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# Committee Annual Report 2025/26

# Introduction

## Purpose of the Report

Public Health Wales has a range of Board Committees, which have key roles in the system of governance and assurance. The Board has five Board Committees established, whose purpose is to support the Board in the delivery of its role, the points below summarise the role of Committees:

- ❖ The organisation's activities are vast and complex: the Committees support the Board in covering the depth and breadth of the organisation's activities.
- ❖ Committees have a defined role which allows for a higher / deeper degree of scrutiny on behalf of the Board.
- ❖ Committees help ensure that the organisation operates effectively and meets its strategic objectives.
- ❖ Provides the Board with assurance that this is the case, obtaining assurance that systems and controls are working as they were designed to do.

During 2025/26 all five of the standing Board Committees were in operation, chaired by Non-Executive Directors. The Committees have key roles in relation to the system of governance and assurance, decision-making, scrutiny, development discussions, assessment of current risks, and performance monitoring.

The main purpose of this annual report is to summarise the work of the Committee during 2025/26, to assure the Board that the system of assurance is fit for purpose and operating effectively.

The report summarises the key areas of business activity undertaken by the Committee during 2025/26.

The Terms of Reference for each of the Committees are reviewed and approved by the Board on an annual basis.

The Terms of Reference are available here: <https://phw.nhs.wales/about-us/publication-scheme/committee-and-sub-groups-terms-of-reference/>

This year, the Committee Annual Report has been combined into a single report to summarise the work of the four standing Committees:

- ❖ Audit and Corporate Governance Committee
- ❖ Knowledge, Research and Information Committee
- ❖ People and Organisational Development Committee
- ❖ Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee

A summary of the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee is provided as part of the Remuneration Report, within the Annual Report 2025/26.



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# Committee Membership

# Knowledge, Research and Information Committee

## Membership and Attendance (1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026)

Committee	Chairperson	Committee Members	Executive Lead
<b>Knowledge, Research and Information Committee</b>	Sian Griffiths, Non-Executive Director (Public Health)	Nick Elliott, Non-Executive Director (Data and Digital) to 30 June 2025 Clare Jenkins, Non-Executive Director and Vice Chair of the Board from 1 July 2025 Tamsin Ramasut, Non-Executive Director, (Equality and Diversity) from 1 July 2025 Catherine Purcell, Non-Executive Director (University) from 9 December 2025	Iain Bell, National Director Public Health Data and Knowledge

	June	September	December	March
Sian Griffiths	✓ (Chair)	✓ (Chair)	✓ (Chair)	✓ (Chair)
Tamsin Ramasut	Not on Committee	✓	✓	✓
Catherine Purcell	Not on Committee	Not on Committee	Apologies	✓
Clare Jenkins	Not on Committee	Not on Committee	✓	✓
Nick Elliot	Apologies	Not on Committee	Not on Committee	Not on Committee

- *\*For June meeting, Huw David Attended for quoracy.*
- *Clare Jenkins, Vice Chair and Non Executive Director also attended also attended the December Knowledge, Research and Information Committee Meetings.*
- *The Chief Executive, Tracey Cooper, was also invited to attend every meeting and attends at least annually. The Chair of the Board, Pippa Britton has a standing invite to attend Committee meetings and attends at least annually.*
- *Other Directors and officers attended during the year to present reports which related to their areas of responsibility as required. Representatives from the Local Partnership Forum have a permanent invite to attend the Committee.*



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# Committee Governance



# Committee Governance Arrangements

## Reporting to Board

The Committees reported to the Board through a composite Chair's Report, providing an overview of items considered by the Committee and highlighting any cross-committee issues/themes or items needing to be brought to the attention of the Board.

The Composite Chair's Report is provided to the Board at the next Board meeting following the Committee meeting. This is a written update that is published with the agenda for the Board meeting.

Where the timescales do not allow for a written update to Board (i.e where the Committee meeting is within a week of the Board), a verbal update is provided by the Chair to the Board, and a formal written update is provided to the Board meeting following.

Draft minutes are circulated to the Committee for comment following the meeting, following which the unconfirmed minutes are published on the website.

## Reporting outside of Committee / Chairs Action

There is a process in place to approve reports out of Committee meeting where required; this is consistent with the Chair's Action process in place for Board.

There have not been any reports which have been considered out of Committee this year.

## Workplans

The Committee Work Plans ensure that the Committees discharge their responsibilities in a planned manner.

It assists with agenda planning and is updated during the year to ensure that the Committee considers any additional items which may arise during the year.

Each of the Committees has had a work plan in place this year, and reported to Board in May 2026 for assurance.

