

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee: Annual Report 2024-25

June 2025



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Audit and Risk Assurance Committee:

Annual Report 2024-25

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1. Introduction

1. The Senedd Commission's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (the Committee) is pleased to present this report on its work for the year ended 31 March 2025.
2. The report focuses on the Committee's work in relation to the Commission's frameworks for risk management, internal control, corporate governance and assurance, including audit. It outlines: the remit of the Committee; the work undertaken and associated findings and observations; the Committee's proposed focus for 2025-26; and its overall conclusions.
3. It has been another year of significant achievement and performance, with major pieces of work being developed and delivered, as outlined in the Commission's Annual Report and Accounts. The Committee has also followed progress on these throughout the year, details of which are presented in the *Summary of activities and considerations* section of this report. The section on *Findings and Observations* focuses on the core work of the Committee.

Role and membership of the Committee

4. The Committee supports the Commission and the Accounting Officer with regard to their responsibilities for risk management, internal control and corporate governance. It acts in an advisory capacity and has no executive powers. It provides advice on the comprehensiveness, reliability and integrity of assurances, including from internal and external audit. This includes reviewing accounting policies and the audit of the Commission's Annual Report and Accounts (the Annual Report), including the Accounting Officer's Governance Statement (the Governance Statement). The Committee members also provide valuable insight from their knowledge and experience in terms of horizon-scanning for potential risks and issues.
5. The Committee's Terms of Reference (**Appendix 1**) and **forward work programme** are produced in accordance with HM Treasury's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Handbook.
6. The Committee also assesses the independence of external auditors, on which it receives assurances from Audit Wales through the Annual Audit Strategy. Audit Wales representatives attend all Committee meetings and hold an annual private session with the Committee. Additionally, Audit Wales and the Commission's Chief Finance Officer debrief the Committee after an annual

lessons-learned session. Alongside this, the Committee also works closely with the Chief Audit Executive and internal auditors as they play a key strategic role in providing assurances on the effectiveness of the Commission's internal controls.

7. The Committee's **current** membership (a Commissioner and three Independent Advisers, one of whom is the Chair) is outlined below. This is also published on the Commission's website and in the Committee's Terms of Reference (**Appendix 1**).

- Robert Evans, Independent Adviser and Committee Chair
- Hefin David MS, Commissioner
- Menai Owen-Jones, Independent Adviser
- Dr. Mark Egan, Independent Adviser

8. Dr. Aled Eirug, Independent Adviser and former Committee member, and Professor Uzo Iwobi, Independent Adviser, are standing invitees at each meeting.

9. Details of attendance at Committee meetings by Commission officials and internal and external audit representatives are included in **Appendix 2**.

10. The Committee publishes its meeting minutes on the Commission's **website**. The Chair also attends a meeting of the Commission to present the Committee's Annual Report before the end of the summer term.

Summary of activity and considerations

11. The Committee's forward work programme has continued to mirror the responsibilities and information requirements sections outlined in its Terms of Reference (**Appendix 1**).

12. As noted in the *Introduction* section of this report, the Committee acknowledges the Commission's achievements during the reporting period. It has received regular briefings and updates from senior officials both at formal meetings and out of committee on key areas of work and provided constructive challenge, in particular on the associated risks. Examples of this include:

- progress with the development and delivery of the Seventh Senedd and Ways of Working Programmes, and other major projects, including the People and Remuneration project;

- embedding the strategic planning framework;
- development of the budget strategy, including stakeholder engagement, and approval of supplementary budgets, and the Commission's budget for 2025-26; and
- progress on delivery of the Communications and Engagement Strategy for the Sixth Senedd.

13. Details of the Committee's role in terms of reviewing and advising on the Commission's Annual Report and Accounts and external audit, including: the Governance Statement; internal audit; risk management; and the assurance framework can be found in the *Findings and Observations* section of this report.

It is worth highlighting the following in this summary:

- a clean audit of the Commission's 2023-24 accounts by the external auditors, with no significant issues identified;
- the move to a fully outsourced model for internal audit services, overseen by the Chief Finance Officer;
- the continued focus on implementation of internal audit recommendations;
- the continued management and monitoring of the Commission's corporate risks by senior management, and the development and approval of risk appetite statements;
- the evolution of the Commission's Assurance Framework at the corporate level; and
- the continued high standards of service and performance for delivering Senedd business, as demonstrated in its Corporate Key Performance Indicator Report, alongside the further development of mechanisms for managing delivery of major transformational change.

