

GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Hybrid meeting held on 15th September, 2025

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

Present: G. Chapman (Chair and Lay Member); N. Ireland (Vice-Chair and Lay Member); Councillors: E. Goodjohn, M.J. Hooper, J. Protheroe and N.J. Wood; and M. Evans (Lay Member).

Also present: Councillors G. John (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing), Dr. I.J. Johnson and E. Williams (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health).

274 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer read the following statement: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing”.

275 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from Councillor G. Ball.

276 MINUTES –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 21st July, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

277 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

278 FINAL DRAFT VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT 2024/25 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 4th September, 2025 as contained within the agenda was presented.

Councillor M. Hooper commented that it was positive to see comments made by the Committee and other Committees reflected upon within the updated document and he was pleased to see that an easy-to-read version would be produced.

Councillor E. Goodjohn stated that the response to the consultation had been very good. He added that it would also be good to have more engagement with Town and Community Councils as a way of strengthening their perception of the Vale of Glamorgan Council. Councillor Goodjohn also referred to the Joint Scrutiny session in which there were comments made around insufficient communication by the Council, and so he considered that there was evidence to show that the evaluation made in the Engagement and Insight Assessment of the Vale of Glamorgan within the Final Draft Annual Self-Assessment report 2024/25 should be amended from 'Good' to 'Fair'. That would better reflect the Council's performance and where it wanted to be in terms of delivering for its residents.

In response, the Director of Corporate Resources stated that in terms of Town and Community Councils, the Place Making process had seen relationships develop in more robust ways and there was a challenge to ensure that relationships were strengthened with all Town and Community Councils, particularly with the Council engaging as early as possible and in the ways that it communicated the Self-Assessment. In terms of the Engagement and Insight Assessment, the Director commented that the work of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Review Group into communication would be important. The rationale for the judgement of 'Good' included the range of focus and activities undertaken by the Council over the year.

Councillor J. Protheroe commented that she understood the comments made in regard to how the Council interacted with the Town and Community Councils, and there was more development that could be made. Councillor Protheroe also commented on the rejection of the recommendation to bring in capped procurement.

Subsequently, it was

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the contents of the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment report / reference be noted.
- (2) T H A T the report be referred to Cabinet for their consideration with the following recommendation that the Engagement and Insight Assessment of the Vale of Glamorgan within the Final Draft Annual Self-Assessment report 2024/25 be amended from 'Good' to 'Fair'.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report, reference and discussions at the meeting.
- (2) To enable the Governance and Audit Committee to consider the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment findings in line with its statutory role, under Part 6 (section 114) of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

To also ensure that Cabinet considers the proposed change of rating for the Engagement and Insight assessment to better reflect the Council's performance and where it wants to be as a Council in terms of delivering to its residents.

279 QUARTER 1 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING 2025/26 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 4th September, 2025 as contained within the agenda was presented by the Operational Manager – Accountancy.

M. Evans (Lay Member), referred to table 11 and the falling gap between debt and the capital financing requirement, and he queried whether that caused any areas of concern. In reply, the Operational Manager – Accountancy stated that there was a planned assumption that all future borrowing would be external, but in reality, there may be some slippage in the delivery of the capital programme that may require use of some kind of borrowing or use of reserves. That would be kept under review.

Councillor E. Goodjohn queried that if there was an assumption for no internal borrowing in future years, was that also incorporated into the Council's financial strategy. The Operational Manager – Accountancy confirmed that savings as a result had been incorporated into the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, but what needed to happen was to ensure that there was a new budget when any new borrowing takes place.

The Chair, G. Chapman commented that capital receipts would have an impact, in that if capital receipts increased then borrowing requirements would reduce.

Subsequently, it was

RESOLVED – T H A T the contents of the Quarter 1 Monitoring report and reference for Treasury Management 2025/26 be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report, reference and discussions at the meeting.

280 REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR JOINT COMMITTEE MEETINGS (MO/HLDS) –

The report presented by the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services, outlined that at its meeting held on 18th November, 2024, the Governance and Audit Committee requested information outlining where reports and minutes of joint committees were reported to.

