

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

11 NOVEMBER 2021

### REPORT OF THE INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER - FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

#### DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS – PROGRESS REPORT AND POSITION STATEMENT

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Governance and Audit Committee on actions taken to progress improvements to the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) service and provide information on the position to date.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:-

1. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
2. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 There have been a number of external and internal reports relating to DFGs, the Appendices outline the progress to date:

3.1.1 The first report was received in February 2018 which was a report by the Auditor General Wales: Adaptations 2018. This highlighted the many challenges and shortfalls in delivering such a complex service and made a number of recommendations.

3.1.2 The next report was received in October 2018 by the Wales Audit Office and provided a commentary on Service Users Perspective of DFGs Audit Year 2017/18. This report was provided to the Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) on 22nd April 2021.

3.1.3 The Regional Internal Audit Shared Service undertook an audit and their report was received in July 2020 with recommendations..

- 3.2 As a result of the findings of these reports a number of internal reports have also been made to this Committee previously and to Cabinet and Cabinet and Corporate Management Board (CCMB) which have outlined the critical need to re-shape and improve the delivery of the DFG service within Bridgend.
- 3.3 A report to Cabinet on 19th January 2021 outlined the next steps in achieving change. The impetus was to ensure that the Council met its governance responsibilities, removed outdated processes and provided a citizen centered approach to applicants based on the learning from the aforementioned reports which have shaped the decisions taken by Cabinet and formed the basis of the actions identified in this report. Increasing the Council's control on the process and ensuring safeguarding issues are addressed has been the cornerstone of the transition to a new service model.
- 3.4 It is acknowledged that further actions will be required to address all recommendations in the various reports, however the starting point to improving the service to applicants within Bridgend has been to address the fundamental issue of ownership and responsibility for delivery and the removal of outdated bureaucracy which saw much of the responsibility handed over to external agencies over which the Council had little control.
- 3.5 Cabinet therefore agreed to adopt a new model of in-house service delivery and to establish a project that will internalise the DFG service to include the functions which had previously been undertaken by an 'Agent'. A Collaboration Agreement is being negotiated with Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPT) to provide support while the new model, policies and processes are established with the intention of final completion shortly.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 On 1st April 2021, the Council ceased the provision of the agent delivery model and the Council has taken full control end to end for delivery of DFGs. However, the citizen still has the choice to go externally for DFG works to be delivered.
- 4.2 The Auditor General Wales Report: Housing Adaptations 2018 made 9 recommendations (R1 – R9). The Wales Audit Office (WAO): Service Users Perspective of DFGs 2018 made 10 recommendations (P1 – P10) and the Regional Internal Audit Shared Service 2019/20 made 7 recommendations (SS1 – SS7). As many of the recommendations are similar, or deal with the same core issues the responses have been grouped together below. Appendices 1 to 3 of this report provide more specific details.
- 4.3 R1: Welsh Government set standards for adaptations
- 4.3.1 Recent guidance from Welsh Government has outlined proposals for a new planning structure which will have a regional and health focus and consideration of the outcomes and any impact on delivery and planning processes locally is required. There is also a need to review the means test requirements for applicants for small and medium works. These matters will be the subject of a report to Cabinet in the future for decision making purposes.

#### 4.4 R2, PI: Local authorities work with partner agencies to strengthen strategic focus

4.4.1 Consideration of the need to strengthen strategic focus has led to the action to re-model the service to ensure a more effective and customer centred approach. Discussions on strategic focus will be further developed as the new model is implemented.

#### 4.5 R3, P3, SS1, SS3: Provide information in accessible formats

4.5.1 Steps are being taken to develop suitable material to support the new model. In the meantime, steps are being taken to have more joined up meetings between council surveyors, contractors and applicants to ensure that communication takes place directly with applicants before the start of works to ensure that there is a common understanding between all parties.

#### 4.6 R4, SS2: Delivery organisations streamline application process

4.6.1 The complexity and bureaucracy of the old process has been recognised and steps have been taken to change processes. Application forms, supplementary forms and Occupational Therapist (OT) referral forms have been reviewed. Interim processes are being implemented until they can be finalised under the new model. This includes –

- reviewing the questions on the application form to reduce duplication;
- amending the OT referral form to provide more specific information in relation to the physical works needed for each client;
- expanding the customer satisfaction survey to ensure they are able to provide feedback on the standard of works and the conduct and activities of the contractors undertaking the work. This will support the contract monitoring and quality control for the Council;
- reducing the number of visits to applicants by introducing a joint visit at the beginning and end of the works. This brings the applicant, DFG team member and contractor together to explain the process and agree actions and timescales.

