

SHROPSHIRE CHILDREN'S SERVICES

POST OFSTED IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

Our journey of continuous improvement

The 'Healthy People' aspect of the Shropshire Plan means supporting them to live independently: out of care, into stable families, and, when and where possible, into good housing and fulfilling employment.

By treating our children and young people with respect, love and trust and with the right amount of encouragement we can inspire them to dream big, build relationships and connections that matter and together with kindness and a sense of belonging we can do great things. (Service Vision Statement Nov 2019)



Mar 2024 V1.0 FINAL

Introduction

Following the Focus Visit in November 2023 Ofsted recommended one priority area of action and identified areas that require action to improve.

Weaknesses in child protection practice, which leave children at risk of significant harm, including the quality of management oversight and decision-making, staff supervision, and appropriate challenge by child protection chairs.

What needs to Improve:

- The consistent understanding, and application of, pre-proceedings interventions to ensure that children are appropriately safeguarded in a timely way.
- The quality and effectiveness of child protection plans.
- The quality and timeliness of strategy discussions and initial child protection conferences.
- The effectiveness of multi-agency core groups to ensure that progress is measured, and drift and delay is challenged by all partner agencies.
- The quality of quality assurance activity, including auditing of social work practice, across the service.
- The training and support provided to social workers and managers in relation to statutory child protection procedures.

Governance and Accountability

- An Improvement Board has been established which aims to seek assurance in relation to improvements in the quality of social work practice in Child Protection and Pre-Proceedings, and seek assurance that the quality of practice in all other Childrens Service's areas is maintained and continues to improve. The Board, whose members represent various areas of the council and include cross party representation of members, whose role will be to monitor the plan and its progress
- Improvement Board will offer monthly challenge and escalation with key officers and council members from across the council sitting on the Board



CIB Terms of
Reference

- Service Managers in Childrens Services will lead to deliver required changes to ensure the quality of practice at pace and with measurable impact.
- Highlight Report will be produced by Assistant Director and Transformation Lead to provide oversight and updates on progress against the plan.
- Terms of reference for Improvement Board are agreed and finalised at the inaugural board meeting 12/12/23
- Data and Quality Assurance reports to be presented to monthly Board as required. As soon as possible Board members will have access to a live dashboard, development is in progress.
- Transformational Projects will progress wider system changes to support delivery of key sections (3 & 7) where required.

'Closing the Loop'

An outcome of this action plan, is to provide a summary of evidence that demonstrates the impact of actions taken is clearly seen in the records, planning and decision making for children, this then is also reflected in the positive outcomes for children and young people. A success measure will be that consistency in quality of interventions is seen in QA activity, Customer Feedback, Peer Review and Inspection Outcomes.

Glossary:

Quality Assurance will be referred to as QA within this document

Child Journey will be referred to as CJ within this document

Child Journey Audit will be referred to as CJA within this document.

Team Managers will be referred to as TM

Service Managers will be referred to as SM

Principal Independent Reviewing Officer is referred to as PIRO

Children Looked After will be referred to as CLA

Public Law Outline will be referred to as PLO

Senior Leadership Team will be referred to as SLT

End to End – all managers meeting – from 'End to End of the Service. Held Monthly, face to face.

Annex A is the child level data requested from Ofsted

Area for Improvement 1:

Quality of Practice

The quality of practice will evidence it is consistently good or outstanding and results in positive outcomes for children. Quality Assurance Framework will be consistently embedded.

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
1.1	The Quality Assurance (QA) Framework needs to increase in its efficacy to ensure that learning from practice has the required impact on the outcomes for children.	The quality of QA activity, including auditing of social work practice, across the service.	Increase in Child Journey Audit completion monthly. Increase in number of good judgements given	Monthly/ Quarterly QA reports	SM QA Jan 2024	PIP Officer in post and completing induction and starting to undertake tasks. Q4 report in development		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
	<p>Demonstrating a clear pathway to consistent quality auditing that is robustly moderated.</p> <p>Actions are completed and 'the loop closed' providing evidence that learning influences practice and development.</p> <p>How: Clarity of the role of QA alongside clear expectations of TM/SM re participation in and delivery of the QA activity set at end to end meetings.</p> <p>Confirmation of the above in individual supervisions with line management</p> <p>Tracking of compliance with audit activity</p> <p>Use of dip sample auditing to undertake check and balance activity of data intelligence and variations</p>	<p>Increase in moderation and learning discussions with auditors.</p> <p>Increase in Closing the loop actions being recorded and acted upon as part of the CJ process.</p> <p>Clear pathway to inform learning and development of managers and social workers.</p> <p>Increase in the number of good & outstanding Audits.</p> <p>Demonstrating positive impact of practice on childrens outcomes.</p> <p>Reduction in number of audits that have to be moderated and grade changed.</p>	<p>to Child protection (CP) plans in Child Journey audits.</p> <p>Number of assessments judged as good increases to 90% (Milestones of 70%/80% to be tracked)</p> <p>Number of visits judged good increases to 90% (milestones of 70%/80% to be tracked)</p> <p>Number of meetings and reviews (inc CP conferences and Core Groups and CLA reviews) judged as good increases to 90% (milestones of 70%/80% to be tracked)</p>			Jan and Feb report for Mar improvement Board		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
1.2	Dip sample auditing forward plan to be developed and involve all across management structure	Ensure effective oversight through individual and group activity to share learning and improve auditing skills Ensure the dip sampling of cohorts of children or specific points in the statutory framework, specifically CP Plans.	Real time snapshot of practice at regular intervals to inform progress	Monthly/Quarterly QA reports	AD & SM QA 29 Feb 2024	In Draft – needs amending in line with changes to CIB action plan. 1 st Management Oversight Dip Sample completed 26/2/24.		
1.3	Task and Finish group to refresh QA activity, relaunch QA framework, adaptations to tool, moderation process. Team Managers to be involved in progressing this and leading each other.	Well understood QA framework which is embedded across practice, provide opportunities for learning, celebrates good practice and provide continuous improvement to reflect “So what” and “impact”	QA activity takes place regularly Learning is extrapolated and shared and development areas included in the learning and development offer Overtime quality and consistency of practice improves evidenced through Child Journey audit gradings	One Update report to March Improvement Board and further update for June 2024	SM QA 31 st March 2024	In progress. Refresh the Performance meeting to become a Performance and QA monthly meetings with PIP officer leading.		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
1.4	<p>Visits to children will be clearly prioritised.</p> <p>Direct work will be clearly evidenced and the impact of it on the assessment and analysis is clear and visible on the child's record.</p> <p>This visibility on the child's record in LCS will be through use of naming convention for files and development of guidance on how and where to record direct work.</p>	<p>Direct work is visible on file and influences the assessment / plan.</p> <p>Consistent use of name and date convention is evident on all records.</p> <p>Guidance is developed to support consistency of recording on LCS.</p>	<p>CJ audit and QA activity will evidence effective direct work.</p>	<p>Dip sample audit. March 2024.</p> <p>QA reporting.</p>	<p>SM QA</p>	<p>LCS user group have discussed naming convention for upload</p> <p>Guidance and training to be developed to embed by May 2024</p> <p>Direct work and the recording thereof will feature as part of Practice Week April 2024</p>		
1.5	<p>Child Protection Planning is robust, effective and results in positive outcomes for children , young people and families.</p> <p>Plans are child focused, acknowledging the needs of adults, with clear actions and timescales identified.</p>	<p>Improve the quality of child protection plans ensuring they are child focused, up to date and capture views of parents and children consistently and ensures robust management oversight is recorded.</p> <p>Ensure robust and effective multi agency challenge during meetings evident from CP chairs and is reflected in Q&A</p>	<p>CJ audit and QA activity</p> <p>Monthly dip sample of child protection plans</p> <p>Supervision evidences purposeful planning for children</p>	<p>QA reporting</p> <p>PIRO report</p> <p>Supervision Audits.</p>	<p>SM QA</p> <p>PIRO</p> <p>March 2024</p>	<p>Dip auditing by SMs and PIRO are highlighting issues in respect of practice, drift and delay – these are being addressed on a case by case basis and collated into overall learning.</p> <p>Moving forward, CP Panels are</p>		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
	Plans are reviewed in timescale and clearly demonstrate progress or not against the plan. Partner agencies attending Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups challenge & support the progress of the plan, raise issues of drift and delay and use the effective	reports held on the child's record. The use of chronologies and history to inform children's assessments and decision making is evident.				being set up in order to review children subject to CP Plans and ensure that their plan is appropriate, timely and required.		
1.6	Embed service specific performance meetings, implementing exception reporting where required.	Key Performance indicators will be met, ensuring that children are seen in a timely way, have up to date assessments and plans, which are regularly reviewed. A culture of resilience and support will be embedded in the team to ensure that KPIs are met.	KPIs in performance information will be met	Performance Information	All SM's 01/04/2024	In progress. Following consultation with Managers restructured End to End and Performance Meetings. 2 new End to End have taken place, and 1 x new Performance Meeting.		