The 2026/27 Work Plans are being finalised and will be submitted to Board in May 2026. This year, the workplans include an assurance map and reference to the cross Committee working arrangements.

## Action Log

In order to monitor progress and any necessary follow up actions, the Committee has an Action Log which captures all agreed actions and tracks their implementation. This provides an essential element of assurance to the Committee and from the Committee to the Board.

# Committee Governance Arrangements

## Cross Committee Working

The Committees have continued to work closely together this year, and have been developing and strengthening the approach.

During 2025/26, the Committee Chairs have continued with the agreed approach to Cross Committee working, to manage referrals and items for which there is crossover with other Committees, this has then been developed and mapped against the work plans.

This year, any referrals between Committees have been managed via co-ordination through the Board Business Unit. There have been referrals this year between the Committees, which have been managed between the Committees. The Cross Committee Chairs group have reviewed the approach in 2025/26 and continue to consider improvements / developments in the approach for 2026/27.

The following cross over areas have been identified and managed this year:

Current Cross Cutting Issues - Summary		
Current Cross Cutting Issues	Primary Committee	Secondary Committee/s
Information Governance	ACGC	KRIC
Internal and External Audit	ACGC	All
Risk	ACGC	All
Workforce	PODC	All
Data and Digital	KRIC	QSIC, ACGC
Service Delivery	QSIC	KRIC, PODC
Equality:		
1. Our Workforce, Board and Committees	PODC	QSIC, KRIC
2. Listening to and Understanding our People	PODC	QSIC, KRIC
3. Fair Pay	PODC	QSIC, KRIC
4. Culture and Leadership	PODC	QSIC, KRIC
5. Data and Systems	KRIC	QSIC, PODC
6. Access to Services and our Environment	QSIC	KRIC, PODC

## Committee Effectiveness

During the year the Committee has continued to review and revise its ways of working to optimise the need for a robust governance approach and balance the need reduce pressure on staff during this time.

The Committees continued to review its effectiveness thorough the year, to ensure effective use of time and ensure it fulfilled its role to provide assurance to the Board, this includes a formal Committee effectiveness review process which took place in February 2026.

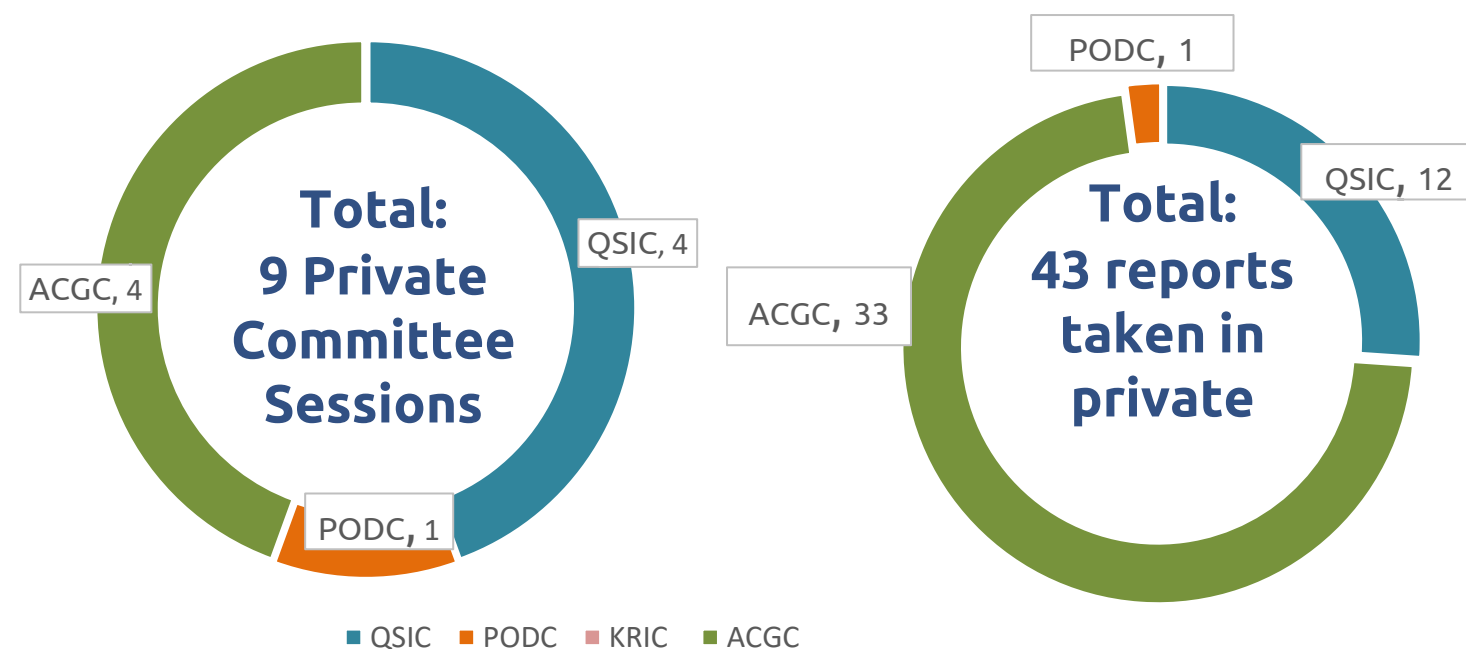
Key themes emerging from this are included in [the Committee Effectiveness section](#).

