**ACCOUNTS** COMMISSION ✓

**MEETING: 11 AUGUST 2022**

**REPORT BY: COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER**

**ACCOUNTS COMMISSION COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

**Purpose**

1.  This report invites members to review, provide feedback on and approve the proposed Accounts Commission Communications and Engagement Strategy 2022-26 (**Appendix One**).

**Background**

2.  At its meeting in November 2021, the Accounts Commission approved the overall approach to a new strategy and asked for more work to be done and a revised strategy to be drafted. In particular, members asked for clarity about the Commission's positioning, promotion activity, a supporting action plan, and measures for reporting progress against the plan. Other requests included promoting the diversity and experience of members, and plans for the Commission's web presence, and a simplified structure.

3.  Since then, there have a been a number of related developments. In December a new Chair was appointed. The Commission has also held a strategy seminar in March. The Commission has also developed a change programme which links with aspects of communications and engagement.

4.  At the same time, Audit Scotland colleagues have been developing the 'Insights' programme, outlining development taking place in horizon-scanning, better coordination of stakeholder engagement, and impact reporting. This was presented to the Commission in June 2022 and has clear links and intersections with a proposed Commission communications and engagement strategy.

**Communications and Engagement Strategy**

5.  The C&E strategy aims to support the priorities in the [Commission's Strategy 2021-26](#), supported by themes of the Commission's unique and national position, and the robustness of the work it publishes.

6.  This aim has three supporting objectives:

    -   Raising awareness of the Commission, its role and its value to the public sector and service users

    -   Ensuring the Commission's work is relevant and informed by effective engagement with stakeholders

    -   Increasing the impact of the Commission and its work to support and encourage improvement.

7.  These will be delivered by three workstreams – linking to each objective – with details on the activities to deliver these. This structure has been simplified from previous versions the Commission has received.

8.  Responsibility for delivering the strategy and its activities will be shared by the Commission secretariat and the Audit Scotland Communications team; the pronoun 'we' in the strategy refers to these colleagues. Please note that under the Commission's change programme, there are proposals for changing and growing the Commission secretariat. We will update responsibilities when the shape and skill-mix of the secretariat has been progressed.

## Workplan and priorities

9.  Paragraph 31 of the strategy notes that the Commission will each year identify priorities – including identifying priority stakeholders and priority projects and activities – to ensure implementation and delivery of this strategy. These will be set out in a workplan mapping engagement work for the next year. These priorities and workplan are proposed n **Appendix Two**.

10. The priorities to be taken forward in coming months are:

    - Branding and web presence

    - Significantly enhancing the Commission's role in leading debate on the future of local government (such as the symposium)

    - Better data on stakeholders' views and awareness of the Commission

    - Better data on impact

    - Enhance community engagement, both in national reporting and in local (council-by-council) reporting.

11. We also recognise some stakeholder groups gaining in priority for engagement, namely:

    - Scottish Parliament committees

    - Opposition parties

    - Communities/the public

    - The academic community

    - Policy influencers such as think tanks and consultancies.

## Progress and reporting

12. Pages 4 and 5 of the strategy set out the activities, targets and measurement tools for monitoring and reporting progress to the Commission on the strategy's objectives and effectiveness. These will be reviewed on an annual basis and revised if appropriate.

13. As well as the regular reporting on individual projects, we will report to the Commission on progress against the strategy on an annual basis.

14. Members should note that this work will include the development and rollout of new methods and approaches, which will require testing, bedding in and adjustments based on early learning.

## Branding and website

15. The strategy and workplan lists Commission branding and website in the activities to deliver. Both of these are also outlined in the Commission's change programme.

16. We have discussed and provided strategic and practical advice, indicative timelines and costs to the Chair on how to take these projects forward over coming months. We will engage further with the Commission on this shortly.

**Next steps**

17. Subject to approval, we will action the activities and priorities outlined in the strategy and workplan, where those activities are not already underway.

18. Proposals for aspects of delivery, such as a symposium, are already being presented to the Commission. Others, such as a public engagement programme, are in progress and will be presented to the Commission shortly. As above, we will also engage further with the Commission on branding and web presence.