Area for Improvement 2:

Capacity, Caseloads and Demand Management including Entry into and out of care

Capacity of social workers and CP chairs/IROs is noted as a causal factor in decline in practice as the practicalities to oversee large caseloads is unmanageable.

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
2.1	<p>Reduce social worker caseloads – national recommendation is 15-18 cases per social worker, dependent on where in the system they are.</p> <p>Weekly caseload and workload meetings to oversee effective allocations, exits and identify drift and delay and closures. TM oversight of children</p>	<p>Manageable caseloads for qualified social workers IN CMT & Court Teams as well as across the service</p> <p>Statutory procedures being consistently followed.</p> <p>Plans progressed in a timely way.</p> <p>Social workers remain employed in post and experience a manageable workload.</p> <p>Improvement in quality of practice</p> <p>Clarity of line of sight over work throughput from front door to exit points. Tracking is effective and any concern re increase can be escalated to IB as required.</p>	<p>Reduction in caseload numbers</p> <p>Increase in positive service user feedback</p> <p>Social Worker stability in the workforce.</p> <p>Social Worker Retention Rate remains at current level or better. Current level Sept 23- 7.74%</p> <p>% social work workforce staff with caseload 15-18</p> <p>Trajectory of caseloads past to present</p>	<p>Power BI live report showing case load data</p> <p>Power BI live caseload data</p> <p>Trajectory data to be built in</p> <p>Power BI Report being built with caseload data overlaid with workflow in and out of system</p>	<p>Assistant Director 7/12/2023</p> <p>Baseline Report in place.</p>	<p>Workflow and caseload oversight meetings to commence wk beg 15/1/24 Chaired by AD</p> <p>In place SMs and AD</p> <p>Microsoft Power BI suite of Reports being built, so Board members have access to live data– draft in place</p>		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
2.2	Reduce CP chair caseloads – to be in line with the IRO Handbook requirements.	Manageable caseloads Effective oversight of CP Chairs/ IRO's to ensure the progression of children's plans in a timely way.	Reduction in caseloads Successful recruitment to additional posts	Weekly Caseload report	SM QA and IRO's 7/12/2023	Adverts for additional IRO's are out 22/12/23 3 posts have been offered – in employment checks		
2.3	Task and Finish group to review and develop Family Support Worker role and function	Family Support Workers time is targeted where needed and ensure the support they offer to families and social workers is purposeful.	Increase in chronologies, genograms and ecomaps informing practice and evidence of direct work.	Chronology Data Report.	Service Manger Case Management Teams Jan 2024	Meeting held with SM's in December. Meeting held with TM's 02.02.2024 completed. Meeting scheduled with FSW's after which final report will be completed by		
2.4	Introduce Data Hygiene meetings to review performance, LCS issues, QA learning and triangulate processes	Ensure an effective case management system in place which supports SW function	Reduction in LCS stuck workflow in case records. Timely response to LCS issues Data quality issues fixed quickly	Annex A Power BI reports Statutory returns	PIP Officer & Senior IRO. Jan 2024	First meeting in diary following recruitment of PIP officer – 31/1 held. Terms of reference developed. Second meeting due 27 th Feb – reviewing		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
				Data quality reports		processes/Data issues and system PIP officer to plan future meetings Action Plan in place for meeting		
2.5	Weekly reporting on exit and entry into care including Care leavers, SGO, PWP, turning 18	Effective tracking of the number of children entering care and increase exiting care where appropriate.	<p>Ensure that the right children are looked after.</p> <p>Plans for permanence are in place and progressed.</p> <p>IRO's have effective oversight and ensure drift & delay is prevented.</p> <p>Solicitor capacity is able to meet demand.</p>	Power BI live reporting	Assistant Director.	Reporting being developed in line with Microsoft PowerBI development		
2.6	Task and Finish group to review role of Information Support Officer (ISO), escalation processes, training needs, tasks and who they support	<p>Reduction in stuck workflow in case records by offering one to one support to front line social worker.</p> <p>Timely response to requests.</p> <p>Accurate recording on system.</p> <p>Timely Closures.</p>	<p>Data accuracy on Annex A (Child level data report requested by Ofsted)</p> <p>Data Accuracy on Power BI report development</p> <p>Data accuracy of stat returns</p>	One off report on actions	SM Compass & Assessment. Jan 2024	<p>First meeting held with team</p> <p>Meeting with LCS around functionality</p> <p>Tracking reporting being developed</p> <p>Alignment with data hygiene meetings</p> <p>Second meeting to be held 29th</p>		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
						Feb. Action plan now in place and the newly appointed QA lead is ensuring progress of agreed actions. Microsoft booking form is in development making it easier for social workers to book time and access support and a specific dashboard is being developed to aid the one to one sessions with social workers ensuring case files are up to date and any 'stuck' workflow in case records in the system are dealt with and escalated timely.		
2.7	Business Support Transformation Project.	Increased capacity for SW Improved processes and timely communication	Transformation project progressed at pace.	Project highlight report	Service Manager	Project underway. As Is process mapping being undertaken		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
	Interdependency – Transformation Board maintains progress oversight.	Timely case recording Use of AI technology to support the quality of practice and effective recording.			Compass & Assessment Mar 2024	Microsoft Co-Pilot Pilot in place as test and learn Review of BS functions underway with focus on finance tasks to free up staff time to support SW through pod model – Project links to People Business support review		

