



Companies House

Business plan 2018 to 2019



© Crown copyright 2018

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0. To view this licence visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/ or email: PSI@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and you must give the title of the source document/publication. Where third party material has been identified, permission from the respective copyright holder must be sought.

This publication is available at: www.gov.uk/companieshouse

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at: Companies House, Crown Way, Cardiff, CF14 3UZ or email: enquiries@companieshouse.gov.uk

Alternative format versions of this report are available on request from: www.enquiries@companieshouse.gov.uk

Companies House is an Executive Agency of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

Ministerial foreword	2
1. Introduction	4
2. Transformation programme	6
3. Our transformation programme	7
4. Our corporate targets	8
5. Our role in government	10
6. International work	11
7. Our customers	12
8. Service development	14
9. Making sure the data on the register is right	16
10. Building a high performance culture	19
11. Organisation design	22
12. Finance	26
13. External accreditation	27

Ministerial foreword

I am delighted to introduce the Companies House Business Plan for 2018-19, which sets out the key performance measures and financial forecasts for the year.

Earlier this year, I had the pleasure of visiting Companies House, to see for myself some of their great services. The volume of transactions processed by Companies House is extraordinary, with thousands of filings being processed every hour. It was truly inspiring to see the commitment to delivering first-class digital services centred on meeting customer needs. I had the opportunity to meet some of the people working at Companies House, and to hear first-hand about the progress that had been made developing the culture of the organisation and improving staff engagement. I was particularly pleased that they achieved a Gold Investors in People accreditation, highlighting the commitment the organisation has to its people and building a highly skilled organisation that can deliver for the future.

This business plan builds on these successes and sets a high level of ambition, demonstrating that Companies House is truly committed to delivering to the highest possible standards. This plan outlines measures to transform the organisation: developing better customer-driven services and further developing the skills within the organisation, whilst concentrating on continuing to improve the quality of the data on the register.

Companies House has an important role to play in making the Industrial Strategy a reality, and all of the measures in the plan will contribute to building a business environment that makes the UK the best place in the world to start and run a business. I firmly believe that Companies House is delivering its vision to be the best registry in the world and that this ambitious programme will ensure that it continues to be world-leading.

Lord Henley



1

Introduction

Companies House plays a critical role in the business framework. We run the most open and transparent company register in the world, with over 3.9 million companies on the register. We process over 30,000 transactions every day. The information on the register is used by thousands of people every day to make millions of business decisions every year. For this reason, it is essential that we provide simple, efficient services that help companies provide information quickly and correctly and allow searchers to extract and analyse information accurately.

This year will mark a major milestone in our history: we will set out on an ambitious programme of work that will see Companies House launching a transformation programme to completely change the way in which we offer services to our customers. We will continue to deliver the high-quality services our customers have come to expect and implement essential changes to meet new demands. We have an excellent workforce that is committed to making this an outstanding year, and are confident that we will deliver our ambitious goals.



3.9 million
companies on
the register

The background features a pattern of green hexagons and diagonal lines. Some hexagons are filled with solid green, while others contain diagonal hatching. The lines are also green and vary in thickness and orientation, creating a dynamic, geometric composition.

Transformation programme



2

Our transformation programme

This year we will be launching a three-year programme of transformation. This will be an organisational transformation that touches every aspect of our work. Every service we offer will be considered as an end-to-end digital service designed to meet our customers' needs, and our organisation will be structured to best support ongoing excellence. On completion of the programme we will be a truly digital organisation, inside and out; our services will be intuitive and easy to use and focussed entirely on our customers' needs. We will seek to use common government platforms wherever possible, providing consistency for customers and efficiency in development.

Digital services are an essential element of our transformation, but some of our biggest changes will be in the cultural shift we will make within our organisation. Our staff will migrate from largely administrative, carefully prescribed jobs, to richer more varied roles where they will feel ownership over the services they provide and can be inquisitive about their routes to development and improvement. We will be able to embed greater checks into digital systems and employ our staff to undertake more analytical, value-added work, to maximise the quality of the data we hold. This will collectively provide a step change in the quality of the data on the register and its value to the wider economy.



