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Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

Legacy Report of the Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee, Session 6



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Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

To consider and report on the following (and any additional matter added under Rule 6.1.5A)—

- (a) the Scottish Government's EU and external affairs policy;
- (b) policy in relation to the UK's exit from the EU;
- (c) the international activities of the Scottish Administration, including international development; and
- (d) any other matter falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture and any matter relating to intergovernmental relations within the responsibility of the Deputy First Minister.



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Introduction

1. The Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee (“the Committee”) has agreed the following legacy paper. The primary purpose of this paper is to provide a steer to our successor committee on a number of issues within our remit which are likely to arise early in Session 7. We also highlight some issues which are likely to be relevant to discussions around the establishment of committees in Session 7.

The transparency of intergovernmental activity and its implications for parliamentary scrutiny.

2. The Committee published our [report on the transparency of intergovernmental activity \(IGA\) and its implications for parliamentary scrutiny](#) on 17th March 2026.
3. We recommend that our successor committee follows up these recommendations with both the new Scottish Government following the Scottish Parliament elections in May and with the UK Government.
4. We also highlight some of the recommendations which are likely to be priority issues for the Scottish Parliament as well as our successor committee in Session 7 below.

Sewel Convention

5. The UK Government stated in August 2024 that “the Sewel Convention and the way the UK Government legislates is certainly a priority area and we are intending to strengthen the Sewel Convention with a new memorandum of understanding.”¹
6. In our discussions with the UK Government in London on 17th November 2025 we were told that the MoU on Sewel is taking a while but there is an emphasis on getting it right. The Cabinet Secretary and his official provided us with a further update on 18th December 2025. The Cabinet Secretary told us that “not as much has been done as we would like” and “it is a bit surprising that we still have not received that memorandum of understanding or made substantive progress.” His official added that there are collaborative discussions on-going between UK Government and Scottish Government officials “to try to bring about wording that we could potentially put to ministers” and there “is hope that we could potentially have something to put to ministers shortly, on the basis that we have a looming Scottish parliamentary election, which I think changes matters.”²

7. **The Committee recommends that a priority issue for Session 7 will be consideration of any revised MoU on the Sewel Convention. We reiterate our previous recommendation in 2023 of –**

” the need for a new Memorandum of Understanding and supplementary agreements between the UK Government and the Devolved Governments. This should specifically address how devolution now works outside of the EU and based on a clear constitutional design including consideration of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. This should be accompanied by new Devolution Guidance notes and other operational guidance notes.³

UK Internal Market Act 2020/Common Frameworks

8. The Committee has performed an oversight function in relation to the UK Internal Market Act 2020 (UKIMA), the exclusions process linked to the Act and the common frameworks programme. Much of our work on these arrangements for the management of the UK's internal market and regulatory difference across the UK remain relevant, with the same transparency and accountability challenges facing the Session 7 Parliament. This work includes our reports on the [UK Internal Market Inquiry | Scottish Parliament](#) ; [The Impact of Brexit on Devolution | Scottish Parliament](#), [How devolution is changing post-EU | Scottish Parliament](#) and our [response to the UK Government's Consultation and Review of UKIMA](#).
9. In our report on IGA we found ongoing challenges for the Parliament in scrutinising the many decisions which now take place in the shared intergovernmental space, including on exclusions to UKIMA's market access principles, common frameworks and the taking and exercise of delegated powers in devolved areas by UK Ministers.
10. We noted that although the Scottish Parliament has twice voted by division to support repeal of UKIMA in Session 6, the possibility of repeal was not considered as part of the UK Government review of the Act. We also noted that this has impacted negatively on the Scottish Government's agreement of Common Frameworks "where the IMA continues to present obstacles to successful operation, such as the Resources and Waste Common Framework..."
11. Our view is that it is therefore unclear how further progress can be made in agreeing Common Frameworks in policy areas impacted by UKIMA. In our view this undermines certainty and trust among businesses and other stakeholders that the UK's regulatory environment is being managed effectively through robust intergovernmental relations. It also hinders Ministerial accountability and parliamentary scrutiny.
12. We recommended the following amendments to the Written Agreement on IGR between the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government (discussed in more detail below) to improve transparency and accountability around UKIMA and common frameworks. These were included in a report by Professor McEwen and Dr Brown Swan, jointly commissioned by the Committee and the Scottish Government—
 - "supplementing the yearly Programme for Government with an assessment of the elements of that programme that interact with, or may be affected by, Common Frameworks, the United Kingdom Internal Market Act, EU alignment, or other executive, legislative, fiscal or constitutional factors that will necessitate cooperation between governments."
 - the Scottish Government "should commit to enhanced reporting to relevant committees during the process of seeking an exclusion from the market access principles of the UK Internal Market Act, in recognition of its significant impact on Parliament's law-making function."
13. The Committee also recommends amending Rule 9.3.3 of the Standing Orders to require the Scottish Government to set out in the Policy Memorandum accompanying a Government Billⁱ—