Area for Improvement 3 Recruitment and Retention

It is essential that the social work workforce is stabilised, reduce agency social workers and changes in them. Direct correlation with the quality of practice.

	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
3.1	<p>Social Care Recruitment and retention project to be initiated to pilot different ways of working to:-</p> <p>Look at retention package for qualified social workers.</p> <p>Develop the recruitment strategy & action plan which results in increase in our recruitment of SW's by improving our "sell" to prospective employees, make application process as efficient as possible and review induction and "on boarding".</p>	<p>Reduction in "start again" approach to case management</p> <p>Reduction in number of social worker changes for individual children</p> <p>Reduction in Red RAGs due to drift and delay & impact of changes of social worker.</p>	<p>Increase in permanent workers recruited and in position within 2 months of application</p> <p>Base line data set for Q3 2023</p> <p>Reduce the number of children with changes in social worker due to leaving post.</p>	<p>Project highlight report</p> <p>Social workers per case load report</p> <p>DRP report</p>	<p>SM PMO, Feb 2024</p> <p>Data Intelligence Lead. Jan 2024</p> <p>SW of QA Jan 2024</p>	<p>Project initiated – documents being drafted and workshop to be convened to understand current context, lessons learnt with aim to review current application process, marketing and offer</p> <p>Additional capacity post adverts went live 22/12/2023. Shortlisting complete, interviews in progress, 3 x IRO's appointed.</p>		

