



## **CABINET OFFICE**

Civil Service Chief Operating Officer & Cabinet Office Permanent Secretary

Catherine Little CB  
Civil Service Chief Operating Officer  
and Cabinet Office Permanent Secretary  
**13th March 2025**

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown,  
Chair of the Public Accounts Committee,  
House of Commons,  
London,  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Sir Geoffrey,

### **Government's relationship with digital technology suppliers - Oral evidence**

During the Oral Evidence Session on the 27th February 2025, I committed to providing responses on the following:

#### **Spending Review and its effect on the Sourcing Strategy**

In order to deliver better funding decisions that drive efficiency and delivery of a modern digital government, the Government Digital Service (GDS) in the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology has a bespoke role in the Spending Review to provide HMT with advice and assurance on digital and technology spend. As part of this, GDS has worked across government to develop assessment criteria that include considering how departments are resourcing and delivering digital and technology programmes. This includes identifying where programmes could be delivered more efficiently through outsourcing, for example commodity IT services that are being delivered in-house that could be delivered more cost effectively by suppliers, or conversely insourcing work where it is better done in-house. This review is based on high-level principles that will be built into the future sourcing strategy.

A small team of digital and commercial staff is already developing the structure, outline and proposed content for the sourcing strategy. Over the coming months, these will be further refined and tested through engagement with both public and private sector stakeholders. We will take an iterative approach to releasing elements of the strategy, including key principles, to support departmental planning after SR settlements have been announced. We will continue to evolve the

document over the summer, building on feedback and demand for specific guidance from both customers and suppliers.

### **Upskilling of staff on digital skills**

As highlighted during the Committee, Andrew Forzani in his capacity as the new Government Chief Commercial Officer will write to you within the next 8-10 weeks to set out a plan and approach to upskilling the 6,000 members of staff in the Government Commercial Function in digital areas.

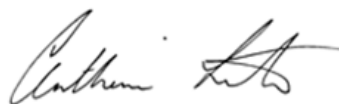
### **Home Office procurement of cloud services from Amazon Web Services**

Home Office contracts are commercially sensitive but all procurement complies by strict rules on value for money, as set out in HM Treasury “Managing Public Money” guidance, and audited by the National Audit Office.

Home Office DDAT is developing new technology and integrating existing systems so that our staff and the public have access to more joined-up and user-friendly IT. We are enabling digital ways of working by putting user needs at the centre of the new digital services we build whilst making it easier to access, use and share data and information to promote an intelligence-led, evidence-based, paper-less department.

New systems are predominantly “cloud first”, and cloud computing expenditure is likely to always trend upwards to meet the priorities of the business.

I would like to thank the Committee for inviting me to the session on 27th February. I will continue to engage fully with the Committee’s work going forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Catherine Little'.

**Catherine Little CB**

Civil Service Chief Operating Officer & Cabinet Office Permanent Secretary

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