

---

## Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting held in public on 20 November 2025

### Committee Chair's summary to Council

A summary of some key papers discussed at the meeting is as follows:

The Committee considered the current position regarding the strategic risks within the strategic risk register. The risk score for the strategic risk relating to resources being in place had increased in view of the significant increase in fitness to practise cases and legal costs and the decrease in international registration applications. The Committee discussed how the opportunities associated with artificial intelligence and the impact of delayed regulatory reform should be reflected and noted. These points would be given further consideration as part of the full review and refresh of the strategic risk register that will be undertaken alongside the launch of the new corporate strategy in 2026.

The Committee was pleased to receive the unified assurance framework in the public session to provide greater transparency. There had been little movement since the previous report received in September and the overall assurance rating remained as medium.

The annual feedback and complaints report showed a significant increase in the number of complaints received in 2024-25 compared to the previous year, which had been partly driven by an increase in international application volumes. The Committee noted that feedback was used to support organisational learning through training and process improvements. The Committee requested that future reports provide additional analysis of the themes for upheld complaints.

The Committee recommended the proposed changes to the speaking up (whistleblowing) policy for Council approval, subject to some minor amendments to provide greater clarity on the roles and responsibilities and on anonymity. The Committee endorsed the proposed actions and asked that the planned speaking up/whistleblowing training for managers was mandatory and that this training be prioritised, with a further update on actions to be provided to the Committee in March 2026.

The internal auditors reported on their most recently completed audit reports. These were in the areas of cyber security and health and safety. The cyber security review has resulted in a **moderate** level of assurance for both the design of the system of internal control and the effectiveness of these controls. The health and safety review has resulted in a **moderate** level of assurance for the design of the system of internal control and a **substantial** level of assurance for the effectiveness of these controls. The Committee emphasised the importance of ensuring the agreed deadlines for implementing recommendations were consistently met and the Chief Executive agreed to follow this up with the wider Executive Leadership team.

Lianne Patterson, Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee