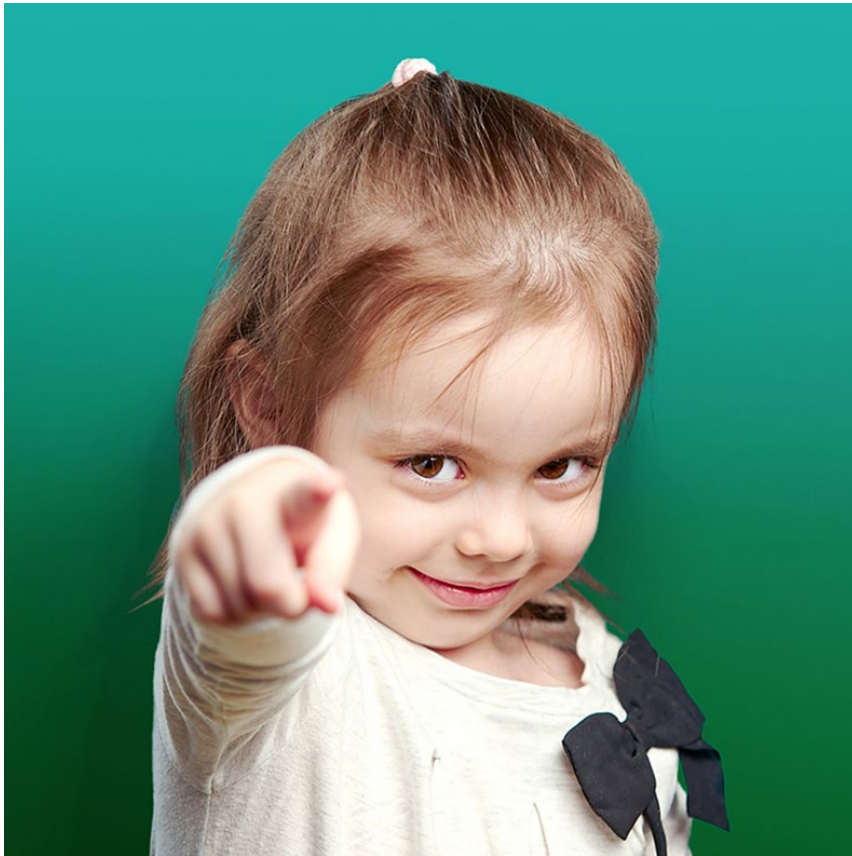


Children, Young People and Families Improvement Plan



Improvement Plan Highlight Report

Reporting position - end
of September 2023

Performance Dataset



Plymouth's child population:

From May 2023, the 2021 Census population is used as follows:

- 0 to 17 at 51,635 used for CYPFS rate per 10,000 children (1,656 less than the mid-2021 ONS population estimate)
- 10 to 17 at 23,307 used for YJS rate per 1,000 & 100,000 children (344 more than the mid-2021 ONS population estimate)

Key for RAG rating against target and direction of travel:

RAG rating for actuals against targets (it is not appropriate to have targets for all indicators)	On target	Within 15% of target	More than 15% from target
Direction of travel shown between current and previous month (green indicates an improvement and amber indicates a decline)	▲	▼	

Please note: the Direction Of Travel indicator is based on whether increase or decrease is a positive or negative change.

Priority I – Governance, Leadership and Management

Lead Officer: Service Director CYPFS



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Commitment

The Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services will ensure that governance, leadership and management in Plymouth are robust and relentlessly focused on improving and sustaining outcomes for children, young people and families and that all recommendations from inspection activity and quality assurance are addressed.

RAG Status

Previous

Current

Headline Performance Measures

ID	Description	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Target	Direction of travel
62	Early Help / Targeted Support - Child Level Caseload (where service is lead (inc Edge of Care))	195	207	190	Monitor	▼
63	Initial Response Team - Child Level Caseload (where service is lead)	749	833	971	Monitor	▲
64	Children's Social Work - Child Level Caseload (where service is lead)	732	735	737	Monitor	▲
65	Children's Disability Team - Child Level Caseload (where service is lead)	102	112	120	Monitor	▲
66	Permanency Service - Child Level Caseload (where service is lead (inc Fostering Service))	325	318	314	Monitor	▼
67	Care Leavers - Child Level Caseload (where service is lead)	255	269	269	Monitor	◀ ▶
68	CIN, CP or CIC Children with missing or incorrect team (month end snapshot)	5	2	2	0	◀ ▶
69	Percentage of Social Workers with more 20 children allocated (month end snapshot)	52.0%	59.1%	47.6%	5.0%	▼
73	Percentage of Case Supervision's in time – Care Leavers Service (month end snapshot (all workers))	87.8%	48.3%	7.4%	90.0%	▼

Commentary;

63 - Additional Advanced Practitioners are in place in the Initial Response Service (IRS) in response to increased levels of demand. A focused action plan is in place to complete all outstanding assessments and reduce caseloads to acceptable levels over the next six weeks with weekly progress reporting to the DCS. A separate detailed report is being presented to the Board.

64 – a managed social work team has been commissioned to start early November to address the impact of increased demand and a high proportion of ASYEs and international social workers newly arrived in Plymouth are in place to ensure caseloads in the CSW service remain at acceptable levels. A strong Quality Assurance plan is agreed to have oversight of the practice and decision making in the managed team.

73 – due to long term sickness absence an additional Team Manager has been agreed for the Leaving Care Service to ensure supervision is completed in accordance with practice expectations. Weekly monitoring and Head of Service oversight is in place to ensure rapid progress.

Please note: KPIs marked as Monitor are snapshot throughput measures. Whole system caseload is reviewed through the ChAT tool. The Direction Of Travel indicator is based on whether increase or decrease is a positive or negative change.

Priority I – Governance, Leadership and Management

Lead Officer: Service Director CYPFS



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CITY COUNCIL

Project Milestones – (Month)					
Workstream	Owner	Status	DoT	This period	Next period
Ensure Elected Members are well-informed	Director of Children's Services		▲	Engagement and briefing systems are embedded now as business as usual.	Elected Members are invited to be involved in activities during Practice Week in November where the focus is on reviewing the quality of practice through the eye's of a child.
Workforce involvement in Improvement	Service Director CYPFS		▲	DCS led whole Service Events have taken place during Sept. to engage staff in improvement planning. Managers are engaged in improvement including through 'Leaders for Excellence' development sessions and in refreshing service improvement plans to ensure they align with this Improvement Plan.	A 'plan on a page' is planned to help staff understand the priorities in this Improvement Plan and will be presented to service meetings during November alongside engagement in the development of priorities for the next phase of the plan.
Corporate resources are aligned to support children and young people	Chief Executive		▲	A priority resourcing plan was agreed, and specific additional capacity needed has been being recruited this month. Additional Advanced Practitioners are in place in Initial Response Teams and the managed social work team will commence at the very start of November. Other additional roles identified in the TOM are being recruited to and interim resources retained and appointed.	Recruit to remaining posts, including a Programme Manager. Ensure additional resourcing impacts on specific agreed priorities.
The service operating model provides the conditions for high quality services	Service Director CYPFS		▲	Recruitment to key posts in the Quality Assurance function has progressed and 2 Practice Leads have been recruited to enhance audit capacity and completion of planned QA activity. The Additional SM is in post in CSW to enable the Disabled Children's Team to transition at the end of the October.	Implement forward plan for QA activity to include continued auditing and sampling of the Front Door. Ensure completion of follow through of actions from audits and dip sampling to 'close the loop' on practice improvement.

Priority 2 - Early Help and Front Door responses

Lead Officers: HoS Targeted Support / HoS Front Door



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Commitment

Children and young people will receive timely and appropriate help which will prevent escalation (or re-referral) to statutory services.

RAG Status

Previous

Current

Headline Performance Measures

ID	Description	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Target	Direction of travel
4	Number of children stepped down from Child In Need to Early Help (in month)	5	27	5	Monitor	▼
7	Percentage of MASH Contact decisions made within one working day (in month)	12.2%	52.2%	58.2%	90.0%	▲
10	Percentage of re-referrals within previous 12 months (rolling 12 months)	18.7%	18.6%	18.3%	23.0%	▼
14	Percentage of strategy discussions held within one working day of referral (where a Strategy Discussion was deemed necessary)	50.0%	51.6%	2.4%	90.0%	▼

Commentary:

7 – All contacts into the MASH inbox are reviewed within 24 hours to ensure they are responded to in the appropriate timescale given the nature of the safeguarding concern and risk. This indicator is recording the proportion of contacts which have an outcome decision within 24 hours and improvement has been maintained.

