

Meeting of:	Governance and Audit Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 23 February 2026
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Q3 2025/26 Progress Against External Regulatory Recommendations.
Purpose of Report:	To present Q3 2025/26 progress to date in addressing existing recommendations from our external regulators and to seek the removal of completed actions covering the period April 2025 to December 2025 from the SIB Insight Tracker.
Report Owner:	Tom Bowring, Director of Corporate Resources
Responsible Officer:	Tom Bowring, Director of Corporate Resources
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Members via the Joint Scrutiny Committee for Performance and Cabinet consider performance monitoring reports which incorporate Council progress against key external regulatory recommendations. The Strategic Insight Board (SIB) via its quarterly monitored Insight Tracker provides the Strategic Leadership Team with regular updates on progress with external regulatory actions. Governance and Audit Committee has regular oversight of progress with external regulatory recommendations throughout the year.
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report (and Strategic Insight Board (SIB) Insight Tracker appended to this report) outline our progress to date (December 2025) against all our existing external regulatory recommendations. • At Q3 2025/26, there are currently 28 actions on-going in the Insight Tracker. Positive progress has been made in responding to our regulatory improvement areas with 86% of actions (24) attributed a Green performance (RAG) status and 14% (4) an Amber status. • Of the 24 actions relating to local regulatory recommendations, 20 have been attributed a Green RAG status, 4 an Amber status. No local regulatory actions have been attributed a Red performance status. The 4 actions attributed an Amber performance status relate to the 'Welsh 	

Housing Quality Standard review including Council housing tenants.', 'Digital Strategy Review' and 'Estyn Review - Cardiff & Vale Adult Learning in the Community Partnership review'.

- There are currently 4 on-going actions in the SIB Insight Tracker relating to **national** regulatory recommendations of which all 4 have been attributed a Green RAG status.
- Following consideration by the Strategic Leadership Team, the SIB Regulatory Tracker Q3 2025/26 position is now being reported to Governance and Audit Committee and thereafter, Cabinet for final oversight. The Strategic Insight Board will respond to any comments and recommendations from the Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet following their consideration of Q3 progress.
- In line with its remit, Governance and Audit Committee is asked to review the Council's progress to date in addressing the recommendations made by our external regulators as outlined in the Q3 2025/26 SIB Insight Tracker (**Appendix 1 to this report**) including the removal of completed actions, with their views referred to Cabinet for consideration.

Recommendations

1. That Governance and Audit Committee review the Council's progress to date in addressing existing recommendations made by our external regulators as outlined in the appended Strategic Insight Board Insight Tracker for the period Q3 2025/26.
2. That Governance and Audit Committee refer any views and recommendations to Cabinet (including endorsing the removal of completed actions from the Strategic Insight Board Insight Tracker).

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To ensure the Council implements its regulatory recommendations and responds appropriately to the recommendations identified through the Audit Wales' programme of local reviews and national Local Government Studies.
2. To ensure that the Council's Strategic Insight Board Insight Tracker reflects the Council's most up to date position on its regulatory recommendations.

1. Background

- 1.1 As part of the on-going audit work by the Council's regulators, a series of recommendations are made as a result of audit studies (locally and nationally). The Council is required to ensure that these improvement areas are appropriately progressed, and the results reported.
- 1.2 The SIB Insight Tracker (**Appendix 1 to this report**) contains the most up to date record of all our regulatory recommendations and outlines progress to date against these. This is updated all year round to reflect the audit work programme, including all local reviews and national Local Government Studies to ensure actions are completed, reported and closed down in a timely manner.
- 1.3 The Insight Tracker also provides a snapshot of overall progress across the Council, a progress snapshot by Directorate, and identifies completed actions to be removed from the tracker as well as remedial actions to address areas where limited progress has been made.
- 1.4 This approach ensures progress remains under review enabling us to provide our regulators with an up-to-date position on all related work in line with our statutory duties.
- 1.5 The Governance and Audit Committee has a key role in maintaining oversight of the Council's response to issues raised by our external regulators and receive progress updates against all regulatory recommendations when initially received, and via a mid-year update report which is then supplemented with an annual review of progress as part of the Council's Annual Self-Assessment.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

Q3 SIB Insight Tracker 2025/26

- 2.1** The SIB Insight Tracker: Q3, 2025/26 (**Appendix 1 to this report**) outlines our progress against existing regulatory recommendations in response to local reviews and national Local Government Studies and audit work undertaken to date.
- 2.2** In line with corporate performance management arrangements, consideration is given by relevant council services to the findings contained within both local and national reports as they are published, and actions have been incorporated within the Council's SIB Insight Tracker throughout the year as appropriate. These actions are monitored quarterly by the Strategic Leadership Team and reported to Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet as work to address them progresses. The Strategic Insight Board considers the views and any recommendations from Cabinet and Governance and Audit Committee and responds to these as part of their consideration of SIB Insight tracker each quarter. Progress is also monitored by Audit Wales colleagues throughout the year as part of the Council's Annual Regulatory Plan.
- 2.3** At Q3 2025/26, positive progress has been made in responding to our regulatory improvement areas. Of the 28 actions on-going in the SIB Insight Tracker, 86% of actions (24) have been attributed a Green performance (RAG) status, and 14% (4) an Amber status.
- 2.4** Of the 24 actions relating to local regulatory recommendations, 20 have been attributed a Green RAG status, 4 an Amber status. No local regulatory actions have been attributed a Red performance status. The 4 local regulatory actions attributed an Amber performance status relate to the 'Welsh Housing Quality Standard review including Council housing tenants.', 'Digital Strategy Review' and 'Estyn Review - Cardiff & Vale Adult Learning in the Community Partnership review'.
- 2.5** There are currently 4 on-going actions in the SIB Insight Tracker relating to national regulatory recommendations of which all 4 have been attributed a Green RAG status.
- 2.6** During Q3, 5 actions have been completed, 4 of which relate to local regulatory recommendations and 1 relates to a national regulatory recommendation. Of the completed local regulatory actions, 3 relate to the 'Audit Wales - Arrangements for Commissioning Services' review and 1 relates to the 'Audit Wales- Corporate complaints – Supporting service improvement 'review. The 1 national regulatory action completed relates to the 'Equality Impact Assessments: more than a tick box exercise?' review.
- 2.7** It must be noted that whilst our response to recommendations have been addressed, many of these actions are long term in nature and work will remain ongoing in a business-as-usual capacity to further embed the required changes in response to audit recommendations.

