PURPOSE

The Adullam Homes Board, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and all staff who work for Adullam Homes are committed to providing the highest possible level of service in satisfying the requirements of their Tenants Resident and Service Users (TRS)/Partners/Commissioners and Stakeholders. This level of service is achieved through the application of quality management and the adoption of a system of processes and procedures that reflect the competency of Adullam Homes in all its business relationships.

This policy will assist staff at all levels in understanding how quality impacts their areas of business, whilst also improving work processes and efficiency. The policy provides a framework of quality objectives and includes a commitment to meet applicable requirements that are statutory, or regulatory as well as to continually review and improve the services provided by Adullam Homes.

1. INTRODUCTION

This Quality Assurance Policy demonstrates Adullam Homes commitment to continuous improvement of all its services and to establishing, implementing and maintaining a Quality Management System (QMS) through a number of different processes in varying operational areas.

ISO 9001:2015 is an internationally recognised Quality Management standard. Whilst Adullam does not wish to formally achieve this accreditation, the methodology and seven key principles have been an integral part of this Policy's creation.

2. SCOPE

This Policy documents the methods we use to consider and strive to improve the quality of our services. This document also supports Adullam's values, with specific linkages to **'Striving for Excellence'** and the Strategic Pledge of **'Being the Best we can'.**

The Policy has been created to:

- Document the keyways in which we strive to improve quality throughout the organisation.
- Assist in promoting a culture/ethos where quality is focused on by all staff.
- Help us meet legal requirements.
- Aid compliance with the regulatory framework and service level requirements.
- Outline the ways in which we challenge and scrutinise our services and departments.
- Assist with Risk Management, incorporating a range of controls to identify and mitigate strategic and operational risk.
- Provide a robust performance management framework which allows effective responses to under performance and continuous improvement.
- Create flexibility to manage unforeseen situations effectively within our operating environment.
- Deliver an independent benchmarking system to review project/service quality and monitor improvement.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility for delivering quality services rests with everyone at Adullam and all employees are encouraged to understand and embrace this policy in their day-to-day work through regular discussion, communication and training.

The overall responsibility for maintaining and evaluating our Quality Management Agenda rests with:

- Adullam Homes Housing Association Limited Board
- Finance and Audit Risk Management (FARM)
- Operations Committee
- Senior Leadership Team
- People committee

Each area above will have responsibility to monitor the Strategic Plan, Business Planning and objectives, key operational actions and audit findings and risk.

All staff are responsible for identifying Tenants, Residents and Service User (TRS) requirements and recommending action and improvements in relation to their roles and business area. These suggestions are reported to respective line managers and Regional Managers for escalation through the governance structure.

4. ADULLAM'S COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

Quality and improvement are integral to all our working practices. We believe that it is critical to the success and development of our business and in turn to increase TRS satisfaction with regard to the services we provide.

'Quality is a degree of excellence, which is ever changing'

4.1. Tenant, Resident and Service User (TRS) Focus

We depend on our TRS and are committed to supplying high quality homes, accommodation and services. Our aim is always to meet or exceed our TRS' expectations. This can be evidenced through Adullam's Co-Production, Involvement & Engagement (CIE) Strategy, Tenant Satisfaction Measures and through the implementation and monitoring of Project Health Scorecards for all Projects, Services and Regions.

We listen, involve and monitor our TRS feedback and satisfaction in the following ways:

- Capturing and sharing local good practice through "Bright ideas" forums and allowing the results to influence the way we work across the wider association.
- The monthly monitoring of various TRS related PIs for every Project, Service and Region including but not limited to:
  - TRS Satisfaction % at entrance.
  - TRS Satisfaction % at exit.
  - Client: Staff Ratio; and
  - Number of OCN accredited peers in service.
- The monitoring of the Organisation wide Balanced Scorecard.