**Recommendation**

19. The Commission is invited to review and approve the strategy, priorities and work plan.

**Simon Ebbett**
**Communications Manager**
**29 July 2022**

# Communications and Engagement Strategy
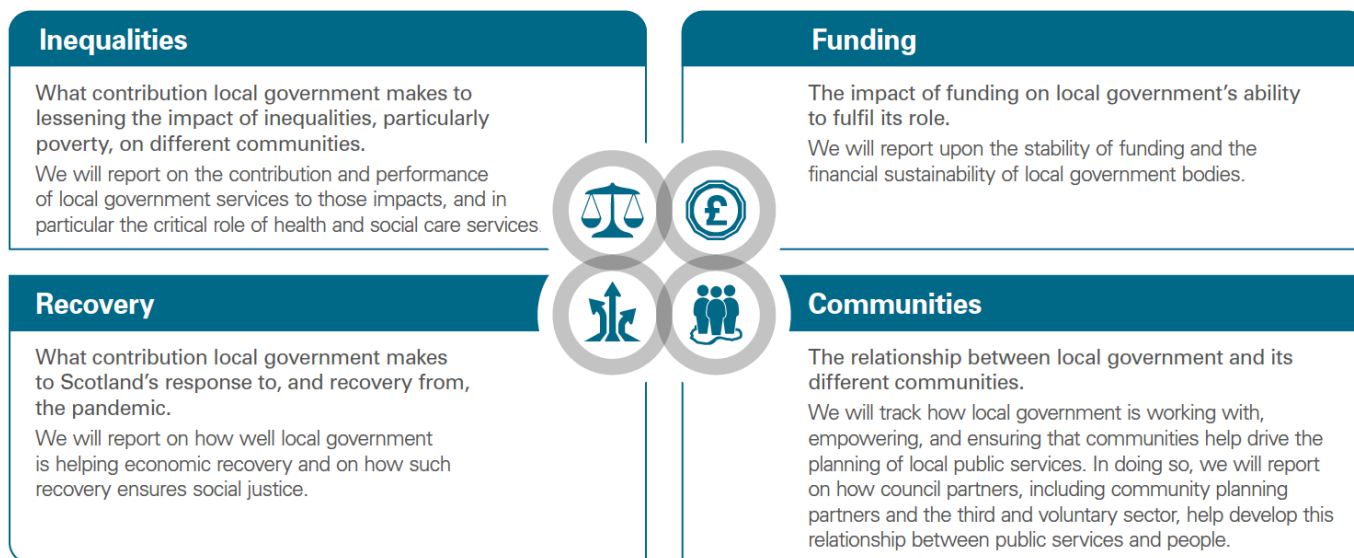
## 2022-26

ACCOUNTS COMMISSION

July 2022

# Contents

# Purpose

**1.** The purpose of this Communications and Engagement Strategy (C&E Strategy) is to support and help deliver the Accounts Commission's [Strategy](#) and its strategic priorities.

**2.** We will do this through this C&E Strategy's objectives and workstream, underpinned by themes of:

- the Commission's independence, expertise and position as the national body across local government in Scotland

- and the robustness of the evidence behind Commission work.

### Inequalities

What contribution local government makes to lessening the impact of inequalities, particularly poverty, on different communities.

We will report on the contribution and performance of local government services to those impacts, and in particular the critical role of health and social care services.

### Funding

The impact of funding on local government's ability to fulfil its role.

We will report upon the stability of funding and the financial sustainability of local government bodies.

### Recovery

What contribution local government makes to Scotland's response to, and recovery from, the pandemic.

We will report on how well local government is helping economic recovery and on how such recovery ensures social justice.

### Communities

The relationship between local government and its different communities.

We will track how local government is working with, empowering, and ensuring that communities help drive the planning of local public services. In doing so, we will report on how council partners, including community planning partners and the third and voluntary sector, help develop this relationship between public services and people.

Commission independence and expertise

Robust audit evidence base

# Aim and objectives

3. The aim of this strategy is to deliver effective communication and promotion of the Commission and its work, and facilitate engagement with the Commission's stakeholders that supports its strategic priorities.

4. We will do this through three supporting objectives:

- Raising awareness of the Commission, its role and its value to the public sector and service users

- Ensuring the Commission's work is relevant and informed by effective engagement with stakeholders

- Increasing the impact of the Commission and its work to support and encourage improvement.

5. This strategy will also support the Commission's dual aims of providing assurance to stakeholders about the performance of local government, when appropriate, and helping drive improvement in public services.