Initial information was provided to Committee at its meeting held 24th March, 2025, which provided a summary for the following joint bodies of which the Vale of Glamorgan were formal members:

- Central South Consortium - Joint Education Service Joint Committee;
- South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (formally Cardiff Region City Deal);
- Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee;
- National Joint Committee for the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales;
- Prosiect Gwyrdd Joint Committee;
- Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee; and
- Glamorgan Archives Joint Committee.

In reviewing the information provided, the Governance and Audit Committee requested further clarification regarding where minutes of meetings were reported to. It was also agreed for information relating to governance arrangements for each Joint Committee to be provided as part of the further report.

Following consideration of further information requested on 21st July, 2025, the Committee resolved:

“T H A T the contents of the report be noted and an update report provided to indicate where the minutes of Joint Committee meetings will be reported to as part of the Council’s democratic process.”

In considering the above, the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with Officers within Democratic Services, proposed a new process in terms of reporting minutes of Joint Committees to the Vale of Glamorgan’s Cabinet.

The new process would involve a report being presented to Cabinet on a quarterly basis which would provide an overview of all the Joint Committee Meetings held and links to the respective minutes.

The Governance and Audit Committee was therefore requested to consider and endorse the proposal.

The Chair, G. Chapman commented that the proposals offered opportunities for Vale of Glamorgan Councillors to Call-In matters that they could not previously do so.

Councillor M. Hooper queried whether the proposal would be shared with other local authorities that were going through similar processes. In addition, Councillor Hooper asked whether there was anything further that the Council could do to provide further understanding to the general public around the reporting arrangements of Joint Committees. The Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services in response to Councillor Hooper’s first query stated that the report would be shared across Democratic Services with other Authorities. Regarding Councillor Hooper’s second query, the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised that further consideration would be given to that point, and a response provided as part of a future report.

Councillor E. Goodjohn requested for consideration to be given to the role of Co-Opted Members on Scrutiny Committees, particularly in relation to the Call-In procedure to try and increase the participation. Councillor Goodjohn formally

recommended that alongside the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services undertake a review of outside representatives and lay members within Council Committees to increase participation and review their responsibilities, especially regarding the call-in procedure to try and increase the participation and representation of members of the public within the Council's processes.

The Chair, G. Chapman, commented on changes to the Central South Consortium, stating that it was important for the Committee to have further information and detail of the new structure and financial arrangements once implemented.

The Committee resolved

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the proposed new process in which a quarterly report is presented to Cabinet providing an overview of meetings of Joint Committees be endorsed.
- (2) T H A T the report and the proposed new process outlined in Resolution (1) above, be referred to Cabinet for consideration.
- (3) T H A T the Council's Head of Democratic Services, alongside the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services undertake a review of outside representatives and lay members within Council Committees to increase participation and review their responsibilities, especially regarding the call-in procedure to try and increase the participation and representation of members of the public within the Council's processes.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.
- (2) To seek Cabinet's consideration and approval.
- (3) To encourage and increase public participation and representation.

281 CORPORATE RISK: QUARTER 1 UPDATE (DCR) –

The report provided Members with an overview of the Corporate Risk Register for Quarter 1 (April 2025 – June 2025). The report also reflected the Strategic Leadership Team's (SLT) consideration of the recommendations made by this Committee following the 2024/25 Quarter 4 period relating to several of the risks contained within the Corporate Risk Register.

The Corporate Risk Register had a total of twelve identified risks. One risk had a score of very high, five risks scored high, four risks scored medium/high and two risks scored medium on the Register.

Officers were working to provide Members with a briefing on the risk scoring process in preparation for the Q2 monitoring period. During Q1, the focus of the Strategy and

Insight team had been on completing the Council's Annual Self-Assessment therefore completing the review of the risk scoring process had not been possible. Alongside reviewing current best practice, the Directorate was also liaising with all risk owners to gather feedback to ensure a streamlined and transparent scoring process that further enhanced existing Council arrangements and supported effective risk management.