- Updating and improving our website to help provide TRS with easy read documents, better access to information, routes of online communication and a generally improved experience of Adullam online.
- By nominating Tenant Scrutiny Champions to engage and attend a formal Tenant Scrutiny Panel. We promote the importance of Scrutiny Champions' time and commitment through training, mentoring and meeting expenses.
- Inviting TRS to the Operations Committee on a quarterly basis to hear their real-life experiences.
- Tenant Scrutiny Kitemark
- By holding an Organisation wide annual CIE week in March of every year.
- A new Tenant Engagement & Satisfaction Lead post has now been established to amongst other duties ensure Adullam Homes meets the required TSM's.
- Coproduction Policy /action plan

Complaints and the Housing Ombudsman Service – it is essential that Adullam Homes adhere to the Complaints Code of Practice and that we remain compliant against the code. Via the complaint's tracker group (a group of regional staff set up to monitor the complaints process and data generated) and a dedicated complaints officer post focus we will scrutinise and ensure the code is being followed by monitoring:

- Number of complaints.
- Average length of resolution for complaints.
- The process is being correctly followed.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures Standard (TSM's) – Tenant Satisfaction Measure - The TSMs include 12 tenant perception measures that must be generated from tenant perception surveys, and 10 TSMs that must be generated from management information. The TSM results themselves give insight about whether landlords are delivering the outcomes of the standards.

Consumer Standards –

1. **The Safety and Quality Homes Standard:** this will focus on ensuring that landlords understand the condition of all of their homes and make use of that data to provide safe, quality homes. Landlords are required to deliver repairs, maintenance and planned improvements in an effective, efficient and timely manner, and must be clear on their health and safety responsibilities.
2. **The Transparency, Influence, and Accountability Standard:** the standard requires landlords to be transparent with tenants, treat them fairly and respectfully so they can access services. Tenants must be able to voice concerns where necessary, influence decisions, and hold the landlord accountable.
3. **The Neighbourhood and Community Standard:** Landlords need to engage with relevant parties to ensure tenants live in secure, well-maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes.
4. **The Tenancy Standard:** This standard outline fair allocation and letting of homes, as well as requirements for managing tenancies by landlords.

The new Competence and Conduct Standard will come into force in October 2026. There will be a transition period after this date giving providers additional time to comply with qualification requirements for senior housing managers and executives. Larger registered providers that own 1,000 or more units of social housing will have three years, and smaller providers that own less than 1,000 units will have four years.

The new Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs) for Registered Providers of social housing, including housing associations will come into force from October 2026, providers will be required to proactively publish information about the management of their homes. From April 2027, they will be expected to provide tenants with access to information on request.
The new requirements will improve professionalism within the sector, ensuring tenants receive a good service and are always listened to and treated with respect and dignity.

The new standards to be introduced are:

- Competency and Conduct – requiring housing managers to obtain specific qualifications; and
- Social tenant access to information requirements (STAIR) – allowing tenants to request certain information from their landlord about performance and compliance.

New Standards 2025/26 - Work has already begun to integrate the new Standards for 2025/2026 and to incorporate these proposed within both operational areas.

Updates on progress against compliance against the Consumer Standards are sent to the Adullam Board twice a year.

4.2. Leadership

The purpose of the Board at Adullam Homes Housing Association Limited is to lead the organisation innovatively within a framework of sound governance, continuous improvement, quality and prudent control, which enables risks to be properly assessed and managed. The Board has ultimate responsibility for the Association, this includes determining strategic direction and key policies, establishing and overseeing control and risk management frameworks, satisfying itself on the integrity of financial information and ensuring that the organisation achieves its aims and objectives providing quality services.

The Board (and its sub committees) sets the tone and influences the culture of risk management within the Association, including the level of acceptable risk (risk appetite).
The Board should understand the risks that are specific to Adullam. The Sector Risk Profile (SRP) published by the Regulator of Social Housing provides a framework and update to help boards appreciate the range of common risks.

