Meeting of:	**GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE**
Date of Meeting:	**24 APRIL 2025**
Report Title:	**REGULATORY TRACKER**
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	**CHIEF OFFICER - LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES, HR AND CORPORATE POLICY**
Responsible Officer:	**ALEX RAWLIN POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER**
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	**The regulatory tracker forms part of the Council's Performance Management Framework.**
Executive Summary:	**The regulatory tracker has been updated to the end of quarter 3 of 2024-25. As at end quarter 3 –** • **11 inspections are included on the tracker** • **3 new inspections have been added** • **No inspections have been removed** • **6 recommendations have been closed** • **80 recommendations are on the tracker** **This report also provides clarity on two issues raised at Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) in January 2025.** • **The process for ensuring the regulatory tracker is properly updated each quarter and any changes to target dates are minimal.** • **The process agreed between the GAC chair and Scrutiny chairs for referring audits from GAC to Scrutiny and providing updates on those audits.**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Governance and Audit Committee on the Regulatory Tracker updated to the end of quarter 3 (Q3) of 2024-25 and issues raised on the Regulatory Tracker reported to the committee in January 2025.

2. Background

2.1 A report to the Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) on 10 November 2022 proposed that a 'regulatory tracker' be created to monitor progress against recommendations from all inspections/audits completed by key

regulators of local government services, including Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), and Estyn. An updated 'regulatory tracker' is considered at GAC twice yearly. This report covers up to the end of quarter 3 of 2024-25.

2.2 The performance judgements for recommendations within the regulatory tracker are awarded by applying the following key as prescribed within the Performance Management Framework, which provides clear definitions for the Blue, Red, Amber, Yellow, Green (BRAYG) statuses.

	What does this Status mean?		
	How are we doing	**Commitments, projects or regulatory improvements**	**Performance Indicators**
COMPLETE (BLUE)	Not applicable	Project is completed	Not applicable
EXCELLENT (GREEN)	Very strong, sustained performance and practice	As planned - within timescales, on budget, achieving outcomes	On target AND performance has improved / is at maximum
GOOD (YELLOW)	Strong features, minor aspects may need improvement	Minor issues. One of the following applies – deadlines show slippage, project is going over budget or risk score increases	On target
ADEQUATE (AMBER)	Needs improvement. Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects need improvement	Issues – More than one of the following applies - deadlines show slippage, project is going over budget or risk score increases	Off target (within 10% of target)
UNSATISFACTORY (RED)	Needs urgent improvement. Weaknesses outweigh strengths	Significant issues – deadlines breached, project over budget, risk score up to critical or worse	Off target (target missed by 10%+)

2.3 A report to the Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) on 30 January 2025 provided an update on the regulatory tracker up to the end of quarter 2 of 2024-25. The discussions of the committee raised two significant issues –

- A need to understand the process used by Corporate Management Board (CMB) and senior officers for making decisions on addressing

recommendations of audits, and the target dates for completing these actions.

- A need to understand the detail of the process agreed between the Governance and Audit Committee Chair and Scrutiny Chairs for referring audits from GAC to Scrutiny and providing updates on those audits.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 Paragraphs 3.3 to 3.7 below summarise details of the full Regulatory Tracker document at Q3, and changes since the last report to this committee in January 2025 for quarter 2 (Q2) 2024-25.

3.2 **Appendix 1** is an extract of the full tracker document showing red and amber recommendations only, and **Appendix 2** is a summary of recommendations closed in the previous period (since the last report produced for Q2 2024-25)**.**

3.3 There are currently 80 regulator recommendations for the Council included on the full tracker report from 11 Audits/Inspections. As the Performance Team is no longer reporting the entire tracker to the Governance and Audit Committee, these are summarised on the following table –

