

Meeting of:	Democratic Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	Tuesday, 03 March 2026
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	All Scrutiny Committees
Report Title:	Internal Audit Review of the Council’s Multi-Location Meeting Arrangements
Purpose of Report:	To provide Members with an update on the outcome of the internal audit review of the Council’s Multi-Location Meeting arrangements.
Report Owner:	James Langridge-Thomas, Head of Democratic Services
Responsible Officer:	James Langridge-Thomas, Head of Democratic Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	This is an internal matter and consultation is, therefore, not necessary.
Policy Framework:	This is a matter of local choice.
<p>Executive Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been two internal audit reviews undertaken of the Council’s Multi-Location Meeting arrangements, focusing upon hybrid meetings (policy) and Easy Conf platform (technical). • Both audits received substantial assurance, meaning that a sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited. • Four low priority actions have been identified, and the management response is included within Appendix C. 	

Recommendations

1. T H A T the Committee notes the content of the internal audit reports into the Council's Multi-Location Meeting arrangements
2. T H A T the Committee endorses the management response to the internal audit included within Appendix C.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To ensure Members are apprised of internal audits findings surrounding the discharge of the Council's Multi-Location Meeting arrangements
2. To advise Members of the response to the external audits exercise

1. Background

- 1.1 In June 2023, and updated in July and August 2023, Welsh Government published Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance for Principal Councils in Wales – Supporting Provisions. Within the Local Government Act 2000, the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
- 1.2 Part 3 paragraph 1.50 of the Statutory Guidance issued in June 2023 states that “the 2021 Act requires principal councils to broadcast meetings of the full council live as they happen. This development will allow the public to follow the proceedings of the full council in real time from wherever they are, hear the contribution of their local representatives and understand the issues raised in respect of agenda items. The council is also required to make the broadcast available electronically for a reasonable period after the meeting. This should be available for at least six months following the meeting. This should not be seen as a prohibition on councils to the broadcast of other meetings of the council. This is the first step in respect of broadcasting and the Welsh Government intends to extend this requirement to several other council committee meetings in the future. As part of its strategy councils should explore the views of the public about which of the council's committees, they consider should be broadcast. This will require councils to ensure the public are clear about the nature and scope of each of its committees and sub committees.”
- 1.3 The Statutory Guidance also advises that relevant Authorities can develop their multi-location meetings (MLM) arrangements as to what is right for them and the communities they serve. Part 15 Paragraph 15.58 advises that the exact contents of a policy will be agreed at local level and refers to decide which meetings will have physical provision made for them and which will be conducted wholly through remote means; also see paragraph 15.60 of the Statutory Guidance.

- 1.4** The overall purpose of Welsh Government amending the law as referred to in the Statutory Guidance is to give relevant Authorities powers and freedoms to convene MLMs to achieve greater accessibility and improved public participation in local government and local democracy. These powers are linked to the requirement for Principal Councils to broadcast (by audio and/or video) certain meetings.
- 1.5** As also referred to in the Statutory Guidance, MLMs offer Local Authorities the potential to update and transform the way they do business. It provides opportunities for Authorities to become more flexible and efficient and raise their profile in the local community and to bring their work directly into people's homes. Public access to MLMs is likely to be significantly higher than the level of audiences attending meetings in person previously and the Guidance also advises that attendance levels during the pandemic bear this out.
- 1.6** The Local Authority is also under a duty to make and publish arrangements for the purpose of ensuring Local Authority meetings can be held by means of any equipment or other facility which enables persons who are not in the same place to attend the meetings.
- 1.7** The EasyConf Hybrid Remote Meeting Solution was installed and commissioned in September 2023, and a programme of snagging followed to ensure the system was ready to be thoroughly tested ahead of the soft launch. 1.8 Once fully commissioned at the end of August / September, a programme of system testing was carried out on the EasyConf Hybrid Remote Meeting Platform in a number of scenarios, with different numbers of attendees attending in the Council Chamber, attending remotely from the Civic Offices whilst connecting to the Council's wireless network, attending remotely whilst connecting to home broadband and VoG VPN, and attending remotely whilst connecting to home broadband without being connected to VoG VPN.
- 1.8** Democratic Services Committee have twice received updates surrounding this function, including:
- Revised Multi-Location Meetings Policy, 17th July 2023
 - Hybrid Meeting Platform Update, 16th July 2024.