14. The *Forward look* section of the Committee's 2023-24 Annual Report highlighted several areas in which the Committee would continue to take an active interest. A brief summary of the Committee's consideration of these specific areas, some of which are included in other parts of this report, are outlined below. Further details on progress against these areas of governance can be found in the

Governance Statement published as part of the Commission's Annual Report and Accounts.

- Progress of the Senedd Reform and Ways of Working programmes in preparation for the Seventh Senedd and beyond, with a particular focus on programme and change management, and the management of risk

The Committee was kept up to date with progress on these major programmes during the year, including significant changes to the governance structures as they developed, both during and outside of the formal meetings. This has included:

- corporate updates from Directors and other senior officials on progress against delivery of both programmes, on the governance structures in place, and on stakeholder engagement;
- the sharing of a programme update dashboard, as presented to the Senedd 26 Change Board and Executive Board;
- comprehensive updates on the related risks as part of the Committee's consideration of the Commission's Corporate Risk Register; and
- deep dives into specific risks, namely Senedd Reform (June 2024); the Bay 32 project (November 2024); and Senedd Reform Driven Estates Projects (February 2025).

At its July 2024 meeting, the Committee also considered a paper presented by the Head of Governance on managing change. This outlined how the Commission was responding to the passage of the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill. It introduced the establishment of the Senedd 26 Change Board, and reconfiguration of the two major programmes which would report to it. The Committee welcomed this development as it provided clarity of accountability and reporting lines. Further details on this can be found in the *Findings and Observations* section of this report under Strategic Planning Framework and also in the Commission's Annual Report and Governance Statement.

- The evolution and embedding of the strategic planning framework

The Committee has received updates at each meeting on how the Commission's Strategic Planning Framework is operating in practice. This has included updates on:

- corporate and service planning;
- the Portfolio Management Group; and
- the Medium-Term Resourcing Framework (MTRF).

Further details of this can be found in the *Findings and Observations* section of this report under *Strategic Planning Framework* and also in the Commission's Annual Report and Governance Statement.

- The management of information governance risks

The Committee has received comprehensive updates on the Data Protection risk as part of its consideration of the Commission's Corporate Risk Register at each formal meeting. These updates, presented by the Director-level Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), provide an update on the Information Governance team's work programme as mitigation for the risks. Reports on data breaches and near misses are also presented to the Committee mid-year and end-year as part of the SIRO Annual Report. The Committee has welcomed the establishment of a SIRO Group which has an agreed terms of reference and remit.

In July 2024, the Committee also carried out a deep dive into risks relating to the Commission's use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Further details on the governance around the use of generative AI, including the establishment of AI Governance Group and an AI Opportunities Group (both chaired by Directors) can be found in the *Risk management* section of this report and in the Commission's Annual Report.

15. In addition to the formal business of the Committee, its members also supported the Commission on other activities during the year, either in their capacity as a member of the Committee or in their wider capacity as Independent Advisers. This included:

- attending an Executive Board meeting in March 2025 to scrutinise and challenge the Corporate Assurance Statements and supporting documentation to inform the Accounting Officer's Governance Statement (further details can be found in the *Findings and Observations* section of this report, under *Assurance framework*);
- judging the Staff Recognition Scheme Awards 2024;
- membership of the recruitment panel for the Chief People Officer; and
- membership of the recruitment panel for members of the Independent Remuneration Board.

16. Commission officials also continue to share information with the Chair and the Committee in real time. Examples of this include:

- circulation of progress update dashboards on the Seventh Senedd and Ways of Working programmes;
- updates on the People and Remuneration (PaR) project;
- links to formal Senedd proceeding such as scrutiny sessions at the Senedd's Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee and Finance Committee, along with the relevant Committee reports and Commission responses;
- announcements relating to senior appointments; and
- relevant newsletters, reports and updates published by bodies such as National Audit Office, internal audit organisations, and CIPFA.

17. At each of its meetings during the year, the Committee has been presented with an update report on a range of activity taken forward by the Governance and Strategic Planning Service. These are outlined in the relevant parts of the *Findings and observations* section of this report, and include the following:

- the assurance gathering process to inform the Governance Statement, including a change of approach at the corporate level;
- the strategic planning and portfolio management frameworks;
- procurement, including issuing contract notices, the awarding of major contracts and a trend analysis report on all departures from normal procurement procedures;
- programme governance arrangements, including changes introduced; and
- risk management, including the development of risk appetite statements.

