-elections-digital-registration-number-review-january-2024

⁸ Representatives elected as an Independent can self-nominate a replacement.

Single Transferable Vote digital count calculator

- Single Transferrable Vote elections require a complex arithmetic process to manage the various stages of the elections. To manage this a digital count calculator system has been used in recent elections. In 2024/25 an updated version of the Single Transferable Vote digital count calculator was developed. The updated software includes:
 - an improved user interface;
 - a faster, more user-friendly functionality; and
 - a detailed user manual.
- This work was taken forward to address issues encountered in the 2023 Local Council count and to assist in the delivery of the 2027 combined elections. The updated system will be rolled out to Local Councils in 2025/26 for testing and familiarisation ahead of the 2027 combined elections.

SECTION 4 – DIGITAL / DATA ENHANCEMENTS

- During 2024/25, the Electoral Office placed strong emphasis on improving data services and digital systems to support the effective delivery of future elections and referendums in Northern Ireland. The key activities included:
- **Data security and compliance** – Electoral Office data assets were actively managed with an annual IT health check and ongoing monitoring of Data Protection compliance.
- **Register data delivery** – A new digital method for supplying electoral register data to statutory users was introduced in Winter 2023. This system proved highly effective during the 2024 General Election.
- **“Am I Registered” service⁹** – Launched in March 2024 at www.eoni.org.uk/Am-I-Registered, this service allows electors to check their registration status and obtain their Digital Registration Number. To use the service, electors provide validated personal details, including a mobile number. By March 2025, the service had processed 64,000 checks and of this confirmed 47,000 registrations and prompted 17,000 updates to registration records. Demand peaked during the 2024 General Election, when 51,000 checks were made, highlighting its importance in running elections.
- **New Electoral Office website** – Developed with a local contractor and launched on 31 January 2025 at www.eoni.org.uk, the new website delivers:
 - stronger security;
 - an improved content management system;
 - redesigned and accessible content;
 - enhanced mobile functionality; and
 - better support for people with disabilities.
- **Online Electoral ID card service** – A new application system, tailored to Northern Ireland’s voter identification laws, went live on 12 March 2025 at www.eoni.org.uk/ID-card. To date, over **2,500 online applications** have been received. The service improves accessibility while provides strong safeguards against fraud.

⁹ The Northern Ireland “Am I Registered” system is available at www.eoni.org.uk/Am-I-Registered. The system has been live since 26 March 2024.

- Collectively, this year's progress demonstrates the Electoral Office's ability to strive to make services **digital by design** - either by adapting Great Britain systems or developing local solutions. This will be the approach for future service development.

SECTION 5 – CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

- **Stakeholder engagement** – The Chief Electoral Officer attended Assembly Parties Panel meetings to discuss electoral matters and maintained regular contact with the Northern Ireland Office on electoral legislation, including the 2024 General Election and the 2025 Canvass Regulations.
- **Professional development and knowledge exchange** – Electoral Office staff attended the Association of Electoral Administrators' annual conference in February 2025, gaining insights into new developments, and best practice. Staff also observed the Irish General Election count on 30 November 2024 in Dublin and Louth, while the Chief Electoral Officer met with both the UK and Irish Electoral Commissions to share best practice and increase cooperation.
- **Audit and assurance** – Government Internal Auditors worked with the Electoral Office during the year to complete a General Election Payroll Audit, as well as an audit of the Business Plan and targets.
- **Information handling** – The Office received 14 requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. In total around 70,000 queries from the public were managed – this included 52,000 phone calls (of which 17,700 were handled directly by agents) and 18,000 emails via our central email service.
- **Funding and staffing** – Core funding for 2024/25 was £2.075 million, with a staffing complement of just over 20 full-time equivalent employees. Funding for elections is provided separately and does not form part of core resources.

Dr David Marshall

Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland

30 September 2025



ANNEX A: PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS (April 2024 to March 2025)

The 2024/25 Business Plan covers the period April 2024 to March 2025.