3

Our corporate targets

This year we will be laying the foundations for our transformation. At the same time, we must continue to deliver our core role. Each year we identify a set of targets which monitor the most important aspects of our work, to ensure that we are focused on what truly matters and continue to deliver to high standards.



Our corporate targets



VOLUNTARY DISSOLUTION

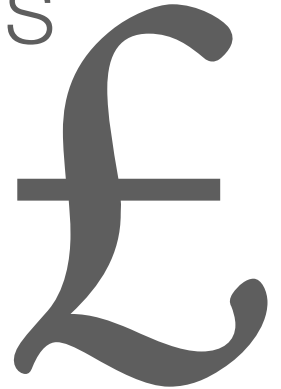


40% of filings for voluntary dissolution are made digitally

REDUCE COSTS



Reduce the cost of our baseline activities by 3.5%



SMALL FULL ACCOUNTS ONLINE



Provide a digital service for the filing of small full accounts

COMPLIANCE



Ensure that 97% of companies have an up to date confirmation statement



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION



Achieve a customer satisfaction rate of 88%

OUR SERVICES



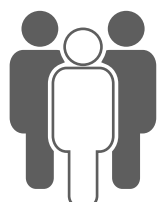
Ensure that our digital services are available 99.9% of the time



Respond to 95% of PSC complaints within 10 days



Ensure no vacancy within the digital area remains unfilled for more than 3 months



4

Our role in government

As an executive agency of the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), we have an important role in the delivery of the department's policy, and particularly in its industrial strategy. Companies House will play a central part in achieving the government's policy to make it easy to set up and run a business in the UK, as well as supporting businesses through the provision of brilliant services and timely and accurate information. We will explore more ways to use the standard industrial classification codes, for example, to help identify regional and sector growth areas. We will also consider how we can make our data easier to analyse, presenting it in different ways to allow the targeting of business support and wider government interventions.

In the coming year we will complete a thorough refresh of our support to small business, with ongoing improvements to our guidance to make sure people have all the information they need at their fingertips. We will also work across government to ensure clear signposting between our services and other sources of support for start-ups, connecting with partners such as the British Business Bank, InnovateUK and the Intellectual Property Office.

During 2018/19 we will work closely with BEIS on their policy development, ensuring that we are ready to deliver any new services that will be needed. In particular, we will support BEIS on preparations for Brexit, contributing to delivery of an effective company law framework in the UK. We will also work with BEIS on the development of a register of beneficial owners of overseas companies that own property in the UK or enter into contracts with government. This will address concerns about the potential use of property transactions to launder money or commit fraud.

We will also work closely with BEIS on potential changes to limited partnership law, to address concerns about the possible misuse of this vehicle for fraudulent activities. At the moment, companies are allowed to have directors that are other companies (corporate directors). To increase transparency, corporate directors will be banned in some circumstances. We will work in partnership with BEIS to implement that ban.

We will continue to work on the implementation of the European General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), ensuring compliance by the EU deadline of 25 May 2018. The main piece of work is likely to be the data audit, which will ensure that we have a record of all processes across Companies House. This will be important for all our stakeholders, including staff, as it will dictate how we deal with their data, as well as the register data we hold which is not shown on the public record.

5

International work

Companies House is regarded internationally as leading the way in setting the standard for company registration. We have close ties with company registries across the world, with whom we are able to share expertise and experience. As part of that engagement, Companies House attends various conferences, which also allows us to meet representatives from interested international organisations such as the World Bank. We will continue to use these opportunities to promote the UK's aims to improve corporate transparency, including sharing our experiences in developing the register of people with significant control.



6

Our customers

Our customers are central to the development of all our services. As we progress our transformation programme, we will be re-engineering each service on the basis of customer insight, to ensure it fully meets customer needs. Once our programme is complete, we will be a truly digital organisation inside and out. This gives us huge opportunities for improvements, in terms of both customer service and efficiency.

