

## **Mid-Year Update from the Performance and Productivity Oversight Board – June 2026**

### **Introduction**

The Council's 2023–2027 Corporate Plan includes 'a strong, responsible and accountable council' as one of its key priorities. This reflects the Council's commitment to maintaining a financially sound position, ensuring effective use of resources and delivering strong governance and accountability.

The Performance and Productivity Oversight Board (PPOB) continues to play a key role in supporting this priority. As an internal officer Board, it provides oversight, challenge and direction across core governance and performance areas, including audit, policies, risk management and contracts.

Since its establishment in July 2024, the Board has embedded routine monitoring and strengthened accountability. Following a recent review of its Terms of Reference, the Board now meets on a bi-monthly basis to maintain oversight while aligning with wider governance structures.

### **Progress Update**

The Board continues to receive regular updates on all areas within its remit, agreeing actions and maintaining focus on sustained improvement.

Progress over the 6 months continues to demonstrate ownership, strong monitoring arrangements and increased engagement from services. The Board continues to adapt its approach to ensure that emerging risks, pressures and governance requirements are effectively managed.

### **Audit Recommendations**

The Board maintains a strong focus on outstanding audit recommendations, particularly those that are overdue or have previously been subject to extension.

Monitoring arrangements are now well-established and continue to be positively received by Internal Audit, who have noted the value of regular updates and improved transparency.

As at April 2026, there are 7 audit recommendations either outstanding or due for review. The Board has recently asked for a completion plan in relation to the outstanding 2024/25 audit recommendation – key internal controls around car park management. The Board continues to challenge progress and seek assurance from responsible officers that actions are being completed in a timely manner.

The number of recommendations will continue to fluctuate as new audits are completed. Internal Audit reporting remains the primary source of detailed performance information.

### **Policy and Strategy Review**

Of the 37 policies outstanding at the end of 2025, a further 6 policies have now completed the committee process and been updated on the Records Centre and 4 policies reviewed and review date updated, demonstrating continued progress in reducing the historic backlog.

In addition, of the 33 policies identified as due for review during 2026, 6 have already been updated and added to the Records Centre, reflecting a more proactive approach to managing the current review cycle.

The Board continues to prioritise:

- Early engagement with policy owners
- Clear sign-off routes through the appropriate governance channels
- Timely completion and recording within the Records Centre

Whilst steady progress is being made, the cyclical nature of policy reviews means that maintaining this momentum remains essential to ensure policies remain current and compliant.

### **Risk Management**

Risk management arrangements continue to strengthen, with the Board maintaining oversight of both corporate and service-level risks.

The Q4 Risk Management update has been completed, with Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) reviewing and refreshing the corporate risk profile.

Corporate risks are now routinely updated within the Management Information System, with over 90% completion rates achieved when prompts are issued. Service-level risk functionality is also now in place, although further work is required to ensure these are fully embedded across all services.

The review of the Risk Management Policy and Framework revealed that previous piecemeal updates had led to a somewhat unwieldy document that was difficult to follow. This meant it was unlikely to allow officers responsible for risk management to understand their responsibilities in a structured way and was unlikely to engender a positive risk management culture. A more fundamental route and branch review is currently nearing completion which also aims to reflect the comments of the Independent Person.

Mandatory risk management training is currently live on the councils e-learning system, Skillgate, and compliance monitoring is planned to ensure that all staff of team leader level and above complete the training.

Embedding risk management within service planning and strengthening links to corporate reporting will remain a key area of focus.

### **Contracts Register**

The Contracts Register continues to be monitored to ensure it remains accurate and up to date. Following recent detailed review work, the register is now considered to be in a good position.

However, the Board has noted increasing workload pressures, including a growing volume of data requests and additional complexity arising from external requirements such as Local Government Reorganisation.

Preparation is also underway for upcoming statutory changes, including those relating to the Public Procurement Act 2023.

The Board continues to highlight the importance of forward planning and early identification of pressures to ensure continued effectiveness.

### **Overall Position**

The Board continues to demonstrate improved oversight, challenge and coordination across its areas of responsibility. Clear progress has been made in strengthening governance, improving monitoring and engaging services.

Whilst the overall position is positive, continued focus is required to sustain progress, particularly in embedding risk management, managing policy cycles and responding to increasing legislative and operational demands.

The PPOB will continue to provide assurance through regular reporting to support the Council's performance and governance framework.