

## **A7. Progress Update on the 2021/22 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) Action Plan**

The committee considered a report by the Internal Audit, Risk, and Corporate Fraud Manager providing an update on progress with the actions which were set out within the 2021/22 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) Action Plan.

The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) formed part of the 2021/22 Annual Accounts, which had been considered by the Audit Committee in October 2022. The Committee had agreed to review progress on the action plan ahead of the publication of the 2022/23 AGS as part of the Annual Accounts.

An updated action plan, based on progress in March 2023 was appended to the report. There had been significant progress on most actions. However, there continued to be some areas which had limited assurance and/or required more detailed updates, including climate change, health and safety, and business continuity.

The committee noted that the review of Gifts and Hospitality Registers had yet to be completed and sought assurance that work was ongoing. The Director of Transformation, Communities and Corporate Services advised that work was nearing completion and that the revised documents would be submitted to the Executive for approval by the summer recess. Following a question on the Council's Equalities Mainstreaming report Ms Algie confirmed that it would be published by the statutory deadline and undertook to provide all members with a copy.

The committee sought clarification as to when the Internal Audit report on the review of transformational change would be completed given the Best Value Review had emphasised the need for the Council to accelerate the change. The Internal Audit Manager confirmed that the report was currently in draft and would be finalised within a couple of weeks. The outcome would be reported to committee in line with audit findings.

The committee noted that Gender Based Violence had been provided with a 'limited' assurance level and asked why this was so. Ms Algie stated that while work had been done around this area there was more to do, including putting support in place. Gender Based Violence had been added to the Risk Register in recognition of its importance and had been assigned a high risk rating. The Council was currently in the process of establishing an officer post to lead on this area.

### **Decision**

**The committee noted progress with planned actions and to seek further assurance from Chief Officers on progress with the 2021/22 Annual Governance Statement (AGS) Action Plan.**