

2026/27 DCUSA Approved Budget

2026/27 DCUSA Draft Budget Approved by the DCUSA Panel

Purpose of this document:

This document sets out the Approved Budget for DCUSA Ltd for the financial year from 01 April 2026 to 31 March 2027. Supporting commentary is provided to enable Parties to understand the rationale behind the inclusion of various items in the Approved Budget.



In accordance with Clause 8.2 of the DCUSA Parties were given the opportunity, between 07 January 2026 and 03 February 2026, to provide comments on the Draft Budget for consideration by the Panel during their meeting on 18 February 2026.

The comments received were not material in nature and no amendments were made to the Draft Budget that was consulted on.



Impacted Parties: All Parties

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1 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to highlight the material costs and key considerations related to the 2026/27 financial year. The 2026/27 Approved Budget is set against a column showing the 2025/26 Approved Budget for comparison purposes. A budget summary grouped into specific 'Reporting Pots', is provided in section 2 below and the detailed breakdown of the items which are included within each reporting pot is provided for in Section 3 below.
- 1.2 The significant costs in the DCUSA budget are secretarial services, external contracts, professional fees, legal fees, project costs, meetings costs and contingency allowances. The remaining costs are either fixed contractual costs or are not material in the context of the Budget.
- 1.3 The Panel have considered the objectives and key deliverables of DCUSA Ltd for the financial year and have identified the level of resource required to deliver those objectives.
- 1.4 It should be noted that the current rate of regulatory change is unprecedented and as such the budget has identified and allocated sums to numerous activities that either support or and/are required to implement such changes. There are also sums set aside as contingencies for the yet to be defined support and impacts that DCUSA may be required to deliver and implement.
- 1.5 The 2026/27 Draft Budget shows an increase of c.£780,000 when compared to the approved 2025/26 budget. The primary drivers for the increase are associated with:
 - An increased level of expected costs required for supporting the Digitalisation of the DCUSA;
 - The inclusion of an 'Extraordinary Item' related to the desire to retain current DCUSA Resources in light of the uncertainty caused by the consolidation of the DCUSA and CUSC into the Electricity Commercial Code; and
 - An increased level of contingency thought to be prudent and which might need to be called upon for any additional work associated with a number of ongoing programmes of work, with the largest being Energy Code Reform that might require legal advisors time or additional resource to be deployed to cover both BAU and project work.
- 1.6 The Panel recognises its obligations to manage costs effectively and the sections below outline the actions and principles the Panel will adopt to deliver these obligations. These include only billing certain costs if they are committed to, continual dynamic assessment of quarterly actual spend and adjusting subsequent billing to reflect any under-spends, and effective management of variable cost drivers such as meeting costs.

2 Key Cost Considerations

- 2.1 The table below provides a summary of the budgeted costs, grouped into specific 'Reporting Pots', that have been agreed by the DCUSA Panel. The key cost considerations for the coming year are set out directly below this table.

DCUSA Limited - Budget 2026/27			
Income & Expenditure Account Overview	Budget 26/27	Budget 25/26	Variance
DCUSA Agreement Charges	£3,208,961	£2,428,813	£780,148
DCUSA Charges Rebate	£0	£0	£0
Other Income	£0	£0	£0
Income	£3,208,961	£2,428,813	£780,148
Direct Costs	£1,067,554	£990,917	£76,637
Direct Costs	£1,067,554	£990,917	£76,637
Legal Fees	£60,000	£60,000	£0
Insurance	£10,118	£18,580	-£8,462
Audit Fees	£24,503	£22,361	£2,142
Meetings	£29,000	£27,000	£2,000
Other	£13,350	£13,340	£10
Overheads	£136,971	£141,281	-£4,311
External Contracts	£306,400	£306,400	£0
Regulatory	£79,000	£39,482	£39,518
Stakeholder Engagement	£140,000	£115,000	£25,000
Technology	£600,000	£380,000	£220,000
DCUSA Process	£74,036	£70,732	£3,304
Projects	£155,000	£185,000	-£30,000
Total Projects	£1,354,437	£1,096,615	£257,822
Extraordinary Item	£200,000	£0	£200,000
Total Extraordinary Item	£200,000	£0	£200,000
Contingency	£450,000	£200,000	£250,000
Total Contingency	£450,000	£200,000	£250,000
Total Costs	£3,208,961	£2,428,813	£780,148
Under/(Over) Spend	£0	£0	£0