Audit/Inspection	Recommendations
Audit Wales, Setting of Well-being Objectives	3
Audit Wales, Review of Decision-Making Arrangements	5
Audit Wales, Financial Sustainability Review	2
Audit Wales, Digital Strategy Review	3
Audit Wales, Use of Service User Perspective and Outcomes	3
CIW Inspection Report on Foster Wales Bridgend	20
CIW Improvement Check Visit to Children's Social Care Services	10
Audit Wales, Springing Forward, Strategic Workforce Management	3
Transformational Leadership Programme Board, Baseline Governance Review Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership Board	7
Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Performance Evaluation Inspection of Children’s Services	21
Audit Wales, Review of Arrangements to Become a ‘Digital Council’	3

3.4 Since the previous report to the Governance and Audit Committee on 30 January 2025, 3 new audit/inspections have been added to the tracker:

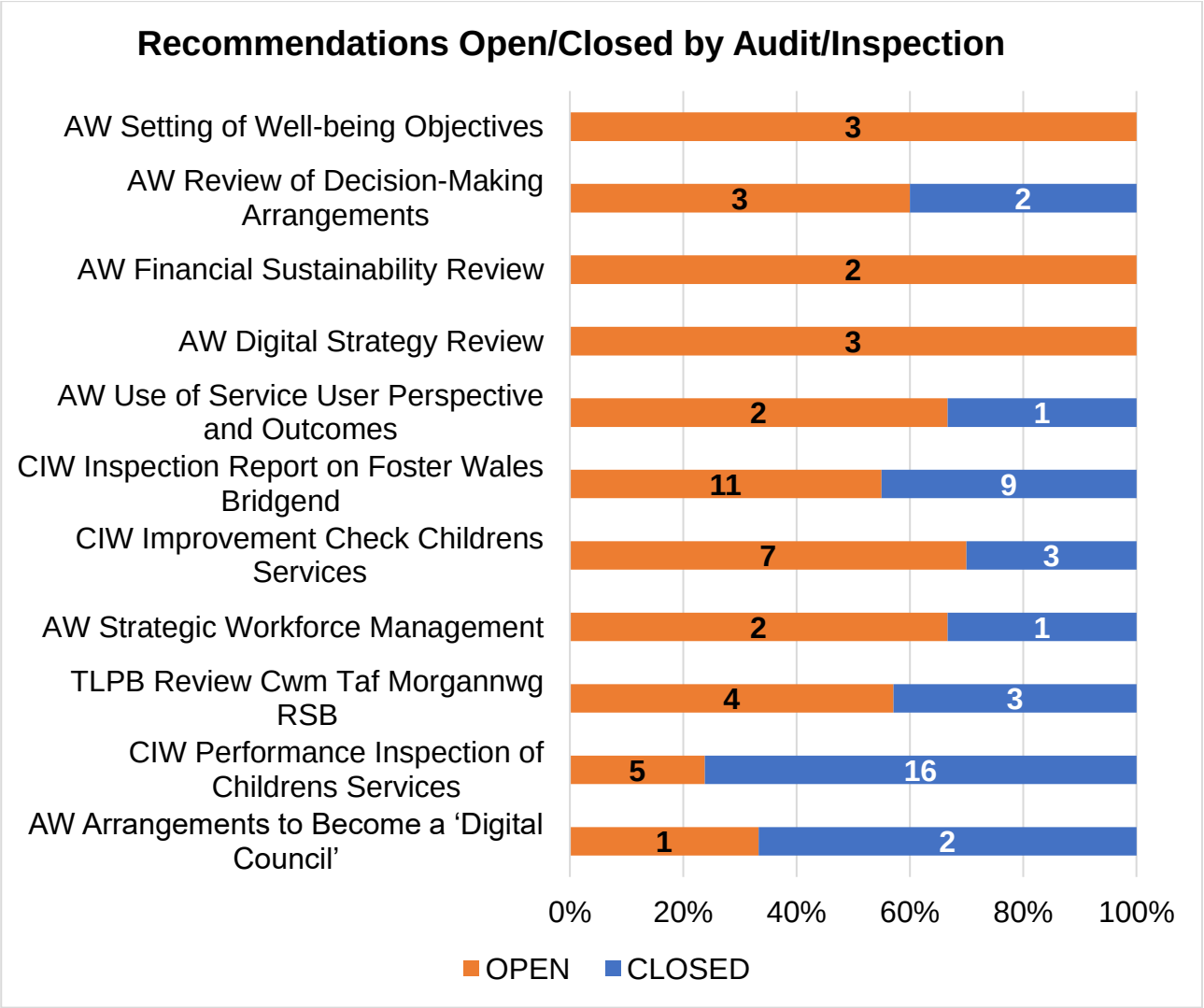
- Audit Wales, Digital Strategy Review (3 recommendations)
- Audit Wales, Review of Decision-Making Arrangements (5 recommendations)
- Audit Wales, Setting of Well-being Objectives (3 recommendations)