The outcome and recommendations following this review will be reported to each of the Committees, and the Board in Quarter 1 2026.

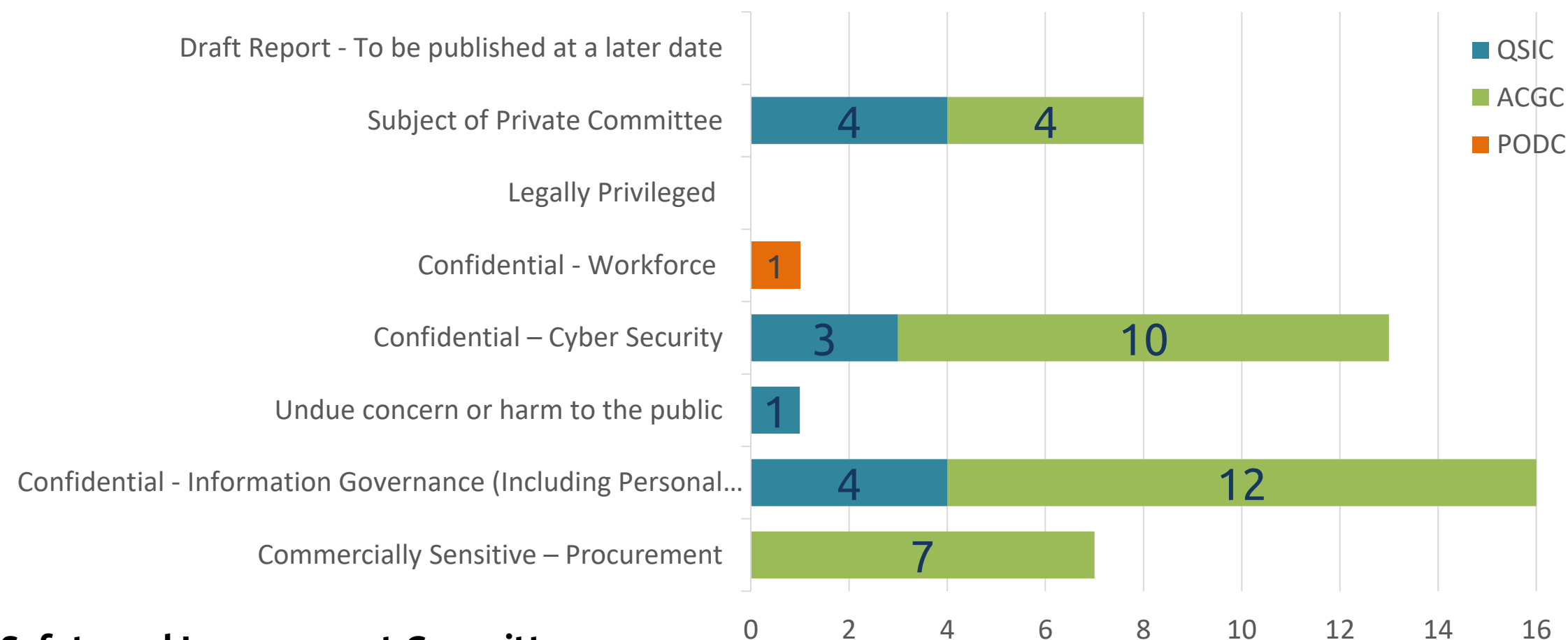
# Committee Governance Arrangements

## Matters in Private

The Committees held a Private Committee session where required in 2025/2026 to consider business of a confidential nature, considering aspects of significant issues.