- whether the market access principles in the UK internal market Act are likely to affect the policy objectives of the legislative proposal, if UKIMA has shaped the legislative approach and, if so, how; whether consideration has been given to seeking an exclusion and, if so, provide details on the scope of the exclusion sought and the exclusion process under which it has been made (i.e., through a common framework, through the minimum economic impact process or by the reserve process;
 - whether and how common framework agreements have affected or may affect the policy objectives of the legislative proposal and, if they do have an impact, provide details.
14. However, our view is that it is difficult to see transparency and stakeholder engagement improving while there are fundamental constitutional differences at an intergovernmental level.

- 15. The Committee recommends to our successor that it may wish to prioritise scrutiny of the ongoing challenges in relation to the operation of UKIMA and common frameworks including taking forward the above recommendations.**

UK/EU Relations

16. A UK-EU summit in May 2025 resulted in an agreement for closer relations between the UK and the EU. The commitments to agree an SPS Agreement and to link Emissions Trading Schemes would result in the requirement for the UK to dynamically align with specified areas of EU law.
17. This raises questions regarding arrangements for scrutiny of both the primary legislation implementing the agreement and the subsequent legislation (most likely secondary) required to comply with the new obligations for dynamic regulatory alignment of the UK with the EU.
18. Primary legislation implementing the agreement at a UK level is likely to require legislative consent from the Scottish Parliament. Secondary legislation to ensure dynamic alignment is expected to be significant in volume and the Scottish Government has stated that a “transposition model is expected, with powers taken to implement the necessary EU law via secondary legislation.”⁴
19. Consequently, Scottish Government officials “expect to work with the CEEAC Committee before the election and its successor to agree on the most effective means for the Scottish Parliament to scrutinise the anticipated legislation.”⁴
20. It is possible that a further UK/EU summit takes place before the Scottish

ⁱ This information should already be provided in certain circumstances under an agreement reached with the Scottish Government on the provision of information. See [Guidance to Subject Committees of the Scottish Parliament on post EU scrutiny](#), September 2023.

Parliament's summer recess and, therefore, the outcome of that summit is also likely to be a priority issue in Session 7.

21. **Within this context we recommend that our successor follows up the relevant recommendations in our recent report on intergovernmental activity. We also recommend that these recommendations inform the discussions around the establishment of committees in Session 7. These recommendations are repeated here for ease of reference –**

- **The Committee thanks Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government officials for their work in reviewing Statutory Instrument Protocol 2. The Committees supports the outcome of the review and believes that it will support the effective and proportionate scrutiny of all UKSIs made within devolved competence, including those anticipated to arise from any requirement for dynamic regulatory alignment with the EU. The Committee recommends that the revised protocol comes into effect at the start of Session 7.ⁱⁱ**
- **Issues which may arise in devolved policy areas which will fall under a UK-EU agreement are also influenced by the existence of common frameworks, governed by the operation of the UK Internal Market Act 2020, and shaped by the willingness of successive UK Governments to take and exercise powers in devolved areas, often without the consent of Scottish Ministers.**
- **The UK leaving the EU drove the establishment of legislative and non-legislative mechanisms to manage intra-UK difference, but these mechanisms are now established in the operation and shape of the devolution settlement. As the Committee has previously noted the reach of these mechanisms extends beyond the scope of former EU competence and the areas which are likely to be governed by dynamic alignment.**
- **In the Committee's view, it is accordingly essential that the Scottish Parliament is notified by the Scottish Government of all SIs containing provision within devolved competence, irrespective of whether they arise from dynamic alignment.**
- **The Committee recommends that a priority for the Scottish Parliament in Session 7 should be to consider the level of resource required to support meaningful and proportionate parliamentary scrutiny of the exercise by the UK Government of all delegated powers within devolved competence. This should include consideration of the establishment of a Committee with lead responsibility for oversight of such delegated powers and the UK statutory instruments made under them.**
- **The interrelationship between the issues also informs the Committee's view that the Session 7 committee responsible for oversight of UK-EU and external relations should also be responsible for scrutiny of the operation of the devolution settlement through the scrutiny of the**

common frameworks programme, UKIMA and its exclusions process, the operation of the Sewel convention including the taking of delegated powers and the exercise of delegated powers in devolved areas.