We support a range of different customers, each with distinct needs. The first group of customers is the companies themselves. These customers need to be able to maintain their information on our register easily, keeping it accurate and up to date at all times. Some of the companies on our register will be very small, filing with us directly and with limited access to professional support to assist them. They need easy-to-use systems that guide them through each process and assist them in filing the right information at the right time. The larger companies on the register may employ professionals to assist them in running their businesses, meeting their filing requirements through an intermediary, such as an accountant. The final group of customers is the search customers. These are the businesses and individuals who rely on the information on the register to assist them in making decisions on whether to enter into a business transaction with a company, whether to extend credit to that company or to analyse company information as a whole. The ways in which people use the information on the register are many and varied, but they all have similar needs. They need to be able to access the information they need quickly and easily and to have confidence in that data being accurate and up to date.

Customer satisfaction

Each year we participate in an independent customer satisfaction survey to ensure that we are continuing to deliver to the highest possible standards. In 2017/18 we experienced a dip in customer satisfaction. We are committed to providing the highest levels of customer service and therefore intend to focus on improving levels to our target of 88% of our customers being satisfied with our service. In order to do so, we will be addressing one of the main sources of customer complaints: the inclusion of residential addresses on the public register. Since 2009, it has been possible to provide a service address for a director for the public register, with the residential address being kept private and not displayed. However, this does not apply to directors who were appointed prior to this change. In recent years, we have seen growing concern from our customers about their private address being widely available. In April this year, we will implement a change in the law which will allow customers to apply to have their residential address replaced with a service address on the public register, or partially suppressed, depending on the circumstances. It will, however, be necessary to charge a fee for each document containing a residential address that is suppressed. The change will also extend to those that applied to be a director since 2009, but did not take up the option to use a service



CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION

88%

address on the public register. The only exception is where a residential address was used as a registered office, given the special legal status of these addresses, but this is something that Companies House and BEIS will continue to review.

Customer contact

As we transform our services, we will communicate with our customers in an increasingly digital manner. This means replacing our current, paper-based reminders with digital options. Customers can currently sign up for email reminders, but we recognise that this does not suit everyone. In the coming year, we will explore the introduction of an additional option to request a text reminder service. We will also begin to look at how we will approach the task of closing down the paper-based reminder service, using customer insights to understand why customers are not currently opting for the digital services, and making sure the digital options are of the highest quality to meet users' needs. During the course of the coming year, our current contact centre contract ends. When we re-tender for this contract, we will focus on development of an efficient multi-channel service provision, with flexibility built in to adapt to our changing services. We will also ensure any new contract provides us with the customer analytics to target our communications more precisely, and to understand customer needs and concerns.

Driving take up of our digital services

We are committed to becoming an entirely digital organisation, closing down paper filing channels wherever possible. Digital services are more secure and efficient, for us and our customers, and also reduce the risk of errors occurring when information on paper is transcribed or scanned. Increased digital filing also supports the wider goals of corporate transparency as information filed is provided directly as data, which can be searched more easily and accurately. We will develop excellent digital services, and ensure that customers are aware of them and understand the benefits of switching to digital.

VOLUNTARY DISSOLUTION



40% of filings for voluntary dissolution are made digitally

In 2017/18 we developed a digital service for filing for voluntary dissolution of a company. This is an important transaction. The consequences of dissolving the wrong company are clearly grave. By requiring customers to file this information directly into our systems, we significantly reduce this risk. The action can also be completed more quickly, with the process beginning immediately after the customer initiates it. We are, therefore, keen to ensure that customers are aware of this service and avoid using alternative paper options. We are currently testing this service with a limited number of customers to ensure it meets their needs, before making it available to all in the first quarter of the coming year. Following this we will, as a first step to full digitisation, aim to have 40% of all filings for voluntary dissolution made digitally across the remainder of the year.

7

Service development

We pride ourselves in offering efficient digital services to our customers. The proportion of transactions completed digitally is high, at over 85%. As such, the reliability of our digital services is critical. In the coming year, we will maintain availability of our services at 99.9% of the time. This means our customers can be confident that they will be able to complete transactions with us digitally, at a time that suits them. Whilst this year will see us laying the foundations for the transformation of all our services, there will still be substantial improvements to our existing services made within the year.