14 – This indicator is impacted by the timeliness of record being placed on the system for which a business support solution is being identified.

Please note: the Direction Of Travel indicator is based on whether increase or decrease is a positive or negative change.

Priority 2 - Early Help and Front Door responses

Lead Officers: HoS Targeted Support / HoS Front Door



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CITY COUNCIL

Project Milestones – (Month)					
Workstream	Owner	Status	DoT	This period	Next period
An agreed understanding and vision of Early Help across the City	HoS Targeted Support and Youth Justice		▲	The revised threshold document was approved at the Sept Partnership Board and well attended and well received multi-agency training has been taking place since. Link workers are in place with all schools and initial visits are taking place focused on inclusion KPIs. Increase in early help referrals being seen.	Continue partnership thresholds training events. Continue school visits by Early Help lead workers. Increase take up of Family Group Conferencing and Mediation Services at an early help stage. Progress Missing and Exploitation Strategies and agree and implement a revised Neglect strategy and continue GCP2 training. Determine solution to recording requirements.
Children and young people are safe in our communities, and we identify and respond to children at risk of exploitation and crime	HoS Targeted Support and Youth Justice		▲	Continued good progress in reducing first time entrants. Effective tracking and multi-agency response to identified child exploitation risks. Improved performance on Return Home Indicators including continuing to offer over 95% RHIs within 72 hours. Training on Outcomes Star being delivered to improve evidence of impact on outcomes.	Complete the national Missing Benchmarking Tool and complete revisions to Missing and Exploitation Strategy. Determine solution to data/recording requirements.
Develop and deliver effective Front Door arrangements.	HoS Front Door		▲	Dorset SLIP review in September confirmed continued improvement and sustained progress. MASH continue to work in 'live time' with no backlog. MASH Manual is complete. New MASH consultation line is now operational. Staff morale continues to improve. Strategic and Operational MASH Boards now in place and will support the focused programme of QA within the service, including use of consent, information sharing and strategy meetings. Additional APs recruited to IRTs to address assessments awaiting a response.	The MASH practice manual to include practices out of hours. Dorset SLIP to attend MASH Boards and review IRS response plan. Continue focused work in IRS to complete outstanding assessments. Sustain planned QA activity, including with partners, and identify and act on key findings. Monitor and respond to case escalations.

Priority 3 – Robust and effective social work practice

Lead Officer: Service Director - CYPFS



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Commitment

Children and young people will receive consistently high-quality social work practice and assessments and plans will ensure that purposeful work is undertaken so that children are safe, and drift is prevented. Children and young people will have greater involvement in the planning and delivery of their care.

RAG Status

Previous

Current

Headline Performance Measures

ID	Description	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Target	Direction of travel
20	Rate of Children subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP) per 10,000 children (month end snapshot)	39.9r	39.1r	39.1r	42.1r England	◀ ▶
21	Rate of Children in Care (CIC) per 10,000 children (month end snapshot)	94.7r	92.8r	94.1r	70.0r England	▲
22	Percentage of single assessments completed within 45 working days (in month)	62.3%	55.0%	55.8%	90.0%	▲
23	Percentage of single assessments completed within 45 working days (year to date)	71.5%	66.8%	64.9%	90.0%	▼
25	Percentage of Initial Child Protection Conferences held within 15 working days of Strategy Discussion (in month)	86.7%	100.0%	100.0%	90.0%	◀ ▶
26	Current children subject to Repeat Child Protection Plans within 2 years	9.2%	8.9%	12.3%	10.5% Ofsted Good+	▲
31	Percentage of PLO (Public Law Outline) concluding within 16 weeks	27.3%	5.3%	50.0%	90.0%	▲

Commentary:

22/23: this is as a result of the increase in demand in IRS and the completion of outstanding assessments. This indicator will continue to be closely monitored and tracked until the targeted action plan is complete.