The latest iteration of the Multi-Location Meetings Policy was updated in July 2024, and it is important to ensure that this is kept under review.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** The Regional Internal Audit Service undertook two audit activities in tandem during Winter 2025, both with distinct areas of focus. The initial area of focus was upon "Hybrid Council Meetings", which focused upon the Council's delivery of its Multi-Location Meetings Policy, with the technical audit focus upon EasyConf connect, the Council's meeting solution provider.

Hybrid Council Meetings

- 2.2** The internal audit sought to assess:
- Compliance with legal duties - To evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of arrangements for multi-location meetings, providing assurance that they comply with the Council's Policy and relevant legislation.
 - Accessibility - To assess whether accessibility provisions for multi-location meetings are fit for purpose.
 - Participation - To evaluate the adequacy of procedural and governance arrangements that facilitate preparation, attendance and contribution by elected members and the public, including their ability to speak and vote in accordance with statutory requirements.
- 2.3** A full version of the audit report is available in Appendix A.
- 2.4** Internal audit fieldwork included, but was not limited to, reviewing the Council's policies, viewing meetings in person and online, surveying stakeholders and collating evidence from the Democratic Services team.
- 2.5** This audit identified that there was substantial assurance, meaning that there is a sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
- 2.6** The report also noted a number of strengths and areas for improvement, with three low priority actions identified. These actions and the subsequent management responses are included in Appendix C.

Easy Conf

- 2.7** The internal audit sought to assess:
- Platform Security and Access Controls - Establish whether the hybrid meeting platform is configured and managed securely, including authentication, authorisation and encryption.
 - Platform Governance, Vendor Management and User Support - Review governance arrangements, vendor contracts, and support processes to ensure they are effective, aligned with organisational requirements, and capable of providing timely resolution of technical issues with adequate staff expertise to assist users.
- 2.8** A full version of the audit report is available in Appendix B.
- 2.9** Internal audit fieldwork included, but was not limited to, reviewing the Council's policies, viewing meetings in person and online, surveying stakeholders and collating evidence from the Democratic Services team, ICT teams and the supplier.
- 2.10** This audit identified that there was substantial assurance, meaning that there is a sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

- 2.11** The report also noted a number of strengths and areas for improvement, with one low priority action identified. These actions and the subsequent management responses are included in Appendix C.

Multi-Location Meetings Policy Review

The Council is currently reviewing its MLM to align with new ways of working and feedback from meeting attendees. As part of the review, the Policy will be updated to consider decisions taken because of this report.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** The integrated nature of the audit and collaboration with other departments whilst involving other stakeholders means that the responses proposed take a long-term approach to preventing future problems.
- 3.2** The proposed actions also support how the Council can be the best council it can be.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** There are no climate change or nature implications directly associated with this report. However, Multi-Location Meeting arrangements and the digital first approach provide an opportunity to reduce its carbon footprint by reducing paper consumption and travel.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** There are no direct financial implications because of this report with all changes being made within the Council's base budget.

Employment

- 5.2** There are no direct employment implications because of this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.3** Any changes to the Council's Multi-Location Meetings Policy have been developed in consideration of the legislation identified in sections 1.1 to 1.6 of the report.

6. Background Papers

<https://www.gov.wales/statutory-and-nonstatutory-guidance-democracy-within-principal-councils>

https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Democratic%20Services/2024/24-07-16/Hybrid-Meeting-Platform-Update.pdf

https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Democratic%20Services/2023/23-07-17/Revised-MLM-Policy.pdf

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Internal Audit Final Report



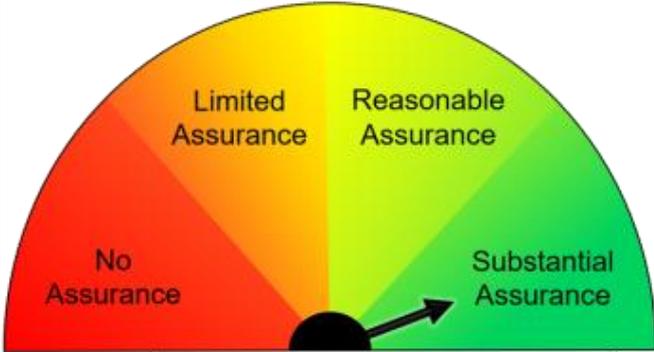
HYBRID COUNCIL MEETINGS

2025/26

Draft Report Issue Date	12th January 2026
Final Report Issue Date	13th January 2026
Report Authors	Kyle Perry – Auditor Helen Harbord – Assistant Audit Manager
Report Distribution	Tom Bowring – Director of Corporate Resources James Langridge Thomas - Operational Manager (Democratic Services)