	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
3.2	Paper to be written for decision by Improvement board on immediate resource requirements to have impact at pace.	Reduce caseloads for social workers in CMT so that workloads are manageable 15 – 18 Ensure team managers across the service area have caseloads that enable effective management oversight 80-100	Reduction in caseloads Increased stability Reduction in staff turnover rate to 6 % in 24/25 and 5% in 25/26 Strategically plan for the recruitment of experienced social workers ensuring a social work response for all children that require one.	Written report. Additional capacity funding agreed by EMT 20/12/23 Caseload data to be tracked in Microsoft Power Bi	CSC, Assistant Director 12/12/2023	Baseline data recorded 22 December 2023. Recruitment underway		
3.3	Regrade of Social worker roles and decision on retention offer. Retention Project – Transformation Board - Interdependency	We become an attractive employer with salaries in line with Regional Neighbours to enable us to compete for best staff and reduce reliance on agency workers	Increase in applications to social worker roles advertised on website Reduced agency rate: starting point 31% Reduce turnover rate: 7.74% Sept 2023 Reduced vacancy rate: TBC	Exception reporting to Imp Bd by Project Lead.	AD Workforce & AD Finance & AD CSC	Extension to Recruitment & Retention Payments for a further 12 months whilst grade reviews undertaken approved by EMT December 2023 ahead of full council agreement of MTFs 2024-25.		


	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
						<p>Review to be undertaken on all elements of the employment offer to inform longer term workforce and succession plans.</p> <p>Meeting with AD for CSC/HR & Finance taken place.</p>		
3.4	Ensure a robust offer to motivate high quality agency workers to convert to permanent contracts	<p>Reduction in spend on agency staff</p> <p>Stable workforce</p> <p>Build and maintain ongoing relationships with children/families we work with</p>	<p>Reduction in vacancy rate</p> <p>Reduction in agency workers from 30</p> <p>Reduce turnover rate</p>	<p>Workforce reports</p> <p>Microsoft PowerBI reporting</p>	AD Workforce & AD CSC	<p>Extension to Recruitment & Retention Payments (equivalent to a conversion payment for agency) for a further 12 months approved by EMT December 2023. Review to be undertaken on all elements of the employment offer to inform longer term workforce and</p>		

	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
						<p>succession plans.</p> <p>Pilot for new post for Specialist SW post agreed, advert out. 22/12/23</p>		

Area for Improvement 4: Management Oversight

Evidence of effective and timely management oversight, including rationale for decisions.

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
4.1	<p>Increase in Management oversight recorded and actioned on case files.</p> <p>TM Development Program for CMT devised and rolled out in January 2024. Clarity of standards and expectations re quality of practice and management oversight.</p> <p>Supervision.</p>	<p>Team Managers have manageable oversight of children's care plans - In Case Management & Court</p> <p>Robust management of children in need including in need of protection and looked after.</p>	<p>CJ audit outcomes</p> <p>Management oversight case note report – track timeliness</p> <p>Moderation and actions from audit evident in Supervision</p> <p>Evaluation Form of TM Programme</p>	<p>Monthly/ Quarterly QA report</p>	<p>AD CSC</p>	<p>TM Program planned and in place to commence 11/01/24</p> <p>Team manager formal sessions as part of the program has been completed with mentoring and coaching taking place through to the</p>		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
	Decision Making Dip sample auditing.					<p>end of March 2024.</p>  <p>TM Development sessions 2023.24.pptx</p> <p>Team Manager evaluation of the programme audits impact to be completed by end of March 2024.</p>		
4.2	Undertake dip sample audits of management oversight for current baseline	Gather baseline for current Management Oversight (as current audit activity is not an appropriate sample size) which will allow further development needs to be understood inc training	See an increase in Management oversight judged as good into 2024	Dip sample template and Analysis	All Service Managers, SM QA Feb Board	<p>Dip sample activity by Early Help and Compass and Assessment SMs undertaken and reported to Feb Board</p> <p>Outcome of above will feed into the Quarterly QA Report.</p> <p>This activity will be included in the refreshed QA Framework which will be</p>		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
						published April 2024		
4.3	Undertake dip sample audit of CP chair work trays.	Provide baseline of current issues in system Ensure robust oversight Ensure no drift and delay and impact on outcomes for children	IRO footprint more evident on children's records in timely manner Review of DRP process and RAG	PIRO update report to improvement Board on monthly basis and within Quarterly PIRO report.	SM QA, Feb Board	Dip sample report went to Feb board within PIRO update.		
4.4	Supervision timeliness to increase. Quality of supervision discussions & recording to increase. Impact of effective supervision on outcomes for children. Effective Supervision to be clearly recorded when decisions made to enter Pre-Proceedings (PLO)	Supervision is undertaken regularly, well recorded, reflective, purposeful and progresses SMART plans for children	Increase in supervision audits/observations judged to be Good or Outstanding Increase in number of supervisions undertaken within recommended timeframe	Scorecard Monthly/Quarterly QA report Supervision Audits Dashboard	SM QA, Feb Board	Dip sample activity by Early Help and Compass and Assessment SMs undertaken and reported to Feb Board Operations Manager L & D People Directorate to create and deliver half day workshop refreshing on key elements of		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
						Supervision Training utilizing in house train the trainer. No Cost. TBC		