#### 4.7 R5, P3, SS5: Improve timeliness in delivery

4.7.1 New processes are being adopted for the delivery of the in-house service. This new way of working requires the expansion of the current team through a recruitment process to ensure the correct skills such as surveying, technical knowledge etc. are in place to take on the additional functionality and responsibility. The in-house provision is vital in providing the end-to-end management of the DFG process and the DFG surveyors will represent that single point of contact that will guide and simplify the citizen through the process. Housing has been successful in the appointment of 2 Assistant Surveyor Posts and an interim Principal Grants Officer, however the recruitment process is still on-going. In the interim, the Council is working with Neath Port Talbot Borough Council to provide the necessary capacity.

#### 4.8 R6, P4, P5, SS6, SS7: Delivery organisations introduce formal systems for accrediting contractors

4.8.1 The implementation of procuring via E-Tender Wales has provided a short-term solution and enabled Bridgend to procure compliant contractors in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs) and support the recommendations outlined above. Housing are working with procurement and legal to establish a longer-term Framework of Contractors for the delivery of the works under Disabled Facilities Grants. This framework will be for the duration of four years. Individual grants will be up to the grant level of £36,000 per job however the Framework will have an aggregate value up to £10 million. The framework will have a focus on ensuring all successful contractors are compliant with CPR processes and have adequate safeguards in place to protect vulnerable service users. The Framework will consist of 2 separate Lots namely:

- Lot 1, General building work
- Lot 2, Stair lifts

Each Lot will provide a list of contractors that can be selected on a rotational basis to provide the works required under a DFG. The work which will be procured under the Framework will range from provision of stair lifts, ramps, replacement showers, to full scale bathroom/bedroom extensions. It is anticipated this Framework will be live in the new financial year.

4.8.2 Housing has carried out engagement with contractors to outline the change in the process with regards the cessation of the agent delivery model. The CPRs specify that for works Contracts all Contractors must be registered and verified on Constructionline Contractors who had previously worked under the agent model of service delivery have been engaged with and as a result many have either joined from new, or upgraded their status on Construction Line. It is, and has been vital that the housing team develop the relationships with the contractors as the oversight and performance management of the contractors will be managed by the Council. It is intended to undertake further market engagement with regards to the procurement of the Framework in conjunction with the procurement team.

#### 4.9 R7 Local authorities work with partner agencies to develop and improve joint working

4.9.1. An internal quantity surveyor is working with the DFG team to standardise the schedule of rates and communication is taking place with Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Borough Council (NPT) to understand any disparity across the geographical area which could lead to a detriment for Bridgend. The key aim is to establish consistency in terms of the schedule of rates across each local authority.

4.9.2 Discussions have also taken place with Valleys to Coast (V2C) to agree a new process of approval for DFGs within their properties and the possibility of support through top up funding for complex and difficult cases.

4.10 R8 To enhance take-up delivery organisations jointly agree and publish joint service standards

4.10.1 To be developed as part of the strategic discussions with partner agencies and internal colleagues.

4.11 R9, P4, P5, SS2, SS7: Effectively manage performance and set appropriate measures to judge both the effectiveness and efficiency

4.11.1 In addition to the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) that measures the average days taken to deliver a DFG for adults and children, housing intend to provide operational PIs to assess all the jobs that have entered the new service delivery model as of 1st of April 2021 to enable the team to baseline the performance of the new way of working, from a PI perspective. This will allow assessments of the process to identify any anomalies or under-performance. Measures will highlight different parts of the process and will identify the time taken between referral and completed application and approval; and time taken between start and finish of jobs (medium and large).

4.12 P1, SS4: That the relationship with Princess of Wales (POW) Hospital continues to be strengthened.

4.12.1 The Housing OT working as part of the DFG teams has established joint meetings with the POW on a weekly basis and undertakes joint assessments for complex cases. Referral paperwork and recording of information on the Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) now brings children's cases in line with adult referrals ensuring there is a central record of needs and actions.