M. Evans (Lay Member) queried that the rationale for the risk reduction around Workforce and Organisational Change. In addition, M. Evans requested further information on the control environment for the control environment for those risk that were cross cutting across many areas, for example financial resources would cross cut into a range of other risks. In response the Director of Resources advised that for the Workforce and Organisation Change risk, the forecasted reduction reflected the Council wide work underway to support staff in terms of their health and wellbeing as well as their productivity. It also reflected work aimed at ensuring the development of Council staff and work around making sure that the Council was able to attract the right kind of talent. As a result, the Council had observed an improvement in terms of absences, and other human resources metrics that were tracked on a monthly basis which had illustrated a reduction in some of the capacity gaps with certain areas.

Regarding the cross-cutting control environment, the Director referred to the role of the Council's Insight Board which reviewed the risk register when complied with responses from risk owners with moderation work undertaken by the Insight Team. The register is then presented to the Council's Strategic Leadership Team for further oversight, and it was at that stage that the cross-cutting nature of risks would be closely considered.

Councillor M. Hooper requested further clarification and consideration was required on the position of the delivery of major regeneration projects such as Barry Marina and its centrality to these in light of ABP withdrawing from the delivery of a marina as part of the Vale's Levelling Up Programme and the acquisition of land (the Mole) earlier in the process and amend the other parts of the scheme including the park and Ocean Water Sports training facilities to compensate for the loss.

In addition, Councillor Hooper asked for further understanding of the issues regarding the Cardiff Region City Deal and the impact of the legal settlement relating to Aberthaw Power Station.

G. Chapman (Chair) referred to housing and homelessness and the forward direction of travel, stating that Audit Wales had recently issues a national report in regard to temporary accommodation, and he stated that it would be useful for the Governance and Audit Committee to consider the report and the Council's responses and the potential legislative and financial impact / responsibilities.

The Chair also commented on the importance of adequately monitoring contract over runs and overspends for some projects where the costs had doubled from initial estimates, particularly in the context of those undertaken under Delegated Powers.

Subsequently, it was

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T SLT's consideration of the responses to the Governance and Audit Committee's comments (Annex B to the report) be noted.
- (2) T H A T the Quarter 1 position of corporate risks (April 2025-June 2025) outlined in the Risk Summary report (Annex A to the report) be noted.
- (3) T H A T the following comments from the Committee be referred to Cabinet for their consideration and/or endorsement in terms of corporate risk:
- Further clarification and consideration was required on the position of the delivery of major regeneration projects such as Barry Marina and its centrality to these in light of ABP withdrawing from the delivery of a marina as part of the Vale's Levelling Up Programme and the acquisition of land (the Mole) earlier in the process and amend the other parts of the scheme including the park and Ocean Water Sports training facilities to compensate for the loss;
 - Further clarification and consideration was required on issues regarding the Cardiff Region City Deal and the impact of the legal settlement relating to Aberthaw Power Station;
 - That the national report on temporary accommodation, housing and homelessness be shared with Cabinet and the Governance and Audit Committee in due course, with the Council's response to its recommendations, as well as outlining the potential legislative and financial impact / responsibilities of these for the Council;
 - The importance of adequately monitoring contract over runs and overspends for some projects where the costs had doubled from initial estimates, particularly in the context of those undertaken under Delegated Powers.

Reasons for decisions

(1&2) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

(3) To ensure Cabinet receives the comments of the Governance and Audit Committee when considering corporate risk.

282 Q1 2025/26 PROGRESS AGAINST EXTERNAL REGULATORY RECOMMENDATIONS AND END OF YEAR POSITION FOR 2024/25 (DCR) –

The report (and Strategic Insight Board (SIB) Insight Tracker appended to the background papers to the report as Appendix 1) outlined the Council's progress to date (August 2025) against all its existing external regulatory recommendations.

At Q1 2025/26, there were currently 19 actions ongoing in the Insight Tracker. Positive progress had been made in responding to the Council's regulatory

improvement areas with 95% of actions (18) attributed a Green performance (RAG) status and 5% (1) an Amber status.

Of the 14 actions relating to local regulatory recommendations, 13 had been attributed a Green RAG status, and 1 an Amber status. The action attributed an Amber performance status related to the 'Welsh Housing Quality Standard review including Council housing tenants'.

There were currently 5 ongoing actions in the SIB Insight Tracker relating to national regulatory recommendations of which all 5 had been attributed a Green RAG status.

