

Chair's update

Item 7

Meeting date:

Chair of the Accounts Commission

17 September 2026

Purpose

1. This report provides an update on the engagements and work of the Chair of the Accounts Commission since the Commission met last and upcoming engagement before the next meeting.

Recommendations

2. The Commission is invited to note this report and enquire about any areas of interest.

Engagement and Commission business

Commission business

- Regular meetings with Sarah Watters (Director for the Commission), Helena Gray (Controller of Audit) and Lee Ovens (Executive Assistant)
- 13 August – Accounts Commission recruitment information session (in person and online)
- 21 August – Best Value report follow-up visit to Inverclyde Council, with Ruth MacLeod (Commission member) and Sarah Watters
- 02 September – Work programme discussion with Sarah Watters, Helena Gray, Alison Cumming (Executive Director of Performance Audit and Best Value) and Mark MacPherson (Audit Director)
- 14 September – Follow-up visit to Clackmannanshire Council, following their Section 102 report, considered at June's meeting
- 15 September – Accounts Commission meeting and strategy seminar prep session with Andrew Burns (Deputy Chair) and Commission support team
- 15 September – Accounts Commission recruitment shortlisting discussion
- 16 September – Accounts Commission Strategy Seminar

Audit Scotland engagement

- Regular meetings with Stephen Boyle (Auditor General), Vicki Bibby (Chief Operating Officer) and Alison Cumming

- 13 August – Future Public Audit Model discussion with the Commission's Sounding Board
- 25 August – Audit Scotland Board meeting
- 27 August – Budget discussion meeting with Vicki Bibby, Fiona McKie (Director of Corporate Services) and Waqas Sanawar (Head of Finance)
- 03 September – Audit Scotland Audit Committee meetings, and introductory meeting with the new Audit Scotland Board Chair, Bruce Cartwright

External engagement

- 17 August – Introductory meeting with Craig Hoy MSP, Convener of the Scottish Parliament's Social Justice, Housing and Local Government Committee, supported by Sarah Watters
- 31 August – discussion with Catriona MacKean, Deputy Director for Local Government at Scottish Government, in advance of the publication of Programme for Government on 01 Sep
- 03 September – National Self-Evaluation Framework overview, with Alastair Delaney, consultant, and Rachael Hood, Transformation Lead at Improvement Service, and Commission members
- 07 September – Scottish Parliament Fiscal Literacy Programme launch event
- 10-11 September – Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (Solace) Scotland conference, Oban
- 15 September – Two-monthly meeting with Catriona MacKean

Forthcoming activities

- Regular meetings with Sarah Watters, Helena Gray and Lee Ovens, and with Stephen Boyle, Vicki Bibby and Alison Cumming
- 17 September – Audit Scotland Budget 2027/28 engagement with Commission Budget Sub-group
- 22 September – attendance at Performance Audit and Best Value Leadership Team meeting
- 23 September – Introductory meeting with Jenny Gilruth, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government
- 24 September – Audit Scotland Board meetings

- 29 September to 02 October – Accounts Commission member recruitment interviews
- 05 October – West Dunbartonshire Council media day
- 06 October – Joint work programme discussion with Stephen Boyle, Andrew Burns, Sarah Watters and Audit Scotland colleagues

Conclusion

3. The Commission is invited to:

- Note this report and enquire about any areas of interest.