4.13 SS6 Service in House – Outstanding Agent Works

4.13.1 As of the 1st April 2021, the functions of the agent role were brought in-house, however there were a number of DFGs already being undertaken by the agents. These applications will have been brought to a specific point in the process outside of the control of the council and as the Council has no control over the time that this has taken this will have a significant impact on the PIs and the measurement of average days taken to deliver a DFG

4.13.2 Agents have approached the Council to request that complex DFG schemes currently under their remit which require specialist equipment or are difficult to deliver are returned to the Council to complete. This will have a knock-on effect on the overall PIs for the DFG service.

4.14 Covid19 Impact

Due to the pandemic the supply chain for materials has been significantly disrupted resulting in a significant uplift in raw material costs. The report to Cabinet on 19th January 2021 outlined the potential risks with regards to the internalisation and movement to a new operating model and one of those risks was the potential impact of Covid 19 with regards to contractors having

access to materials and resources which could affect the pilot project timeline and the Disabled Facilities Grants performance indicator. Since that report there have been significant events that have changed the general outlook in relation to building works and contractors. It is widely reported that the costs of building materials has increased and that there is a shortage of labour in all sectors of the market. The implications for the DFGs is that many contractors have many months of programmed work, due to the demand from private homeowners who are able to pay a premium for private work. The engagement and attraction of contractors with the ability and capacity to undertake work in Bridgend is a key focus for the team, however the situation is concerning.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

5.1 There is no effect on policy framework and procedure rules.

## **6. Equality Impact 2010 implications**

6.1 This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

## **7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications**

7.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with five ways of working to guide how the Council should work to deliver well-being outcomes for people. The following is a summary to show how the five ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been considered in this report.

Long term	Ensuring best use of available accommodation allowing Citizens to live safely in their own homes
Preventative	Through a person-centered approach preventing an individual escalating into hospital services
Involvement	Providing individuals the choice to remain in their home ensuring they are part of the process from start to finish managed through a single point of engagement
Integration	Ensure individuals can remain within their communities providing an array of benefits including stability through the maintaining of local support networks
Collaboration	Developing a Framework Agreement of contractors for the DFG service. Working in partnership with Social Services Princess of Wales Hospital, (POW) Valleys to Coast (V2C) to deliver the required adaptations necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person. Entering into a Collaboration Agreement with NPT

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 At a meeting on the 19th January Cabinet approved that the additional annual costs of the enhanced team to support the internalisation of the DFG process will be met

from the DFG Capital budget annually, previously used to cover the agency fee. The anticipated costs are £135,018 (based on 2020/21 costs) and is below the historic costs levied by external agents (£139,000).

- 8.2 The Collaboration Agreement with NPT requires a fee per case of 15%, which will be paid out of the DFG capital budget. However, as internal capacity for the DFG service increases through the recruitment of staff, the support provided by NPT will reduce alongside the fees on a pro rata basis. The table below is an illustrative example of the potential costs and demonstrates that if all DFGs were carried out by NPT for a financial year their fees based on the average cost of a DFG would not exceed £139,000 per annum as referenced in 8.1.

Average Number of DFGs Per Annum	Average cost of DFG	15%	Total Fees Per Annum
77	£12,000	£1,800	£138,600

## 9. Recommendation(s)

9.1 It is recommended that the Governance and Audit Committee:-

- Note progress to date to improve the DFG service.

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### Background documents:

Service Users Perspective of DFG's Audit Year 2017/18 report date October 2018

Auditor General Wales: Housing Adaptations 2018. Report date February 2018

Regional Internal Audit Shared Services Report, 2019 Report date July 2020

## Appendix 1

### **Recommendations from Auditor General Wales: Housing Adaptations Report February 2018 (summarised)**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Progress</b>
R1 WG to set standards for adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WG guidance subject to further discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not Started - report will go to cabinet once guidance received.</li> </ul>
R2 Local authorities work with partner agencies to strengthen strategic focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action to re-model the service to ensure a more effective and customer centred approach</li> <li>Work with the Housing Adaptations Steering Group (HASG) in terms of new Welsh Government Guidance Housing Adaptations Strategic Framework - Draft Guidance (Oct 2021)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-going</li> </ul>
R3 Provide information in accessible formats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being developed to meet the new model</li> </ul>
R4 Delivery Organisations streamline application process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pilot New processes i.e. the applicant, contractor and council surveyor to discuss and agree works at one meeting rather than several</li> <li>Review of the questions on the application form and other paperwork to reduce duplication;</li> <li>OT referral form to be amended</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processes being developed to meet new model requirements</li> <li>Paperwork amended on an interim basis</li> </ul>
R5 Improve timeliness in delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement and develop an in-house, service delivery model</li> <li>Staff recruitment</li> </ul>	<p>Being progressed through a variety of actions contained in the report which aims to improve timeliness in particular the recruitment of staff. See section 4.4,4.5,4.6 and 4.7</p>
R6 Delivery Organisations - Introduce formal system for accrediting contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The use of Construction Line has been introduced which ensures a level of accreditation</li> <li>Pilot tender exercise to be undertaken via E Tender Wales</li> <li>Expanding the customer satisfaction survey to ensure they are able to provide feedback on the standard of works and the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractor Framework being progressed</li> <li>Contractor engagement will be carried out as part of Framework tender process</li> <li>Following pilot tender exercise, works are</li> </ul>



