

MEETING: 13 MAY 2021

REPORT BY: INTERIM CHAIR OF ACCOUNTS COMMISSION

INTERIM CHAIR'S UPDATE REPORT

Purpose

1. This report provides an update on the engagements and work of the Interim Chair of the Accounts Commission.

Engagement and Audit Scotland business

2. The engagements and work in the period from 1 to 30 April have been as follows:

Audit Scotland Board and Committee meetings

- There were no meetings in April.

Audit Scotland engagement

- 12 April – Regular catch up with Alan Alexander, Audit Scotland Board Chair.
- 13 April – Catch up with Antony Clark, new Interim Controller of Audit and Interim Director of Performance and Best Value.
- 16 April – Audit Scotland Farewell Celebration for Fraser McKinlay, outgoing Controller of Audit and Director of Performance and Best Value. A fitting tribute.
- 22 April – Monthly catch up with Diane McGiffen, Chief Operating Officer.
- 22 April – New Audit Appointments Steering Group meeting.
- 27 April – Work Programme refresh discussion with Stephen Boyle, Auditor General for Scotland, Antony Clark, Tim McKay, Interim Deputy Chair, Paul Reilly, Commission Secretary, Mark Roberts, Audit Director, Michelle Borland, Business Manager, Patrick McFall and Joanna Mansell, Communications advisers.
- 29 April – Regular catch up with Stephen Boyle.

External engagement

- 1 April – Strategic Scrutiny catch up with Brian McNulty, Chair of Strategic Operational Group, and Mark Roberts, Strategic Scrutiny Group Secretary to discuss programme of work for 2021.
- 14 April – Caroline Gardner, Insight Session pre-meeting.
- 26 April – Standards Commission meeting to discuss current issues and priorities with Paul Reilly.
- 26 April – Regional Networks of Registered Tenant Organisations with Carol Calder, Senior Manager, to discuss their enquires about HRA.
- 26 April – Local Government Benchmarking Framework discussion with Solace Chair Steve Grimmond, Chief Executive of Fife Council, Deputy Chair Andrew

Kerr, Chief Executive City of Edinburgh Council, and LGBF Lead Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive of Falkirk Council.

- 27 April – Joint Strategic Scrutiny Group and Shared Intelligence Group meeting with Sarah Gadsden, Chief Executive of Improvement Service, Simon Watson, Joint Chair of SIG and Medical Director, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, Mark Roberts, Strategic Scrutiny Group Secretary, Leigh Johnston, Senior Audit Manager, and Donald Morrison, Healthcare Improvement Scotland to discuss progress on IJB Shared Intelligence work.

Commission business, development and support

3. Commission business has been as follows:

- Regular catch ups with Paul Reilly and Jillian Elgin, Executive Assistant to the Commission.
- 1 April – Commission Digital Strategy and Digital Services requirements catch up with David Robertson, Digital Services Manager, in preparation for his update to the Commission in May.
- 1 April – Action Tracker review meeting with Paul Reilly, Jillian Elgin and Lucy Carter, Commission Policy Manager.
- 14 April – Accounts Commission pre meeting with Commission members.
- 14 April – Forward planning meeting with Tim McKay, Paul Reilly, Lucy Carter and Jillian Elgin to discuss up and coming Commission business and prepare for our Strategy Seminar.
- 14 & 28 April – Best Value Working Group meeting. Updates are shared with Commission members at each monthly Commission meeting as a standing item on our agenda and papers are shared on the Commission SharePoint site.
- 15 April – Accounts Commission meeting.
- 19 April – Communications catch up with Simon Ebbett, Communications Manager to discuss Commission priorities and ambitions.
- 19 April – Catch up with Kathrine Sibbald, Audit Quality Project Manager around future business for Best Value Working Groups.
- 20 & 21 April – Accounts Commission Strategy Seminar.
- 20 April – Catch up with Tim McKay to discuss ongoing Commission business.
- 21 April – Commission Insight session with Caroline Gardner.
- 22 April – Communications monthly catch up meeting with Paul Reilly, Lucy Carter, Craig Flannigan and Joanna Mansell, Communications Team, to discuss Accounts Commission communications, engagement, and public profile.
- 29 April – Monthly sponsor catch up with Local Government Overview team to discuss the comments from Commission members and the approach, timing, and emerging messages for the Local Government Overview due for publication in May.

4. Other areas of work have included:

- Preparation for the Strategy Seminar including discussions with Andrea Quinn, external facilitator.
- Preparation for the Audit Scotland Board Development Session on 10 May.

Forthcoming activities

5. My forthcoming engagement activities include:

- Weekly catch ups with Paul Reilly and Jillian Elgin.
- 4 – 7 May – Few days off.
- 10 May – Catch up with Elaine Boyd, Associate Director. Audit Quality and Appointments, to discuss audit quality work.
- 10 May – Board Development workshop.
- 11 May – Catch up with Kathrine Sibbald, Audit Quality Project Manager around future business for Best Value Working Groups.
- 12 May – Accounts Commission pre meeting.
- 12 May – Audit Scotland Audit and Remuneration and Human Resources Committees.
- 12 May – Catch up with Antony Clark.
- 12 May – Introductory meeting with Netta Meadows, new Chief Executive of Scottish Borders Council.
- 13 May – Accounts Commission meeting.

Conclusion

6. The Commission is invited to:

- a) note this report and enquire about any areas of interest
- b) consider whether there are any changes that they would wish to see to the format and content of the report for the future.

Elma Murray
Interim Chair
2 May 2021