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Clare Haughey MSP
Convener
Finance and Public Administration Committee
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH9 1SP

Our ref: Re: Letter of 7th September
29 September 2026

Dear Convener,

Thank you for your letter of 7 September to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government regarding the Scottish Government's strategy landscape.

Strategies are an important mechanism for addressing the challenges facing Scotland and delivering the Government's priorities. They help to provide clear direction for making choices about where effort and resources should be focused, and support coordinated action to achieve better outcomes for people and communities.

To be most effective, strategies should not operate in isolation. They should work together as part of a coherent system, with clear links across policy areas, public service reform activity and the Government's wider priorities. Ensuring that strategies are aligned and mutually reinforcing can strengthen their impact, support delivery and provide greater clarity about how different strands of work contribute to shared outcomes.

We recognise that, previously, there has not been a consistent approach across government to the definition, development, governance or presentation of strategies. As a result, approaches have varied between policy areas. To address this, the Scottish Government is advancing a strategy control and development framework, supported by common definitions, guidance and expectations. This forms part of wider Public Service Reform activity to strengthen strategic decision-making, improve alignment with National Outcomes and ensure that strategies are used where they add most value.

As part of this work, officials previously reported that there were approximately 100 live Scottish Government strategies in place as of August 2025. Officials subsequently undertook

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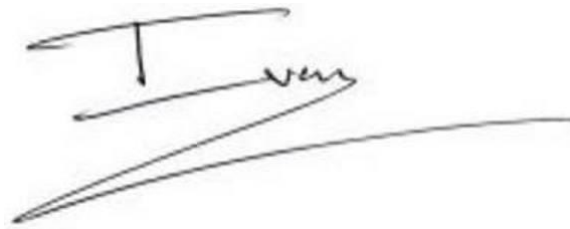
further work in March 2026 to refresh this analysis. This identified a number of strategies that had not previously been captured, alongside new and updated strategies published since August 2025, while also accounting for strategies that had been completed, superseded or otherwise closed.

The spreadsheet provided to the Committee reflects that March 2026 exercise and should be regarded as a snapshot of the developing position at that time. The spreadsheet records approximately 120 strategies. It also, importantly, begins to show how they relate to each other and to the government's priorities in a coherent fashion. As this work progresses, we intend to refine and improve how strategies are identified, mapped and presented. This will support a clearer understanding of the strategic landscape, including how individual strategies relate to one another, where there may be overlap, and where gaps may exist that could require strategic attention.

Over time, this work will help create a more coherent and accessible strategic landscape, with greater consistency in methodology, stronger connections between strategies and a sharper focus on supporting delivery of the Government's priorities.

I hope this update is helpful and I would be happy to keep the Committee informed as this work progresses.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ivan McKee', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

IVAN MCKEE