Official Report
Aithisg Oifigeil

Public Audit Committee

Comataidh an Sgrùdaidh Phoblaich

Thursday 25 June 2026

Session 7

The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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CONTENTS

	Col.
INTERESTS	1
DEPUTY CONVENER	2
DECISION ON TAKING BUSINESS IN PRIVATE	3
LEGACY REPORT	4

PUBLIC AUDIT COMMITTEE
1st Meeting 2026, Session 7

CONVENER

*Neil Bibby (West Scotland) (Lab)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Dawn Black (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Miles Briggs (Edinburgh and Lothians East) (Con)
*Alan Brown (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)
*David Kirkwood (South Scotland) (Reform)

*attended

LOCATION

The Alexander Fleming Room (CR3)

Scottish Parliament

Public Audit Committee

Thursday 25 June 2026

[The Convener opened the meeting at 09:30]

Interests

The Convener (Neil Bibby): Good morning. I welcome everyone to the first meeting in session 7 of the Public Audit Committee. It is an honour for me to have been elected by the Parliament as the committee's convener. It is also a duty and a privilege.

I take this opportunity to welcome all members to the committee. Dawn Black, Miles Briggs, Alan Brown and David Kirkwood, I look forward to working with you all in the session ahead. I am aware that, for three of our members, this is the first Scottish Parliament committee that they have sat on, but I believe that, between us, we have a mixture of experience and fresh perspective that will serve us well.

Public bodies in Scotland spend nearly £70 billion a year. That is not the Government's money or the Parliament's money, but the people's money. Our duty is to ensure that the people's money is well spent in the interests of the people; we must ensure that it is spent properly and wisely. We are the guardians of taxpayers' money.

Accountability means not only asking the difficult questions but ensuring that the work of the committee is accessible and understood by the public. Public bodies are accountable to us, and we expect full openness and transparency from them. We are accountable to the public, and they deserve robust and effective scrutiny from us on their behalf. That work starts today, and I look forward to working with you all to achieve that.

Under our first agenda item, each of us is asked to declare any interests that are relevant to the work of the committee. I have no relevant interests to declare.

Dawn Black (Angus North and Mearns) (SNP): I declare that I am a sitting councillor on Aberdeenshire Council, but that is all.

Miles Briggs (Edinburgh and Lothians East) (Con): I have no relevant interests to declare.

Alan Brown (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP): I have no relevant interests to declare.

David Kirkwood (South Scotland) (Reform): I have no relevant interests to declare.

The Convener: That is excellent. Thank you, members.

Deputy Convener

09:32

The Convener: Under agenda item 2, the committee is asked to choose a deputy convener. The Parliament has agreed that only members of the Scottish National Party are eligible for nomination as deputy convener of this committee. I invite members to nominate a deputy convener.

Alan Brown: I nominate Dawn Black.

Dawn Black was chosen as deputy convener.

The Convener: I congratulate Dawn Black on her election as deputy convener. I look forward to working with you, Dawn.

Decision on Taking Business in Private

09:32

The Convener: We come to agenda item 3. Does the committee agree to take agenda item 5 in private?

Members *indicated agreement*.

Legacy Report

09:33

The Convener: Under agenda item 4, the committee is asked to thank the session 6 Public Audit Committee for the work that it conducted over the past five years and for its legacy report. I thank that committee's convener, Richard Leonard, and all the members who served on it. For now, I ask that we note the legacy report and agree to consider it more fully as part of our work programme discussions.

The legacy report is an important document that catalogues the work of our predecessor committee and highlights some of the challenges and opportunities for us over the next five years. I have read through the report and pulled out recommendations that I believe are important for our committee to follow up. These are: to use the option set out in the Scottish public finance manual to seek progress reports on the implementation of recommendations made in the committee's own reports; to ensure that adequate data is gathered across the Government, so that this committee has the necessary tools to carry out its scrutiny work fully; to continue to examine how the Scottish Government manages its relationship with public bodies; and to look further into the effectiveness of the Government's arrangements of the boards of public bodies.

I see that no member wishes to comment on the legacy report at this point, so I will now close the public part of this meeting and, as the committee agreed to do under item 3, we will move into private session to consider our work programme.

09:34

Meeting continued in private until 09:36.

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