Below is the summary of the number of items considered in private session, broken down by the categories listed in the [Private Meeting Protocol](#):



### Audit and Corporate Governance Committee

- ❖ Cyber Security, quarterly reports (4)
- ❖ Strategic Risk (Cyber Security) (4)
- ❖ Procurement including procurement reports (4) and debtors write off report (1), HPSS Procurement Plan (2)
- ❖ Finance, including quarterly losses and special payment (4)
- ❖ Quarterly update reports from Counter Fraud (4)
- ❖ Quarterly Integrated Governance reports, extracts showing data breaches from the public report (4)
- ❖ Minutes of Private Committee meetings (4)
- ❖ Audit Recommendations Tracker (2) for actions relating to Business Continuity and Cyber Security.

### Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee

- ❖ Quarterly Reports for assurance on the Organisation's effective management of Claims and Redress (4)
- ❖ Reviewed and recommended a revised emergency response plan to the Board for final approval. A redacted version of this plan was later published. (1)
- ❖ Extract of the Audit Recommendations Tracker for actions relating to Business Continuity (3)
- ❖ Minutes of Private Committee meetings (4)

### Knowledge, Research and Information Committee

- ❖ No private sessions.

### People and Organisational Development Committee

- ❖ Speaking Up Safely Annual Report (1)



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# Committee Assurance

# Knowledge, Research and Information Committee

# Knowledge, Research and Information Committee

The Committee's role is to provide assurance to the Board that there are appropriate and effective systems in place for areas within its remit, including ensuring that there are appropriate development and quality improvements. The Committee's programme of work was designed to ensure that it was able to discharge fully the provisions of its Terms of Reference and areas of remit:

## Research and Evaluation

The Committee:

- Considered regular updates on the implementation of the **Research and Evaluation Strategy**, which aimed to make measurable improvements to the health of the population in Wales by leading and supporting population-level health research and evaluation. It also highlighted areas of research which would be crucial to the Organisations role to deliver on its Long-Term Strategy. The updates included the following areas:
  - ❖ **Academic Public Health research:** the vision and subsequent identification of relevant strategic partners.
  - ❖ **Academic Institutions:** including efforts to develop strong strategic partnerships including Cardiff and Bangor Universities, as well as other Universities.
- Regularly considered and took assurance on the development of an **Outcomes Framework** to measure the impact of Public Health Wales's work.

## Digital

The Committee:

- Considered updates on the implementation of the **Digital and Data Strategy**, noting the progress of delivering the Strategy through the agreed Routemap and has robust governance in place for managing digital and data work, including through linked programmes.
- Considered the development on the use of **artificial intelligence (AI)** within the organisation.

## Analysis and Data Science

The Committee:

- Considered and took assurance on the implementation of the findings of the annual **Monitoring Impact Report**, noting the areas identified for improvement and the plans to formulate detailed actions plans to take forward the findings.

# Knowledge, Research and Information Committee

## Knowledge and Impact

### The Committee:

- Considered and supported the work undertaken to deliver and improve Public Health Wales screening programmes as part of **Strategic Priority 5**.
- Considered and took assurance the progress to date against **Strategic Priority 1** (Influencing the Wider Determinants of Health) and the planned next steps.
- Considered and took assurance on the progress to date of the **International Health Strategy**, which included Public Health Wales becoming a WHO Collaborating Centre in Digital Health Equity.
- Took assurance that research, data, evidence and evaluation activity is progressing to support **Strategic Priority 2** (Promoting Mental and Social Wellbeing).
- Took assurance on the **Pathogen Genomics Delivery Plan** for 2026-2029.
- Took assurance on progress to date and plans for future of the Our Approach to **Health Inequalities** programme.
- Took assurance that research, data, evidence and evaluation activity is continuing to support **Strategic Priority 3**: Promoting Healthy Behaviours.

## Risk

### The Committee:

- Regularly considered and took assurance on the management of both **strategic and corporate risks** within remit of the Committee.
- Considered **Strategic Risks 1, 4 and 5** under the remit of the Committee.

## Policies

### The Committee:

- Considered bi-annual reports on the status of **policies, procedures** and other written control documents, and took assurance on the management of the review of Policies within its remit.

