

MEETING: 11 NOVEMBER 2021

REPORT BY: HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, AUDIT SCOTLAND

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Purpose

1. This report introduces a draft Accounts Commission communications and engagement strategy for 2021 to 2026.
2. Members are invited to discuss the attached document (Appendix), which provides the structure of the strategy and overviews of its supporting workstreams, and to provide feedback and approval.

Background

3. At its September meeting, the Commission approved its Strategy 2021-26 which was published on 23 September.
4. Previously, at a meeting of members in August 2021, the Audit Scotland Communications team, Commission Secretary and Commission support team presented proposed objectives and pillars for a communications and engagement strategy to support the overarching commission strategy during its lifespan. Members were supportive of the proposal and approved further development.
5. The draft strategy is attached at Appendix. This should be considered alongside:
 - [The Accounts Commission strategy](#)
 - [The work programme of performance audits](#)
 - The updated [Code of Audit Practice](#)
 - [Audit Scotland communications and engagement strategy 2020-23](#).
6. In line with the Commission's previously stated commitment to review the partnership framework between the Commission, Auditor General for Scotland and Audit Scotland, and the Public Audit in Scotland publication, work has recently started on these. This strategy will support that work.

Communications and engagement strategy

7. The attached draft reflects the approach and priorities agreed by members in August. It outlines:
 - Objectives and strategic pillars.
 - Positioning.
 - Communicating the Commission's strategic priorities.

- Audit promotion.
 - Stakeholder engagement.
 - Maximising the Commission.
 - Reporting impact, and learning and development.
8. These overarching workstreams are supported by plans and programmes such as the stakeholder engagement programme, audit promotion plans, the member promotion schedule and Audit Scotland's social media programme.
9. Please note that regarding measuring impact, Audit Scotland will shortly start to revise its corporate approach. The Commission will be consulted on this to ensure its objectives and direction are reflected in the updated approach.

Publication and implementation

10. It is proposed that the draft Communications and Engagement Strategy be published forthwith. Updates on progress will be made regularly to the Commission.
11. Previously, in March 2020, the Commission agreed that its Strategy and Communications and Engagement Strategy be combined. We will look at ways in how we ensure that we are consistent with this aim, particularly in their presentation and in how we report progress.

Conclusion

12. Members are asked to review the attached draft strategy, provide feedback and approve for implementation.

Simon Ebbett
Head of Communications and Public Affairs
1 November 2021

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Please see separate document.