2.8 Detailed below is a snapshot of overall progress to date against our 24 ongoing regulatory improvement priorities. This reflects the priority ratings ¹assigned to the Council’s response to all external regulatory audit recommendations (national and local) in order to assist in their implementation and progress monitoring.

National			
RAG status	Regulatory Audit Action Priority		
	H	M	L
	1	3	0
	0	0	0
	0	0	0
4			

Local			
RAG status	Regulatory Audit Action Priority		
	H	M	L
	14	5	1
	1	2	1
	0	0	0
24			

2.9 Of the 24 **local** Regulatory actions, 15 have been assigned a high priority rating with 14 of these attributed a Green RAG status and 1 an Amber RAG status. 7 have been assigned a medium priority rating, with 5 of these actions attributed a Green RAG status and 2 an Amber RAG status. There are 2 low priority rated local regulatory actions, 1 has been attributed a Green RAG status and 1 an Amber RAG status.

2.10 Of the 4 **national** regulatory actions, 1 action is rated high priority and has been attributed a Green RAG status and all 3 medium priority rated national regulatory actions have been attributed a Green RAG status. There are no national regulatory actions attributed a low priority status.

2.11 Following consideration by the Strategic Leadership Team, the SIB Regulatory Tracker Q3 2025/26 position is now being reported to Governance and Audit Committee and thereafter, Cabinet for final oversight. The Strategic Insight Board will respond to any comments and recommendations from the Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet following their consideration of Q3 progress.

2.12 In line with its remit, Governance and Audit Committee is asked to review the Council’s progress to date in addressing the recommendations made by our external regulators as outlined in the Q3 2025/26 SIB Insight Tracker (**Appendix 1**) including the removal of completed actions, with their views referred to Cabinet for consideration.

¹ The priority ratings of High, Medium or Low (as described in the appended Strategic Board Insight Tracker) are based on assessment of the risks that the recommendations pose to the Council. For example, assigning a priority rating of ‘High’ requires immediate management response/action to mitigate or reduce the level of risk exposure (political and legislative, resources, service delivery & well-being and reputational) to the Council. Identified management response/actions should be implemented as soon as possible and within 1 year of agreeing the recommendation(s). ‘Medium’ priority rated recommendations require a management response/ action to be implemented within the short term (1-2 years), while recommendations assigned a ‘Low’ priority require a response within 1-3 years.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** Performance Management is an intrinsic part of corporate governance and integrated business planning which underpins the delivery of the Council's Well-being Objectives and associated commitments in its Corporate Plan and the Annual Statement. The Council's Annual Performance Calendar is our key means of demonstrating how we are meeting the new performance requirements whilst contributing to the national well-being goals.
- 3.2** External Regulation is an important vehicle for driving continuous improvement across our services. Progressing the improvement areas identified by our regulators not only enables us to demonstrate our commitment to continuous service improvement but also contributes to further strengthening our impact on the national well-being goals through the achievement of our well-being objectives.
- 3.3** The areas of improvement identified by our external regulators and the associated action plans produced by officers have been developed with the five ways of working in mind. The focus of these is on developing innovative ways of working that better integrate services, whilst enabling us to work more collaboratively with our partners and citizens to involve them in improving service delivery. These improvement actions also focus on preventative actions that will enable us to sustain and future proof our services into the longer term.
- 3.4** All external regulatory recommendations are reflected in the Council's Strategic Insight Board Insight tracker and progress monitored regularly to ensure they are addressed.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** Our Corporate Plan and associated enabling strategies all have regard to the effects of climate change and nature implications and inform decisions around resource use that help to mitigate climate change and nature implications in the use of those resources.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** There are no additional budgetary implications directly arising from this report, although failure to progress the improvement areas outlined in the report could have a negative impact on any future external regulatory assessments of the Council which could in turn put funding opportunities at risk.

Employment

- 5.2** There are no direct workforce related implications associated with this report. However, there are a number of issues contained within the report that if not effectively managed have the potential to impact on our staff establishment and performance overall. This may in turn impact adversely on progressing our improvement areas and achievement of our well-being Objectives.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.3** There are no implications directly arising from this report, although failure to progress the relevant improvement areas outlined in the report could have a negative impact on any future external regulatory assessments and could result in a special inspection by the Auditor General for Wales if deemed that the Council is not meeting the performance requirements as a result.
- 5.4** The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG) and the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (LG&E) require the Council to publish annual Well-being Objectives, keep performance under review and consult and report on our performance through an annual self-assessment relating to the previous financial year.
- 5.5** The Auditor General for Wales is statutorily required under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, to examine public bodies to assess the extent to which they have acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when setting their well-being objectives and taking steps to meet them.
- 5.6** Under the LG&E Act, a special inspection of the Council may be undertaken if the Auditor General for Wales considers that the Council is not, or may not be meeting, the performance requirements. This inspection is to assess the extent to which the Council is meeting the performance requirements, in exercising its functions effectively; using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively; and in ensuring its governance is effective for securing the above.