6. The table on pages 5 and 6 details the activity, targets and measurement tools that will deliver these objectives. The Commission will be invited to review the activity and targets annually and adjust as appropriate. Activities in bold are priority activities in 2022/23.

| Objective | Activity | Targets to achieve by end of 2024 | Measurement tools |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Raising awareness** | • **Commission branding**<br>• **AC website project**<br>• Media interviews<br>• Consultation submissions<br>• Media promotion<br>• Social media | 40% public awareness<br>40% understanding of role<br>70% MSP awareness<br>70% MSP positive perceptions<br>70% councillor positive perceptions | Public opinion surveys<br>Client feedback surveys<br>Focus groups<br>Structured interviews |
| **Effective stakeholder engagement** | • **Stakeholder analysis and market research**<br>• Symposiums<br>• Conference appearances<br>• Round tables<br>• Community group events<br>• Parliamentary appearances<br>• Social media engagement<br>• Ministerial, council leader, CEO and 3rd sector 1-2-1s<br>• Work programme consultation<br>• Newsletters<br>• Strategic Scrutiny Group<br>• Think tanks | 85% stakeholders receiving engagement<br>85% satisfaction with contact<br>80% of audits containing impact goal based on stakeholder engagement/service user priority<br>80% positive perceptions from community groups<br>Maintain 1% engagement on social media<br>Increase social media audiences by >10% year-on-year | Public opinion surveys<br>Stakeholder surveys<br>Client feedback surveys<br>Focus groups<br>Structured interviews<br>Report impact analytics<br>Social media analytics |
| **Increasing impact** | • **Improved data collection and analysis**<br>• **Recommendations**<br>• Media promotion<br>• Social media<br>• Parliamentary evidence sessions<br>• Local government engagement post-audit<br>• Audit follow-up activity | Av. 15 media articles for local reports<br>Av. 30 media articles for national reports<br>Maintain 1% engagement on social media<br>Increase social media reach by >10% year-on-year<br>90% recommendations uptake<br>10% increase in Parliamentary mentions year-on-year | Media and social media analytics<br>Parliamentary reporting<br>Take-up of recommendations<br>Political and sector announcements<br>Data on service improvement and service user outcomes<br>Focus groups<br>Structured interviews |

# Workstreams

7. We will deliver this strategy through three core workstreams linking directly to the objectives:

- Awareness-raising and positioning
- Stakeholder engagement
- Impact measurement and reporting

8. While the diagram below portrays these as separate, in practice there is overlap between all three.

9. Each of these have supporting programmes, and these workstreams work will be supported by learning and development activity.

| Awareness-raising and positioning | Stakeholder engagement | Impact |
|---|---|---|
| • Promotion and positioning of Commission<br>• Audit promotion and driving priorities<br>• Maximising Commission and its work | • Audiences and relationships<br>• Informing priorities and work<br>• Feedback and follow-up | • Impact monitoring and reporting<br>• Baseline and bespoke targets<br>• Progress of C&E strategy |

# Positioning and promotion

### Promotion and positioning

**10.** For the Commission to effectively deliver its priorities, stakeholders need to be sufficiently aware of the Commission and its work. Through this strategy we will aim to raise awareness and understanding of the Commission across a broad range of stakeholders, including the public.

**11.** The Commission also needs to hold the appropriate position in Scotland's public sector. We will work to consolidate its position as:

- The body that holds local government organisations to account and helps them improve, aiming to improve the outcomes for people
- The body that reports directly to the public, in public, on the performance of local government
- The body with a unique and independent national overview across local government in Scotland
- An authoritative, evidence-based voice on the issues facing local government in Scotland, as a sector and as organisations.

### Audit promotion and driving priorities

**12.** We will support the dissemination and impact of the audit work delivered for the Commission through targeted promotion and engagement. This will be based on the specific aims and key stakeholders for each audit, to inform the most appropriate promotion and engagement methods, proportionate resources and appropriate performance measures.

**13.** We will support the Commission's strategic priorities through two approaches: bespoke activities about the priorities, such as specific audits, blogs and interviews; and identifying other audit work and current events that provide opportunities to highlight the priorities.

### Maximising the Commission and its work

**14.** We will make more of the Commission's unique position, its collective experience and members' diverse expertise and experiences. This will help position the Commission as authoritative, independent and relevant. We will also work to extend the life and impact of audit work post-publication.

# Stakeholder engagement

**15.** The Commission has a diverse range of stakeholders, with unique needs, perspectives and approaches to communication and engagement. We will seek to engage effectively with all stakeholders through a variety of methods and by demonstrating the relevance of the Commission's work to their priorities and concerns. In particular, we will work to better reach communities and service users.

