



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Geoff Huggins
Director Digital
Scottish Government

By email only

Public Audit Committee
Room T3.60
The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

Email:

publicaudit.committee@parliament.scot

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Dear Geoff,

Major ICT projects – accountability and governance

Thank you for providing evidence to the Committee at its meeting on [31 March 2022](#). Following the evidence session, the Committee agreed it would be helpful, for its future scrutiny of Major ICT projects, if you were able to provide us with diagrams setting out the accountability and governance structures for the oversight of the digital strategy and for major ICT projects and programmes.

Where relevant, the diagrams should show the roles and remits of the Ministerial and Scottish Government official oversight groups as well as the roles and remits of the Scottish Government's Internal Audit and Assurance and Digital Directorates. Where appropriate, the diagrams should also include the roles and remits of the Scottish Government's procurement and legal teams.

In particular the Committee would like to receive diagrams in respect of the following types of projects and programmes—

1. Projects within public bodies

The first diagram requested is for projects where responsibility lies with the accountable officer of a public body. The Committee asks that you use one of the current projects being undertaken by Police Scotland as a case study to show the overall governance structure. The Committee would also be interested to see where the role of Police Scotland's own digital team fits into the overall structure and what

role the Internal Audit and Assurance and Digital Directorates play in supporting, managing and assuring these projects.

2. Scottish Government projects

The Committee would like to see a similar diagram for projects that the Digital Director is the accountable officer for, such as the Digital Identity Service or the Payments Transformation Project.

3. Scottish Government corporate projects

Finally, the Committee would be grateful for a similar diagram for projects where the accountable officer sits outwith the Digital Directorate, such as corporate projects like the Shared Services programme.

Spending controls

During the evidence session, the Committee also raised the issue of spending controls. In his [response](#) to the Session 5 Committee's report entitled [Key audit themes: managing public sector ICT projects](#) in March 2021, Colin Cook in his role as Director Digital, advised that—

“The digital directorate is further strengthening the governance of IT and digital projects by implementing a financial spend controls process for digital and technology spend. This will complement the assurance process by reviewing spending plans at an early stage of a programme. It will also review organisations' 'business as usual' IT spend to make sure that organisations address any risks and disproportionate costs associated with running 'legacy' systems. Spend controls will be incorporated into the Scottish Public Finance Manual. As such, they will apply to all public bodies subject to these standards, including Executive Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies.”

The Committee notes the work that you have undertaken to date, and your intention to run a pilot to apply this work in a practical setting. The Committee asks that you provide a timescale for completion of the pilot and that you provide an update to the Committee on the conclusion of the pilot.

I would be grateful if you could respond to this letter by **20 May 2022**.

Yours sincerely,

**Richard Leonard MSP,
Convener**