3.5 Since the previous report 6 recommendations have been closed. Final commentary is included in **Appendix 2**. They are –

- CIW Inspection Report on Foster Wales Bridgend (1 recommendation closed, 11 remain open)
- Transformational Leadership Programme Board, Baseline Governance Review Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership Board (1 recommendation closed, 4 remain open)
- Audit Wales, Review of Arrangements to Become a 'Digital Council' (1 recommendation closed, 1 remains open)
- Audit Wales, Use of Service User Perspective and Outcomes (1 recommendation closed, 2 remain open)
- Audit Wales, Review of Decision-Making Arrangements (2 recommendations closed, 3 remain open)

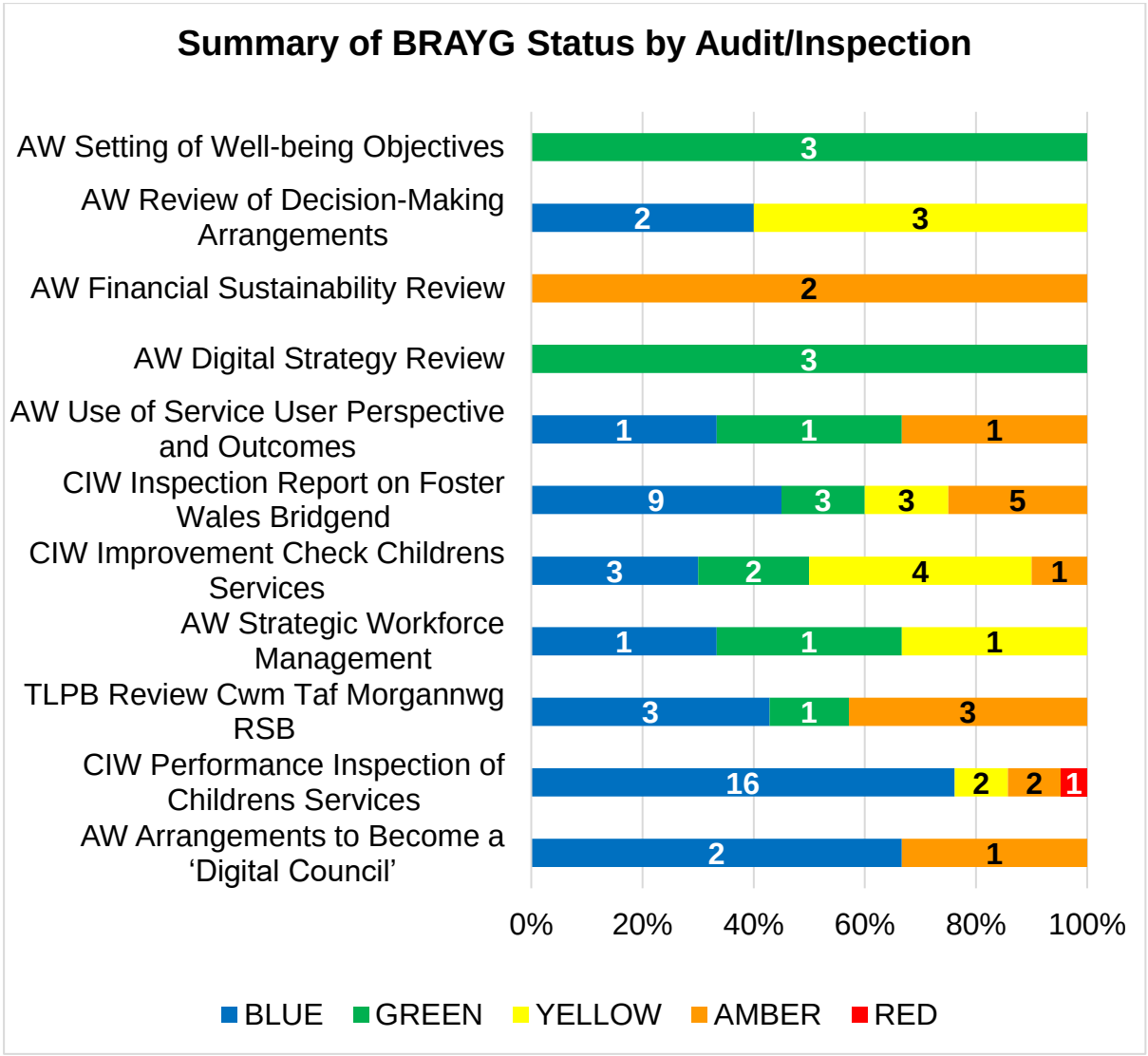
3.6 A breakdown of the open/closed status for the 80 current recommendations is below. This has also been summarised by audit / inspection to draw the Governance and Audit Committee's attention to specific areas of concern.