	conduct and activities of the contractors undertaking the work	now tendered for through E Tender Wales
R6 Delivery Organisations - Use of Framework Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using a Framework to procure stair lifts and their installation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractor Framework tender currently being progressed with target start date June 2022</li> </ul>
R6 Delivery Organisations - Update Schedule of Rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action started to review Rates</li> <li>Discussions with regional colleagues to mitigate variations in price</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bridgend Schedule of Rates review currently being progressed with target date Nov 2021</li> </ul>
R6 Delivery Organisations - Undertake competitive tendering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tendering process Undertaken via E Tender Wales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pilot tendering project completed.</li> <li>Tendering currently underway through E Tender Wales</li> </ul>
R6 Delivery Organisations - Develop effective systems to manage and evaluate contractor performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring will be via the DFG Housing Team with regards contract management and through customer satisfaction surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further development of evaluation and monitoring performance shall be included in the DFG Framework</li> </ul>
R7 Local authorities work with partner agencies to develop and improve joint working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new process established with V2C to approve works at the start of the process</li> <li>Discussions held with V2C regarding 'top up' funding for complex cases</li> <li>New process established with Social Services COT – mitigation of statutory intervention and providing independence</li> <li>Contributing to the review on housing for Older People</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> </ul>
R8 To enhance take-up delivery organisations jointly agree and publish joint service standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be developed</li> </ul>
R9 Effectively manage performance and set appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New recording and measures to be developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-going</li> </ul>

<p>measures to judge both the effectiveness and efficiency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Measures will highlight different parts of the process and will identify the time taken between referral and completed application and approval; and time taken between start and finish of jobs (medium and large).</li></ul>	
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## Appendix 2

### **Recommendations from WAO: Service Users Perspective of DFGs. Audit Year 2017/18 Report October 2018**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<p>P1 The Council should consider more broadly how its housing adaptations service can contribute to meeting its strategic aim 'To ensure that Bridgend County is a place that people want to live, where there is a choice of good quality, affordable, and sustainable housing, appropriate to the needs of each Household' and the medium and longer-term actions needed to do this. In doing so, it should consider how it can apply the five ways of working from the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act to help it do this and the Social Services and Well-being Act.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To re-model the service to ensure a more effective and customer centred approach</li> <li>• Contribute to a review on housing for Older People being undertaken by external consultant via Social Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-modelling in progress. The change in the delivery model can apply to all the five ways of working however there is a strong emphasis on:</li> <li>• Long Term – enabling citizens to live in their homes for longer</li> <li>• Involvement – citizen centred approach meeting their needs</li> <li>• Prevention – mitigation of statutory intervention and providing independence</li> <li>• Current contributing to the review on housing for Older People</li> </ul>
<p>P2 The Council should strengthen its arrangements for evaluating the housing Adaptations service to help the Council improve the service. This includes improving the design of the service user survey and extending it to include all service users and to increase awareness of the survey and the results across the organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of survey questions to include comment on contractors to support monitoring and quality control.</li> <li>• Survey work on the completions of jobs continue and DFG officers will provide a single point of contact for the citizens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be strengthened when new model established.</li> <li>• New operational level PIs to be introduced from April 2022</li> </ul>