6. Background Papers

N/A

Quarter 3 (1st April 2025 - 31st December 2025) 2025/26 SIB Insight Tracker Progress Snapshot

Snapshot of progress at Q3 against our ongoing regulatory improvement areas

National Recs/ PFIs	RAG status	Local Recs/ PFIs	RAG status	All Regulatory Recs/ PFIs	RAG status
4		20		24	
0		4		4	
0		0		0	
4		24		28	

Snapshot of progress at Q3 by Regulatory Audit Action Priority

National				Local			
RAG status	Regulatory Audit Action Priority Action			RAG status	Regulatory Audit Action Priority Action		
	H	M	L		H	M	L
	1	3	0		14	5	1
	0	0	0		1	2	1
	0	0	0		0	0	0
	4				24		

Priority	Description
High	Management response/ action is considered imperative to ensure that the Council is not exposed to high risks (Political and Legislative, Resources, Service Delivery & Well-being and Reputational). Action to be implemented as soon as possible (within 1 year).
Medium	Action/ management response is considered necessary to avoid exposure to considerable risks (Political and Legislative, Resources, Service Delivery & Well-being and Reputational). Action to be implemented within the short term (within 1-2 years).
Low	Management response/ action is considered desirable or good practice and would result in enhanced control, good governance and better value for money (Political and Legislative, Resources, Service Delivery & Well-being and Reputational) Action to be implemented within the short to medium term (within 1-3 years).