Our online search service receives exceptionally high levels of customer satisfaction. At present, the service is classed as a 'public beta', as we have not yet completed the full suite of assessments required by the Government Digital Service to make the service fully live. We are aware that this concerns some of our customers. We will, therefore, complete the final stages of assessment and move to a fully live public service in the coming year.

For our filing customers, we will expand our digital services. We will continue our work to enable accounts filings as fully as possible, focusing initially on providing a digital filing service for those customers who need to file 'small company, full accounts' and then going on to provide a digital account filing service for community interest companies (CIC). These are companies with a social purpose at their core and providing an efficient, digital service for these companies, which are often very small, will be welcomed. As CICs are required to file an additional form and a fee alongside their accounts, this will require us to develop a payment facility on CHS. The payment facility, and the ability to upload attachments, will be common services that can then be used in any transactions that require similar functionality. Thus, acting as key building blocks for the rest of our digital transformation.

It is not just our external facing systems which will be improved in this year. We will be making improvements to internal systems which will deliver efficiencies and service improvements for our customers. In the last year, we completed an end-to-end review of the 'late filing penalty' regime. This is the regime we administer on behalf of government to collect penalties imposed for the late filing of accounts. This review identified many changes that could be made internally to generate efficiency savings for Companies House and customers. These include creating digital services for elements of the process, such as submitting 'promise to file' correspondence and requests to the Secretary of State for an extension of filing time, digitally logging appeals and creating an online portal to allow customers to pay penalties as quickly and easily as possible. We will implement these changes in the coming year.

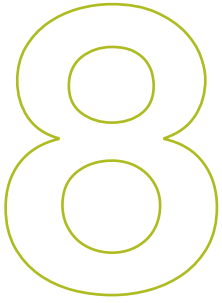
Companies House is part of a wider network that enforces compliance with company law requirements. One element of this is our interaction with the magistrates' court. In the coming year, we will develop digital services for prosecution activity and integrate them with the court via the Single Justice Procedure. This digital service will replace one that is currently exclusively paper. It will offer a much more efficient process, for both Companies House and the court, in those instances where companies do not comply with their filing requirements and we need to take action.

SMALL FULL ACCOUNTS ONLINE



Provide a digital service for the filing of small full accounts





Making sure the data on the register is right

The register is an important source of company information that underpins decision making across many activities, as well as supporting law enforcement in tackling money laundering. For this reason, it is essential that we make sure the quality of the data is high.

The first step in ensuring that the data is complete, is to focus on maintaining high levels of compliance. The information held within a company's accounts is invaluable to any searcher wishing to engage with that company. They can provide evidence as to the financial stability and effective management of the company, helping businesses and customers to reach sound decisions as to whether the company is one with which to do business. Currently, 99% of companies have filed an up-to-date set of accounts, reflecting one of the highest compliance rates of any registry in the world. The second important document, filed by every company, is the confirmation statement. This filing confirms that a company's record is up to date, and that key pieces of information, such as the names of its directors and people with significant control, are correct. This is an essential element of corporate transparency. In the past year, we have introduced a number of changes to the confirmation statement, making it simpler to complete. This has led to improving compliance levels, and we wish to continue to improve this in the coming year. We will refresh our guidance, in line with the standards of the Government Digital Service, and test it with customers to make sure it is easily understood and enables companies to understand and comply with their obligations. Alongside this, we will review our communications directly with companies. We will make sure these are timely and clear so that recipients know immediately what they need to do and can quickly and easily update their company record. We recognise that the confirmation statement is also important to customers, and we propose to ensure that at least 97% of companies have filed an up-to-date confirmation statement.

