

Purpose

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

Engagement and Audit Scotland business

2. The engagements and work in the period of 1 February to 28 February have been as follows:

Audit Scotland Board and Committee meetings

- 8 February – Extraordinary meeting of the Audit Scotland Board.

Audit Scotland engagement

- 6, 20 and 27 February – Catch ups with Vicki Bibby, Chief Operating Officer.
- 15 February – Catch up with John Cornett, Executive Director of Audit Services, and Helena Gray, Controller of Audit.
- 21 February – Monthly catch up with Stephen Boyle, Auditor General for Scotland.

External engagement

- 20 February – Meeting with COSLA representatives Shona Morrison President, Steven Heddle Vice-President, Sally Loudon Chief Executive and Sarah Watters, Director alongside Andrew Burns, Accounts Commission member; Helena Gray and Tim McKay, Interim Deputy Chair.

3. Commission business has been as follows:

- Regular catch ups with Commission Support Team: Helena Gray; Blyth Deans, Senior Manager, PABV; Martin McLauchlan, Policy Manager; Jillian Elgin, Executive Assistant; and Joanna Mansell, Communications Adviser.
- 1, 16, 22 and 23 February – Catch ups with Helena Gray.
- 8 February – Development discussions with Tim McKay and Christine Lester, Accounts Commission members.
- 9 February – Catch up with Sophie Flemig, Accounts Commission member.
- 9 February – Accounts Commission meeting.
- 9 February – Media preparation for the housing benefit report with Joanna Mansell and Elizabeth Sargeant, Social Media Manager.

- 13 February – Media preparation for the housing benefit report with Joanna Mansell, Elizabeth Sargeant and David Sim, Benefit Performance Auditor.
- 16 February – Preparatory meeting for session with COSLA with Andrew Burns, Blyth Deans, Helena Gray, Tim McKay and Martin McLauchlan.
- 16 February – Development discussion with Geraldine Wooley, Accounts Commission member.
- 22 February – Discussion on replacement EU funding with Blyth Deans; Gemma Diamond, Director of Innovation and Transformation; Helena Gray; Mark Taylor, Audit Director, Performance Audit and Best Value; and Catherine Young, Senior Manager, Performance Audit and Best Value.
- 23 February – Financial Audit and Assurance Committee and Performance Audit Committee meetings.

4. Other areas of work have included:

- Preparing for appraisal with Sean Neill, Director for Local Government and Communities.
- Reviewing the forthcoming blog on Education outcomes.
- Preparing for development sessions with Commission members.
- Media preparation for the Housing benefit publication.
- Reviewing the content of the Commission newsletter.

Forthcoming activities

5. My forthcoming engagement activities include:

- Preparing for the Audit Scotland staff conference.
- 1 and 8 March – Catch ups with Helena Gray.
- 6 March – Emerging messages discussion on the Adult Mental Health audit.
- 7 March – Audit Scotland Audit Committee and Remuneration and Human Resources Committee meetings.
- 8 March – Development discussion with Andy Cowie, Accounts Commission member.
- 9 March – Accounts Commission meeting.

Strategic Scrutiny Group update

6. Recent business of the Strategic Scrutiny Group includes:

- Meetings took place on 16 January and 16 February with volunteers from the Strategic Scrutiny Group (Care Inspectorate, Education Scotland, HMICS, HMIPS) to develop the

terms of reference for the re-positioned strategic scrutiny group and the operational scrutiny group. This was a collaborative approach to developing the roles, responsibilities, purpose, governance and accountability arrangements as well as capturing the interrelationship between the two groups. The terms of reference for both will be discussed and agreed at the next SSG meeting in April.

Conclusion

7. The Commission is invited to:

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