## Audiences and relationships

**16.** We will engage with this diverse range of stakeholders to understand and incorporate their experiences into the Commission's work. We will consider our stakeholders as diverse audiences with specific and different characteristics and interests. We will also seek to build strategic partnerships to help better inform our work, our understanding of our audiences and our reach and engagement.

**17.** Our engagement will be based on a consideration of the following: What are their priorities and key concerns? How does our work and communications link with those? What are the best methods of engaging and communicating with them?

## Informing priorities and work

**18.** Our engagement will be two-way, so that stakeholders' viewpoints and concerns inform our overarching work programme, our audit work and our communications.

**19.** Through this engagement, we will aim to ensure the subjects of our audits are timely, relevant and helpful. Our audits and supporting work help drive improved services and outcomes, inform people's relationship with their council, and help public bodies use public money well.

## Feedback and follow-up

**20.** Through improved feedback and targeted follow-up with relevant stakeholder groups, we will aim to get a clearer understanding of the impact of our work and where we can improve.

**21.** We will also use stakeholder engagement to help gauge the Commission's profile and position, people's understanding of its role, perceptions of its effectiveness, and whether it is focusing on the right priorities.

# Measuring and reporting impact

### Impact reporting

**22.**We will measure and report on the impact of the Commission's work and communications and engagement activity to assess what influence it is having, whether it is helping achieve our aims and priorities, how the Commission is perceived and what we can learn.

**23.**Key to our impact reporting will be prioritising the Commission's work, providing appropriate and proportionate resourcing, and being realistic in targets and aspirations. It will also involve a better blend of objective and subjective evaluation tools. Where appropriate, we will integrate evaluation with stakeholder engagement to ensure we are capturing the relevant viewpoints and perspectives.

### Baseline and bespoke targets

**24.**We measure the performance and impact of our audit work and supporting communications through a mix of quantitative and qualitative targets and metrics. We will also set baseline and bespoke targets for each activity. Baselines targets and measures will apply across all communications and engagement activity, allowing us to compare against other Commission work and against UK audit agencies. When appropriate we will also develop bespoke targets relating to the specific audiences, aims and C&E activity for individual audits and projects.

### Progress of C&E strategy

**25.**We will monitor and evaluate progress and performance of this strategy against the three objectives on page 4 through the targets and measures outlined there, and report to the Commission annually.

# Learning and development

**26.** We will support the strategy through learning and development for both the Commission and support staff and by using the results and insights from our monitoring to develop and improve our approaches.

**27.** This will broadly cover three aspects of L&D:

- Learning from the implementation of this communication and engagement strategy in order to better inform our approaches

- Learning from relevant stakeholders about their communications and engagement approaches with audiences that are a common priority and in areas where the Commission has an interest

- Commission learning and development – both collectively and for individual members - and Audit Scotland staff continual professional development

**28.** One aspect of development is recognising that experimenting with new approaches and outputs carries risk. This means Commission members accepting that some experiments sometimes fail. Support staff will ensure that risks are proportionate and do not carry reputational risks, and that we learn from all new approaches whether they are effective or not in order to continue improving.

**29.** We will review Commission members' existing skills and experiences in order to maximise them and to identify and address communications-related skills gaps. Addressing those needs would include activities such as formal media training, training in blog writing, public speaking and presentation skills and other relevant skills.

# Supporting and related plans and projects

**30.** This strategy is supported by activity plans. It also works alongside existing projects and workstreams.

**31.**The Commission will each year identify priorities – including identifying priority stakeholders and priority projects and activities – to ensure implementation and delivery of this strategy. These will be set out in a workplan mapping engagement work for the next year.

**32.** Other supporting plans include but are not limited to:

- Member activity programmes

- Commission learning and development programme

- Individual audit promotion plans.

**33.**Linked projects and strategies include:

- Commission change programme

- Audit Scotland Insights programme: horizon-scanning, engagement and impact reporting

- Performance Audit communications and production processes improvement project

- Audit Scotland Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-23.

**ACCOUNTS COMMISSION**
**COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY – PRIORITIES AND WORKPLAN**

## 1. Priority themes

- Enhancing the Commission's profile (and place in Scottish public audit) with all stakeholders through:

    o Better branding of Commission and of Scottish public audit

    o Better web presence for the Commission

- Building the Commission's role in helping inform and shape the debate on the future of local government.