31: this relates to two families (four children) whose pre-proceedings ended during Sept. where 2 of these open to the Disabled Children's Team had been in place more than 16 weeks when they ended.

Please note: the Direction Of Travel indicator is based on whether an increase or decrease is a positive or negative change.

Priority 3 – Robust and effective social work practice

Lead Officer: Service Director - CYPFS



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Project Milestones – (Month)					
Workstream	Owner	Status	DoT	This period	Next period
Review and relaunch Practice Standards	Service Director CYPFS		▲	Refreshed Practice Standards with a video from young people have been shared at the 'Leaders for Excellence' session this month and are being cascaded through team meetings.	Continue to cascade Practice Standards through team meetings. Fortnightly Leaders for Excellence sessions will focus on specific elements of the practice standards, in October this is visits and SMART planning and IROs are also attending.
Children at risk of harm are identified and responded to without delay	HoS Front Door and HoS Quality Assurance and Safeguarding		▶	Revised Assessment Training being delivered to teams. 100% of ICPCs were held in time. IROs have introduced pre-conference consultations during S47 enquiries to support decision making. Additional APs in place to progress assessments in the IRS. Children in Need tracker meetings are in place.	Prioritise ASYEs and new international SW starters for assessment training. Leaders for Excellence session to focus on visits. The CIN Framework will be reissued with SM lead.
Public Law Outline and Pre-Proceedings process	HoS Children's Social Work		▲	Terms of reference are being developed for the monthly pre-proceedings review meetings which continue to ensure timely support and intervention to children in PLO. Progress and actions are tracked by the Court Progression Officer leading to more timely use of pre-proceedings, only 6 children (3 families) are currently over 16 weeks. Planning is on track for the first Unborn Baby Panel.	Continued focus on timeliness and quality of PLO practice. Dip sampling to ensure Pre-proceedings letters are saved on children's files. Unborn Baby Panel is in place with a timeline to review all 54 unborn babies open in service.
Supervision and management oversight	Service Director		▶	Managers are using live data within teams to manage practice. Supervision expectations are included in the Practice Standards which has been reissued at Leaders for Excellence, Performance data has been reviewed at QAPIB, and expectations set. Senior Managers are tracking progress at service Performance Boards and clinics.	Additional TM to be appointed in Leaving Care to ensure supervision expectations are met. Progress on obsessions to be monitored at SMT/QAPIB. Increased completion of audit and dip sampling and reporting of findings. Session on 'line of sight' at Leaders for Excellence. Development of leadership/management development offer for managers to Team Managers and equivalent level..

Priority 4 – At risk of Care, Cared for and Care Experienced Children and Young People

Lead Officer: HoS Permanence



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Commitment

Children and young people will remain cared for safely within their family networks wherever possible. When necessary, they will have access to alternative homes close to Plymouth and have access to a range of effective services and support that promote stability, permanence, educational success, and positive health outcomes. **Care experienced young people will** experience trusting relationships with us and support to enable them to be safe and develop into successful adults.

RAG Status

Previous

Current

Headline Performance Measures

ID	Description	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Target	Direction of travel
29	Number of Safer Me Assessments undertaken in month	2	6	2	Monitor	▼
30	Children open to services with a Safer Me 'High Risk' status (month end snapshot)	7	7	9	Monitor	▲
34	Number of unregistered placements – Under 16 (month end snapshot)	3	4	3	0	▼
35	Number of unregistered placements – Age 16+ (month end snapshot)	1	2	1	0	▼
36	Number of residential placements (month end snapshot)	55	51	49	50	▼
37	Number of unplanned admissions to care (in month)	2	1	9	0	▲
41	Short Term Placement Stability (month end snapshot)	8.6%	9.6%	9.7%	10.0%	▲
42	Long Term Placement Stability (month end snapshot)	71.0%	69.6%	72.1%	70.0%	▲
43	Percentage of Initial Health Assessments offered admissions to care within timescales (where required) Note: Relates to children who entered care during the previous month	83.3%	62.5%	50.0%	95.0%	▼
44	Percentage of children in care with health checks up to date	78.7%	76.5%	80.5%	95.0%	▲
45	Percentage of children in care with dental checks up to date	47.1%	50.2%	53.7%	95.0%	▲
46	Percentage of children in care with optical checks up to date	71.9%	74.3%	77.9%	95.0%	▲
47	Percentage of children in care with immunisations up to date	66.5%	66.1%	67.8%	95.0%	▲

Commentary:

34/35; 5 young people currently placed in unregistered arrangements. 2 have placements identified, (1 is moving to Falcon Lodge) and 3 YP do not yet have a registered placement identified.