2.2 The key cost considerations for the coming year are:

FIXED COSTS

- **Audit Fees:** Audit costs have been budgeted at £24.5K which includes a 10% inflationary increase on the 2025/26 cost. The costs include statutory audit and corporation tax compliance.
- **Legal Fees:** An allowance of £60K has been made for legal fees to cover development within the DCUSA. These costs are for legal consultation required in relation to the operation of the DCUSA, primarily the review of Change Proposals legal text.
- **Legal Fees – As a result of Code Reform/Consolidation:** There are likely to be additional legal fees in 2026/27 as a consequence of code consolidation and the preparations for winding down DCUSA Limited. A sum of £50K is recommended as a contingent item and will only be billed if the need arises.

- **Insurance:** An allowance of £10.1K has been made based upon reductions we have seen last year.
- **DCUSA Parties' Training:** An allowance of £4K has been included which will cover the cost of an external venue for one training session. This is reduced from previous years as the training is now delivered via Teams, however it is considered prudent to budget for one training event to be held face to face subject to demand. Please note the delivery of the training session content is included within the Secretarial Services costs.
- **Physical Meeting Costs:** This is reduced from previous years as industry has adapted and evolved into a hybrid working that has seen in-person meeting reduce. However, Panel & Board meetings are ordinarily held in-person, and we sometimes have groups such as the Interventions Working Group request in-person meetings. We consider it appropriate to budget for a sum of £25K, made up as follows:
 - An average of 1.5 ElectraLink hosted meeting room bookings per month @ £500 per booking = £9K
 - 4 externally hosted events per annum @ £4K = £16K
- **Bad Debts:** The bad debts provision has been retained at £12k. In 2025/26 we have seen at least two Suppliers defaulting and we consider it prudent to budget for any potential bad debts that may arise.
- **Secretarial Services:** The contract for 'Secretarial & Administration Services' makes provision for an increase of "RPI+1%; provided that in any event such increase shall not be less than 3% or exceed 4%". The recommendation would be to apply an increase of 4% to allow for the maximum increase that could potentially apply, thus £978.4K.
- **Secretarial Services – Quality Bonus:** We will need to consider budgeting for the quality bonus provision as contained within the Secretariat and Administration agreement with ElectraLink. The agreement makes provision for a 4% Quality Bonus based upon the contract value in the event of achievement of meeting all its quality targets (being the Qualitative Service Levels set out in Schedule 4 of the agreement). It is recommended this is provided for in full for prudence. This equates to the sum of £39.1K.

EXTERNAL CONTRACTS

- **Charging Methodologies Modelling:** The 2026/27 budget includes an allowance of £238.7K reflecting a full year contractual CEPA charge under the extended contract terms effective from April 2023 to March 2028.
- **Charging Methodologies Modelling Contingency:** The DUoS SCR has been re-launched from 31 October 2023. Given the previous experience of Ofgem requesting support via DCUSA Limited to allow access to our Charging Methodology Service Provider, we consider it prudent to continue to include a contingent sum (albeit much reduced from prior years) of £50K in 2026/27.
- **Management of Charging Methodologies Service Provider (CRF 143):** This is a fixed fee payable to the Secretariat based on 20% of the CEPA costs, therefore £47.7K has been allocated.
- **Charging Methodologies Modelling – New Models:** We do not anticipate the need to commission new Charging Methodologies Models in 2026/27 and therefore no sum has been included for this purpose.

Provision of Measurement Class G Data: DCUSA have been supporting parties on an informal basis with respect to providing this data to Distributors in meeting their obligations under Schedule 32 for residual banding allocations. A sum of £20K is set aside fund the provision of obtaining this data via the Data Transfer Service which is owned and operated by ElectraLink Limited.