Local Regulatory Actions										
Reference	Report	Responsible Officer	Regulatory Recommendation	Priority (H/M/L)	Update	Status	Target Date	Date of Last Update	Scrutiny Committee	Rationale for Revised Target Date
LR17	Audit Wales- Welsh Housing Quality Standard review including Council housing tenants	Andrew Treweek	P1 – The Council should evaluate how effective the process is for tenants to report housing repairs via the Customer Contact Centre (Call One Vale)	L	Evaluation has identified an on-line resource would assist tenant's in directly reporting and booking appointments, without calling C1V. A solution is being delivered through the Housing software update. The main housing software system has been implemented and work is now beginning on planning the implementation of phase three which opens up the tenant portal for on-line self-reporting. The project plan for implementation of the tenant portal is likely to be quarter 3 of 2026/7.	Amber	Jun-26	Jan-26	PC	Work on the core housing software system has now been completed, and planning is underway for the implementation of the software that will allow tenants to self-serve online. This phase is expected to take approximately three to four months, depending on the availability of the supplier's consultants.
LR45	Audit Wales- Application of the sustainable development principle in service areas – Vale of Glamorgan Council	Tom Bowring	The Council should develop its project management toolkit to ensure that those documents help officers to apply the sustainable development principle from the outset.	H	The revised Project Management Toolkit is now being finalised for deployment. In addition to updated artefacts and a dedicated SharePoint site to support project managers in successful delivery, the toolkit includes guidance to ensure that sustainable principles are embedded throughout project design. During development, we broadened the scope beyond the original plan to incorporate support for colleagues in preparing robust business cases that clearly justify investment decisions. We have also engaged with the Major Projects team, who intend to contribute content relating to traditional PRINCE2 style deliverables. As these project types are led specifically by that team, we have agreed to append their content at a later stage. Our primary focus for this release has been on projects of a more transformational nature, where Discovery and Agile methodologies are most appropriate.	Green	Mar-26	Jan-26	RC	
LR53	Audit Wales- Digital Strategy Review	Nicki Johns	R4: To help the Council monitor the value for money of its digital strategy it should: - identify any savings it is aiming to make from the strategy. - ensure that performance information used to monitor its digital strategy enables it to fully understand the impact of the Council's investment in digital.	H	We continue to face and explore how to resolve the challenge of how we capture the value of deliverables where our colleagues have used digital capabilities from, as an example, Microsoft 365 tools. The Digital team cannot alone deliver the digitalisation of the organisation and it is important that we facilitate the use of self-service tools which will be delivering business efficiency that we may not be aware of. As an example, a team may start to use Microsoft Forms to capture information quickly and easily, however we will not have visibility. Where we deliver a Digital project, there is a dashboard to identify savings, efficiencies or risk mitigations that we are now able to capture and report against. This work has not progressed at the pace we anticipated, as a significant amount of our time this year has been dedicated to meeting the Digital team's savings requirement. Consequently, we have had less capacity to focus on developing a method for recording savings for the wider organisation.	Amber	Jul-26	Jan-26	RC	This work remains ongoing.
LR66	Audit Wales- Use of Performance Information: Service User Perspective and Outcomes Review - Vale of Glamorgan Council	Tom Bowring/ Helen Moses	R2: Outcomes information - The Council should strengthen the information provided to senior leaders to help them evaluate whether the Council is delivering its objectives and intended outcomes.	H	A new approach was taken for the Q2 report which was more in line with the Annual Self-Assessment and included sections on use of resources and governance and also included statements from each Director covering challenges, successes etc. In addition a Power Bi dashboard has been developed and the new style report and dashboard have been discussed at SLT and Insight Board and were presented to Joint Performance Committee in December. This new approach enables a greater focus on outcomes, engagement information and provides a more holistic approach.	Green	Jul-26	Jan-26	RC	Improved information will be included in the Annual Self Assessment which will be considered by members in the summer.
LR72	Panel Performance Assessment November 2024	Tom Bowring	R1: Planning for Place: The Council would benefit from developing and effectively communicating a narrative that articulates a positive vision for the future, which is relatable to multiple audiences and has a call to action. In doing so it could be a catalyst for change for the Vale of Glamorgan as a County, drawing together partners, stakeholders, the business sector, and communities.	H	Work continues to promote Vale 2030 and associated activity and this is captured in the Q2 performance report. External and internal communications ensure there is a line of sight back to Vale 2030 to emphasise how different activities link back to commitments in Vale 2030. The PSB in December focused on a range of activities that linked to addressing inequalities and support for more vulnerable people which connects back to Vale 2030 and partners agreed to expand the Your Place work in response to WIMD 2025.	Green	Mar-26	Jan-26	RC	
LR73	Panel Performance Assessment November 2024	Tom Bowring	R2: Signalling Change: The Council should consider how it signals and amplifies its changing approach both within the organisation and across the Vale.	H	A new Vale 2030 Communications Strategy is close to completion. The new strategy, which has already been discussed at SLT and business cabinet, is built around five key principles and will help better focus work on signalling change across the organisation.	Green	Mar-26	Jan-26	RC	
LR74	Panel Performance Assessment November 2024	Tom Bowring	R3: Building on existing, strong partnerships: • Recognising the democratic convening role that the Council has in leading partnerships, whilst recognising when to lead and when to support wider partnerships to take the lead in the provision of services. • Taking the opportunity to create the time and space to strategically assess and review the partnership landscape, strengthening relationships and assessing where resource and energy is best spent for the wider benefit of the place in order to make the biggest difference. • Working with stakeholders on getting the "brilliant basics" right that reflects the needs of the local community. • Leverage the collective capacity of the Vale of Glamorgan and continue to build innovative joint working arrangements with neighbouring Councils	M	The partnership mapping work is currently being brought together for consideration by the Strategic Partnership Group in January. Discussions will also take place regarding the implications of WIMD 2025 on partnership activity. To assist with our insight into the work of different partnerships sections on partnership working have been included in the Directorate Plans for 2026/27 and the Directorate Self-Assessment 2025/26 and a section on partnership working was also included in the Q2 performance report illustration partnership opportunities and impact.	Green	Mar-26	Jan-26	RC	
LR75	Panel Performance Assessment November 2024	Tom Bowring	R4: Governance and using resource effectively • Reviewing and revising the cycle of formal democratic meetings and formal reporting requirements, exploring ways to better engage members in more proactive and cross chamber collaboration – in both formal and informal ways including reviewing the effectiveness of online meetings. • Reviewing the balance between the internal corporate demands placed on members and their role as representatives of their constituents to deliver the Council's vision of place. • Using the strong local politics as a force for good, whilst ensuring civility in public life is promoted and kept front and centre to encourage respectful and constructive debate including online and in-person meetings. • Enhancing the effectiveness of the Council's scrutiny arrangements, specifically meetings, by assessing current practices to identify opportunities for improvement to make them more effective.	M	In Quarter 3, work has continued in reviewing the Council's Democratic and Governance arrangements, building upon work previously undertaken, which will continue for the upcoming year. During the Quarter, following the agreement of Reshaping Scrutiny (changes to Scrutiny Committee's size, structures and ways of working, each Committee held their next rounds of formal meetings and made progress on their forward work programmes, including Task and Finish topics. All Committees are undertaking their first round of Task and Finish, with a view for this to be complete Q4. Alongside this, the Council has undertaken its second joint performance Scrutiny session in December, reviewing the Council's Performance in Quarter Two. A range of enabling actions to support these changes were also undertaken, including: *changes to the way information only items are shared with Members *A revised Recommendations Tracker and supporting guidance for Members and Officers was also developed. *The Scrutiny Chair and Vice-Chairs Group was also reconvened with and have started to consider elements such as learning from other Council's, reviewing the Scrutiny changes, reflective practices, and ways of working including meeting arrangements. *The launching of a dedicated Scrutiny hub on the Member Net site to support Members in their role *Work has also commenced to explore how to diversify voices in decision making, including sessions held with Youth Services and Tenant representatives to develop relationships and an understanding of how they can become more involved in the Council's democratic processes *A refresh of the Council's branding and web content relating to meetings, including developing a visual identity across social media channels to promote and engage with residents *Digitisation of forms to support Members of the public in submitting topics for consideration Alongside reviewing the Scrutiny function, work has been undertaken to review the effectiveness of current communication channels between Officers and Members. A number of workstreams have continue to be delivered within the Quarter, including:	Green	Apr-27	Jan-26	RC	The target date requires amendment as Audit Wales will not commence their review of Scrutiny arrangements until March 2026, with the findings expected in May/June 2026. Given this timeline, additional time is needed to consider the outcomes, implement any required changes, and ensure these are fully embedded. The proposed target of April 2027, aligns with the end of the current electoral cycle. Although changes will be introduced during the 2025/26 municipal year, a further period of consolidation and embedding will be necessary throughout 2026/27 to ensure the new arrangements are effective and robust ahead of the incoming Member cohort in May 2027.
LR/55	Estyn Review - Cardiff & Vale Adult Learning in the Community Partnership review (ACL)	Trevor Baker/Mark Davies	R1 - Evaluate learners' progression into, through and on from the provision	M	Strategic partnership is meeting in October to discuss. This is an action for all Adult Community Learning Partnerships in Wales	Amber	Mar-27	Jan-26	LW	Action remains a priority for Estyn and work to influence how this is recorded and reported is under development at National level by MEDR
LR56	Estyn Review - Cardiff & Vale Adult Learning in the Community Partnership review	Trevor Baker/Mark Davies	R2 - Improve the extent to which learners contribute to self-evaluation and the work of the partnership	M	Discussion at National level via MEDR (the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research in Wales) about the creation of a Learner Engagement framework for all post 16 will direct how learners will/can contribute to the running and self evaluation of partnerships. Once launched this will be discussed and implemented in Strategic partnership level. The learner Involvement group have completed a learner engagement strategy that has been submitted to the Strategy Group for approval.	Amber	Mar-27	Jan-26	LW	Action remains a priority for Estyn and work to influence how this is recorded and reported is under development at National level by MEDR