| Registration (Maintain & Enhance the Register) | |
|--|---|
| Business Plan Objective and Status | |
| Registration 1 | <p>Ongoing throughout the year to continue to process registration applications</p> <p>On 1 December 2024, the Electoral Register contained 1.398 million electors – the highest number ever in Northern Ireland. During the year over 120,000 registration applications were processed - the highest number of registration applications on record. Of this the online register to vote system (www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) collected data on 118,220 online applications (or 98.1% of the total) to register to vote. All applications were processed by the Electoral Office to determine inclusion on the electoral register.</p> |
| Registration 2 | <p>During 2024/25 to manage the additional registration workload the 2024 UK Parliament General Election brings</p> <p>There was significant additional registration workload over the General Election campaign. In total over 50,000 people applied to register to vote and a further 50,000 people used the Am I Registered check service. The use of digital systems mitigates the peak workload but there is a still a marked increase over a very narrow time-window.</p> |
| Registration 3 | <p>Ongoing throughout the year to promote the continued uptake of digital registration (www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)</p> <p>The Electoral Office undertook a young person registration initiative in November 2024. In total 32,300 letters were sent to households that had, from other data, a young person (16-18 years old) not registered to vote living there. This was backed up with letters to 200 secondary schools with Years 13 and 14 pupils.</p> <p>A further 38,000 letters were sent to electors who from other administrative data were likely to have moved house recently and not yet updated the Electoral Register.</p> |
| Registration 4 | <p>Ongoing throughout the year to use high quality data from official sources to drive forward improvements in the accuracy and completeness of the Electoral Register.</p> <p>As part of the work to maintain the electoral register various data cleansing exercises were undertaken (National Insurance Numbers and postcodes/Unique Property Reference Numbers). Also see comments above at Registration 1-3.</p> |
| Registration 5 | <p>Ongoing throughout the year to process, where possible digitally, persons to be removed from the register via info received from death certificates or other sources.</p> <p>The Electoral Office used data from death certificates supplied by the General Register Office to remove electors from the electoral register who were deceased. This work is carried out on a weekly basis and this year 15,000 deceased people were removed from the register.</p> <p>Following the July 2024 General Election 5,200 Poll Cards (out of 1.4m or 0.4%) were returned with addressee gone away. Attempts were made to contact these people by mail/telephone/letter with 3,800 electors removed from the Electoral Register.</p> |
| Registration 6 | <p>By Winter 2024, complete a review of European Union electors as required by Elections Act 2022 & detailed in Representation of the People (Franchise Amendment and Eligibility Review) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2023</p> <p>As required by law European Union (EU) electors were reviewed – following data analysis a review notice was sent to such electors in September 2024 (email, text & post). This resulted in 200 electors being removed from the register in October 2024.</p> |
| | <div> <div>Achieved</div> <div>Partially / Not Achieved</div> </div> |

| Elections (Readiness & Delivery) | |
|--|---|
| Business Plan Objective and Status | |
| Elections 1 | <p>During 2024/25 deliver work required for a 2024 United Kingdom Parliament General Election and to review its operation</p> <p>The Electoral Office administered the United Kingdom General Election on 4 July 2024. In total 1.365 million parliamentary electors were registered to vote (up 5.4% from the 2019 election) and 136 candidates stood for the 18 seats. The election involved hiring 6,000 poll and count staff, printing / delivering 1.4 million poll cards and issuing ballot papers at 605 Polling Places (1409 Ballot Boxes) to allow electors to vote. In total 3 count centres were run (Belfast, Craigavon & Magherafelt) to return 18 new Members of Parliament (listed in Annex C). An internal review was carried out and a meeting held with Deputy Returning Officers to identify areas for improvement.</p> |
| Elections 2 | <p>Ongoing throughout the year to maintain readiness for any upcoming elections.</p> <p>During the year work was undertaken to ensure systems and temporary staffing levels were maintained for election readiness. Following the 2024 General Election count centres, communications and logistics were reviewed. Following the decision to hold a double election in 2027, work has started on planning for/improvements to assist the delivery of these two elections.</p> |
| Elections 3 | <p>During 2024/25 to finalise methods to mitigate Digital Registration Number issues found in the Electoral Office report published in January 2024</p> <p>The Electoral Office published a Digital Registration Number mitigations paper in January 2024 www.eoni.org.uk/results-data/local-council-elections-2023-results/2023-local-elections-digital-registration-number-review-january-2024. The paper noted the policy needs to be reviewed but mitigations can be delivered for the 2024 General Election. This led to work in 2024/25 which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Digital Registration Number online lookup service was delivered www.eoni.org.uk/drn. In total 64,000 people used the new service during 2024/25 new absent voter forms were prepared and used at the 2024 General Election – see https://www.eoni.org.uk/voting/voting-by-post-or-proxy/ first class post & email were both used in the 2024 General Election to give electors a faster understanding of whether their absent vote application was approved <p>This work led to less issues with the Digital Registration Number in 2024 than in 2023, with a fall in the number of rejected absent vote applications. (It should be noted that this fall occurred even though the overall number of absent vote applications rose markedly).</p> |
| Elections 4 | <p>By Spring 2025 to have started development of an improved programme for single transferrable vote training and calculation software – this is planned to include improved training & enhanced digital calculation methods</p> <p>A review of the electronic count calculator spreadsheet was undertaken. An updated version of the count calculator spreadsheet was developed. The updated version also has a detailed manual to guard against the chance of error.</p> <p>The new software provides more user-friendly, faster decision-making and an enhanced user interface. This work will be shared with and a training exercise run with Local Councils in 2025/26 to ensure that it is fully tested and understood prior to the 2027 elections.</p> |
| Elections 5 | <p>Ongoing throughout the year to finalise changes required under the Elections Act 2022 – this includes new postal vote handling rules, reduced proxy limits, changes to nomination process and changes to prescribed forms</p> <p>A host of changes were completed from the Elections Act 2022 in time for the 2024 General Election. New rules around postal vote handling were delivered, changes to the nomination process and to forms/systems. Following the election European Union electors were reviewed in Autumn 2024 (see Registration 6).</p> |
| <div> <div></div> <div>Achieved</div> <div></div> <div>Partially / Not Achieved</div> </div> | |