REGULATORY

- **Attendance at Charging Futures Forum and Charging Delivery Board (CRF140):** A sum of £4K is required to cover the costs of the DCUSA Secretariat attending the Charging Futures Form and the Charging Delivery Board (should this reconvene).
- **Supporting the DUoS SCR (CRF 1156):** The DUoS SCR has re-commenced in October 2023, and the Secretariat will be required to support this process on behalf of DCUSA Limited. However, given the latest update from Ofgem at the DCUSA Strategy Day on 14 October 2025, we do not believe sufficient progress will be made that will lead to extensive support. We therefore propose to maintain a modest sum of £25K for 2026/27.
- **Market-Wide Half-Hourly Settlement (CRF 127):** There should not be any DCUSA costs associated with this programme in 2026/27, in the unlikely event that support is required it is proposed that it would be funded from the Regulatory and Code Governance Change Contingency.
- **Ofgem Data Best Practice as a Code Obligation:** A sum of £50K is recommended to ensure sufficient funds are available to undertake the DCUSA related obligations as and when these are formally implemented, which is expected to be some time in 2026/27.
- **Regulatory and Code Governance Change Contingency:** We operate in a constantly changing regulatory and governance environment and not all of it can be accurately forecast for 2026/27 and therefore it is prudent to budget a contingency sum of £100K specifically for this aspect. Note that a separate project line exists for supporting the DESNZ/Ofgem Energy Code Reforms.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- **Stakeholder Engagement Plan:** Building on the success of the existing programme and importance of continuing to develop new initiatives, £125K has been included to continue with stakeholder engagement activities to be designed and delivered for the benefit of DCUSA parties. This is an increase on previous years and reflects the additional costs of producing more webcasts and holding open Q&A sessions post Change Proposal approval/pre implementation to assist Parties in understanding the changes to DCUSA in a timely fashion. In addition, this increase allows for up to two in-person DCUSA Stakeholder Engagement Days to be delivered (which have been very well -received in 2025). We also anticipate the need to deliver timely updates on the code governance process as this progresses in 2026/27. Also being considered are a You Tube channel for DCUSA webcast/video material and the potential to collaborate with other industry bodies such as the Energy Networks Association and the Retail Energy Code in producing a webcast targeted at potential Safe Isolation Providers (SIP) as there is much confusion, (especially within the electrical contractor community) of the requirements and process for becoming a SIP.
- **Strategy Day 2026:** An allowance of £15K has been included to organise, run and host a strategy day in October 2026. This is an important annual event to inform the DCUSA Board of all material events that are or may be impacting upon the operations of DCUSA Limited for the upcoming financial year and assists with the first step in the draft budget setting process. Whilst we expect code consolidation to lead to the formal winding down of DCUSA Limited, this is unlikely to happen before mid-way through 2027/28, which we expect will be DCUSA Limited's final budget year.

TECHNOLOGY

- **Digitalisation of the DCUSA Service:** Following the work undertaken to date in phases 1-5 on a project basis, we have now moved into a continuous improvement agile methodology that is underpinned by the DCUSA Digitalisation Development Group (DDDG). This group captures suggestions for improvement directly from DCUSA users and subject to DCUSA Board approval, our website development partner undertakes the development work for implementation. It has been a huge success during 2025 where many user-led improvements have been implemented on regular basis.

The time is now right to explore the opportunities and benefits that Artificial Intelligence (AI) can bring. We consider that the DCUSA document (and any future consolidated code document) is a prime target for a tailored AI solution. It is therefore proposed that an AI project is scoped and delivered for implementation in 2026/27. A bespoke AI trained on DCUSA is like having an DCUSA expert by your side. It understands the regulation and change process end-to-end, with complete knowledge of all past, present and future changes - and the context behind them. It will also have complete knowledge of the DCUSA Document and all past and upcoming legal text changes. The potential benefits include:

- A virtual DCUSA expert available 24/7 - helping you understand the legal requirements, CPs and DCUSA process.
- Helping users review and assess the impact of change proposals
- Help and support Working Groups to understand issues and provide information instantly for quicker decision making
- The ability for members to ask endless questions and assess the impact of ideas by sharing additional personalise context and viewpoints.
- Support in understanding cross code changes
- Support in drafting new change proposals, responding to RFIs and consultations

A total budget of £500K is proposed to cover the DDDG process, user-led agile development and an AI project. We particularly welcome your feedback on the proposed AI project as part of this consultation.