- Ensuring better data and analysis on how well different stakeholder groups are aware of us and the value that they place on our reports (including through market research).

- Ensuring better data and analysis on our impact.

- Developing our community engagement (and 'presence') along two dimensions:

    o National reporting:

       ▪ More intensive activity around publication

       ▪ Longer-term promotion of national reports

       ▪ Further development of our roundtable model for community advocacy groups.

    o Local reporting:

       ▪ Develop an approach to better promotion (and public understanding) of annual audit reports at a local level.

## 2. Priorities by stakeholder

| Key | ↑ Currently underdeveloped, so significant increase in priority and activity planned. | ↗ Recently improved activity, but more needed. | ←→ Activity currently in place, so minor enhancements only. |
|---|---|---|---|

| Stakeholder | Priority | Aim |
|---|---|---|
| **Scottish Government** | | |
| Ministers | ↗ | While the Commission has had regular engagement with Ministers in the past, we want to be clearer on the purpose of this engagement, which is that:<br><br>• Ministers are kept more fully apprised of our impact<br>• We are contributing to Ministers' thinking about and relationship with local government. |
| Civil servants | ←→ | A similar aim applies to civil servants, particularly in ensuring that the Commission is kept apprised of emerging thinking in the Scottish Government. |
| **Scottish Parliament** | | |
| Scottish Parliamentary committees | ↗ | Evidence suggests that parliamentary committees do not have a full understanding of the role of the Commission and how our work fits (and can help) with their remit.<br><br>We therefore want our profile to be much higher with this stakeholder group. |
| Scottish Commission for Public Audit | ↑ | SCPA's engagement with public audit partners is entirely with Audit Scotland.<br><br>The Commission wants SCPA to better understand its role and how we can contribute to its remit. We are clear that such engagement needs to be done in partnership with Audit Scotland. |
| MSPs | ↗ | In a similar fashion to parliamentary committees, evidence suggests that MSPs as a whole do not have a full understanding of the role of the Commission and how our work fits (and can help) with their remit.<br><br>We therefore want our profile to be much higher with this stakeholder group. |
| Opposition parties | ↑ | It is not clear whether opposition parties fully understand the role of the Commission and how our work can be used by them in (a) their policies relating to local government and (b) their scrutiny of the Scottish Government.<br><br>We therefore wish to significantly increase our engagement with opposition parties. |

| Stakeholder | Priority | Aim |
|---|---|---|
| **Councils** | | |
| Leaders | ↗ | We have regular engagement with council leaders, mainly through 'pushing' information on our reports and our work (e.g. newsletter), but it important that we ensure good two-way engagement, such as through COSLA leaders forum. |
| Members | ↗ | Similarly, we have good information dissemination with elected members, but we want to look at ways of encouraging more 'two way' engagement. |
| Chief Executives | ←→ | While we can be confident about chief executives' understanding of our role, there is potential for improving how we contribute to their collective thinking. More engagement with SOLACE such as through branch meetings is an easy way to improve this. |
| **IJBs** | | |
| Chairs | ←→ | We have agreed our approach to auditing IJBs and social care in the run up towards the introduction of the National Care Service. Discussion and debate on the proposals will increase, and so we will want to ensure fruitful dialogue with IJBs. |
| Members | ←→ | Ditto. |
| Chief Officers | ←→ | Ditto. |
| Staff | ←→ | Ditto. |
| **Other stakeholders - external** | | |
| Communities / the public | ↑ | Engagement with communities is a top priority for the Commission's communications and engagement strategy. This is to be shaped in two dimensions: <br>• National reporting – how our reports are understood and used by communities <br>• Local reporting – ensuring our work informs the relationship between councils and their communities (thus '32 local engagement plans'). |
| Third and voluntary sector | ↗ | Third and voluntary sector play a crucial role in council service delivery and outcome improvement. The Commission has made initial steps to improve engagement to this stakeholder group through its roundtable initiative, but we now need to increase the pace. |
| Council community planning partners | ←→ | This does not feel like a priority area. Our engagement is based upon ensuring that council partners are aware of our reporting, and contribute to BV work as necessary. |