Area for Improvement 5: Decision Making

Decision making is recorded in a timely way with clear rationale. Decision Making is made at the appropriate level of Manager. Impact of leaders is evident in the progression of plans and outcomes for children.

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
5.1	Undertake regular dip sample audit of Defensible Decision Making	Determine what actions need to be undertaken and with which managers to ensure a consistent understanding of decision making practice standards.	The number of decisions audited to be Good or Outstanding. Practice standards provide clarity of defensible decision making	Dip Sample Audit Analysis	SM Case Management & SM QA Feb Priority	CMT/Court TM programme included session around defensible decision making – completed. Defensible decision making is focus of End to End 04.03.2024. Practice Standards to be		

						launched in April 2024.		
5.2	Child Protection Chairs have oversight of the progression of plans and effectively impact the progression of case decision making.	Number of Green Rags raised by CP Chairs / IRO's increases Audit identifies increase in decision making graded as Good/ Outstanding.	Increase in appropriate escalations through DRP process. Increase in Good CJ audits	Monthly DRP report Weekly dip sampling of plans and CP Chair oversight PIRO report to each improvement Board.	SM QA. And PIRO	Dip sample of work undertaken by new PIRO in Feb 2024		
5.3	Review the QA function of LPM meetings & PLO decision making. Reporting on Outcomes of LPM & Tracking PLO/ Issue or proceedings.	Childrens Plans are effectively progressed, and decisions made are enacted.	Improved quality of information provided to LPM. Reduction in the rate of children entering court proceedings, through early/timely implementation of PLO. Early / timely implementation of PLO leading to reduction in duration of care proceedings	Quarterly LPM Audit Analysis Quarterly LPM Outcome Report	SM CMT & SM Stepping Stones. Dec 2023	QA Template sign off at SLT on 07.02.2024.		

			ensuring with compliance with 26 week standard.					
5.4	Reinstate the Principal Independent Reviewing Officer (PIRO) Quarterly report that has oversight of the CP Chair & IRO Role.	Childrens Plans are effectively progressed, and decisions made are enacted.	Increase in appropriate escalations through DRP process. Increase in Good CJ audits	Quarterly report	SM QA. Jan 2024	Completed. January report completed. Presented to board 14/2/2024		

Area for Improvement 6: Public Law Outline

The consistent understanding, and application of, pre-proceedings interventions to ensure that children are appropriately safeguarded in a timely way.

Ref	Action	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
6.1	Review of the PLO area and development of an action plan to deliver impactful changes at pace.	Timely response to pre proceedings stage of PLO Care proceedings initiated in timely way by legal services Plans drive forward outcomes, escalate risk and timely response. Early consideration to secure legal permanence is evident	Timely Care proceedings decision making. Early Pre proceedings considered. % care proceedings initiated on time Permanence measured through % children come to Permanence Forum by second review.	Action Plan update report Court progression report Permanence Progression report Quarterly	SM CMT 31 Mar 2024	Letter format reviewed and new version in place and being used. Court Tracker amended to include tracking of decision to issue, docs to legal and time for legal to issue. Weekly permanence		