During Q1 2025/26, a further 4 actions relating to local regulatory work had been completed, these actions related to the 'Audit Wales – Urgent & Emergency Care: Flow out of hospital Cardiff & Vale Region' report. It must be noted that whilst the Council's response to these recommendations had been addressed jointly with key partners, these actions were long term in nature and work would remain ongoing in a business-as-usual capacity to further embed the required changes in response to the audit recommendations.

Following consideration by the SIB and Strategic Leadership Team, the SIB Regulatory Tracker Q1 2025/26 position was now being reported to Governance and Audit Committee and thereafter, Cabinet for final oversight.

A positive end of year position in relation to the Council's external regulatory recommendations for the period 2024/25 had been reported as part of the Council's Draft Annual Self-Assessment (ASA) 2024/5. A Joint Scrutiny Committee for Performance had considered the Draft ASA on 15th July, 2025 as had the Governance and Audit Committee on 21st July, 2025. This reported the completion of 58 actions (22 national and 36 local regulatory actions) with 17 actions ongoing. Of the 17 actions that were ongoing at end of year, 65% of actions (11 actions) were attributed a Green performance (RAG) status, 29% (5) an Amber status and 6% (1) a Red status. Additionally, prior to the new scrutiny arrangements established as part of Vale 2030, all Scrutiny Committees had had oversight throughout the year of the progress with the Council's regulatory actions via the SIB Insight Tracker which was incorporated within the Council's corporate quarterly performance monitoring arrangements.

In line with its remit, Governance and Audit Committee was asked to review the Council's progress to date in addressing the recommendations made by its external regulators as outlined in the Q1 2025/26 SIB Insight Tracker (Appendix 1 to the report) including the removal of completed actions, with their views referred to Cabinet for consideration.

Additionally, for completeness, Governance and Audit Committee was requested to review and endorse the reported progress for the period 2024/25 against the Council's our regulatory recommendations (as detailed Appendix 2 to the report) including the removal of completed actions, with their views referred to Cabinet for consideration.

G. Chapman (Chair) referred to national action NR33 and the progress rating. In reply, the Director of Resources stated that the red rating was as at end of March 2025, with progress being made and for which the current rating was green. The action related to the housing system and improving processes around customer contact and correspondence.

Councillor E. Goodjohn referred to the recommendations and target dates from the Panel Performance Assessment (PPA), and he stated that the target dates should be pushed back. Councillor Goodjohn also asked for consideration to be given around the monitoring and scrutiny arrangements of the recommendations from the PPA. The Director clarified that the Council's performance at quarter 2 would be presented to the next Joint Scrutiny session, which would include an update on the PPA recommendations. Progress including the new scrutiny arrangements would also be reported to Cabinet.

The Chair added that in respect of the PPA recommendations, those should be broken down to give some key milestones regarding delivery.

There be no further queries or comments the Committee.

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the Council's progress to date in addressing existing recommendations made by its external regulators, as outlined in the appended Strategic Insight Board (SIB) Insight Trackers for the periods Q1 2025/26 and Q4 2024/25 respectively, be noted.

(2) T H A T Cabinet should consider the PPA target date, and this be looked at again, with the recommendations broken down to give some key milestones regarding delivery of those recommendations.

(3) T H A T the Committee refers to Cabinet its endorsement of the removal of the completed actions from the SIB Insight Tracker.

Reasons for decisions

(1) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

(2) For Cabinet to consider the PPA target date and breakdown of recommendations.

(3) To ensure that the Council's SIB Insight Tracker reflected the most up to date position on regulatory recommendations.

283 GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE DECISION AND ACTION TRACKING (DCR) –

A Decision Tracking record had been devised to assist the Committee in tracking the decisions made and actions requested in the exercise of its functions.

A record of the outstanding formal decisions / resolutions made by the Governance and Audit Committee during the 2024/25 Municipal Year was attached at Appendix A to the report.

Appendix B to the report was a record of outstanding decisions / resolutions for the current Municipal year and also included informal actions raised by Committee Members during meetings.

The Committee was recommended to note the contents of Appendices A and B and make comments, as appropriate.

It was recommended that the Governance and Audit Committee be kept regularly apprised off all outstanding decisions and / or resolutions and actions.

The Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service stated that he would pick up the action relating to the development of a training programme for the Committee Members.