2. Findings and Observations

18. This section of the report outlines the findings and observation of the Committee during the year around its core programme of work. Details of the Committee's assurances relating to the other areas of Commission activity are included in other parts of the report.

Financial management

19. The Commission appointed a new Chief Finance Officer in January 2025 following a period of interim arrangements. The Committee considered the transitional arrangements to be effective in terms of the information presented on financial performance and budget setting.

20. The Committee continued to receive finance updates at each of its meetings. It noted the Commission's careful management of spend against forecast, which resulted in achievement of a 0.22% out-turn against the target of 1.5% of the approved operational budget, and an unqualified audit opinion for the 2023-24 accounts. Further details of financial management and performance can be found in the Governance Statement, published as part of the Annual Report and Accounts.

21. The Committee was also briefed in detail on the development of the Commission's Supplementary Budget and the Draft Budget for 2025-26. At the February 2025 meeting, the Chief Finance Officer and the Commissioner with responsibility for budgets, who is a member of this Committee, provided a detailed account of the budget cycle and the ways in which they had engaged with Members. That engagement was particularly important as there was a step change in the budget request to support an expanded Senedd in 2026. This led to the creation of an engagement strategy for the 2025-26 budget-setting process which was also reviewed by the Committee.

22. The Committee also welcomed the annual update on accounting policies.

23. The Chief Finance Officer presented an Annual Report on Fraud to the Committee and reported that no cases of actual or suspected fraudulent activity were brought to her attention during the year. There were also no internal whistleblowing disclosures.

Annual Report and Accounts and external audit

24. The Committee provided advice on the production of the 2023-24 Annual Report and Accounts, which included reviewing the narrative, the accounts and the Governance Statement.

25. In terms of the Annual Report narrative, the Committee considered this to be a detailed and thorough account of delivery against the Commission's strategic goals. It also noted the research carried out into how the report was accessed online and welcomed the steps taken to improve accessibility and transparency, and the tools to be deployed to better monitor readership. A suggestion around clarifying the nature of each of the risks in the risk profile section were taken on board.

26. At its June 2024 meeting, the Committee noted the draft Audit of Accounts Report (ISA260) from the Auditor General for Wales for 2023-24. It was presented as a draft as there was an issue outstanding relating to a delay in the receipt of pension data disclosures by MyCSP. This was a UK-wide issue, the resolution of which depended on direction from HM Treasury. The Committee discussed the implications for the audit opinion and timing for certification of accounts. A final version was subsequently presented and the Committee was able to recommend the signing of the accounts within the agreed timeline.

27. The Committee was pleased to note the clean audit with no significant issues identified and that the Auditor General for Wales issued an unqualified audit opinion on the financial statements. There were five recommendations arising from the audit which were addressed during the year.

28. The Committee appreciated the continued strong working relationship between the external and internal auditors through the 'joint working protocol', which is reviewed and presented to the Committee annually.

29. The Committee welcomed early sight of a draft Governance Statement for 2023-24 in May 2024 and suggested minor points of clarification which were addressed. A final version was presented as part of the Annual Report and Accounts at the June meeting. The Committee considered this to be a robust statement and a true and honest reflection of the effectiveness of the Commission's governance arrangements over the year. Updates on areas identified in the previous year's Governance Statement were received throughout the year via reporting on the Commission's corporate risks, financial management and internal audit reports.

30. The Committee also welcomed early sight of the draft narrative for the 2024-25 Annual Report and Accounts, including a draft Governance Statement, and an outline of the financial statements.

Internal audit

31. During 2024-25, the Commission formalised the move to an outsourced model for its internal audit services and appointed the Engagement Director of the third-party internal audit service provider as its Chief Audit Executive. The Chief Finance Officer has maintained oversight of internal audit strategies, plans and performance.

32. The Chief Audit Executive presented a three-year Internal Audit Strategy to the Committee in May 2024, followed by a detailed annual plan for 2024-25. The Committee welcomes this approach and is satisfied with assurances from the Chief Audit Executive that the level of resourcing committed to the deliver the programme remains sufficient. It also welcomes the continued focus on maintaining an appropriate balance of audits across services and directorates and notes that this plan will be adapted to take account of emerging risks.