- **The Committee notes that procedures for the transposition and implementation of EU legislation in the UK were previously set out in the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy. The Committee further notes that if a similar transposition model is introduced for dynamic regulatory alignment that similar procedures will be needed. If so, it is essential that this includes consideration of the need for transparency and Ministerial accountability.**

Written Agreement on intergovernmental relations

22. The findings of our report on IGA are intended to inform the ongoing work on the joint review of the [written agreement on intergovernmental relations between the Parliament and the Government](#). This work which has been led by Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government officials has been paused pending the outcome of our inquiry. Our recommendations are intended to inform a revised written agreement early in Session 7. This includes our broad support for the 8 recommendations in the research we jointly commissioned with the Scottish Government to examine whether the written agreement on intergovernmental relations between the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government is fit for purpose.

23. **The Committee recommends that concluding the joint review of the written agreement on intergovernmental relations between the Parliament and the Government is a priority for our successor early in Session 7 as a means to improve transparency and accountability of intergovernmental activity.**

Written Agreement on EU Alignment

24. Ministers have agreed with the Scottish Parliament to provide information on the impact of the Scottish Government's commitment to align with EU law, which is "the default position of Scottish Ministers", noting that there will be circumstances as set out in the policy statement approved by Scottish Parliament where alignment is not pursued. This applies to primary and secondary legislation and Legislative Consent Memorandums.⁵

ii This paragraph is an updated version of paragraph 182 in our report on the transparency of intergovernmental activity following the Committee's consideration of the following correspondence: [Letter from Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans, 18 March 2026](#)

25. As noted in the EU Law Tracker, 6th report, as well “as providing information on the relevance of the alignment policy to new Bills and LCMs, under its new approach to reporting, the SG have committed to provide in Policy Notes accompanying SSIs a subheading on the ‘EU Alignment Consideration’ granted the relevant instrument.” The report states that –

” Although earlier issues of the EU Law Tracker noted some inconsistencies in the level of information being provided by the SG in policy notes accompanying SSIs regarding their relevance to EU alignment, more recent issues have noted an improvement in the quality and consistency of SG reporting in policy notes. Similarly, information provided by SG departments in policy notes for SSIs made during the research period...continues to demonstrate improved consistency and an increase in the level of detail provided on the specific ways in which provisions in SSIs align or do not align with parallel provisions in EU law, where appropriate. ⁶

26. **The Committee recommends that this agreement is continued in Session 7.**

Written Agreement on the UK EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement

27. The Committee has a written agreement with the Scottish Government which sets out the information the Scottish Government will provide to the Committee on matters relating to the UK EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. It aims to increase clarity on Scottish Government activity and facilitate scrutiny of the Scottish Government’s input into UK/EU relations.

28. **The Committee recommends that this agreement is continued in Session 7.**

Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023 (REUL) Updates

29. The Scottish Government agreed to provide the Committee with a bi-annual update on the REUL Act including a list of REUL Act SSIs and consent-engaging UK SIs as laid/notified in the relevant update period. Updates were issued bi-annually in 2024, 2025 and 2026 with reporting periods to 23 December and 23 June respectively.

30. The Committee notes that the main powers contained in that act will expire on 23 June 2026. One power will remain available to Scottish Ministers under the REUL Act in relation to the updating of assimilated law “to take account of changes in technology or in developments in scientific understanding”. This power is not time limited.

31. **The Committee notes that the final report on the REUL Act from the Scottish Government will be due after 23 June 2026. On balance, the Committee does not believe it is necessary for continued reporting on use of the updating power which will remain available to Scottish Ministers.**

Interparliamentary Relations

32. The primary purposes of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum (the Inter-Parliamentary Forum which is successor to the Interparliamentary forum on Brexit and the Interparliamentary Finance Committee Forum) are to provide a mechanism for dialogue and cooperation between parliamentarians from the UK's legislatures in meeting common scrutiny challenges arising from the constitutional arrangements put in place following the UK's departure from the EU and to co-operate in finding solutions to overcome them.
33. Priorities include the oversight of intergovernmental activity. The forum first met in February 2022 and since then has met a further 6 times.