Having considered the report

RESOLVED – T H A T the contents of the Decision and Action Tracking report be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

284 PROGRESS AGAINST THE INTERNAL AUDIT RISK BASED PLAN (HRIAS) –

The report provided the Committee with a position statement on progress made against the audit work included and approved within the Internal Audit Risk Based Plan 2025-26.

A summary of the progress made against the Internal Audit Plan as of 31st July, 2025 was detailed in Appendix A to the report. Table 1 summarised that 14 planned audit reviews had been completed which equated to a completion rate of 29%.

Audit opinions, based on the assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the areas examined through testing of the effectiveness of the internal control environment, had been given to 13 of the 14 audits completed: 4 Substantial Assurance, 8 Reasonable Assurance and 1 Limited Assurance.

Included within the 2025-26 Plan were 11 audits that were not undertaken or completed in 2024-25. Appendix B to the report showed the status of these audits; 5 were completed, 3 were in progress and 3 were yet to start.

A total of 24 recommendations (6 medium priority and 18 low priority) had been made to date to improve the control environment. The progress being made in

implementing the high and medium priority recommendations was regularly monitored by the Audit team and reported to the Committee.

G. Chapman (Chair) referred to Vehicle Fuel Management audit and asked for assurance that there was no on-going fraud. In response, the Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service stated that issues had been identified within the control environment, but it was impossible to say whether there were other currently unidentified issues. Where issues were identified, those would be reported through to the appropriate channels and dealt with accordingly.

N. Ireland (Vice-Chair) queried the management response to the Vehicle Fuel Management audit. The Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service in reply advised, that as always operational managers were generally positive and very responsive of Audit reports. For all reports a management action plan would be produced based on the findings and evidence of the audit, the plan would include recommendations as well as space for any management comments. For the Vehicle Fuel Management audit, all recommendations and the associated implementation timescales had been agreed by the operational managers. A follow up audit would be undertaken to assess progress and to check that those recommendations had been implemented.

M. Evans in also referring to Vehicle Fuel Management audit stated that it would be useful to have more information and data of the actual numbers, for example, the number of users.

N. Ireland also queried when the review into the compliance of the Internal Audit Standards be undertaken. In response, the Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service clarified that as part of the Self-Assessment, a review would be undertaken in quarter 4, to capture all work undertaken during that financial year. Findings of that would be reported back to the Committee.

Councillor J. Protheroe asked that in relation to the follow up audit of the Tender Tender Evaluation & Award - Project & Planned Team Building Services and the implementation of the new Procurement Act, had the Audit Team been able change its original audit criteria so that it tied into current regulations and new processes. In reply, the Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service advised that Ardel had been able to provide training to the Team which would have incorporated the new processes. Part of the initial audit had looked at high volume low value spends, so those would be followed up as part of the current review to ensure that appropriate contracts were in place either through the proper tendering process or via a framework. Where new legislation had come in, the Council would ensure that the appropriate training had been provided to those making the decisions.

Councillor M. Hooper queried when the reviews into the scrutiny function and hybrid meetings would be allocated. In reply, the Head of Service advised that they would likely be allocated this quarter (quarter 3) or during quarter 4.

Subsequently, the Committee

RESOLVED – T H A T the contents of the report and the progress made against the 2025-26 Internal Audit Risk Based Plan be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

285 RECOMMENDATION MONITORING (HRIAS) –

The report provided Members with a position statement on internal audit recommendations that had been made to identify those that had been implemented and those that were overdue as of 31st July, 2025. The position statement was at Appendix A to the report.

An audit recommendation was made to enhance an identified weakness in a control to mitigate the identified risk, so until the recommendation was implemented the risk remained.

To date 6 medium priority recommendations had been made following the conclusion of audits from this year's annual plan. All had been agreed and had a future implementation date.

There were 3 overdue recommendations made in audits completed prior to 2025-26 and these were detailed in Appendix B to the report.

There were currently 40 recommendations made in previous financial years that still had a future implementation date. 33 of these were from audits completed during 2024-25 and were being monitored, the remaining 7, made prior to 2024-25, (2 high priority and 5 medium priority), were detailed in Appendix C to the report.

The monitoring of recommendations was undertaken regularly by the Audit team and any undue delays or issues were highlighted to the Council's Strategic Leadership Team and ultimately this Committee.