Reference	Report	Responsible Officer	Regulatory Recommendation	Priority (H/M/L)	Update	Status	Target Date	Date of Last Update	Scrutiny Committee	Rationale for Revised Target Date
LR57	Estyn Review - Cardiff & Vale Adult Learning in the Community Partnership review	Trevor Baker/Mark Davies	R3 - Explore opportunities to increase provision or access to provision through the medium of Welsh	M	A pilot programme of Welsh medium courses for parents/carers was offered to all local Welsh medium schools. Unfortunately, no schools went forward with our offer although there was some interest from parents in Ysgol St Baruc. Two new Welsh - medium courses are planned to start in January in Palmerston Centre. These are Welsh Medium Digital skills and Welsh Medium Art and Crafts. The courses have been promoted via Menter Y Fro and Learn Welsh the Vale, posters have also been sent out to local Welsh medium schools to be promoted to parents. If learners enrol the courses will run.	Green	Mar-27	Jan-26	LW	Action remains a priority for Estyn and work to develop this continues on a regional footprint.
LR79 (a)	Audit Wales- Corporate complaints – Supporting service improvement	James Langridge-Thomas	R1 To strengthen complaints handling and support the implementation of the Council's new policy, the Council should: 1.1 Undertake an equalities impact assessment for the updated complaints policy and, if necessary, update the policy to ensure the Council meets its obligations under the public sector equalities duty	H	Equalities Impact Assessment for the revised Corporate Concerns and Complaints Policy is underway and any changes or additions required as a result will be made.	Green	Mar-27	Jan-26	RC	Although work has begun and the key components are in place, additional time is needed to complete the EIA meaningfully due to recent changes in responsibilities.
LR79 (b)	Audit Wales- Corporate complaints – Supporting service improvement	Helen Moses / James Langridge-Thomas	1.2 develop an implementation plan for the updated complaints policy that includes strategic objectives, and key performance indicators, and where relevant, integrating this into the annual directorate planning process.	H	New performance indicators have been introduced which will form part of engagement and user perspective insights considered as part of the Directorate and the Council's Annual Self-Assessment. These will look in detail at Directorate level performance in relation to complaints handling and resolution including Public Services Ombudsman Wales complaints. These indicators will also be subject to regular scrutiny by SLT colleagues to ensure consistent and continued improvements in the Council's overall approach to complaints handling. Progress against these PIs will also be reflected in the Q2 and Q4 performance reports to the Joint Performance Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet with G&AC having oversight of the Council's performance on complaints handling.	Green	Sep-26	Jan-26	RC	
LR79 (c)	Audit Wales- Corporate complaints – Supporting service improvement	James Langridge-Thomas	1.3 integrate key elements of the Council's Policy on Unacceptable Actions by Citizens and the Council's social media policy, so complaints investigators can deal with vexatious and malicious complaints and social media commentary quickly and consistently	H	Policies being reviewed with additional content added to staff guidance for information and clarity to ensure that complaint investigators are aware of behaviours that may be defined as unacceptable and the options available to them to address these through the Unacceptable Actions by Citizens Policy.	Green	Mar-27	Jan-26	RC	Whilst the changes required to meet this recommendation are relatively minor, the timeline needs to be extended to allow sufficient time to update the documents, complete the formal approval process, and communicate the changes to staff.
LR80	Audit Wales- Corporate complaints – Supporting service improvement	Tony Curliss	R2 - The Council should improve the functionality of its IT system for complaints handling by: 2.1 configuring the system to recognise where complaints have been reassigned to a new owner, to ensure all complaints are handled in a timely way	L	Functionality has been added to allow reassignment of complaints between departments and individual investigators receive an email notification when a complaint is assigned to them	Green	Mar-26	Jan-26	RC	
LR81	Audit Wales- Corporate complaints – Supporting service improvement	James Langridge-Thomas	R3 The Council should improve the impact of staff training on complaints by: ensuring all complaints handlers are suitably trained and kept updated on changes to the complaints system, processes and policy	H	A review of training and supporting resources available to staff will be undertaken to ensure that complaints are investigated consistently, well and on time. This review will include research in relation to best practice, staff consultation and liaison with the Public Sector Ombudsman for Wales	Green	Dec-26	Jan-26	RC	
LR82 (a)	Audit Wales- Corporate complaints – Supporting service improvement	James Langridge-Thomas	R4 The Council should improve its monitoring and learning from complaints by: 4.1 improving the annual report on complaints to clarify learning and service improvements as a result of complaints	H	The Complaints Team is working with investigators across the council to improve how service have been improved as a result of individual complaints and cumulative complaints data. Recommendations for change are expected in Q2 2026/27.	Green	Nov-26	Jan-26	RC	
LR82 (b)	Audit Wales- Corporate complaints – Supporting service improvement	James Langridge-Thomas	4.2 including council benchmarking data in the Annual Complaints report as well as PSOW data to maximise the opportunity to share best practice with members of the Governance and Audit Committee and improve complaints handling .	H	This data will be included in the Annual Complaints Report for 2025/26 onwards.	Green	Nov-26	Jan-26	RC	
LR83	Audit Wales- School Balances	Elizabeth Jones	R1 To enable greater oversight of the impact of its actions the Council should: 1.1 Strengthen corporate oversight of all school recovery activity as part of one coherent programme of work. 1.2 Set realistic milestones and targets to improve monitoring and evaluation of impact.	H	Schools with exceptional deficits have met with the Leader of the Council, Head of Finance/151, Chief Executive, Director of Education and Cabinet Member regarding deficits and these will be continuing as a mechanism for monitoring recovery plans.	Green	Sep-26	Jan-26	SW	As Governing Bodies are not due to finalise budgets and recovery plans before June, feedback on these actions will not be available until September at the earliest.
LR84	Audit Wales- School Balances	Elizabeth Jones	R2 To enable robust support and challenge the Council should: 2.1 Require all schools in deficit to submit a robust recovery plan in line with the Finance Scheme for Schools 2025. 2.2 Clarify its criteria for when it will use its range of statutory powers as described in the Finance Scheme for Schools 2025 for schools that are unable to set a robust recovery plan. 2.3 Assess and set out in both its budget monitoring and risk management reports the significance of school deficits within the context of the wider financial position of the Council with consistent messaging to improve awareness and understanding.	H	All schools have submitted recovery plans and these continue to be developed and challenged where appropriate.	Green	Sep-26	Jan-26	SW	As Governing Bodies are not due to finalise budgets and recovery plans before June, feedback on these actions will not be available until September at the earliest.
LR85	Audit Wales- School Balances	Elizabeth Jones	R3 To identify any additional actions that it could take to address deficits; the Council should review alternative approaches adopted by other Councils.	H	Corporate transformation programmes including centralised procurement are well underway and delivering savings. Working group with neighbouring authorities have been meeting regularly and sharing insight, leading to addition support mechanisms and savings for schools via specialist advisors	Green	Sep-26	Jan-26	SW	As Governing Bodies are not due to finalise budgets and recovery plans before June, feedback on these actions will not be available until September at the earliest.
LR86	Audit Wales- Temporary Accommodation	Mark Lawrence	R1 Value for Money We found that councils are not able to demonstrate that they are securing value for money in their temporary accommodation provision. To address this councils should: • Ensure the full range of approaches and options for temporary accommodation provision are considered; and • Set out how they will assess and monitor the overall value for money of temporary accommodation provision, including: - the intended outcomes; and - the information they will use to assess the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of their temporary accommodation provision.	H	Market pressures continue to limit the availability of suitable accommodation, leaving the council with reduced leverage in negotiations. The usual balance between supply and demand has shifted significantly, resulting in situations where necessity drives procurement decisions. While large scale solutions have been investigated, high capital costs have restricted viable options. Overall, market conditions remain challenging, and meaningful stabilisation is not yet anticipated.	Green	Mar-27	Jan-26	LW	Market forces provide limited opportunities for cost comparisons. Necessity drives procurement via limited options.