33. Details of the audit reviews completed, and those in progress can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

34. The Committee is pleased to note the continued positive engagement with internal audit by management. The Commission has a mechanism in place to track the implementation of audit recommendations.

35. The Chief Audit Executive's Annual Report and Opinion for 2024-25 states that *"Overall, in our opinion, the Senedd Commission has: adequate and effective risk management; adequate and effective governance; and adequate and effective control processes"*. The Committee sought assurance on the timeliness of audit reports during the year to ensure there was sufficient evidence to form the Annual Opinion. It considered the report to be an accurate assessment of work undertaken during the year and of the effectiveness of recommendations.

36. Although falling outside the strict date for this report, the New Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS) for the UK Public Sector, which came into force in April 2025, represent a significant change in internal audit policy. The updated Internal Audit Strategy, and the Internal Audit Charter presented to the Committee in May 2025, confirmed conformance with these new standards.

37. The Committee is satisfied with assurances from the Chief Audit Executive that the independence of the role is protected with no conflict of interest in carrying out the audits.

38. The Commission's Corporate Assurance Statement identified the need to evaluate the performance of internal audit in 2025-26.

Risk management

Review and reporting processes

39. The Committee continued to monitor the effectiveness of risk management processes throughout the year. It remains satisfied that arrangements for the identification, management, review and reporting on risks across the Commission are adequate and effective. The Committee also acknowledges the continual efforts of the Risk Manager and network of Risk Champions to maintain a focus on risk management at all levels.

40. The Committee welcomes the Commission's review of the Corporate Risk Register during the year, together with regular horizon scanning and the consistent high quality of the risk reporting process. It also welcomes the proposed fundamental review of the risk controls, as a result of the assurance mapping exercise carried out to inform the Governance Statement. The Committee also notes that an internal audit review of risk management has been included in the audit programme for 2025-26 which will inform further developments.

41. Further details on the arrangements for, and the management of risks can be found in the Governance Statement which is published in the Commission's Annual Report and Accounts.

Risk Profile

42. As well as reviewing the Commission's Summary Corporate Risk Register at each meeting, the Committee also undertakes 'deep dive' reviews of some individual risks during which senior officials provide further assurance to the Committee on their effective management. The specific risks considered during 2024-25 were:

- the new HR/Payroll system (May 2024)
- Senedd Reform (June 2024)

- Artificial Intelligence (July 2024)
- the Bay 32 project (November 2024)
- Senedd Reform Driven Estates Projects (February 2025).

Further details on the corporate risks, and how they have changed over the year, are included in the Risk Profile section of the Commission's Annual Report and Accounts.

43. At the end of the reporting period, three of the ten corporate risks had a 'red' severity rating. Whilst the Committee recognises that the high-risk ratings are largely due to external influences over which the Commission has little or no control, it encouraged officials to maintain a continued focus on reducing their likelihood and impact as far as possible. The Committee believes that, along with cyber security, one of the most significant risks will continue to be around preparations for an expanded Senedd in 2026 and beyond, alongside delivering the Commission's ambitious strategic priorities within financial constraints.

Cyber Security

44. The Committee maintained an interest in the management of cyber security risks during the year. At its November 2025 meeting, the Committee was presented with an internal audit report on cyber security which reported an 'adequate' level of assurance on the application of controls. Senior ICT officials also attended that meeting to present a Cyber Security Assurance report. The update included reference to the use of a Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) and a further paper on this was subsequently presented to the Committee at its February 2025 meeting. The Committee noted how the CAF provided a structured approach and a framework against which the management of cyber risks could be assessed by auditors.

45. A separate paper on supply chain security was also presented at the November meeting. The Committee also received comprehensive updates on the cyber-attack corporate risk at each meeting.

46. The Commission's ICT service have confirmed that there were no cyber-security incidents that resulted in data breaches in 2024-25.

47. The Committee acknowledges that the steps taken to secure the ICT infrastructure have continued to protect the organisation and allowed the organisation to keep pace with the evolving threat of attacks which were

increasing in volume and sophistication. It encourages the Commission to remain appropriately focussed on cyber-security matters and continue to emphasise the importance of good cyber-security practice, and raising awareness of the threats and mitigation with Members and their support staff.