COMPLIANCE



97%

Ensure that 97% of companies have an up to date confirmation statement

Many customers use the data on the register to form the basis of wider analysis: to understand business trends, to identify patterns within companies or to spot possibly fraudulent activity. For these customers, it is essential that the data is consistent in its form and as complete as possible. Feedback had highlighted that there are issues. For example, there were over 500 different ways in which a company may have declared the nationality of a director as being 'British'. A single consistent entry would make analysis far simpler and more effective. With this in mind, we have recently taken a number of steps to improve the quality of data. This included a clean-up of over 100,000 records where the nationality data was misspelled or inaccurate. We have also replaced free text fields, introducing authoritative registers of countries and nationalities, producing a more consistent data set. In the coming year, we will continue to make similar improvements, concentrating on providing clean, structured data. For example, the standard industrial classification codes are vital to understanding the success and lifespan of companies in various sectors across regions of the UK. We will complete work to identify and implement improvements in the consistency of this data. One set of beneficiaries of this work will be other parts of government that provide support to businesses. We will work with other departments to identify the information and analysis they require to make effective decisions on where support for business



Corporate transparency

could be best targeted. We will explore the value in providing visual representations of information on the register to support this work.

Corporate transparency and money laundering

Tackling money laundering is a key issue for the government, and Companies House plays an important role in this wider work. The information on the register is vital in building a picture of corporate transparency and our links with the wider law enforcement network help ensure that money laundering is tackled effectively. The requirement to provide information on people with significant control (PSC) was introduced in 2016 and is an integral part of the government's commitment to corporate transparency, ensuring that the UK is a trusted and fair place to do business. Companies House has focused on getting its implementation right.


In June 2017, we implemented changes resulting from the EU's fourth anti-money laundering directive which means PSC information is more up to date and that a greater number of company types are required to provide information on their PSCs. Over 98% of companies have provided information regarding their PSCs. This is a great success.

However, our analysis of the data submitted has identified areas where improvements can be made. We will contact companies where we believe they have misunderstood the requirements, to ensure that the records are corrected and that they comply with their legal requirements. We will pursue companies that have not provided PSC information in their confirmation statement or that have not provided a statement of additional matters. We will also follow up with companies and PSCs where they have issued notices to their PSC (asking the PSCs to provide them with information), or restrictions (where a PSC has failed to provide information), to ensure they update the information on their company records. We will also seek compliance from companies where there has been a complaint about missing or incorrect PSC information.

Although for the majority of companies, the requirements are very straightforward, some companies have not fully understood their obligations and have, therefore, provided incomplete or incorrect information. We will look to ensure our communications and guidance on this are as clear as possible, to assist effective filing.

A small number of companies may be deliberately providing false information, or no information at all. This could be to cover fraud or money laundering activities. Companies House works with others across the law enforcement network to ensure that information is shared correctly and to support the tackling of economic crime. We will develop data and intelligence sharing gateways with law enforcement and other government departments to support this work further. In particular, we will work with The Insolvency Service criminal enforcement team to investigate non-compliance.

We follow up every complaint to us regarding PSC information, and in the coming year we will aim to respond to 95% of these within 10 working days. In 2019, government will review the effectiveness of the PSC register. Over the coming year, we will work with BEIS and other partners to gather the necessary evidence to make this review valuable.



95%

Respond to 95% of PSC complaints within 10 days

9

Building a high performance culture

We have a highly committed workforce, with vast experience in company registration. This gives us a great foundation on which to build to ensure we have the right skills and culture to deliver excellence in the future. In recent years we have made significant improvements in the performance of our staff and our organisation. We have concentrated on improving the skills of our managers, focusing on a coaching style to develop their people to their highest potential, and on building excellence in customer service skills. Our transformation programme will see us achieve a true shift in our culture, to make sure we are best placed to deliver to the highest possible standards in the future.

Cultural change

To achieve the ambitions we have set ourselves in our transformation programme, we need to change certain styles and perceptions of management in order to cultivate confidence, trust and maturity in working relationships. Successful change will engender a shared vision and understanding, enabling our people to think beyond their own roles, and be confident in offering the benefit of their vast expertise when thinking about how those roles might be performed more efficiently. We will use our excellent foundations to build the strength of commitment, knowledge, experience and a strong sense of working together, which are all vital to our continued success. We recognise, however, that in today's rapidly changing world, our people will need to be responsive to such change: to adapt, cope with change and to be inquisitive about their work, constantly seeking new and better ways to carry out their roles.