37: these 9 children have all been reviewed by the Service Director and the care entry was confirmed as appropriate for all children.

43-47; please refer to separate Board report.

Please note; the Direction Of Travel indicator is based on whether increase or decrease is a positive or negative change.

Priority 4 – At risk of Care, Cared for and Care Experienced Children and Young People

Lead Officer: HoS Permanence



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Project Milestones – (Month)					
Milestone	Owner	Status	DoT	This period	Next period
Children continue living with their families where possible.	Service Director CYPFS		▲	Children's Resource Panel and Overview Panel is operating in accordance with revised and extended ToR to ensure appropriate decision on care entry and Service Director tracking and oversight of priority groups.	Continue close tracking of progress for priority groups to ensure that children remain living with their families wherever possible and do not come into care. Provide evidence of outcomes for children where care is prevented.
Children who cannot remain in their family will live in the right home, close to Plymouth	HoS Permanence		▲	All children reviewed to ensure permanence plans clear and opportunities for reunification, SGO or Care Order discharge identified and progressing. Revised Sufficiency Strategy, being completed fostering recruitment plan, SGO offer being finalised. Confirmed involvement in Mockingbird support model for foster carers. Merrivale Project opened this month and 7 young people moved in. Falcon Lodge are awaiting Ofsted registration following positive visit.	Ensure identified child level actions progress through close monitoring and tasking. Business case for Special Guardianship Offer to SMT on 6/11 and DMT on 15/11. Sufficiency Strategy and Fostering Recruitment Plan to be finalised and implemented. Fostering support/retention plan to be revised including Mockingbird and enhanced support model. Falcon Lodge to open.
Outcomes for cared for children	HoS Permanence		▶	Increased use of 'MoMo'. Updated Health offer incorporated in the revised local offer, co-designed with the Listen & Care Councils through the VOICE group.	Train the trainer model to support further increase in MoMo usage. Health to present report on health outcomes for CiC to November Board. November Practice Week to focus on voice of child. Virtual School included in SLIP work in October.
Outcomes for care experienced young people	HoS Permanence		▲	Merrivale opened and Ofsted visit to Falcon Lodge complete. Numbers of care leavers not in unsuitable accommodation improved. Local Offer to Care Leavers updated. Planning for events with potential employers. 'Your Future' programme launched and four YP attended.	Additional TM appointed to cover sickness and ensure supervision taking place. Young people to move into Falcon Lodge once registration confirmed. More young people to be engaged in 'Your Future' programme.

Priority 5 – Quality Assurance and Audit

Lead Officer: HoS Quality Assurance and Safeguarding



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Commitment

Children and young people will benefit from a culture of continuous improvement and quality assurance that ensures the best possible outcomes and experiences for them.

RAG Status

Previous

Current

Headline Performance Measures

ID	Description	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Target	Direction of travel
54	Timeliness of Reviews of Child Protection Plans (month end snapshot)	99.5%	100.0%	100.0%	95.0%	◀ ▶
55	Timeliness of Reviews of Children in Care (month end snapshot)	93.0%	91.7%	91.1%	95.0%	▼

Please note; the Direction Of Travel indicator is based on whether increase or decrease is a positive or negative change.