| Corporate Services | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Business Plan Objective and Status | |
| Corporate Services 1 | <p>Ongoing throughout the year to work with commercial supplier to start implementation of new Election Management Software</p> <p>Following detailed work, the Electoral Office paused the implementation of the new Electoral Management System. The supplier will launch a product in Great Britain & continue to work towards a UK product in the longer term.</p> |
| Corporate Services 2 | <p>By Spring 2025 to have identified and started delivering a series of activities to build greater resilience into the work of the Electoral Office</p> <p>During the year, a Deputy Chief Electoral Officer was appointed, and work was taken forward to replace staff who retired in 2024/25. In addition work was taken forward to create an enhanced Data/Digital capacity in the Office and recruitment/training is now ongoing on this issue.</p> |
| Corporate Services 3 | <p>By Winter 2024 to have started the implementation of reform of the delivery of the Electoral Identity Card service</p> <p>The new online Electoral ID card application form www.eoni.org.uk/ID-card went live on 12 March 2025.</p> <p>The online application form was part of a wider review which enhanced procedures for other parts of the Electoral ID card service. This included an improved paper form and mitigations to reduce the risk of fraudulent applications being approved.</p> |
| Corporate Services 4 | <p>Ongoing throughout the year to continue to deliver an Electoral Identity Card service</p> <p>During the year, the Electoral ID service issued 5,000 ID cards to registered voters who made successful applications.</p> |
| Corporate Services 5 | <p>By Autumn 2024 to have developed and submitted to the Secretary of State the 2022/23 and 2023/24 Annual Reports of the Chief Electoral Officer</p> <p>The 2022/23 and 2023/24 Annual Reports were sent to the Northern Ireland Office and laid before Parliament in October 2024.</p> |
| Corporate Services 6 | <p>By Spring 2025 to have run Association of Electoral Administrators professional training for key Electoral Office staff</p> <p>Five senior staff attended the Association of Electoral Administrators annual conference in February 2025. Staff also attended Association of Electoral Administrators Elections Act 2022 professional training.</p> <p>The Electoral Office moved over to online Association of Electoral Administrators training for all 4,000 Polling Station staff at the 2024 General Election. This helped standardised training of poll staff.</p> |
| Corporate Services 7 | <p>Ongoing throughout the year to ensure that internal financial, procurement and personnel controls are adhered to.</p> <p>Meetings were held with Government Internal Auditors to complete General Election Payroll and Business Plan / Targets Audits. In addition work was progressed to address issues from previous audit reports.</p> |

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|---------------------------------|
|  | Achieved |  | Partially / Not Achieved |
|---|-----------------|---|---------------------------------|