# Knowledge, Research and Information Committee

## Deep Dives

The Committee undertook the following cross cutting deep dives based on the Organisation's strategic priorities:

- ❖ Priority 4 (Supporting the development of a sustainable health and care system focused on prevention and early intervention)
- ❖ Primary Care
- ❖ Innovation within Infection Services

## Updates

The Committee considered the following updates to deep dive items from previous meetings:

- ❖ Inequalities – Inclusion
- ❖ Priority 5 (Protecting Public from infection and environmental threats to health) - National Population Screening Programmes
- ❖ **Priority 1 (Influencing the wider determinants of health)**

# Committee Effectiveness Review 2025/26

# Committee Effectiveness Review 2025/26 – Summary of Approach

- We issued one combined survey for all Committees to avoid multiple asks for those who sat on more than one Committee.
- The survey contained a specific questionnaire for each Committee, and some questions that focused on the overall breadth of the Committees.
- Participants were encouraged to leave some general comments relevant to specific Committees, and the Committees as a whole.
- The questions were based primarily on the Audit Committee handbook (2012) suggested self-assessment questions
- Online questionnaire was circulated in January 2026 to Committee Members, Execs and regular attendees
- 5 responses were received to the survey.
- Results were incorporated into Committee Work planning and Effectiveness Workshop discussions held with each Committee in February 2026.

# Discussion Points from the Survey Results

## PODC Specific:

- Effectiveness of scrutiny and Challenge
- Hearing from service users/staff
- Member training on specific plans (EDI, Workforce, Welsh Language)
- Members want more comprehensive workforce and people-related data to improve decision-making and scrutiny.

## General:

- A recurring issue is the simultaneous onboarding of several new NEDs, which led to:
  - Loss of continuity
  - Reduced long-term committee knowledge
  - A sense of temporary disruption

## QSIC Specific:

- Broadly positive in all areas
- Appetite for improvement in enhancing scrutiny and service user engagement

## ACGC Specific:

- Hearing from service users/staff
- Performance Management Process

## KRIC Specific

- No issues raised, broadly positive in all areas

# Summary of Discussions at Workshop

## Key Themes discussed Across all Committees:

- **Cross-Committee Coordination:** Addressing siloed working, strengthening alignment between committees (notably QSIC and KRIC), and improving agenda planning and chair-level engagement.
- **Strategic Alignment & Intelligence Sharing:** Aligning Committee agendas, coordinating deep dives, and sharing intelligence to maximise assurance and prevent duplication.
- **Staff Voice & Evidence-Based Reporting:** Emphasising informed employee and service user input, reviewing how staff voices are heard (direct vs indirect), and seeking clearer evidence in committee reports (case studies, impact stories, examples of failure).
- **Risk Management & Assurance:** Enhancing risk visibility in Committee, linking directorate risks to corporate risks, and considering whether strategic risks should be reviewed across multiple committees with different lenses.
- **Committee Work Plan & Deep Dive Approach:** Balancing systematic planning with agile, responsive deep dives; developing mechanisms to trigger deep dives based on emerging risks; ensuring meaningful assurance and avoiding unnecessary reporting.
- **Scrutiny & Assurance Mechanisms:** Consider how informal Committee sessions and one-to-one meetings between executives and non-executives to supplement formal reporting, or whether an in private concerns and risk item would help draw out the Execs areas of concerns systematically.
- **Quality Management Tools:** Considering adopting quality management systems for focused, routine assurance and informed deep dive selection.

# Themes and Improvement Identified

The following actions aim to strengthen Committee processes, clarify responsibilities, and support ongoing development and assurance:

- Adopt a more agile approach to Deep Dives, ensuring responsiveness to Executive concerns.
- Consider the use of Executive Summaries for items suitable for a lighter touch, to streamline meeting processes while maintaining oversight.
- Consider how informal Committee sessions and one-to-one meetings between executives and non-executives to supplement formal reporting
- Develop an induction pack for all Committees, including information on skill set requirements and training.
- Improve risk mapping across Committees to enhance understanding and oversight.



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# Assurance to Board



# Assurance to the Board

2025/26

The Committees wish to assure the Board that on the basis of the work completed by the Committee during 2025/26:

- ❖ That the Committees are fit for purpose, operating effectively and fulfilling their terms of reference;
- ❖ That effective measures and processes were place to oversee and coordinate Committee activity;
- ❖ That there no outstanding issues that the Committees wishes to bring to the attention of the Board over and above the risks and issues already raised in the Committee Chairs composite report or that are already visible in the Strategic Risk Register and corporate risk register.

# Planned Activity

2025/26

- ❖ The Work plans for each of the Committees will be presented to the Board for assurance in May 2026; these contain a summary of how the Committees intends to fulfil their Terms of Reference next year.
- ❖ The Committee terms of reference are being reviewed following the discussion as part of the effectiveness review. There have been no major changes identified concerning remit or scope. Any minor changes will be recommended to the Board for approval at its meeting in May 2026.
- ❖ A summary of the Committee effectiveness themes and considerations for this year has been provided as part of this report and identifies the key improvements this year.



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i greu Cymru iachach

Working together  
for a healthier Wales