**REGIONAL INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE /
GWASANAETH ARCHWILIO MEWNOL RHANBARTHOL**



AUDIT OPINION	RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY	
	High Priority	0
	Medium Priority	0
	Low Priority	3
	Total	3
<p>SUBSTANTIAL ASSURANCE</p> <p>A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.</p>		
<p>STRENGTHS & AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT</p>		
<p>During the audit a number of strengths and areas of good practice were identified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council meets its statutory responsibility to live broadcast meetings in accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. • The contents of the Multi Location Meeting (MLM) policy are fully embedded within the council's constitution, ensuring alignment with legislative requirements. • Votes cast during committee meetings are accurately documented and actively monitored to ensure that all eligible members exercise their voting rights. • The council chamber is designed to be fully accessible for attendees with mobility impairments. • Supporting documentation is available in alternative formats upon request to accommodate individuals with visual impairments. • Provision is in place to support elected members who prefer to speak in Welsh, ensuring they are heard and understood by all attendees. • Notice of meetings, including agendas and relevant papers, is consistently publicised within the timeframes set out in Welsh Government guidance. • Members of the public can request to speak at all relevant meetings, and the Democratic Services Team provides tailored support to accommodate any personal requirements, such as accessibility needs. 		

DISTRIBUTION LIST – FINAL REPORT

Tom Bowring	Director of Corporate Resources
James Langridge Thomas	Operational Manager (Democratic Services)

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

An audit of Hybrid Council Meetings was undertaken in accordance with the Internal Audit Plan 2025/26.

This report sets out the findings of the audit and provides an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal control, governance and risk management arrangements in place. Where controls are not present or operating satisfactorily, recommendations have been made to allow Management to improve internal control, governance and risk management to ensure the achievement of objectives.

Under the Coronavirus Act 2020, Welsh Ministers issued 'the 2020 Meeting Regulations' which temporarily relaxed the rules for Local Authority meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020 Meeting Regulations were intended to enable Councils to safely continue to discharge their functions during the pandemic, whilst adhering to public health restrictions and guidance.

The provisions of the 2020 Meeting Regulations ended on 30th April 2021 and were replaced by new provisions for Full Council meetings made under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 ("the Act") and Welsh Government are currently consulting around extend the duties to consider all statutory meetings of Council. A Multi-Location Meeting (MLM) Policy for the Vale of Glamorgan was produced as a result of this guidance and was last revised in July 2024.

A Multi-Location Meeting (MLM) is a meeting where participants are not all in the same physical place, enabling greater accessibility and public participation in the Local Government decision making process. Certain meetings of the Council are required to be broadcast live and retained electronically for future viewing. In addition to the requirement for all participants to be able to speak and be heard and as of May 2022 there are the additional requirements for participants to be seen.

This audit was originally intended to encompass both operational and IT-related aspects of hybrid meetings. However, at the request of management, these elements will now be addressed through two separate audits, with this audit focusing specifically on the operational components. It is also noted that Audit Wales is planning to undertake a review of the scrutiny functions within Democratic Services, and every effort will be made to avoid duplication or overlap.

2. OBJECTIVES & SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

The purpose of the audit is to provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control, governance and risk management arrangements in respect of Hybrid Council Meetings.

Audit testing will be undertaken in respect of municipal year(s) 2024/25 and 2025/26.

The internal control, governance and risk management arrangements have been evaluated against the following audit objectives:

To provide assurance that hybrid Council meetings are compliant, effective and efficient including stability of the solution.

The objectives will include:

- **Compliance with legal duties** - To evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of arrangements for multi-location meetings, providing assurance that they comply with the council's policy and relevant legislation.
- **Accessibility** - To assess whether accessibility provisions for multi-location meetings are fit for purpose.
- **Participation** - To evaluate the adequacy of procedural and governance arrangements that facilitate preparation, attendance and contribution by elected members and the public, including their ability to speak and vote in accordance with statutory requirements.

3. AUDIT APPROACH

Fieldwork has taken place following agreement of the audit objectives.

A draft report has been prepared and provided to Management for review and comment with an opportunity given for discussion or clarification.