Information Governance

48. The Committee has continued to take a keen interest in compliance with Data Protection legislation and welcomes the updates provided in the Corporate Risk Register. The Annual Report by the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) further bolsters assurance that information risks are being managed effectively and outlines plans for the Information Governance team to deliver priority objectives.

49. The Committee also receives updates on any data breaches or potential breaches during the year. During 2024-25, nine data breaches were reported internally. None of these breaches met the threshold for reporting to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

50. During the year the Freedom of Information (FOI) function was incorporated into the Information Governance Team, and the team has assumed lead responsibility for developing the AI Governance Framework, which includes the AI policy, and the documentation and monitoring of associated risks. The team also oversees the delivery of the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) Group and the AI Governance Group (see paragraph 51).

51. The Committee has welcomed the Commission's cautious approach to the use of generative AI and its inclusion on the Corporate Risk Register. It has received comprehensive updates on the risks at each meeting, and carried out a deep-dive at its July 2024 meeting. Two groups have been established, the AI Governance Group and the AI Opportunities Group, both chaired by Directors who are working together to ensure the use of AI is driven by robust governance arrangements). An AI Policy and a detailed risk register, which sits beneath, and reports via the AI corporate risk, have been developed. Officials have also shared papers with the Committee as this has developed. This has provided assurance on the steps being taken to ensure the safe, ethical and compliant use of AI technologies.

Risk appetite

52. The Committee has been provided with updates on the development of a set of risk appetite statements which have been approved by the Executive Board

and the Commission. The Committee welcomes this important development in the further evolution of the Commission's Risk Management Framework. It has also noted the rigorous process of engagement with senior management which has aided understanding and ownership of the statements. The final output i.e. the risk appetite levels and statements, has also been shared with the Committee and it will follow with interest their use in Commission decision papers.

Assurance framework

53. The Commission's Assurance Framework includes a robust process for gathering assurance on the effectiveness of governance arrangements at all levels across the Commission to inform the Governance Statement. The Commission's approach is based on the widely adopted HM Treasury 'three lines' model. This provides a structured and evidence-based approach to help assess the levels of assurance on internal controls and to highlight any potential weaknesses so they can be addressed.

54. The process at the service level has not changed this year, with Heads of Service producing assurance maps and statements, which are reviewed by Directors.

55. This year, the Committee has been kept up to date with changes to the provision of assurances to the Accounting Officer at the corporate level. The changes include the production of a single Corporate Assurance Statement completed collectively by Executive Board members and presented to the Accounting Officer. This was supplemented with three assurance maps relating the Governance Framework, the Governance Principles and Supporting Principles and Risk Controls which were also presented to the Accounting Officer as supporting evidence for the statements being made in the Corporate Assurance Statement. An action plan to address areas for improvement has been produced and updates on progress will be reported to the Executive Board and the Committee. Further details on this are included in the Governance Statement.

56. A further layer of assurance was provided through attendance by the Chair of this Committee and one other member at an Executive Board meeting to scrutinise and challenge the Corporate Assurance Statement and supporting documentation (assurance maps). The changes outlined in paragraph 55 were partly in response to comments in the scrutiny of the previous Director statements, which included the suggestion that the statements to the Accounting Officer could be more corporate and cross-cutting approach. The

Committee also considers early drafts of the Governance Statement and advises on its content.

57. The Committee considers that the process for gathering assurance is robust and proportionate. It welcomed this latest evolution of the Assurance Framework and noted the approach would be evaluated to ensure it was fit for purpose ahead of next year's assurance gathering process.

Strategic planning framework

58. The Committee welcomed the ways in which the Commission's Strategic Planning Framework, which includes a rolling three-year MTRF, a two-year Corporate Plan and an integrated annual planning cycle, were embedded and aligned during the year.

59. At the 8 July meeting, the Committee was presented with a paper outlining the introduction of a Senedd 26 Change Board as the decision-making body for matters relating to the transition to the Seventh Senedd. Further details on the remit and membership of this Board, and the wider Strategic Planning Framework can be found in the Overview section of the Annual Report under Strategic planning and in the *Planning and performance measurement* section of the Governance Statement.