SLT are committed to maintaining compliance with all statutory, regulatory, legislative and contractual requirements. Through regular monitoring of projects, regions and organisation wide performance at all levels we will provide an internal environment in which our people can become fully involved in achieving the organisation’s objectives through quality services.

4.3. Involvement of people (Staff)

Our staff are critical to effective service delivery and must be able to deliver an efficient and professional service. Issues such as low competency levels, high turnover and high sickness absence can impact on the financial viability of a scheme as well as the outcomes for the service users and our ability to meet commissioner and stakeholder expectations.

People Committee - The Committee considers the structures and systems required to effectively lead the Organisation in relation to remuneration, HR strategy and related matters and for making recommendations on these issues to the Board. The Committee ensures that the Organisation has the appropriate policies and procedures to attract, retain and motivate members of the executive management and the wider staff team.

The Committee will receive by exception, matters concerning HR, where there is a possibility of legal action and or reputational damage to the Association.

At Adullam, there are a number of ways in which we are working to ensure the recruitment, retention and development of quality permanent (Human Resources) and agency (Adullam Social Enterprise) staff:

4.3.1. Recruitment and staffing

The Human Resources department is responsible for the implementation and management of an efficient system for the recruitment, selection, training and onboarding of staff at all levels.

4.3.2. Training and Development

All roles in the organisation have an identified list of mandatory training. Any specific additional requirements are identified via training needs analysis and through the Striving for Excellence process.

The main role of HR in Training is to:

- carry out training needs analysis as part of workforce planning process.
- collate training identified through the Striving for Excellence process.
- implementation and delivery of training program.
- evaluation of training program effectiveness
- development of career paths
- ensure that all managers responsible for recruitment have the relevant training; and
- manage and report on the use of Adullam's Virtual College training platform which is accessible to all staff.

4.3.2..1. Striving For Excellence (SFE) – performance management process

- intended to help people perform to the best of their abilities in alignment with the Associations goals.
- it views employees in the context of the broader workplace system and encourages their input in goalsetting.
- focuses on accountability and transparency and fosters a clear understanding of expectations.
- rather than just annual performance reviews, performance management provides ongoing feedback to employees.

4.3.2.2. Employee Voice – this group is made up of staff from across Adullam whose aim is to work together to identify and take forward opportunities to improve people related practices for the benefit of both staff and the Association.

4.3.3. Communications Team

We have a corporate responsibility to deliver key quality communications to all staff.

Our team do this in the following ways:

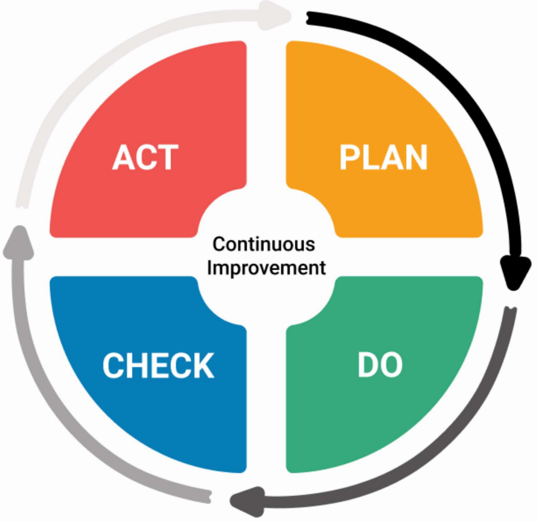
- Production and distribution of a monthly staff newsletter.
- Staff briefing document weekly.
- Attendance at monthly Regional Managers’ meetings and quarterly SLT meetings to provide performance updates.
- Sharing of good practice and success stories
- Managing the Adullam Homes website
- Promotion of our social media platforms on which information is added at least once a week.

We monitor communications performance through the results of an annual staff survey which is focused on objectives for the year, engagement, values, training, development etc with the results reported to SLT. We monitor staff activity on our social media platforms through the use of analytics provided by the platforms.