Reference	Report	Responsible Officer	Regulatory Recommendation	Priority (H/M/L)	Update	Status	Target Date	Date of Last Update	Scrutiny Committee	Rationale for Revised Target Date
LR87	Audit Wales- Temporary Accommodation	Mark Lawrence	<p>R2 Planning for Prevention</p> <p>We found that while all councils have Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans in place, these are of variable quality. To effectively plan to prevent homelessness councils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure they use relevant data to make the best possible estimate of future demand for homelessness services; • include a range of primary, secondary and tertiary approaches in their plans, with the emphasis on primary prevention where possible; • model the impact of policy changes on the skills and capacity needed in their workforce; • identify the workforce they will need to address demand for temporary accommodation in the future; and • set out how they will assess and monitor the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of their approach to preventing and reducing demand for temporary accommodation. 	M	Demand patterns have shifted considerably since the original Rapid Rehousing Plans were developed. Work on prevention remains ongoing and aligned with current legislative requirements. While improving data collection continues to be a priority for producing reliable forecasts, staff retention challenges have disrupted continuity in training delivery. Anticipated legislative reforms have led to extensive discussions around potential pre-emptive adjustments. We awaited May 7th Senedd elections for indications of intent and direction indicators.	Green	Mar-27	Jan-26	LW	With staffing at only 50%, the service is operating at crisis capacity. Demand continues to far exceed available resources, and although data is routinely collected and analysed, persistent supply and demand imbalances limit the accuracy of any forecasting. A revised target date is therefore required to reflect current operational constraints.
LR88	Audit Wales- Temporary Accommodation	Mark Lawrence	<p>R3 Partnership Working</p> <p>We found that partnership working in preventing homelessness is often not effective. To improve this councils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with their partners to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identify existing respective roles and responsibilities; - agree how to address gaps in and/or duplication of services; • regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their partnership working for homelessness prevention. 	M	The council continues to work closely with partner organisations through established communication channels, including regular meetings with common housing register partners. Internally, we collaborate with various departments to explore potential options and resources. However, efforts to identify new resources have been less successful than hoped, due to capacity challenges.	Green	Mar-27	Jan-26	LW	The target date has been extended to March 2027 to reflect the slower-than-anticipated progress in identifying new housing resources. Although partnership working remains strong and communication channels are well established, additional time is required to secure viable opportunities. The revised date provides a more realistic timeframe that aligns with current performance, capacity constraints, and expected progress.