34. **The Committee recommends that our successor should prioritise interparliamentary relations as an effective mechanism for the scrutiny of intergovernmental activity. We recommended in our report on intergovernmental activity that the four legislatures within the UK jointly commission research to examine how interparliamentary relations might be substantially strengthened and that this proposal is discussed at the next meeting of the Interparliamentary Forum.**

Membership of External Bodies

35. The Scottish Parliament is currently represented on the following external bodies which fall within the Committee's remit –
- UK/EU Parliamentary Partnership Assembly (PPA) (observer status);
 - Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE);
 - Committee of the Regions (CoR)-UK Contact Group.

PPA

36. The PPA is the Parliamentary Assembly of the UK-EU Partnership Council. It is composed of a Delegation of UK Members of Parliament and a Delegation of Members of the European Parliament, who meet twice per year in London or Brussels.
37. The Scottish Parliament has two observers who in Session 6 have been the Convener and Deputy Convener of the Committee. While only having observer status, the Convener and Deputy Convener have been able to participate in the breakout group discussions and the Convener has been invited to speak during one plenary session at previous meetings of the PPA.

- 38. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Parliament continues to participate in the PPA during Session 7 and that the Convener and Deputy of our successor committee continue to be the delegates. However, consideration should also be given to whether there is some flexibility to allow, where appropriate, the relevant subject committee to be represented where the agenda includes items of interest to that committee.**

CLRAE

39. CLRAE is an institution of the Council of Europe, responsible for strengthening local and regional democracy in its 46 member states and assessing the application of the European Charter of Local Self-Government. As the voice of Europe's municipalities and regions, it works to foster consultation and political dialogue between national governments and local and regional authorities, through cooperation with the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers.
40. The UK Government has written to the Presiding Officer inviting the Scottish Parliament to propose nominees for the 2026-31 CLRAE mandate. To ensure the new delegation "is in place in good time for the plenary that will take place from 26-29 October 2026" the UK Governments are seeking proposals by 31st July 2026 at the latest.
41. The Scottish Parliament is invited to propose one full seat and one substitute seat in

the Regional Chamber. All appointees to the Congress must hold an elected mandate; for Scotland this means a person who is an elected Member of the Scottish Parliament.

42. **The Committee recommends that the Scottish parliament continues to nominate a full member and alternative member of CLRAE in Session 7 and that they should also be members of our successor committee.**

CoR-UK Contact Group

43. The role of the CoR-UK contact group is to allow members of the CoR and representatives of local and regional authorities from the United Kingdom to discuss EU-UK relations and co-operation.
44. The Scottish Parliament has two representatives on the contact group both of whom are also members of the Committee.

45. **The Committee recommends that our successor committee considers whether the Scottish Parliament should continue to have membership of the Contact Group in Session 7, including consideration of the role of the Group following the outcome of the next EU/UK leaders' Summit.**

Visit to Brussels

46. **We also recommend that our successor may wish to prioritise an early visit to Brussels to build effective links with the European Parliament, European Commission and the UK Mission to the EU.**

UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021 (“the Continuity Act”)

47. Following UK withdrawal from the EU there is no longer a requirement for the UK to apply or follow EU law or policy. In Scotland, however, the Scottish Government indicated that “where appropriate” Scots Law would “keep up with future developments in EU law” either through new legislative initiatives or by making changes in EU-derived laws that continue to operate in Scotland which correspond to those being made at EU level.
48. Alongside the potential for normal legislative processes to be used in pursuit of alignment with EU law and policy in Scotland, specific provisions were made in the Continuity Act to empower Scottish Ministers to give effect to the stated policy to stay aligned with EU law where appropriate. This is known as the ‘keeping pace power’.
49. In order to support the Scottish Parliament in scrutinising the use of this power and the Scottish Government’s policy of alignment with EU law more generally the Committee commissioned an EU Law Tracker. Six EU Law Tracker reports have been published and are designed to serve as a reference tool for parliamentarians, officials, stakeholders, and the wider public, seeking to better understand the Scottish Government alignment commitment as well as its effects on law and policy development in Scotland.
50. As noted in the Conveners’ Group legacy paper the tracker “was one of the main tools used to promote cross-committee scrutiny of post-EU issues” and “also supported the Parliament in scrutinising the Scottish Government’s commitment to EU alignment.”
51. In response to recommendations from the Committee, the Scottish Government also publishes a number of documents which accompany the draft Annual Report on the Continuity Act. As noted in the most recent EU Law Tracker report the “quality of information provided in these SG Reports continues to improve and offers the most comprehensive and official account of alignment/divergence with EU law produced by any UK based government or department.”⁶

52. The Committee recommends that our successor should give consideration to the scrutiny of the Scottish Government’s policy to align with EU law early in Session 7. We recommend that the Scottish Government should continue to provide the same level of information as it now does alongside the draft Annual report on the Continuity Act.