| Stakeholder | Priority | Aim |
|---|---|---|
| Strategic scrutiny partners | ←→ | The Commission is currently giving thought to how it wishes to take forward its responsibility to co-ordinate local government scrutiny.<br><br>There is therefore no need for further development in this area beyond the Strategic Scrutiny Group. |
| Improvement Service | ↗ | While we recently completed a first year of our Strategic Alliance with the Improvement Service and agreed a second year of activity, the Commission's interest in |
| Local Government Benchmarking Framework | ↗ | The Commission has identified data as being an important priority area for development to help fulfil its responsibilities.<br><br>LGBF will therefore be an important stakeholder with whom to engage in how to take this forward. |
| Academics | ↑ | In line with the priority set out above of building the Commission's role in helping inform and shape the debate on the future of local government, we need to significantly increase our engagement with this stakeholder group.<br><br>The proposed symposium will be a good start to this end. |
| Think tanks / consultancies | ↑ | Ditto. |
| **Other stakeholders - internal** | | |
| Appointed auditors | ↗ | We need better two-way engagement with appointed auditors, to be delivered through:<br><br>• More effective use of quarterly local government forum meetings<br>• More engagement through FAA Committee. |

## 3. Priority activities

| Activity | Detail | When |
|---|---|---|
| Website and branding | As part of the Commission Change Programme, we are committed to putting in place better branding of Commission and of Scottish public audit, and a better web presence for the Commission | • By end of 2022. |
| Data and intelligence | We want better data on how well different stakeholder groups are aware of us and the value that they place on our reports. | • First reporting to Commission by end of 2022.<br>• Proposal on market research approach by end of 2022.<br>• Enhanced data for BV reporting by Autumn 2023 |
| Annual conference and/or symposium | We want to firm up proposals for an annual conference (i.e. the Commission reporting its work) and / or a symposium (i.e. the Commission using its work to inform debate) | • First symposium planned for late Autumn 2022<br>• Longer-term approach needs agreed by then. |
| Third sector roundtable | As noted above, we need to develop this important medium so that the third sector can see the value in – and contribute to – our work. | • Next roundtable planned before end of 2022.<br>• Longer-term approach needs agreed by then. |
| Commission meetings 'roadshow' | We need to consider the business case for taking monthly meetings beyond Edinburgh. | • Business case by the end of 2022. |

## 4. Stakeholder engagement workplan

**Key:**

Black text: already in place
Red text: proposed future development

| Stakeholder | Approach | Next engagement |
|---|---|---|
| **Communities** | | |
| **Communities** | • Roundtables with community advocacy/representative organisations (two per year)<br>• Targeted outputs and social media engagement<br>• <span style="color:red">Commission meetings in different locations</span><br>• <span style="color:red">Significantly increased promotion of annual and BV audit to local communities</span><br>• <span style="color:red">Potential market research activity</span> | • Next newsletter: October 2022<br>• Market research proposals by end of 2022<br>• Commission meeting proposals by end of 2022<br>• Annual audit promotion proposals by early 2023 |
| **Scottish Government** | | |
| **Ministers** | • Annual Commission meetings with ministers for local government and public finance.<br>• (Also annual Chair meeting with Local Government Minister)<br>• Annual work programme consultation<br>• <span style="color:red">Minister involvement in annual symposium / conference</span> | • Next meeting with ministers: November Commission meeting<br>• One-off meeting with Social Care Minister around National Care Service proposals and mental health issues: Autumn 2022<br>• Next work programme consultation: end 2022 |
| **Civil servants** | • Monthly meetings between Commission support team and sponsor department on:<br>   o Framework agreement<br>   o Commission work programme<br>   o Scottish Government priorities<br>• (Also six-monthly Chair meeting with Director and Deputy Director of Local Government)<br>• Annual work programme consultation | • Next meeting: September 2022<br>• Next work programme consultation: end 2022 |