- **DCUSA Website Continuous Improvement:** An allowance of £30K is included to enable additional improved functionality, including when required because of newly implemented Change Proposals. This item will only be billed when known.
- **DCUSA Website Ongoing Maintenance:** As the website estate and functionality have grown and become more sophisticated over the past years, so has the cost of maintenance. An increase in the budget to £50K is required to ensure all the required regular patching and updates are implemented in a timely fashion.
- **Website Estate Annual Penetration Test:** As part of ensuring the security of the website estate it is essential that a penetration test is undertaken at least once a year and/or after any significant changes to the website. The budget of £35K assumes a maximum of two penetration tests.
- **DCUSA Digital Assurance Review Process (CRF 1185):** A sum of £25K is recommended to cover the new bi-annual process of DPIAs that reflects the iterative and agile nature of digital developments a new CRF was approved in 2025 to cover this activity on an enduring basis.

DCUSA PROCESS

- **General Process - Ongoing Approved CRFs (044, 139, 181, 182, 190, 191, 1103, 1113, 1143, 1145 & 1164):** All of these existing small value approved CRFs that will continue into 2026/27 are separately detailed within the budget tables.
- **Supporting Innovation Sandbox Applications (CRF 1125):** We have one live Sandbox in process and are engaging with Ofgem on the Sandbox evolution. However, the prospect of new Sandbox applications would appear to be limited, and we have therefore maintained the budget sum of £25K in 2026/27.
- **CACoP Attendance:** The 2026/27 budget includes £10K for attendance at CACoP meetings charged on a time and material basis. This will also cover attendance at the Cross Code Steering Group as required.
- **DCUSA Limited Board Director Training:** It is requirement to provide initial and refresher training for DCUSA Limited Board Directors as required. The 'Role of a Director' training is sourced externally and 'Financial Awareness' training is provided by the Secretariat's Finance Manager. A sum of £4K is recommended for 2026/27.
- **Delivering the Requirements of DCP 325 (CRF 1188):** A sum of £7.5K is required to cover the cost of the requirement for the DCUSA Secretariat to host the post publication cost information calls.

PROJECTS

- **Supporting the DNO-DSO transition:** As there has not been any spend in this area to date (over several years), it is proposed that this potential activity is not specifically budgeted for in 2026/27 and in the event of an impact to the DCUSA or support is required it can be funded from the general contingency.
- **DESNZ/Ofgem Energy Codes Reform (CRF 1074):** We know that the DCUSA will consolidate with the CUSC to create a new Electricity Commercial Code. However, the precise nature of the work to be undertaken remains uncertain and difficult to estimate. It is therefore recommended that we specifically budget for a sum of £150K to ensure appropriate resources are available and deployed to progress any activity or programme of work that is required to deliver DESNZ/Ofgem's expectations in 2026/27. Management of the DCUSA requirements within Ofgem's Strategic Direction Statement (SDS) is included within this sum. In addition to this we propose a specific contingency sum of £50K is included to cover any overspend against this item.
- **Carbon Neutral Recertification:** A sum of £5K is included to cover the cost of the annual DCUSA Limited carbon neutral recertification process.

EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS

- **DCUSA Resources Retention for new Electricity Commercial Code:** The DCUSA Board have captured a risk on the DCUSA Risk Register that relates to a degradation of service due existing DCUSA Secretariat staff choosing to seek alternative employment given the uncertain nature of their personal job security and career development, as a result of code consolidation. It is therefore considered appropriate to mitigate this risk by introducing a retention scheme for the ElectraLink DCUSA Team members (six in total) that will pay out when they have served 3 months (and not given notice to leave) with whatever entity or arrangement is put place to manage the ECC . This is to help ensure that we retain the existing skills, knowledge and experience and delivery of the quality of service that DCUSA parties have become accustomed to during and beyond the code consolidation process. Whilst any payment due is not expected to be made until well into 2027 (possibly into 2028), our view is that this should be budgeted for in 2026/27 and the funds received can be deferred into 2027/28. The budget proposed is £200K.

