

Chair's update

Item 7

Chair of the Accounts Commission

Meeting date:
14 August 2025

Purpose

1. This report provides an update on the engagements and work of the Chair of the Accounts Commission since the Commission met last in June.

Engagement and Commission business

2. Details of my engagements and work since the last meeting are as follows:

Audit Scotland engagement

- Regular meetings with: Alison Cumming – Executive Director of Performance Audit and Best Value, Helena Gray – Controller of Audit, and Vicki Bibby – Chief Operating Officer
- 13 June: Monthly catch-up with Stephen Boyle, Auditor General
- 26 June: Local Government Overview (LGO) Spotlight – audit scope discussion (with sponsors)
- 30 July: Meeting with Blyth Deans, Audit Director, to discuss LGO Spotlight

Commission business

- Regular meetings with Sarah Watters – Secretary to the Commission, and Lee Ovens – Executive Assistant
- 2 July: East Lothian Council Best Value report media day
- 3 July: Future Public Audit Model (FPAM) sounding board – to consider discussion papers 2 and 3
- 29 July: Meeting with Ellen Leaver, Director for Local Government, to discuss Commission intervention options
- 5 August: FPAM sounding board – discussion papers 2 and 3
- 11 August: Commission work programme consultation discussion with Solace

- 12 August: Accounts Commission prep session with Andrew Burns – Deputy Chair, Helena Gray, Sarah Watters, Joe Chapman – Policy Manager, and Callum Aitken – Modern Apprentice

External engagement

- 16 June: Meeting with Jan Savage, Executive Director of Scottish Human Rights Commission
- 27 June: Attended COSLA Leaders meeting with Andrew Burns to discuss the Commission's work programme consultation
- 9 July: Interview with Public Finance (publication date TBC)

Forthcoming activities

3. My forthcoming engagement activities include:

- Regular catch-ups with Helena Gray, Sarah Watters, Lee Ovens, Vicki Bibby, Alison Cumming and Stephen Boyle
- 15 August: Commission work programme consultation discussion with Directors of Finance
- 19 August: FPAM Sounding Board – discussion on papers 3 and 4
- 20 August: East Lothian Council Best Value report follow-up visit (with Jennifer Henderson, Malcolm Bell and Sarah Watters)
- 21 August: LGO Spotlight draft report – review meeting (with sponsors)
- 26 August: Follow-up meeting with Clackmannanshire Council Chief Executive, Council Leader and auditor, accompanied by Andrew Burns (TBC) and Sarah Watters to discuss the council's medium-term financial strategy
- 26 August: Commission work programme consultation discussion with COSLA's President and Vice President
- 2 September: Audit Scotland Audit Committee meeting
- 10 September: Commission strategy seminar
- Date TBC: Commission work programme consultation discussion with Moray Council

Conclusion

4. The Commission is invited to:

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