53. We also recommend that our successor considers whether reintroducing the EU Law Tracker is an effective use of parliamentary resources. In our view this will depend on the extent of dynamic alignment between the UK

and EU and whether the new Scottish Government continues with a policy of alignment with EU law.

54. **The Committee also notes that the ‘keeping pace power’ under section 1(1) of the 2021 Continuity Act is set to expire in March 2027. This could be extended until 2031 if regulations to that end are passed by affirmative procedure. We, therefore, recommend that our successor may wish to carry out some work early in Session 7 in relation to the review of the ‘keeping pace power’.**

Scottish Government's international work

55. The Committee published our [Inquiry into the Scottish Government's International Work report](#) on 6 April 2022.
56. The key themes to emerge from the inquiry were—
 - the importance of adopting a strategic approach
 - the need for a prioritisation of policies to flow from that approach
 - an emphasis on effective collaboration across government to encourage policy coherence in relation both to external affairs and how this interacts with domestic priorities
 - challenges in measuring impact and
 - how we enhance scrutiny
57. The recommendations included that the Scottish Government undertake to publish an Annual Report setting out the contribution made by the international offices to promoting the values, objectives and priorities of the revised International Framework. The Scottish Government accepted this recommendation and has since published several such reports and this Committee has taken evidence from a range of the offices (including Washington, Berlin and Copenhagen) to discuss the detail of their work in promoting trade and culture.
58. **The Committee recommends that our successor monitor and scrutinise the work of the Scottish Government in this area (of its international strategy and international development work) and may wish to take evidence from some of the international offices after publication of their next Annual Report; the publication of an Annual Report being a practice we recommend the next Scottish Government continue.**

Culture

Budget Scrutiny

59. The Committee agreed to adopt a cumulative approach to budget scrutiny this session, focusing on the culture spending portfolio. The Committee published five pre-budget reports this session—
- [Pre-Budget Scrutiny 2022-23](#)
 - [Pre-Budget Scrutiny 2023-24](#)
 - [Pre-Budget Scrutiny 2024-25](#)
 - [Pre-Budget Scrutiny 2025-26](#)
 - [Pre-Budget Scrutiny 2026-27](#)
60. During the [statement introducing the 2024-25 Scottish Budget](#) on 19 December 2023, the Cabinet Secretary for Finance Shona Robison confirmed the Scottish Government’s commitment of “investing at least £100 million more in the arts and culture by 2028-29.” As of the 2026-27 Budget, the uplift in culture funding was £70 million.
61. Throughout the session, the Committee has heard that the culture sector has faced significant financial challenges as a result of long-term budget pressures and increased operating costs.
62. As detailed in the Pre-Budget Scrutiny 2026-27 report, several recurring themes arose in the Committee’s budget scrutiny over the course of Session 6. These included—
- The ongoing financial context for the culture and heritage sector, and the impact and distribution of additional funding provided by the Scottish Government
 - Multi-year funding
 - Strategic approaches to funding decisions
 - Mainstreaming and cross-portfolio funding
 - Alternative funding models
- 63. The Committee recommends that the Session 7 Committee continues to scrutinise the funding position for the culture and heritage sector, including delivery of the Scottish Government’s commitment to increase culture funding by £100 million by 2028-29 as part of its pre-budget scrutiny.**

64. **We also recommend that the future Committee continues to take a cumulative approach to budget scrutiny over Session 7, including scrutinising the Scottish Government’s progress in the areas outlined in our Pre-Budget Scrutiny 2026-27 report, including multi-year funding, strategic funding approaches, mainstreaming and cross-portfolio funding, and the implementation of alternative funding models.**