Date	Recommendations	Open	Closed	% Open
12/01/2023	66	48	18	72.73
15/07/2023	82	38	44	46.34
25/01/2024	58	33	25	56.90
19/07/2024	67	38	29	56.72
30/01/2025	69	38	31	55.07
24/04/2025	**80**	**43**	**37**	**53.75**



3.7 A breakdown of red, amber, yellow, green, blue status for recommendations is below. This has also been summarised by audit / inspection to draw Governance and Audit Committee's attention to specific areas of concern.

Date	Recommendations	Blue	Green	Yellow	Amber	Red	No status
12/01/2023	66	18	26	n/a	14	1	7
15/07/2023	82	44	22	0	15	1	0
25/01/2024	58	25	17	0	15	1	0
19/07/2024	67	29	18	1	17	2	0
30/01/2025	69	31	11	1	25	1	0
24/04/2025	**80**	**37**	**14**	**13**	**15**	**1**	**0**



3.8 On 12 March 2025, Corporate Management Board (CMB) considered the points and recommendations made by Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) at their January meeting. CMB agreed to consider the regulatory tracker twice yearly, before it is submitted to GAC. CMB also agreed to minimise any changes to target dates on the regulatory tracker.

3.9 In preparing information for GAC, the performance team have reexamined the dates of updates. The team concluded that GAC would receive a more up to date set of information by changing their regulatory tracker updates to April and October (rather than the current updates in January and July). It is therefore proposed that the committee alter their regulatory tracker consideration to April and October sessions.

3.10 As reported at the last meeting, a meeting took place between the GAC and Scrutiny Chairs on 9 December 2024, to make the referral arrangement more systematic. In that meeting, there was a joint understanding of the need for a

collaborative approach between Scrutiny and Governance and Audit Committee, but a recognition that their roles are different. The Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance for the LG Act 2000, the LG (Wales) Measure 2011 and the LGE (Wales) Act 2021 states:

'The governance and audit committee role should be more to seek assurance that the budgetary control systems (as an internal control) of the council are working, rather than the actual scrutiny of spend. This may serve as acceptable demarcation between the role of the governance and audit committee and that of an overview and scrutiny committee'.