Companies House operates within the context of a legal framework, and much of our work is bound by legal requirements. This can lead to a reluctance to take managed risks, or to seek to be innovative and do things differently. However, step-change improvements for staff and customers can only be achieved by constantly learning and giving our people the freedom to try new ideas. This is a profound cultural shift that we need to make. Our existing network of culture champions will continue to play a major role in pushing this forward, creating energy and momentum across the organisation. We will work with our people to review our policies and systems, to make sure these are not acting as barriers to doing things differently. Specific projects will include a review of our working arrangements, as we seek to offer our staff the greatest possible flexibility in how, when and where they do their work. As the people who know their work best, they are also the best placed to identify how it can be done better. This, in turn, will engage their sense of responsibility; success and true collaboration require clear communication to manage their time in partnership with the needs of their colleagues, the wider team, their manager and the business.



Coaching will remain at the heart of our approach to management and organisational development. This involves questioning and supporting people in thinking issues through and reaching solutions for themselves and supports the inquisitive culture we are aiming to develop. It also builds confidence in individuals to develop their own ideas and solutions. We have piloted the use of a dedicated people coach to support groups of managers in improving their people management capability. The results have been impressive, and in the coming year we will roll out this approach across the organisation, with all managers and leaders being expected to develop their coaching skills. We also have a network of internal coaches, to work with individuals who have the aspiration and potential to progress. Against the backdrop of transformation, this will be an essential element in developing our own people, maximising their potential and providing them with opportunities to grow.

Achieving our change in culture will require exceptional leaders, who will need to demonstrate the values we wish to promote. They will be advocates for change and will show their own willingness to try new things, and a genuine commitment to their own development and that of their people. All of our leaders will continue their personal development programme to improve leadership capability, setting the expectation of continuous learning and an openness to challenge their own thinking, as well as being role models for all aspects of the high standards and behaviours we expect from our staff. To make sure we embed our thinking, we need to reward our people for demonstrating the behaviours and skills we need, as well as providing clear feedback if people are not acting in accordance with the culture we wish to adopt. In the coming year, we will launch our staff awards. Nominations will be open to all staff and awards will focus on team work, collaboration and innovation; the things we need to reward and encourage for the future.

Proactive performance management will play a key role in identifying and celebrating excellence, and will also ensure we address under performance. We will continue to focus on the importance of regular one to one conversations and constructive feedback. Our aim is to enable people to reach the maximum of their potential, and where there are capability or conduct issues, to tackle these early to ensure swift improvement. In the cases where robust performance management does not lead to sustained improvement, then we will use our policies to exit individuals from the organisation.

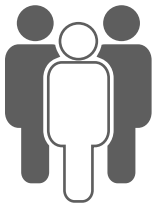
10

Organisation design

As we enter our transformation programme, we will need to review our entire operating model. Our starting point will be the customer needs for each of our services. Once we fully understand our customers' needs from the perspective of a digital future, we can shape the relevant services. The target operating model will be a new way of running our organisation, and may change the shape and size of Companies House. Our people, systems and processes will be reviewed, to ensure they work effectively to deliver the services we need to provide. Our staff will feel a sense of ownership over those services and will be empowered to drive through constant improvement, always thinking about the entire process and its end customer.

We know that to deliver our transformation programme we will need to increase our headcount in certain areas, particularly in specialist fields such as digital development. However, as we progress through the transformation and realise savings, this number may decrease again. We undertake a range of activities to attract the people we need, from using specialist recruiters to running physical and virtual open days. As part of our longer-term recruitment strategy, we will expand our graduate scheme and offer 'year in industry' placements for IT under-graduates. We will seek other opportunities to increase our links with Universities and FE Colleges, such as part funding PhDs in technology areas of potential benefit like BlockChain. Filling vacancies in the digital area will be a key priority for us. We have, therefore, set a target of ensuring that no vacancy within the digital area remains unfilled for more than three months.

VACANCIES



Ensure no vacancy within the digital area remains unfilled for more than 3 months

It is not simply in the digital area that we will need to recruit new staff. The digital development of new services will require support from staff in a variety of fields, to make sure the design truly meets customer needs, is understood by customers and remains compliant within any law change. In these areas, we will need to make sure we have in place the right people, with the right skills. In the future, the work that is done by our operational staff is likely to change considerably. Roles will be more varied and challenging, and there will be more analytical work, requiring people to exercise judgement and to have an enquiring mind. This will be supported by our essential cultural change.