- **Temporary Additional Resource:** We expect 2026/27 to be a particularly challenging year for the DCUSA Secretariat as they will be expected to deliver business as usual activities as well as the work associated with code consolidation. Code consolidation and delivery of the SDS will take priority and will require the expertise of the team. There is therefore significant risk that business as usual activities, in particular the progression of Change Proposals, will be delayed as there is simply insufficient resource to cope with both business-as-usual activities and the work to deliver code consolidation. We therefore require additional temporary resource to backfill those resources. This would be similar to when additional temporary resource was introduced to chair the four Access SCR Change Proposal Working Groups, we consider it appropriate to budget a sum of £100K to cover the costs of additional temporary resource that can be deployed on business as usual activities.

CONTINGENCY

- **General Project Contingency:** As per last year, £100k has been included in the budget to cover any unforeseen costs which may arise during 2026/27.

[Billing of the Contingency sums within the Budget - Please note that DCUSA Limited will not invoice Parties for the Contingency sums shown in the budget unless it believes there is a strong likelihood of some or all of the Contingency sum being called upon to cover appropriate and approved expenditure. This decision is taken in advance of each quarterly invoice being raised. Please also note that in the event a contingent sum is invoiced in advance and does not subsequently materialise, any excess will be refunded to Parties as part of the year end re-conciliation.](#)

3 The 2026/27 Approved Budget

- 3.1 The itemised budget costs have been split across 'Cost Areas' and it should be noted that any 'Project Costs' will only be recovered from Parties if the projects are initiated. The table on the following page details the estimated 2026/27 costs as agreed by the Panel members with a point of reference against the main cost headings for the company. A column showing the 2025/26 Approved Budget has been provided for comparison purposes.