The final report will incorporate Management comments together with a Management Action Plan for the implementation of recommendations. Where the report contains only low-priority recommendations, the implementation of such recommendations is not monitored, and a Management Action Plan is not required.

The Governance & Audit Committee will be advised of the outcome of the audit and may receive a copy of the Final Report.

Management will be contacted and asked to provide feedback on the status of each agreed recommendation, once the target date for implementation has been reached.

Any audits concluded with *No Assurance* or *Limited Assurance* opinion will be subject to a follow-up audit.

4. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of staff gave their time and co-operation during the course of this review. We would like to record our thanks to all of the individuals concerned.

The work undertaken in performing this audit has been conducted in conformance with the Global Internal Audit Standards.

The findings and opinion contained within this report are based on sample testing undertaken. Absolute assurance regarding the internal control, governance and risk management arrangements cannot be provided given the limited time to undertake the audit. Responsibility for internal control, governance, risk management and the prevention and detection of fraud lies with Management and the organisation.

Any enquires regarding the disclosure or re-issue of this document to third parties should be sent to the Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service via awathan@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk.

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. COMPLIANCE WITH LEGAL DUTIES			
<p>Control Objective: There are effective arrangements in place for multi-location meetings to be held in compliance with the council’s policy and relevant legislation.</p>			
	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council meets its statutory responsibility to live broadcast meetings in accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. • The contents of the Multi Location Meeting (MLM) policy are fully embedded within the council’s constitution, ensuring alignment with legislative requirements. • Attendance and ongoing presence of elected members, whether attending remotely or in person, are actively monitored throughout by the Democratic Services staff using the hybrid meeting management system and physical headcounts, ensuring that meetings commence and remain quorate in line with statutory requirements. • Meeting participants are able to speak and be heard and can see and be seen by other participants and observers, whether attending remotely or in person. • Votes cast during meetings are accurately documented and actively monitored to ensure that all eligible members exercise their voting rights. 		
Ref. & Priority	Finding / Weakness	Risk	Recommendation
1.1 Low	The recordings of all meetings are stored on a hard drive located within the Council Chamber for a period of 6 months, in addition to this, recordings are uploaded/stored on a social media platform for 6 years.	Access to the social media platform is revoked, resulting in the loss of meeting recordings. Limited control over how the social media platform stores, processes, or uses the recordings.	A contingency plan for the storage of recordings should be drawn up in the event of potential access issues to the social media platform.

Ref. & Priority	Finding / Weakness	Risk	Recommendation
<p>1.2 Low</p>	<p>There are no documented operational procedures for managing hybrid meetings, which may pose a risk to business continuity.</p>	<p>Inconsistent working practices are carried out.</p>	<p>Procedures should be documented to support business continuity.</p>

2. ACCESSIBILITY

Control Objective:
 There is adequate accessibility to multi-location meetings ensuring that participation is available to all attendees.

Strengths:

- The council chamber is designed to be fully accessible for attendees with mobility impairments.
- Supporting documentation i.e. agenda and committee reports is available in alternative formats upon request to accommodate individuals with sight impairments.
- A hearing loop system is in place for attendees with a hearing impairment to aid access to spoken content of meetings.
- Provision is in place to support elected members who prefer to use the Welsh language, ensuring they are heard and understood by all attendees.

Ref. & Priority	Finding / Weakness	Risk	Recommendation
<p>2.1</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>Committee meetings are broadcast live, and members can choose to contribute in Welsh. However, when Welsh is spoken, the live broadcast is automatically over-dubbed with the English translation.</p> <p>This means viewers cannot hear the original Welsh contribution in real time, and the Welsh language audio is not available as part of the live public record.</p>	<p>Welsh speakers may feel less represented.</p> <p>Public perception of bilingualism may be affected.</p>	<p>Continued efforts should be made to further improve the accessibility of live broadcasts and archived recordings for Welsh language speakers.</p>

3. PARTICIPATION

Control Objective:

The procedural arrangements in place facilitate adequate preparation, attendance and contribution by elected members and the public.

Strengths:

- Training on use of the hybrid meeting platform is provided to all elected members and relevant staff. It is also available for individuals to self service through the Council's e-learning platform.
- The council actively publicises upcoming meetings through multiple media channels, including the official website and social media platforms, supporting the objective of encouraging greater participation.
- Notice of meetings, including agendas and relevant papers, is consistently publicised within the timeframes set out in Welsh Government guidance.
- Members of the public can request to speak at all meetings where there is a provision for public speaking, and the Democratic Services Team provides tailored support to accommodate any personal requirements, such as accessibility needs.