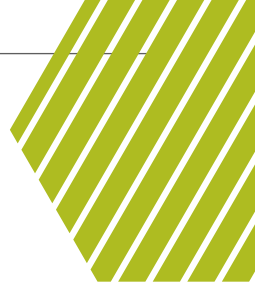
Diversity

The government has recently set out its aims to become the most inclusive employer in the UK. Companies House is committed to mirroring this aim. Inclusion means ensuring that everyone is comfortable being themselves at work, that everyone can deliver to the maximum of their abilities and is rewarded accordingly. As we take on large numbers of new staff, it is even more important that we promote the value of



Engagement

Having a highly engaged workforce is essential to driving the high-performance culture we need



diversity in all its forms. Being open to new ideas and different ways of thinking are essential if we are to make the most of the skills of our new workforce.

In the coming year, we will run a series of events on various diversity-related themes. These sessions will be designed to encourage people to be aware of how they can adopt a more inclusive approach to the management of their people and their work. We will focus on understanding our diversity data, to identify any groups of staff who may feel less engaged, and any underlying reasons for this. This will allow us to target future interventions more effectively, and to monitor their impact.

Engagement

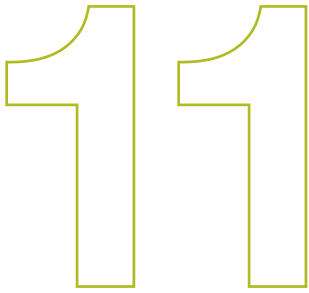
Having a highly engaged workforce is essential to driving the high-performance culture we need. People who are engaged at work are actively seeking ways to make things better, constantly striving for excellence and are open and enquiring about their wider world, constantly learning and developing. This leads to improvements in processes, customer services and productivity.

One way to encourage high levels of engagement is to provide a wide range of development activities. This investment in people, in terms of the skills and wider experiences, demonstrates the value the organisation places on the rounded development of all its people. Companies House excels in this area, making available a wide range of activities to suit all learning styles. Last year, we launched a programme of sessions with motivational speakers, one-hour slots in which an external speaker talks about motivation, resilience and overcoming challenges. These were very well received by staff. In the coming year, we will expand on this by widening the range of speakers to cover diversity issues, customer care skills, innovation and business development. We will also seek to provide specialist sessions. For example, bringing in experts from the digital world to share experiences from the field with our own digital staff. We also encourage our staff to participate in volunteering, in line with the government-wide policy to allow staff 5 days to support voluntary work. This is an opportunity for our staff to learn in a different situation, whilst giving something back to the local community, and is a major driver of staff engagement.

We will also continue our important work on health and well-being, to help maintain our impressive record of improving attendance levels. Health promotion, and early intervention when individuals are experiencing health issues, are vital and we will use a range of innovative methods to improve the well-being of staff. As part of our commitment to the 'Time to Change' initiative, which focuses on reducing the stigma of mental ill health in the work place, we will take specific actions to address this important issue. For example, working with charity, Mind, to build our managers' confidence in supporting staff with mental health issues.

Culture, well-being and engagement are all affected by the environment in which our people work. This year, we will continue to implement our ambitious estates strategy. We will create a flexible conference facility that will enable us to collaborate and engage effectively with large numbers of people, running a variety of different styles of events to maximise opportunity for developing different thinking. As we grow we will use our space creatively, reflecting our digital future. We will also continue to engage with the government on its estates' agenda. Focusing on our regional offices, to ensure that we are able to deliver effective services across the entirety of the UK, and that we continue to maximise and exploit the facilities we have available.





Finance

As a trading fund, Companies House aims to cover its running costs through fees. In the coming years, we will be investing in a range of transformation initiatives, both to enable extended and improved customer services, and to deliver ongoing efficiencies. These will be funded initially from accumulated cash reserves and, therefore we do not anticipate making any changes to our fees in the coming year. However we will continue to monitor the cost of our services, particularly, about changes implemented through regulatory requirements.