| Stakeholder | Approach | Next engagement |
|---|---|---|
| **Scottish Parliament** | | |
| **Scottish Parliamentary committees** | • Bilateral relationship with Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee (LGHPC), particularly in considering Commission reports, supported by regular meetings between Commission support team and Committee clerking team.<br>• Bilateral relationship with Public Audit Committee (PAC) on considering joint reports.<br>• Bilateral liaison with other committees as business requires.<br>• Annual work programme consultation<br>• (Also six-monthly Chair meeting with LGHPC Convener and annual Chair meeting with PAC Convener)<br>• <span style="color:red">Committee invitations to annual symposium / conference</span> | • LGHPC: Being discussed with clerking team<br>• PAC: Late August (Committee planning day)<br>• Next work programme consultation: end 2022 |
| **Scottish Commission for Public Audit** | • Commission Chair liaises with SCPA as part of Audit Scotland Board | • SCPA considering Audit Scotland budget in November/December |
| **Opposition parties** | • Annual 'workshop' meetings with shadow spokespersons for local government and public finance.<br>• Enhanced communications with shadow spokespersons, focusing on Commission newsletters to councillors and third and voluntary sector.<br>• Annual work programme consultation<br>• (Also six-monthly Chair meetings with each spokesperson) | • Next newsletter: October 2022<br>• Next work programme consultation: end 2022<br>• Round of meetings between Chair, Secretary and party local government spokespersons: Autumn 2022 |
| **MSPs** | • Enhanced communications with shadow spokespersons, focusing on Commission newsletters to councillors and third and voluntary sector<br>• <span style="color:red">MSP invitations to annual symposium / conference</span> | • Next newsletter: October 2022 |
| **Councils** | | |
| **Leaders** | • Six-monthly appearance at COSLA leaders' meeting<br>• Annual member seminar around overview work<br>• Annual work programme consultation<br>• <span style="color:red">Leader invitations to annual symposium / conference</span> | • COSLA leaders' meeting in September 2022<br>• Next work programme consultation: end 2022 |

| Stakeholder | Approach | Next engagement |
|---|---|---|
| **Members** | • Councillor newsletters three times per year<br>• Annual member seminar around overview work<br>• Member invitations to annual symposium / conference | • Next newsletter: October 2022<br>• Next work programme consultation: end 2022 |
| **Chief Executives** | • Six-monthly appearance at SOLACE branch meetings<br>• Annual symposium around overview work<br>• Annual work programme consultation<br>• Chief Executive invitations to annual symposium / conference | • SOLACE branch meeting to discuss strategy and BV auditing: Post August 2022<br>• Next work programme consultation: end 2022 |
| **IJBs** | | |
| **Chairs** | • Annual work programme consultation | • Letter to Chairs on future auditing: sent July 2022<br>• Next work programme consultation: end 2022 |
| **Members** | • Councillor newsletters three times per year | • Next newsletter: October 2022 |
| **Chief Officers** | • Appearance as required at meetings of IJB Chief Officers group<br>• Annual work programme consultation | • Letter to Chief Officers on future auditing: sent July 2022<br>• Next work programme consultation: end 2022 |
| **Staff** | • Annual work programme consultation with trade unions<br>• Trade union invitations to annual symposium / conference | • Next work programme consultation: end 2022 |
| **Other stakeholders: external** | | |
| **Third and voluntary sector** | • Roundtables (two per year)<br>• Newsletters: three per year<br>• Invitations to annual symposium / conference | • Roundtable: Autumn 2022<br>• Next newsletter: October 2022<br>• Next work programme consultation: end 2022 |
| **Council community planning partners** | • Sharing councillor and community newsletters<br>• Significantly increased promotion of annual and BV audit to local communities | • Next newsletter: October 2022<br>• Annual audit promotion proposals by early 2023 |
| **Strategic scrutiny partners** | • Regular liaison through Strategic Scrutiny Group<br>• Annual work programme consultation | • Further discussion by Commission on way forward for strategic scrutiny: Autumn 2022<br>• Next work programme consultation: end 2022 |

| Stakeholder | Approach | Next engagement |
|---|---|---|
| **Improvement Service** | • Regular meetings between Commission Support Team and Chief Executive<br>• (Also annual meeting between respective Chairs)<br>• Annual seminar on overview reports | • Next work programme consultation: end 2022 |
| **Local Government Benchmarking Framework** | • Commission Secretary attends LGBF board meetings as observer (five/six per year)<br>• (Also meetings between respective Chairs as required) | • Next Board meeting: September 2022 |
| **Academics** | • Involvement in annual symposium / conference<br>• Longer-term engagement arrangements are needing to be developed. | |
| **Think tanks / consultancies** | • Involvement in annual symposium / conference<br>• Longer-term engagement arrangements are needing to be developed. | |
| **Other stakeholders: internal** | | |
| **Appointed auditors** | • Quarterly local government forum meetings<br>• Auditor appearances at FAA Committee<br>• Significantly increased promotion of annual and BV audit to local communities | • Quarterly forum with new round of appointed auditors: August 2022<br>• Schedule of FAA appearances to be developed before end of 2022. |