| Digital & Data Services | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Business Plan Objective and Status | |
| Digital & Data Services 1 | <p>Ongoing throughout the year to maintain security and protection of all Electoral Office data assets – while at the same time delivering training / measures to monitor, enhance and review our data security and Information Governance</p> <p>During the year Information Governance meetings were held, Data Protection training was delivered, the information asset register was maintained & an IT Health Check undertaken with issues found addressed.</p> |
| Digital & Data Services 2 | <p>By Winter 2024 to review and improve the online “Am I Registered” electoral register check process www.eoni.org.uk/am-i-registered with evidence from the 2024 General Election</p> <p>The new online “Am I Registered” service went live on 26 March 2024 (www.eoni.org.uk/am-i-registered). In total 64,000 checks were made in 2024/25. This service was a significant enhancement for the 2024 General Election.</p> <p>To date (September 2025 from March 2024) the service has had 73,000 checks and the Electoral Office have identified and documented a small number of improvements. Last year priority was given to develop the online Electoral ID card application form & the new website. However the full list of improvements identified will be delivered for the 2027 elections.</p> |
| Digital & Data Services 3 | <p>Ongoing throughout the year to continue to deliver digital access to electoral register data for external users</p> <p>In Autumn 2023 the Electoral Office moved over to delivery of digital copies of the electoral register to external users who have statutory access. This was delivered in 2024/25 & all statutory users now use the digital service.</p> |
| Digital & Data Services 4 | <p>Ongoing throughout the year to develop, test and trial online form for Electoral Identity Card applications</p> <p>The new online Electoral ID service www.eoni.org.uk/ID-card went live on 12 March 2025. The service was inherited from the Great Britain system but was built and developed locally using Electoral Office staff. The service was tested by independent security experts.</p> |
| Digital & Data Services 5 | <p>By Winter 2024 to have implemented the new Electoral Office website (www.eoni.org.uk)</p> <p>The Electoral Office, working with a local contractor, delivered a new website which went live on 31 January 2025. The new website was a significant enhancement on the old site - with improved security, a better Content Management System, revamped content, increased functionality for mobile phones and the ability to link in other digital services quickly. This will become a bedrock for the delivery of future Electoral Office services. The website was tested by external independent security experts.</p> |

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|---------------------------------|
|  | Achieved |  | Partially / Not Achieved |
|---|-----------------|---|---------------------------------|

ANNEX B: CASUAL VACANCIES COUNCILLORS / MEMBERS OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RETURNED (April 2024 - March 2025)

Casual Vacancies - Members of Legislative Assembly returned (2024/25)

| Date Filled | Constituency | Previous MLA | New MLA | Political Party/Independent |
|-------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 29/04/2024 | South Down | Patrick Brown | Andrew McMurray | Alliance |
| 10/07/2024 | Lagan Valley | Sorcha Eastwood | Michelle Guy | Alliance |
| 10/07/2024 | North Antrim | Robin Swann | Colin Crawford | Ulster Unionist Party |
| 10/07/2024 | North Down | Alex Easton | Peter Martin | Independent |
| 16/07/2024 | North Antrim | Jim Allister | Timothy Gaston | Traditional Unionist Voice |
| 27/09/2024 | Fermanagh & South Tyrone | Tom Elliott | Diana Armstrong | Ulster Unionist Party |
| 10/02/2025 | Newry and Armagh | Conor Murphy | Aoife Finnegan | Sinn Féin |

Casual Vacancies - Councillors returned (2024/25)

| Date Filled | Area | Previous Cllr | New Cllr | Political Party |
|-------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 24/04/2024 | Ards & North Down (Bangor East & Donaghadee) | Janice MacArthur | Edward Burns Thompson | Democratic Unionist Party |
| 16/05/2024 | Belfast (Ormiston) | Ross McMullan | Hedley Abernethy | Alliance |
| 24/05/2024 | Newry Mourne & Down (Slieve Croob) | Andrew McMurray | Helena Young | Alliance |
| 17/07/2024 | Mid Ulster (Cookstown) | Cathal Mallaghan | Donna Mullin | Sinn Féin |
| 23/07/2024 | Mid & East Antrim (Bannside) | Timothy Gaston | Anna Henry | Traditional Unionist Voice |
| 31/07/2024 | Ards & North Down (Bangor West) | Peter Martin | Carl McClean | Democratic Unionist Party |
| 05/08/2024 | Lisburn and Castlereagh (Castlereagh South) | Michelle Guy | Jamie Harpur | Alliance |
| 13/08/2024 | Mid & East Antrim (Ballymena) | Colin Crawford | Brian Thompson | Ulster Unionist Party |
| 13/08/2024 | Belfast (Balmoral) | Geraldine McAteer | Natasha Brennan | Sinn Féin |
| 14/10/2024 | Ards & North Down (Holywood & Clandeboyne) | David Rossiter | Gillian McCollum | Alliance |
| 15/10/2024 | Ards & North Down (Bangor East & Donaghadee) | Gillian McCollum | John Hennessy | Alliance |
| 21/10/2024 | Fermanagh & Omagh (Erne North) | Diana Armstrong | Rosemary Barton | Ulster Unionist Party |
| 21/10/2024 | Ards & North Down (Bangor West) | Christine Creighton | Naomi McBurney | Alliance |
| 01/11/2024 | Lisburn & Castlereagh (Lisburn North) | Paul Burke | Declan Lynch | Sinn Féin |
| 07/01/2025 | Belfast (Collin) | Clíodhna Nic Bhranair | Siobhán McCallin | Sinn Féin |
| 07/03/2025 | Newry Mourne & Down (Slieve Gullion) | Aoife Finnegan | Martin Hearty | Sinn Féin |
| 21/03/2025 | Lisburn & Castlereagh (Lisburn South) | Peter Kennedy | Jessica Bamford | Alliance |