Priority 5 – Quality Assurance and Audit

Lead Officer: HoS Quality Assurance and Safeguarding



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Project Milestones – (Month)					
Milestone	Owner	Status	DoT	This period	Next period
Implement the new Children's Services Quality Assurance Framework	Head of QA and Safeguarding		▲	Recruited 2 interim practice learning reviewers to evidence our practice and support with practice development with an appointment planned for Oct and further interviews planned. Expectations have been set for completion of Sept/Oct audits. Programme of planned audit and dip sampling is progressing well. Audit forward plan implemented including dip sampling and auditing of the impact of improvements in Front Door services and children on the Edge of Care. Planning for Practice Week progressing well.	Increase the number of audits that are taking place, capture and share learning from audits and ensure the audit loop is closed and impact measured. Practice reviewers to commence in post. Practice week scheduled for November.
Independent Chairs and IROs will support improved outcomes for children and young people	Head of QA and Safeguarding		▶	Implemented additional expectations to complete mid-point reviews and pre-conference consultations to improve decision making and support the timely progress of plans. Reset expectations regarding using the "Resolution and Escalation process" Included in 'Leaders for Excellence' development programme.	'Leaders for Excellence' sessions on service planning, line of sight and SMART planning. Development of targeted development offer by the Academy. Increased audit and dip sampling to evidence impact on new approaches.
Allegation management	Head of QA and Safeguarding		▲	Interim LADO commenced in post on 11 Sept. Current review of working practices and data recording being undertaken.	LADO function included in the SLIP work programme.

Priority 6 – A Stable and Able workforce

Lead Officer: Service Director - CYPFS



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Commitment

Children and young people will benefit from a stable and skilled and supported workforce which provides high-quality, effective support, and interventions that meet their needs and aspirations.

RAG Status

Previous

Current

Headline Performance Measures

ID	Description	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Target	Direction of travel
69	Percentage of Social Workers with more 20 children allocated (month end snapshot)	52.0%	59.1%	47.6%	5.0%	▼
76	Turnover rate for Social Workers (month end snapshot)	15.4%	Not available	15.4%	17.0%	◀ ▶
77	Vacancy rate for Social Workers (month end snapshot)	11.0%	Not available	12.6%	18.5%	▲
78	Sickness Average Days Lost Per FTE (Rolling Year) - CYPFS department as a whole	11.06	11.78	11.25	7.00	▼

Commentary

69: Additional capacity has been agreed for parts of the service experiencing increased demand, including 6 Advanced Practitioners in the Initial Response Service and a managed team of social workers in the Children's Social Work Service. The plan for reducing caseloads is set out in the Board report on MASH and IRS.

Please note the Direction Of Travel indicator is based on whether increase or decrease is a positive or negative change.

Priority 6 – A Stable and Able workforce

Lead Officer: Service Director - CYPFS



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

Project Milestones – (Month)					
Milestone	Owner	Status	DoT	This period	Next period
Effective recruitment and retention	Service Director CYPFS		▲	Retention payments for the CSW teams implemented in Sept pay packets to reward Social Workers who remain working for Plymouth in the CSW teams. Social worker registration payments agreed for all social workers. 12 International Social worker started this month with a targeted induction offer and protected caseloads. A high proportion of ASYEs and ISWs in CSW Teams (50%) impacts on caseholding capacity for complex work in the medium term.	Continue induction and targeted Work Force Development with ASYEs/ ISWs. Progress the Early Career Framework for ASYE's in year 2 and 3. Recruit to remaining vacancies in agreed areas.
Additional interim capacity to reduce overall workloads	Service Director CYPFS		▲	Recruitment to additional capacity agreed across the IRS and CSW service has progressed. The 6 additional APs are in post in the IRS.	A focused plan for IRS will lead to reduced caseloads in the service and agreed progress in completion of outstanding assessments. The managed team for CSW will commence at the start of November and a QA plan is in place.
Workforce Strategy	HROD		▶	Revised Children's Workforce Strategy is in development.	A draft Children's Workforce Position Statement with an HR scorecard will be presented to CSTB in October and then finalised and shared with managers and staff. An action plan will be developed.
Workforce learning and development	HoS Quality Assurance and Safeguarding		▶	Review of restorative practice training to inform the development of a refreshed offer in progress (meeting with Mark Finnis). Academy is reviewing WFD offer to ensure it aligns with improvement priorities. High proportion of ASYEs and newly arrived international SWs are a priority group for targeted WFD. Management development in place through Leaders for Excellence sessions.	Progress recruitment of Policy Officer to review all policies and procedures. Continue targeted training with priority teams and groups. Plan and deliver two more Leaders for Excellence sessions on visits, plans and 'line of sight'. Develop leadership/management development offer.