	throughout the process	
<p>P3 The Council should help service users understand the often complicated process that involves multiple organisations by providing a clear and simple overview of the grant process from beginning to end.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of new pilot process combines visit to applicant with council surveyor and contractor to ensure engagement and overview of process and manage expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In progress</li> <li>• Implemented in conjunction with the pilot process and will be further strengthened with the introduction of the DFG Framework</li> </ul>
<p>P4 The Council should fully implement the recommendations made by the Auditor General for Wales in his report in 2018 on housing adaptations, most notably Recommendation 6 to introduce formal systems for accrediting contractors to undertake adaptations including developing effective systems to manage and evaluate contractor performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council should ensure it has arrangements in place to monitor and manage the performance of third parties involved in the DFG process. This performance information should be shared with service users to inform their decision upon which agent and builder to engage for their housing adaptation.</li> <li>• Formally accrediting contractors and continually monitoring user satisfaction will satisfy the Council that adequate safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable service users when builders are entering their homes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New model which will ensure the agents function undertaken in house thereby allowing greater monitoring and performance evaluation of the process and contractors used.</li> <li>• Use of E Tender Wales, Construction Line, and establishment of a DFG Framework of Contractors supports the accreditation of contractors, and supports greater monitoring by housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New model being implemented.</li> <li>• To be strengthened further once the DFG Framework is in place</li> </ul>
<p>P5 The Council needs to assure itself that it has appropriate controls in place to provide effective oversight of the adaptations process, given it is ultimately responsible for the delivery of the adaptation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of new arrangements underway which will meet this requirement</li> <li>• Removal of the 3rd Party Agent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DFG grant officer aligned to the specific citizens DFG will oversee the DFG end to end, but will be supported by the DFG Grants team</li> </ul>

		ensuring effective oversight
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## Appendix 3

### Recommendations from Regional Internal Audit Shared Service Audit Report March 2020. Audit Year 19/20

Recommendation	Action	Progress
SS1. An information guide for applicants is produced and made available on-line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To implement within 3 months of decision on new model.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In progress</li> <li>• New model being progressed and information to be made available when completed</li> </ul>
SS2. The processes are reviewed to be as efficient as possible and documented procedure notes to be put in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To undertake -</li> <li>• New processes i.e. the meeting of applicant, contractor and council surveyor to discuss and agree works at one meeting rather than several</li> <li>• The cessation of the provision of external agency contact details</li> <li>• A new process with V2C to approve works at the start of the process</li> <li>• Discussions with V2C regarding 'top up' funding for complex cases</li> <li>• New process with Social Services COT team to oversee DFG referrals and Housing OT to deal with any queries</li> <li>• To amend OT referral form to clarify DFG point of contact and referral route</li> <li>• Review Paperwork and put in place interim arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In progress</li> <li>• New model being progressed.</li> <li>• Pilot tender process – lessons learned identified Pilot recording process established to monitor schemes</li> <li>• Pilot procedure notes written for E tender Wales which will be updated when model finalised</li> <li>• Cessation of the Agent Delivery Model April 1<sup>st</sup> 2021</li> <li>• A new process with V2C to approve works at the start of the process established</li> <li>• Discussions held with V2C regarding 'top up' funding for complex cases</li> <li>• New process with Social Services COT team to oversee DFG referrals and Housing OT to deal with any queries</li> <li>• OT referral form to clarify DFG point of contact and referral route amended</li> <li>• Paperwork reviewed and interim arrangements put in place</li> </ul>
SS3 That the website differentiated between Children's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web site to be progressed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not Started target date for completion March 2022</li> </ul>

and Adults applications		
SS4 That the relationship with Princess of Wales Hospital continues to be strengthened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To take the following actions –</li> <li>• Housing based OT and POW hospital to meet weekly</li> <li>• Housing OT to attends POW screening meetings</li> <li>• Undertake Joint assessments in some complex cases</li> <li>• Housing OT to undertake assessment of children's cases on POW behalf</li> <li>• Referral paperwork to be brought in line with adult referrals to ensure consistency</li> <li>• Data recording to be brought in line with adult referrals and recorded on WCCIS ensuring monitoring and recording</li> <li>• Develop strong relationships to lead to more collaborative working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
SS5 That the team continues to ensure it has adequate staffing to process applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within 12 months of adoption of new service model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In progress</li> <li>• 2 new permanent posts appointed</li> <li>• 1 agency post in place</li> <li>• Further posts being advertised</li> </ul>
SS6 That a review of the Agent's is undertaken and only up to date accurate details are sent to applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review undertaken and provision of agency information ceased</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
SS7 That steps continue to be taken to reduce the average number of days a DFG takes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going target to introduce -</li> <li>• Tendering process to speed up average times</li> <li>• New operational PI's to be established to support KPI's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going</li> </ul>