In regard to the Local Authority Trading Company, the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services provided an update, advising that in relation to recommendation 1.3 regarding tax advice and updating of the Catering Services Agreement, several steps had been taken and detailed tax advice secured which had been taken forward. That had been strengthened by monthly financial monitoring meetings between the Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) and the Council's Accountancy Team. Close working had also been ongoing between the LATC's Managing Director, the LATC Council's Director and the LATC accountants. Therefore, the recommendation had been completed, and Internal Audit had advised that based on that work the recommendation would be closed as implemented.

Relating to the Catering Agreement at 3.1, the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Service advised that the updating of the agreement had been aligned to some of the broader governance reviews that were ongoing and to also coincide with the Council's budgetary cycle. Therefore, it was felt better to avoid piecemeal changes to the agreement to ensure there was a robust framework in place. In addition, scrutiny arrangements had been embedded into the Shareholder

Agreement and the Terms of Reference, with performance reporting scheduled for the forthcoming Autumn, with the intention to present a report to the Start Well Scrutiny Committee on 10th November, subject to availability. That meant that the second recommendation at 3.2 was almost complete.

With regard to the Officer Code of Conduct, the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Service stated that in terms of a Fund Raising Policy, a policy document had been completed some time ago, but there had been a delay with publishing it on the Council's StaffNet and external website. The policy would be uploaded. Councillor E. Goodjohn, commented that a delay may have been due to a review of StaffNet.

Subsequently, it was

RESOLVED – T H A T the content of the report and the information provided in respect of the status of the high and medium priority recommendations made by the Regional Internal Audit Service be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

286 DRAFT GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25 (HRIAS) –

The report provided an opportunity for Members of the Committee to consider and comment on the Draft Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2024/25, which was attached at Appendix A.

The report demonstrated how the Committee had met its terms of reference as per the Council's Constitution as set out by the Local Government Measure 2011 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. It had achieved this by concentrating on its core responsibilities during the year.

During the year Members demonstrated they were keen to challenge the reports presented to them, the robustness of information and process and made suggestions to improve governance reporting moving forward. They were also keen to ensure officers learnt lessons from issues identified and held senior management accountable for making the required improvements.

Councillor M. Hooper commented on a lack of engagement from some Committee Members across a range of Committees.

N. Ireland (Vice-Chair) stated that it would be good to include the attendance rates for the Committee Members over the year. Democratic Services would be able to provide that information.

Councillor E. Goodjohn stated that as part of the Reshaping Scrutiny Programme information on the outcomes of reports to Committees had been collated.

M. Evans, (Lay Member) queried the comments included around undertaking of the self-assessment exercises. The Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service stated that it was considered more meaningful to undertake an assessment in December, but the timing of that would be contemplated.

The Chair, G. Chapman, commented that the vacancy on the Committee needed to be looked into. That would be considered by the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

Subsequently, it was

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the Draft Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2024/25 be noted.

(2) T H A T Draft Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2024/25 be referred to full Council for their consideration.

Reasons for decisions

(1) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

(2) To allow Council to consider the Draft Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2024/25.

287 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26 (HRIAS) –

The Governance and Audit Committee had several core functions and responsibilities within its remit.

It received reports and presentations throughout the year to enable it to carry out those core functions and responsibilities effectively and to provide it with confidence in the financial governance of the Authority.

To enable the Committee to provide this assurance and to ensure it was covering its range of responsibilities, a Forward Work Programme (FWP) was presented at each meeting, setting out the reports to be presented at future meetings, for approval or amendment, as necessary. The FWP for 2025/26 was attached at Appendix A to the report.

With regards to the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts, it was noted that a special meeting may be required towards the end of October if the accounts were not ready in time for the scheduled meeting on 13th October, 2025.

Councillor M. Hooper commented that due to the amount of business, consideration should be give to scheduling further meetings when appropriate.

Councillor E. Goodjohn stated that there was scope to look at how business of the Committee was undertaken. The Chair commented that it was important from a public perspective, that there was openness and transparency.

Having considered the report, it was

RESOLVED – T H A T the schedule of items for the next meeting on 13th October, 2025 be endorsed and noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting, on attendance and information requirements.