DEFINITIONS

AUDIT ASSURANCE CATEGORY CODE	
Substantial Assurance	A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Reasonable Assurance	There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Limited Assurance	Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
No Assurance	Immediate action is required to address fundamental gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance identified. The system of governance, risk management and control is inadequate to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

RECOMMENDATION CATEGORISATION	
Risk may be viewed as the chance, or probability, one or more of the systems of governance, risk management or internal control being ineffective. It refers both to unwanted outcomes which might arise, and to the potential failure to realise desired results. The criticality of each recommendation is as follows:	
High Priority	Action that is considered imperative to ensure that the organisation is not exposed to high risks.
Medium Priority	Action that is considered necessary to avoid exposure to significant risks.
Low Priority	Action that is considered desirable and should result in enhanced control.

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Internal Audit Report



EASYCONF CONNECT

2025/26

Final Report Issued	10th February 2026
Report Authors	Chris Evans – ICT Auditor Nathan Smith – Assistant Audit Manager
Report Distribution	James Langridge-Thomas – Operational Manager, Democratic Services Amy Rudman – Principal Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer

(See page 3 for full distribution list)

**REGIONAL INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE /
GWASANAETH ARCHWILIO MEWNOL RHANBARTHOL**



AUDIT OPINION	RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY	
	High Priority	0
	Medium Priority	0
	Low Priority	1
	Total	1
<p style="text-align: center;">SUBSTANTIAL ASSURANCE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">KEY STRENGTHS & AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT</p>		
<p>During the audit a number of strengths and areas of good practice were identified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting attendees receive personalised, unique joining links, reducing the risk of unintended access or duplicate identities. These invitations are sent securely with standardised authentication methods established. • The department’s issue tracker underpins strong system governance by standardising issue capture, ownership and review. Consistent use of the tool has driven a year-on-year reduction in operational issues, evidencing effective control and continuous improvement. • The latest contract variation clearly outlines the dates when additional support is required, providing the service with greater assurance that technical requirements will be met in advance and at the start of these meetings. <p>No key issues were identified during the audit.</p>		

DISTRIBUTION LIST – FINAL REPORT	
Tom Bowring	Director of Corporate Resources
Victoria Davidson	Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services
James Langridge-Thomas	Operational Manager, Democratic Services
Amy Rudman	Principal Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

An audit of the Council's management, oversight, and secure use of the hybrid meeting platform (Easyconf Connect) was undertaken in accordance with the Internal Audit Plan 2025/26.

This report sets out the findings of the audit and provides an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal control, governance and risk management arrangements in place. Where controls are not present or operating satisfactorily, recommendations have been made to allow Management to improve internal control, governance and risk management to ensure the achievement of objectives.

An effective meeting platform is critical for Council meetings as it enables secure, reliable, and uninterrupted communication, ensuring that decisions are made transparently and efficiently. Technical issues during meetings can undermine governance and delay decision-making, which is why timely support from trained staff and responsive vendor assistance is essential to maintain continuity and uphold the integrity of the democratic process.

Whereas this audit focuses on the Council's use of the meeting platform, EasyConf Connect, a separate audit reviewing compliance with the Multi Location Meeting policy has also been undertaken. The scope and findings of these two audits should complement each other, and every effort has been made to avoid duplication or overlap.

2. OBJECTIVES & SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

Audit testing was undertaken in respect of financial year(s) 2025/26.

The objective of the audit is to provide assurance that the hybrid meeting platform is secure, compliant, and supported by effective governance, vendor arrangements, and user assistance processes.

The scope will include:

- **Platform Security and Access Controls** - Establish whether the hybrid meeting platform is configured and managed securely, including authentication, authorisation and encryption.
- **Platform Governance, Vendor Management and User Support** - Review governance arrangements, vendor contracts, and support processes to ensure they are effective, aligned with organisational requirements, and capable of providing timely resolution of technical issues with adequate staff expertise to assist users.

3. AUDIT APPROACH

Fieldwork takes place following agreement of the audit objectives.

Governance & Audit Committee will be advised of the outcome of the audit and may receive a copy of the Final Report.

Any audit concluded with a *No Assurance* or *Limited Assurance* opinion will be subject to a follow-up audit.

4. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of staff gave their time and co-operation during the course of this review. We would like to record our thanks to all the individuals concerned.

The work undertaken in performing this audit has been conducted in conformance with the Global Internal Audit Standards.

The findings and opinion contained within this report are based on sample testing undertaken. Absolute assurance regarding the internal control, governance and risk management arrangements cannot be provided given the limited time to undertake the audit. Responsibility for internal control, governance, risk management and the prevention and detection of fraud lies with Management and the organisation.

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FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

PLATFORM SECURITY AND ACCESS CONTROLS

Control Objective:

The hybrid meeting platform is securely managed with suitable access controls, encryption, and data-protection measures.

Strengths:

- Attendees receive personalised, unique joining links, reducing the risk of unintended access or duplicate identities. Invitations are sent securely from the meeting workstation using Microsoft cloud services; the process follows a standard authentication method approved within the supplier environment.
- The organisation has a confidentiality feature within virtual meeting platforms, allowing hosts to activate a dedicated "confidential mode". When enabled, this control helps ensure that any recordings uploaded to external platforms (e.g., YouTube) automatically block audio and visual content.
- A layered endpoint security control is in place to help safeguard the system against external threats.

PLATFORM GOVERNANCE, VENDOR MANAGEMENT AND USER SUPPORT

Control Objective:
Platform governance, vendor contracts and support processes meet organisational requirements.

Strengths:

- The department’s Excel-based issue tracker underpins strong system governance by standardising issue capture, ownership and review. Consistent use of the tool has driven a year-on-year reduction in operational issues, evidencing effective control and continuous improvement.
- The latest contract variation clearly outlines the dates when additional support is required, providing the service with greater assurance that technical requirements will be met in advance and at the start of these meetings.
- A Security Impact Assessment (SIA) has been completed, providing assurance that risks have been appropriately identified, assessed, and considered.

Ref. & Priority	Finding / Weakness	Risk	Recommendation
<p>1.1 Low</p>	<p>The Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for the service has not been reviewed within the annual timeframe specified within the document. The document was last saved and amended on 8th February 2024.</p> <p>The team have advised that they are currently awaiting upcoming Welsh language and wider storage back up changes which will need to be reflected in the DPIA.</p>	<p>Failure to complete and evidence annual DPIA reviews reduces assurance that data-protection risks, controls, and mitigations remain current and appropriate.</p>	<p>The service should ensure that the DPIA is reviewed and updated in line with the stated annual review requirement.</p>

DEFINITIONS

AUDIT ASSURANCE CATEGORY CODE	
Substantial Assurance	A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Reasonable Assurance	There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Limited Assurance	Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
No Assurance	Immediate action is required to address fundamental gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance identified. The system of governance, risk management and control is inadequate to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

RECOMMENDATION CATEGORISATION	
Risk may be viewed as the chance, or probability, one or more of the systems of governance, risk management or internal control being ineffective. It refers both to unwanted outcomes which might arise, and to the potential failure to realise desired results. The criticality of each recommendation is as follows:	
High Priority	Action that is considered imperative to ensure that the organisation is not exposed to high risks.
Medium Priority	Action that is considered necessary to avoid exposure to significant risks.
Low Priority	Action that is considered desirable and should result in enhanced control.

Management Action Plan

Audit	Report Ref & Priority	Recommendation	Agreed (Y/N)	Management Comments	Job Title of Officer Responsible	Date to be Implemented
Multi-Location Meeting	1.1 Low	A contingency plan for the storage of recordings should be drawn up in the event of potential access issues to the social media platform.	Yes	Agree to explore alternative methodologies in consultation with ICT to store backups of recordings.	Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer – Digital Specialist	May 2026
	1.2 Low	Procedures should be documented to support business continuity.	Partial	Agree to look at how we document core procedures, building on previously devised training notes, but there needs to be a phased approach due to variations in approaches between Committees.	Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer	December 2026
	2.1 Low	Continued efforts should be made to further improve the accessibility of live broadcasts and archived recordings for Welsh language speakers.	Yes	Agree to explore dual translation facilities and initial arrangements in place with provider to identify potential solutions.	Operational Manager – Democratic Services	September 2026
EasyConf	1.1 Low	The service should ensure that the DPIA is reviewed and updated in line with the stated annual review requirement.	Yes	Agreed to update reflecting upon the outcomes of actions 1.1 and 2.1 above.	Operational Manager – Democratic Services	November 2026