National Regulatory Actions

Reference	Report	Responsible Officer	Regulatory Recommendation	Priority (H/M/L)	Update	Status	Target Date	Date of Last Update	Scrutiny Committee	Rationale for Revised target Date
NR7	Local Government Services to Rural Communities	Tom Bowring	R4- To help sustain rural communities, public services need to act differently in the future. We recommend councils do more to develop community resilience and self-help by: - working with relevant bodies such as the Wales Cooperative Centre to support social enterprise and more collaborative business models; - providing tailored community outreach for those who face multiple barriers to accessing public services and work; - enhancing and recognising the role of town and community councils by capitalising on their local knowledge and supporting them to do more; -encouraging a more integrated approach to service delivery in rural areas by establishing pan-public service community hubs, networks of expertise, and clusters of advice and prevention services; - enabling local action by supporting community asset transfer identifying which assets are suitable to transfer, and having the right systems in place to make things happen; and - improving community-based leadership by developing networks of interest, training and coaching, and encouraging volunteering.	M	Work to progress the social enterprise aspect of this work is continuing with the work underpinned by the Cwmpas commission last year. Services to support people in rural areas who are experiencing poverty are being supported, for example through the Wick Food Farmacy, Llantwit Major More than Food Hub and the outreach into St Athan. More strategic work is commencing regarding the relationship with town councils under Reshaping as well as via the Placemaking Plans which include references to community hubs. During the quarter, the latest WIMD data was released which indicated areas of the rural Vale suffer disproportionately in terms of access to services and this will now inform work going forward.	Green	Mar-26	Jan-26	CP&R	Further work forms part of the PSBs work programme.
NR8	Local Government Services to Rural Communities	Phil Chapell Penny Lauder	R1 - Local authorities need to do more to make CATs (Community Asset Transfers) simpler and more appealing, help build the capacity of community and town councils, give them more guidance in raising finance, and look to support other community development models such as social enterprises the support social value and citizen involvement. In addition, we recommend that local authorities monitor and publish CAT numbers and measure the social impact of CATs.	M	CAT Role now appointed and will be working with the Assets Board to encourage asset transfers across the board. Funding is also associated with this role and work is underway to identify assets for investment.	Green	Mar-26	Jan-26	CP&R	This work remains ongoing.
NR9	Local Government Services to Rural Communities	Phil Chapell Penny Lauder	R2 - Local authorities have significant scope to provide better and more visible help and support before, during, and after the community asset transfer process. We conclude that there is considerable scope to improve the business planning, preparation, and aftercare for community asset transfer. We recommend that local authorities: - identify community assets transfer's role in establishing community hubs, networks of expertise and clusters of advice and prevention services; - work with town and community councils to develop their ability to take on more CATs; - identify which assets are suitable to transfer, and clarify what the authority needs to do to enable their transfer; - ensure their CAT policy adequately covers aftercare, long term support, post transfer support, signposting access to finance, and sharing the learning about works well; and - support community-based leadership by developing networks of interest, training and coaching, and encouraging volunteering.	M	Following appointment of dedicated officer, work has commenced on prioritisation and identifying the partners within the community.	Green	Mar-26	Jan-26	CP&R	This work remains ongoing.
NR33	'Time for Change' – Poverty in Wales	Tom Bowring	R7 Streamlining and improving application and information services for people in poverty • We recommend that councils: establish corporate data standards and coding that all services use for their core data; undertake an audit to determine what data is held by services and identify any duplicated records and information requests; create a central integrated customer account as a gateway to services; undertake a data audit to provide refresher training to service managers to ensure they know when and what data they can and cannot share; and review and update data sharing protocols to ensure they support services to deliver their data sharing responsibilities.	H	This work is being progressed by a cross-directorate group working with Citizens Advice to identify and map the different types of provision being offered by the Council both centrally and via outreach. A recent workshop with council tax has also highlighted opportunities to streamline the sharing of data and exploring the perceived and actual parameters that may limit this, with the potential to remove some barriers. Work is also underway in line with the Welsh Benefits Charter to streamline application processes, building on previous work in this area, and exploring opportunities to make use of cross-departmental data. Some issues have been identified with the use of DWP data and will be progressed in the coming months.	Green	Mar-26	Jan-26	CP&R/ L&C/ H&SC	This work remains ongoing.