60. The Committee also received updates on the recommendations made to the Executive Board by the Portfolio Management Group (chaired by the Chief Finance Officer) during the year on priorities for funding projects. Further details on this can be found in the *Financial management and performance* section of the Governance Statement

61. As noted in the *Summary of activity and considerations* section of this report (paragraph 11), the Committee received regular updates on these developments during the year. It welcomed the further evolution of the governance structures which were crucial to managing transformational change.

3. Forward Look

62. Whilst the Committee recognises the strength of the Commission's risk, control, governance, and assurance arrangements, these must continue to develop in order to remain effective. As well as its regular activity, the Committee will be taking an active interest in the following areas during 2025-26 – these largely reflect the areas identified for focus in the Governance Statement:

- governance around the management of change;
- the alignment of corporate strategies;
- a review of risk management arrangements;
- the provision of internal audit services; and
- dignity and respect.

63. The Committee also needs to look ahead and anticipate issues, challenges and risks which may arise in the future, over and above those identified in its forward work programme. To help inform this, officials and the clerking team will continue to circulate relevant updates and the Chair will continue to meet regularly with the Head of Governance and Strategic Planning, the Chief Finance Officer and other officials as necessary. The Committee remains keen to pursue opportunities for working with the Commission's Executive Board and other officials in areas where it can add value.

4. Conclusions

64. The Commission has seen significant developments in its internal policy, governance and assurance processes during the last year as well as the continued delivery of its two major projects. There have also been changes of key staff in several critical roles.

65. Change on this scale would be challenging to any organisation and it is impressive how the whole organisation has risen to this challenge. The focus and dedication of the Commission team is the best assurance there can be that change will be delivered successfully without increasing its exposure to risk. Taking this into account, the Committee remains satisfied that it has sufficient evidence to provide assurance to the Accounting Officer and the Commission on the effectiveness of the overall risk, control and governance environment. Overall, assurance levels within the Commission continue to be strong. The sources of assurance are robust and reliable, as evidenced by the Assurance Framework, external audit of the accounts, and the on-going work and Annual Report and Opinion from the Chief Audit Executive.

66. The Committee observed how the Commission continued to demonstrate high standards of governance throughout the year.

67. The Committee thanks the Chief Executive and Clerk, and her staff, for the constructive and cooperative approach they have taken to the Committee's work over the past year. Throughout the period the Committee has continued to enjoy good working relationships with Commission staff and have found them to be open and receptive to challenge. The support provided by the clerking team continues to be highly valued by the Committee members.

Appendix 1: Senedd Commission Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Senedd Commission establishes the Senedd Commission Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in support of its responsibilities for issues of risk, control and governance. Its role is to review the comprehensiveness, reliability and integrity of assurances and whether they meet the Senedd Commission and the Accounting Officer's needs.

MEMBERSHIP

1. The members of the **Senedd Commission Audit and Risk Assurance Committee** are:
 - **Hefin David**, MS, Commissioner;
 - Three independent advisers: **Robert Evans** (Chair); **Dr Mark Egan**; and **Menai Owen-Jones**.

REPORTING

2. The Committee will report to the **Commission** via the Commissioner Committee member following each meeting. The minutes of each meeting will be included as a paper to note at a future Commission meeting published on the Senedd website.
3. The Committee Chair, will attend a Commission meeting, usually in July and present the Commission and the Accounting Officer with an Annual Report which will summarise the Committee's conclusions from the work it has done during the year.

RESPONSIBILITIES

4. The Committee will advise the Commission and the Accounting Officer on:
 - the strategic processes for risk, control and governance;
 - the Governance Statement;

- the accounting policies, the accounts, and the annual report of the Commission, including the process for review of the accounts prior to submission for audit, levels of error identified, and management's letter of representation to the Auditor General;
 - the planned activity and results of both internal and external audit;
 - the adequacy of management response to issues identified by audit activity, including the external audit management letter from Audit Wales;
 - assurances relating to the management of risk and corporate governance for the Commission;
 - proposals for tendering for Internal Audit services or for purchase of non-audit services from contractors who provide audit services; and
 - anti-fraud policies, whistle-blowing processes, and arrangements for special investigations.
5. The Committee will periodically review its own effectiveness and report the results of that review to the Commission in its Annual Report.

RIGHTS

6. Subject to budgets agreed by the Commission, the Committee may, with the approval of the Accounting Officer:
- co-opt additional members for a period not exceeding one year to provide specialist skills, knowledge and experience;
 - procure specialist ad-hoc advice, at the expense of the organisation.