ANNEX C: MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ELECTED AT 4 JULY 2024 GENERAL ELECTION

| Constituency | Name | Political Party/Independent |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Belfast East | Gavin Robinson MP | Democratic Unionist Party |
| Belfast North | John Finucane MP | Sinn Féin |
| Belfast South & Mid Down | Claire Hanna MP | Social Democratic & Labour Party |
| Belfast West | Paul Maskey MP | Sinn Féin |
| East Antrim | Sammy Wilson MP | Democratic Unionist Party |
| East Londonderry | Gregory Campbell MP | Democratic Unionist Party |
| Fermanagh & South Tyrone | Pat Cullen MP | Sinn Féin |
| Foyle | Colum Eastwood MP | Social Democratic & Labour Party |
| Lagan Valley | Sorcha Eastwood MP | Alliance |
| Mid Ulster | Cathal Mallaghan MP | Sinn Féin |
| Newry & Armagh | Dáire Hughes MP | Sinn Féin |
| North Antrim | Jim Allister MP | Traditional Unionist Voice |
| North Down | Alex Easton MP | Independent |
| South Antrim | Robin Swann MP | Ulster Unionist Party |
| South Down | Chris Hazzard MP | Sinn Féin |
| Strangford | Jim Shannon MP | Democratic Unionist Party |
| Upper Bann | Carla Lockhart MP | Democratic Unionist Party |
| West Tyrone | Órfhlaith Begley MP | Sinn Féin |

ANNEX D: ELECTORATE STATISTICS (NORTHERN IRELAND) – DECEMBER 2024

Electoral Register (Northern Ireland – December 2024) – Parliamentary Constituencies / Assembly Areas / Local Councils

| Constituency | Total Electorate | Parliamentary Electorate | Assembly Electorate |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Belfast East | 75,679 | 72,808 | 75,648 |
| Belfast North | 76,257 | 74,084 | 76,236 |
| Belfast South & Mid Down | 77,014 | 74,544 | 76,943 |
| Belfast West | 76,001 | 75,142 | 75,991 |
| East Antrim | 73,946 | 73,131 | 73,927 |
| East Londonderry | 76,495 | 75,395 | 76,462 |
| Fermanagh & South Tyrone | 82,270 | 77,596 | 82,247 |
| Foyle | 74,125 | 73,520 | 74,103 |
| Lagan Valley | 83,874 | 82,140 | 83,848 |
| Mid Ulster | 76,097 | 73,779 | 76,088 |
| Newry & Armagh | 81,452 | 78,056 | 81,435 |
| North Antrim | 76,461 | 74,404 | 76,441 |
| North Down | 74,624 | 73,614 | 74,568 |
| South Antrim | 78,515 | 76,882 | 78,494 |
| South Down | 77,268 | 76,004 | 77,237 |
| Strangford | 75,241 | 74,447 | 75,218 |
| Upper Bann | 86,762 | 81,186 | 86,742 |
| West Tyrone | 75,450 | 74,144 | 75,440 |
| Northern Ireland | 1,397,531 | 1,360,876 | 1,397,068 |

| Local Council | Local Council Electorate |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Antrim & Newtownabbey | 107,825 |
| Ards & North Down | 125,260 |
| Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon | 157,932 |
| Belfast | 239,783 |
| Causeway Coast & Glens | 104,708 |
| Derry City & Strabane | 115,722 |
| Fermanagh & Omagh | 88,559 |
| Lisburn & Castlereagh | 111,794 |
| Mid & East Antrim | 103,668 |
| Mid Ulster | 106,971 |
| Newry, Mourne & Down | 134,846 |
| Northern Ireland | 1,397,068 |

(1) Total Electorate relates to all persons in the electoral register on 1 December 2024.

(2) There are different eligibility rules regarding the electorate for each election (Parliamentary, Assembly & Local Council).

This is detailed at www.eoni.org.uk/voting/what-elections-can-i-vote-at and commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8985

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