Completed Local Regulatory Actions										
Reference	Report	Responsible Officer	Regulatory Recommendation	Update	Priority (H/M/L)	Status	Target Date	Date of Last Update	Scrutiny Committee	
LR79	Audit Wales- Urgent & Emergency Care: Flow out of hospital Cardiff & Vale Region	Lance Carver/ Jason Bennett	R1 - To help inform discussions around discharge, the local authorities should capture the risks associated with social care capacity on the provision of services at a local and regional level, including the impact on patient flow out of hospital.	A monthly "check point" data report is submitted to Welsh government which includes a risk rating for both assessment and care capacity.	H	Green - Completed and ongoing	Apr-25	Aug-25	LW	
LR80	Audit Wales- Urgent & Emergency Care: Flow out of hospital Cardiff & Vale Region	Lance Carver/ Jason Bennett	R2 - The Health Board, working with local authorities, should update its discharge policy and associated policies, including the choice of accommodation policy, to provide clarity to all staff on how the discharge planning process should work across the region. This should be based on the national guidance issued in December 2023, set out clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and expectations, and reflect the Discharge to Recover then Assess model. The process for updating the policy should include patients and carers.	National policy was updated and the UHB have updated their policy accordingly including patient information leaflets and staff information.	H	Green - Completed and ongoing	Apr-25	Aug-25	LW	
LR81	Audit Wales- Urgent & Emergency Care: Flow out of hospital Cardiff & Vale Region	Lance Carver/ Jason Bennett	R5 - The Health Board, in partnership with its local authorities, should ensure it has the necessary arrangements in place to embed and deliver a seven-day working week approach to hospital discharge to minimise unnecessary stays in hospital.	The UHB is yet to fully adopt a full system of 7 day working for consultants, Allied Health professionals, and their discharge team. Local Authority arranged care providers and Vale Community Resource Service all provide care 365 days a year . Emergency duty team provide out of hours social work cover. No evidence to suggest increasing social work presence on weekends would increase discharges from hospital at this time. No additional funding or resources to enable this have been made available. Suggest this action is complete pending review once UHB have embedded the approach.	H	Green - Completed and ongoing	Apr-25	Aug-25	LW	
LR82	Audit Wales- Urgent & Emergency Care: Flow out of hospital Cardiff & Vale Region	Lance Carver/ Jason Bennett	R7 -To help inform decision-making and discussions, the Health Board and local authorities should ensure that the Regional Partnership Board has routine access to key performance indicators relevant to effective and timely flow out of hospital, including urgent and emergency care performance within the Health Board and waiting lists for social services and care packages.	Already in place and has been for a long time, in addition all regions have a monthly meeting with Welsh Government to discuss Pathways of Care data.	H	Green - Completed and ongoing	Apr-25	Aug-25	LW	
LR76	Audit Wales- Arrangements for Commissioning Services	Matt Bowmer	R1 - To enable the Council to assess and report on value for money of commissioned services, it should ensure that: 1.1 comprehensive options appraisals are routinely undertaken when commissioning services and these include each option's full costs and benefits; 1.2 commissioning decisions: • are supported by appropriate records; • consider short, medium and long-term factors; • are informed by the views of those impacted by the commissioned service; and • include an assessment of risk 1.3 contract monitoring routinely assesses and monitors value for money.	The Audit Wales report has been presented to the Governance & Audit Committee and subsequently to SLT. A cross organisation discussion of the recommendations took place, followed by communication to all Chief Officers emphasising: the need for comprehensive options appraisal across all commissioned activity; thorough documentation and consideration of long-term impacts; incorporation of service user views; and consistent risk assessments and value for money monitoring. Work remains ongoing to embed the above practices consistently across all relevant commissioning activity to enable a council-wide overview of value for money for its commissioned services.	H	Green- Complete and ongoing	Jun-26	Jan-26	RC	
LR77	Audit Wales- Arrangements for Commissioning Services	Matt Bowmer	R2 - To avoid duplication and identify opportunities to secure multiple benefits, the council should take account of its own well-being objectives, partners' well-being objectives and the national well-being goals when commissioning services.	Commissioning guidance/ templates have been updated to ensure alignment with the Council's well being objectives, partner organisations' objectives, and national well being goals. Staff have been reminded to complete all relevant sections in Cabinet and Committee reporting templates to avoid duplication and maximise opportunities for shared outcomes. Work remains ongoing to embed the above practices.	H	Green- Complete and ongoing	Jun-26	Jan-26	RC	
LR78	Audit Wales- Arrangements for Commissioning Services	Matt Bowmer	R3 - To ensure that the Council identifies opportunities to improve value for money and outcomes it should: 3.1 routinely and consistently evaluate the effectiveness of its commissioning arrangements across the organisation; and 3.2 share learning from commissioning activity across the Council.	Commissioning and contract management are included in the 2025/26 Annual Audit Plan, with a commitment to a rolling annual review. This will support systematic evaluation of commissioning effectiveness and embed learning across the organisation.	H	Green- Complete and ongoing	Jul-26	Jan-26	RC	
LR79 (d)	Audit Wales- Corporate complaints – Supporting service improvement	Rob Jones	1.4 improve signposting on how to make a complaint, to help the public to find this information more easily	The complaints page has been reviewed to ensure all content is up to date. Changes have been made to make key information more accessible. Metadata and SEO have been reviewed to ensure page is returned in both site and google search results.	H	Green- Complete	Jan-26	Jan-26	RC	

Completed National Regulatory Actions									
Reference	Report	Responsible Officer	Regulatory Recommendation	Update	Priority (H/M/L)	Status	Target Date	Date of Last Update	Scrutiny Committee
NR28	Audit Wales: Equality Impact Assessments (EIA): more than a tick box exercise?	Tom Bowring	Reviewing public bodies' current approach for conducting EIAs - R4 While there are examples of good practice related to distinct stages of the EIA process, all public bodies have lessons to learn about their overall approach. Public bodies should review their overall approach to EIAs considering the findings of this report and the detailed guidance available from the EHRC and the Practice Hub. We recognise that developments in response to our other recommendations and the Welsh Government's review of the PSED Wales specific regulations may have implications for current guidance in due course.	New digital EIA process is now live. New guidance has been produced to support colleagues in using this. The new digital form will also soon link to the Let's Talk results dashboard. Work will remain ongoing to embed these practices.	H	Green-Complete	Mar-26	Jan-26	L&C