DCUSA Limited - Budget 2026/27	Budget 26/27	Budget 25/26	Variance
FIXED COSTS			
Audit Fees	£24,503	£22,361	£2,142
Legal Fees	£60,000	£60,000	£0
Insurance	£10,118	£18,580	-£8,462
DCUSA Parties Training	£4,000	£4,000	£0
Meeting Costs	£25,000	£23,000	£2,000
Data Protection (ICO Fees)	£50	£40	£10
Bank Charges	£300	£300	£0
Bad Debts	£12,000	£12,000	£0
Subsistence & Travel	£1,000	£1,000	£0
Secretarial Services/Administrator Contract Costs	£978,417	£940,786	£37,631
Contract Bonus	£39,137	£37,631	£1,505
Website Support & Maintenance	£50,000	£12,500	£37,500
TOTAL FIXED COSTS	£1,204,525	£1,132,199	£72,326
OTHER COSTS			
Charging Methodologies Modelling	£238,667	£238,667	£0
CRF 143 Management of Modelling Services Agreement	£47,733	£47,733	£0
Provision of Measurement Class G Data	£20,000	£20,000	£0
*External Contracts	£306,400	£306,400	£0
CRF 140 Ongoing Charging Futures Forum and Charging Delivery Board Attendance	£4,000	£4,032	-£32
CRF 1156 DUoS SCR (Supporting the Programme)	£25,000	£25,000	£0
CRF 127 & 1120 Market Wide Half-Hourly Settlement	£0	£10,000	-£10,000
CRF 141 Ongoing Access SCR Delivery Group Attendance	£0	£450	-£450
Ofgem Data Best Practice as a Code Obligation	£50,000	£0	£50,000
*Regulatory	£79,000	£39,482	£39,518
Stakeholder Engagement Delivery	£125,000	£100,000	£25,000
Strategy Day	£15,000	£15,000	£0
*Stakeholder Engagement	£140,000	£115,000	£25,000
Digitalisation of the DCUSA Service (Phase V)	£0	£350,000	-£350,000
Website Development	£30,000	£30,000	£0
Website Estate Annual Penetration Test	£35,000	£0	£35,000
Digitalisation of the DCUSA Service	£500,000	£0	£500,000
CRF 1185 DCUSA Digital Assurance Review Process	£35,000	£0	£35,000
*Technology	£600,000	£380,000	£220,000
CRF 044 DCUSA Monthly eBulletin	£13,534	£13,014	£521
CRF 139 Incident Mgt Scenarios Contacts Maintenance/audit	£500	£1,000	-£500
CRF 181 New processes for DCP 336	£2,506	£2,410	£96
CRF 182 New processes for DCP 350	£1,000	£1,000	£0
CRF 190 New processes for DCP 364	£1,000	£1,000	£0
CRF 191 New processes for DCP 360	£2,500	£2,861	-£361
CRF 1103 New DCUSA Meta Data Processes for Updating the REC	£500	£500	£0
CRF 1113 Non-DCUSA Party training	£500	£500	£0
CRF 1125 Sandbox Application Support & Administration	£25,000	£25,000	£0
CRF 1143 New processes for DCP 404	£1,246	£1,198	£48
CRF 1145 New processes for DCP 394	£2,000	£2,000	£0
CRF 1164 Support for the Cross-Code Digitalisation Steering Group	£2,000	£6,000	-£4,000
CRF 1188 Delivering the Requirements of DCP 325	£7,500	£0	£7,500
CACOP Attendance	£10,000	£10,000	£0
Director Training	£4,000	£4,000	£0
London Gazette	£250	£250	£0
*DCUSA Process	£74,036	£70,732	£3,304
Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs)	£0	£30,000	-£30,000
DESNZ/Ofgem Energy Codes Reform	£150,000	£150,000	£0
Net Zero / Carbon Neutral Recertification	£5,000	£5,000	£0
*Projects	£155,000	£185,000	-£30,000
DCUSA Resources Retention for new Electricity Commercial Code	£200,000	£0	£200,000
*Extraordinary Items	£200,000	£0	£200,000
Charging Methodologies Modelling Contingency	£50,000	£50,000	£0
Legal Contingency	£50,000	£0	£50,000
Regulatory & Code Governance Changes Contingency	£100,000	£50,000	£50,000
DESNZ/Ofgem Energy Codes Reform Contingency	£50,000	£0	£50,000
Temporary Additional Resource Contingency	£100,000	£0	£100,000
General Contingency	£100,000	£100,000	£0
*Contingency	£450,000	£200,000	£250,000
TOTAL OTHER COSTS	£2,004,437	£1,296,615	£707,822
TOTAL FIXED COSTS AND OTHER COSTS	£3,208,961	£2,428,813	£780,148

4 Recoverable Costs & Amendments to Budgets

- 4.1 Budgeted costs are recovered quarterly in advance and split into ‘operational’ and ‘project’ costs, with project related costs only being recovered from Parties if the projects are initiated. This option allows the Panel to give foresight to Parties of what they might be expected to pay in the year but not recover costs unless they are going to be utilised. In short, Parties essentially approve the costs up front, thereby allowing the Panel, without further consultation, to decide whether to initiate a project and thus recover any associated costs from Parties.
- 4.2 Clause 8.6 of the DCUSA, details the Panel’s ability to revise the budget part way through the year, providing the Panel with the option to wait until there is more certainty around potential costs before putting them into the Budget. However, it should be noted that a revised budget requires the same approval process as the original budget, i.e., further consultation with Parties.

5 Cost Recovery Invoicing

- 5.1 In accordance with DCUSA, the Panel is required to provide its good-faith estimate of the Recoverable Costs that it anticipates will be invoiced in each Quarter of the Financial Year to which the Draft Budget relates, split between each Party Category. The Panel must also provide its best estimate of the dates on which it will raise invoices for each Quarter of the Financial Year. The following table sets out this information.

	<i>Quarter 1</i>	<i>Quarter 2</i>	<i>Quarter 3</i>	<i>Quarter 4</i>	<i>Year</i>
Invoice Date	31/03/2026	30/06/2026	30/09/2026	31/12/2026	Totals
Total amount recoverable from Distributors	£401,120	£401,120	£401,120	£401,120	£1,604,481
Total amount recoverable from Suppliers	£401,120	£401,120	£401,120	£401,120	£1,604,481
Total	£802,240	£802,240	£802,240	£802,240	£3,208,961