In addition to providing enhanced services for customers, the transformation initiatives will also deliver savings through organisational and technological efficiency. Each year, we aim to achieve an efficiency saving of 3.5%; to date, efforts have focussed on effective procurement and tight cost control. In the coming years, these savings will be found through changes to operating processes, systems and organisational design, as well as potential changes to our service offering (eg by moving from paper to digital reminders and through driving take up of the voluntary dissolution service).

REDUCE COSTS

3.5%

Reduce the cost of our baseline activities by 3.5%

Income and expenditure	
	2018/19 Proposed Budget £,000
Income	
Total income	66,046
Late filing penalties	5,200
Trading fund income	71,246
Expenditure	
Staff costs	31,832
Other costs	30,992
Depreciation	5,805
Total expenditure	68,629
Surplus before interest and dividend	2,617
Net interest receivable/(payable)	(4,000)
Retained surplus/(deficit)	(1,321)

12

External accreditation

Companies House aims to benchmark its systems and policies against well-known external standards. This gives us confidence that our approach has been independently assessed, and meets the high standards we aim for. It also helps us to identify any areas of potential weakness, and to focus on ongoing plans on improving in these areas.

Investors in People

At a time of transformation, it is essential, more than ever, that we continue to demonstrate our ongoing investment in staff. We are currently assessed as being at gold standard by Investors in People. In July this year, we will be reassessed to determine whether we can retain this standard. We are fully-committed to achieving this goal. Our previous IiP assessment identified a few areas where we could improve, to ensure we retained our gold assessment. Whilst the assessment found that we were generally strong and had pockets of excellence, the assessment showed that we were not consistently demonstrating the highest standards on collaboration, innovation and celebrating success. We have an effective plan in place to tackle these gaps, and are confident in retaining our gold award.

Data security

We have an excellent record in the maintenance of a number of security standards: this is our sixteenth year holding ISO27001 certification, and our third audited Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance. This year, we will continue to invest in the security of our digital services, implementing a new Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) service. This will utilise expert third-party resource, with a global reach, to monitor and analyse output from our network infrastructure. This will improve the detection and management of security events on our own network, as well as providing early sight of global events, before they hit us.

Environmental standards

Companies House has proudly held the ISO 14001 Environmental Standard since 2002. The purpose of this internationally recognised standard is to provide a framework, so that we can develop and implement an effective Environmental Management System (EMS) to responsibly manage our impact on the environment. The intended outcomes are clearly defined, and many processes and procedures have been put in place, to ensure our objectives are met: to protect the environment and reduce pollution; ensure continual improvement, by enhancing our environmental

performance and to comply with all relevant environmental compliance obligations. Companies House is assessed against the ISO 14001 criteria on an annual basis to ensure on-going compliance, and was recently successful in achieving accreditation to the new ISO 14001:2015 Standard.

Health and safety accreditation

We have, for a number of years, achieved accreditation to the OHSAS 18001 standard (Occupational Health and Safety). We are re-assessed twice a year through a robust audit process to ensure we remain compliant. To date we have successfully retained this important recognised standard.

We have also been audited by the Government Internal Audit Office (GIA) on areas of Health and Safety in Companies House, which again focusses on compliance and good practice, based on our Management Control System. We currently hold Silver status within the Corporate Health Standard. This accreditation is based on the breadth and relevance of a range of wellbeing initiatives, which we offer and promote as part of our Companies House Wellbeing Strategy.

www.gov.uk/companieshouse

Contact Centre: **0303 1234 500**

For training and quality purposes your call may be monitored

Mini-com: 029 2038 1245

enquiries@companieshouse.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/companieshouse

Cardiff: Companies House
Crown Way, Cardiff CF14 3UZ.

Edinburgh: Companies House
Fourth Floor, Edinburgh Quay 2,
139 Fountainbridge, Edinburgh, EH3 9FF.

London: Companies House
4 Abbey Orchard Street, Westminster, London, SW1P 2HT.

Belfast: Companies House
Second Floor, The Linenhall,
32-38 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BG.