ACCESS

7. The Chief Audit Executive and the representative of Audit Wales will have free and confidential access to the Chair of the Committee.

MEETINGS

8. The Committee will meet at least four times a year. The Chair may convene additional meetings, as necessary.

9. A minimum of two members of the Committee must be present for the meeting to be deemed quorate.
10. Committee meetings will normally be attended by the Accounting Officer, the Chief Finance Officer, the Director of Resources, the Risk and Governance Manager, the Chief Audit Executive, and a representative of Audit Wales.
11. The Committee may ask any other officials to attend to assist it with its discussions on any particular matter.
12. The Committee may ask any or all of those who normally attend but who are not members to withdraw to facilitate open and frank discussion of particular matters.
13. The Commission or the Accounting Officer may ask the Committee to convene further meetings to discuss particular issues on which they require the Committee's advice.

INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

14. For each meeting the Committee will be provided with:
 - a report summarising any significant changes to the Commission's Risk Register;
 - a progress report from the Chief Audit Executive summarising:
 - work performed (and a comparison with work planned);
 - key issues emerging from Internal Audit work;
 - management's response to audit recommendations;
 - changes to the annual audit plan;
 - resourcing issues affecting the delivery of Internal Audit's plan;
 - a progress report from the Audit Wales representative summarising work done and emerging findings;
 - management assurance reports; and
 - reports on the management of major incidents/issues, "near misses", and lessons learned.

15. As and when appropriate the Committee will be provided with:

- proposals for the terms of reference of internal audit / the internal audit charter;
- the internal audit strategy;
- the Chief Audit Executive's Annual Report and Opinion;
- quality assurance reports on the internal audit function;
- the Audit Wales annual Audit Strategy;
- the Audit Wales ISA 260 report to those charged with governance;
- the draft accounts of the Commission;
- the draft Governance Statement;
- Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) Annual Report;
- a report on any changes to accounting policies;
- the Audit Wales management letter;
- a report on any proposals to tender for audit functions;
- a report on co-operation between internal and external audit;
- the Commission's Risk Management Strategy;
- reports on information breaches and regular updates on cyber-security;
- details of key change programme/project portfolio management;
- departure summaries; and
- other information of relevance or potential interest, including:
 - Commission papers or reports on matters of strategic importance;
 - updates on areas considered by the Commission's Remuneration Committee;
 - national reports as and when produced by audit bodies; and

- twice yearly updates from Audit Wales to share knowledge of wider public sector studies and reports and to summarise how these might impact on, or be of interest to, the Commission.

Appendix 2: Attendance at Committee meetings

The following senior officials and internal and external audit representatives attended Committee meetings during the year:

- Manon Antoniazzi – Chief Executive and Clerk / Accounting Officer
- Ed Williams – Director of Senedd Resources
- Arwyn Jones – Director of Communications and Engagement
- Sian Wilkins – Interim Director of Senedd Business
- Matthew Richards – Interim Director of Senedd Business (from November 2025), also attended as Head of Legal Services prior to November 2025
- Kate Innes – Chief Finance Officer (April to July 2024 meetings)
- Simon Hart – Interim Chief Finance Officer (November 2024 meeting)
- Lisa Bowkett – Chief Finance Officer (from February 2025)
- Phil Boshier – Head of Governance & Strategic Planning
- Lee Glover, Validera – Chief Audit Executive (from March 2024)
- Leanne Baker – Chief People Officer
- Anthony Veale, Executive Audit Director, Audit Wales
- Clare James – Audit Manager, Audit Wales
- Kathryn Hughes – Committee Clerk / Risk and Governance Manager
- Buddug Saer – Deputy Committee Clerk.

Other Commission officials also attended meetings as required.

Appendix 3: Internal Audit Activity

Internal Audit has delivered a programme of audits during 2024-25. Below is a list of the audit reviews completed:

- Programme and Project Governance - an advisory audit
- Members' Expenses
- Counter Fraud Health Check
- Procure to Pay
- Complaints and Compliments
- Cashflow, Treasury and Banking Administration
- Communications and Engagement
- Strategic Planning
- Cyber – advisory audit to evaluate preparedness for assessment against the Cyber Assessment Framework.

At the time of writing, reports on the following audit reviews are being finalised: Payroll and Pensions; and Programme and Project Governance (formal audit).







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