Ref	Action	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
			% IRO ratified at second review			forum in place, ensuring the earliest opportunity to consider permanence options as required in the Care Planning Regulations.		
6.2	Improve quality (meaningfulness) of Pre proceedings (PLO) letters for parents	Parents have a clear understanding of expectations and actions	QA dip sample reports	Quarterly reports - Dip sample on PLO letters for April IB	SM CMT Apr 2024	Trailblazer Regional standard forms in development.		
6.3	Development of a Permanence progression officer role to track and progress plans for Permanence for Children Looked After.	Effective & timely Permanence Planning in place. Progression of plans for Permanence. Identification of drift and delay and timely and Effective escalation in a timely way of drift & delay.	Accurate tracking and timely completion with the purpose of preventing drift and delay and ensuring timely escalation when required. 100% of children who become looked after having a permanence plan by 2 nd Review.	DRP Report Child Journey Audit Report.	SM Case Management & SM CLA Jan 2024	Permanence progression officer post interviews week of 22/2.		

Ref	Action	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting Mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
6.4	Effective use of Family Group Conferencing informing Pre-proceedings.	Ensure all pre-proceedings included recorded consideration of FGC as part of the plan and solution finding for the family.	Increase in families effectively accessing FGC to enable them to find family solutions to issues identified, Increase in number of families being diverted from court proceedings.	FGC Report, Quarterly.	SM SS Q3 report.	Report submitted to Directors Assurance February 2024 Q4 report in April will evidence full year effect.		
6.5	Court system processes will be improved through Shropshire's involvement in the Trailblazer work, goes live 1 st April	Improvements in practice Reduction in drift and delay and ability to progress cases due to court backlogs	To be confirmed when the Impact measures for the project are agreed and will be used.	Trailblazer reporting	SM Case Management and Court Team	Project has been agreed and will commence 1 st April in partnership with West Midlands LA		

Area for Improvement 7: Resources

Children's Social Care and Safeguarding are dependent on other departments in the council ensuring that the resources needed to improve are available in a timely way. This section of the plan aims to identify key areas of interdependence and ensure priority attention is given to the actions.

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
7.1	Develop a "Back on Track" Training Offer to be delivered across Childrens Services. (Joint Training Team.)	Restorative Practice - Relationship based practice refresh – all staff. Clear understanding of processes, pathways, policies & procedures.	Dip sampling and Child Journey Audits will show practice improvement Increasing numbers of Good and Outstanding audits.	Monthly workforce/training report Monthly/Quarterly QA reports	SM QA May 2024	Training offer to be finalized in March 2024 to be rolled out and completed		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
		<p>Improved and consistent application of statutory child protection procedures</p> <p>Training offer reflects areas of need and is linked to learning from QA activity</p>				by end of May 2024		
7.2	<p>Ensure resources in place to meet current and forecast future demand. (Human Resources and Finance)</p>	<p>Track demand in the system and forecast for the next 5 years.</p> <p>Workforce strategy to be updated and in line with current demand and forecasting.</p>	<p>Case Load Capacity to be consistently monitored and staffing 'right sized' to maintain case loads at a workable level.</p>	<p>Microsoft PowerBI reporting</p>	<p>Data & Intelligence Team.</p>	<p>Demand management reports being built.</p> <p>Build in project outcomes and benefits expectations to forecasts.</p>		
7.3	<p>Ensure that Business Support & administrative tasks are completed at the right level in the organisation and in the most effective way (equitable with other departments in Directorate): e.g.:</p>	<p>Transformation Project: Peoples Business Support.</p>	<p>Phased project approach being developed.</p> <p>Finance function is priority 1</p>	<p>Project highlight reports</p>	<p>Project team</p>	<p>Project scaled up from children to people project but to include</p>		

Ref	Actions	Expected Impact/Outcome	Impact Measure	Reporting mechanism	Lead and Timescale	Progress to date	Progress RAG	Impact RAG
	Finance processing & Authorisation. Subject Access Requests. Admin tasks- meeting organisation, minutes etc.					areas in scope Finance functions being reviewed currently in phase 1		