3.11 The group discussed referrals made from the GAC to Scrutiny. They noted that Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes (FWP) are often very full and focused on key policy and strategic items, often pre-decision which have time constraints upon them relating to Cabinet decisions. It was agreed that it is ultimately for the Scrutiny Committee to determine if and when items get added to their FWP, utilising the criteria and agreed priorities. The Scrutiny Chairs and GAC Chair will meet on a regular basis throughout the year to assist them in this collaborative approach, whereby they can go through any referrals, clarify any queries and agree approaches. The group agreed that –

- A paragraph be included in the Scrutiny Committee's Forward Work Programme Update report which highlights collaborative working and picks up on any Audit or Inspection referrals. The relevant Scrutiny Committee will then consider the referral(s) and whether it / they meet the criteria for the committee's FWP. If an item does, Members will then determine where it fits, in terms of prioritisation, against other items already on the Scrutiny Committee's FWP.
- To help develop a strong collaborative relationship between Scrutiny and GAC, collaboration and communication is key. It was requested that GAC provide as much detail as possible to their referral, so the Scrutiny Committee can clearly understand the rationale and risk associated with item and prioritise accordingly. Similarly, it was requested that clear communication back to GAC via the Action Tracker be provided on the reasons why any item would not be incorporated into a Scrutiny FWP.
- Feedback to GAC will be provided via the GAC Action Record with a summary of the Committee's response. This could include feedback stating that the item is already included on the FWP or has been considered recently. Where it may be the latter, links will be provided in the action record to evidence the report and the outcome.
- The regulatory tracker is reported to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC), twice a year, following its consideration at GAC. It was further agreed that any new inspection reports received by GAC are sent for information to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee as a link in their FWP report. Members of that Committee can then determine if they want

to consider the report in detail, which could be accompanied by any comments and referrals from GAC.

3.12 These agreed measures have now been actioned as evident from the (COSC) FWP Update report from 17th March 2025 as well as GAC's Action Record report to this meeting.

3.13 There are numerous examples of Scrutiny's involvement in monitoring recommendations in the tracker – not always as an individual item. Examples of this include the Placement Sufficiency and Support recommendations (PR3) where Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SOSC 2) received the Commissioning Strategy on 19 Feb 2024, as well as the Children's Placement Commissioning Strategy on 13 March 2025. The Scrutiny Committee consistently raise the subject of sufficiency of placements when considering any Safeguarding item as well as on receipt of the Director of Social Services' Annual Report.

3.14 On recommendations relating to recruitment and workforce, the Workforce Recruitment and Retention report was presented to COSC in March 2023, followed by the Workforce Strategy in September 2023, and an update report on Strategic Workforce Plans in March 2024. SOSC 2 also received the Authority's 3 Year Sustainability Plan in Children's Services in July 2023, the focus of which was the safe reduction and usage of agency staff and growing our own social workforce.

3.15 Similarly, there are numerous examples of COSC and Scrutiny committee consideration of broader performance and budget issues related to the regulatory tracker. For example, on carers assessments, staff sickness and disabled facilities grants

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty / Welsh Language)

4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 This report forms part of the measurement of progress against the following corporate well-being objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that form part of the Council's Corporate Plan 2023-28:-

1. A county borough where we protect our most vulnerable

2. A County Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns
3. A County Borough with thriving valleys communities
4. A County Borough where we help people meet their potential
5. A County Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency
6. A County Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community
7. A County Borough where we support people to live healthy and happy lives

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 There are no specific implications of this report on climate change.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no specific implications of this report on safeguarding or corporate parenting.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications associated with these arrangements.

9. Recommendation

9.1 The Governance and Audit Committee is recommended to: -

- Consider the updated process for CMB consideration of the regulatory tracker.
- Agree to change regulatory tracker updates at GAC to April and October each year.
- Consider the scrutiny arrangements at paragraphs 3.10-3.15.

Background documents

None.