Historic Environment Scotland

65. The Committee has undertaken several evidence sessions with Historic Environment Scotland (HES) following governance concerns. The Committee took evidence from the HES Chair on [30 October 2025](#), before hearing from the Cabinet Secretary on [6 November 2025](#).
66. The Auditor General for Scotland (AGS) published a [section 22 report on HES](#) on 16 December 2025. The key messages from the AGS report included—
- That HES operated without an Accountable Officer for almost six months;
 - That HES is experiencing a period of significant instability and challenge, including a number of staff-related matters that are awaiting resolution;
 - That there are “unacceptable weaknesses in the governance arrangements” at HES which “point to a culture of non-compliance”; and
 - That significant capital projects must be subject to appropriate scrutiny
67. Following the publication of this report, the Committee took evidence from the AGS on [22 January 2026](#), before taking further evidence from the Cabinet Secretary on [29 January 2026](#).
68. The Cabinet Secretary confirmed in evidence that an external investigation into the situation at HES has begun.⁷
69. Following the publication of the AGS section 22 report, the Public Audit Committee (PAC) also took evidence from the AGS on [14 January 2026](#). PAC then took evidence from senior officials from HES, including the Chief Executive and the Chair, at its meeting on [4 February 2026](#).
70. The Public Audit Committee’s 2 March 2026 [letter to the Committee](#) outlines its findings. The letter states that—
- ” The Committee agrees with the AGS that it was unacceptable that HES did not have an Accountable Officer for almost six months and notes the various constraints that led to this. The Committee has written to the Permanent Secretary to express its concerns and suggests consideration is given to reviewing the Scottish Public Finance Manual and HES’s Governance Framework Document to prevent a similar situation re-occurring.
71. The letter also states that, had the dissolution of Parliament not been forthcoming,

the Public Audit Committee would have continued its scrutiny of HES's progress in implementing the AGS's recommendations and awaited the outcome of HES's independent external review. It notes that this will be highlighted in the Committee's legacy report.

72. The Committee recommends that its successor continues to monitor the governance of Historic Environment Scotland, including—

- how the ongoing situation at HES is progressing
- HES's progress towards implementing the AGS's recommendations;
- the outcome of the independent external review of HES, and the implementation of the review's findings.

Creative Scotland

73. In September 2024, the Scottish Government announced a review of Creative Scotland as part of the [Programme for Government 2024-25](#). As outlined in the [findings from the review](#), which were published on 25 November 2025, the review aimed to—

- ” consider whether the remit and functions of Creative Scotland remain relevant, evaluate how Creative Scotland delivers its functions, and assess how appropriately and effectively Creative Scotland uses and distributes funding.

74. The review made several recommendations, including in relation to Creative Scotland's—

- Purpose, functions and structure;
- Governance and leadership;
- Performance;
- Finances and distribution of funds; and
- Collaboration, relationships and partnerships

75. The Committee took evidence from the Chair and Vice-Chair of the review on [4 December 2025](#).

76. The Committee recommends that its successor seeks regular updates from Creative Scotland on the implementation of the review's findings and recommendations as part of its pre-budget scrutiny in Session 7.

Broadcast inquiry

77. The Committee published our [report on Scottish Broadcasting](#) on 20th March 2026.
78. The aims of the inquiry were to—
- examine the health of Scottish broadcasting
 - assess the effects of consolidation and centralisation
 - consider whether the current regulatory framework is fit for purpose
 - examine the wider role of broadcasting and
 - explore what the priorities for the BBC in Scotland should be.
79. The inquiry also informed our response to the UK Government’s [Britain’s Story: The Next Chapter - BBC Royal Charter Review, Green Paper and public consultation](#) on the renewal of the BBC Charter in the context of the four themes identified in the Green paper—
- a trusted institution
 - delivering services for the public good
 - driving growth across the UK
 - sustainable and fair funding
80. The recommendations included our views on the future funding of the BBC and a call for the new BBC Charter to give parity of esteem to Welsh and Gaelic language services as well as recognising the unique status of BBC ALBA as a Gaelic language partnership service.
81. It is expected, given the Scottish Government’s role in the Charter Review process that there will be a debate without motion in the Chamber early in session 7 (likely after the summer) on the content of the Draft Charter and Framework Agreement. This Committee’s report may be helpful in informing that debate.
- 82. The Committee therefore recommends that its successor draw on the evidence and findings of the Scottish Broadcasting inquiry to inform a future debate without motion in the Scottish Parliament on the Draft Charter and Framework Agreement; and also that its successor should seek responses to the report from the UK Government, the Scottish Government, Ofcom, Screen Scotland and BBC Scotland.**

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