4.4. Process approach

4.4.1. Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) cycle

In line with ISO9001 guidance we apply the Plan Do Check Act (PDCA) cycle to our process approach. See diagram below:



The PDCA cycle is flexible in that it can be applied to a project as a whole or each of the tasks within it. We evidence the PDCA cycle in practice through the usage and quarterly monitoring of departmental Team Workplans and also in mandatory Striving for Excellence meetings.

4.4.2. Policy Hub and Policy Control

Adullam strives to achieve a consistent approach to the application of its Policy and Procedures. This is primarily evidenced by the storage and management of all formal documentation through Policy Hub and the Document Control Policy which explains the process for developing and reviewing policy and similar documents.

4.5. Improvement

Improvement is a constant cycle (as specified in 4.4.1 above). All staff are expected to identify weaknesses in their Projects/Regions and present for discussion at weekly team meetings. Where matters are more sensitive, they can be raised in one-to-one meetings/supervisions with line managers.

The Senior Leadership Team, Regional Manager's and Quality Assurance Manager determine and select opportunities for improvement and implement any necessary actions to meet TRS requirements and improve TRS satisfaction. We focus on the following three key types of improvement:

1. Improving services and accommodation to meet requirements as well as to address future needs and expectations of our TRS.
2. Correcting, preventing or reducing operational inefficiencies or undesired effects; and
3. Improving the performance and effectiveness of the quality management systems currently in place.

We outsource the Internal Audit of all business functions, with all departments/areas being subject to review in line with the Annual Audit Plan which is guided by discussions in FARM and SLT. Recommendations or actions arising from audits are monitored and reported on by the Quality Assurance Manager.

Regional Managers are also invited to refer services to be reviewed internally via their quarterly reports to the Quality Assurance Manager via the project health scorecards process and quarterly performance reports.

Each Project/Service has a 'Service Specification' which is agreed and monitored by Commissioners and respective stakeholders/partners, in line with the contractual agreement. Where issues/improvements are identified (either internally or by commissioning authorities), the Quality Assurance Manager will ensure a review of the Service/Project in line with contractual agreements. The outcome of these reviews must be recorded and monitored on the Project Improvement Plan.

4.6. Managing Performance and Ensuring Compliance

Managing how we are performing and if we are compliant against contracts, current regularity codes and practices are key to ensuring we are providing quality-based services within Adullam Homes.

Quarterly Quality Assurance Report - This report is submitted to SLT and details all work completed in that relevant quarter against the Quality Assurance Team Workplan and reports upon progress against other quality-based initiatives and other areas of work Adullam Homes are currently undertaking to address regulatory and compliance requirements.

Our performance and operational data is taken from Pyramid G2 (Adullam's bespoke Housing Management System), which is audited for Data Quality on an Annual basis by the Quality Assurance Manager. The results of these audits are provided in a report to the SLT Operation's Committee and regional staff.

The HR department is responsible for the quality of data in Cascade (Human Resources system). Reports are provided independently from the HR department and are reviewed by the SLT on a monthly basis.

Health and Safety Data is held between Pyramid and Peninsula (Health and Safety Management System) and is under constant review and monitoring by the Health and Safety department, alongside the Asset Manager.

Ofsted - Auditing and Compliance Procedure for Ofsted Services

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the Monthly Ofsted Compliance Audit Tool is completed accurately, consistently and in line with:

- Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023
- Ofsted's Quality Standards for Supported Accommodation
- Organisational quality assurance and safeguarding expectations

The audit provides assurance that:

- Young people are safe.
- Support and independence work is high quality.
- Staff are trained and supervised.
- Environmental standards meet regulatory requirements.
- Leadership and governance are effective.

4.6.1. Balanced Scorecard

The Balanced Scorecard includes various performance indicators reported on a monthly basis to the Operations Committee. The Balanced Scorecard is linked closely to Adullam's Business Plan, Risk Register and respective Action Plan to ensure that performance monitoring is aligned with Adullam's Values and Strategic Pledges.

4.6.2. Team Plans Management Group (TPMG)

Each department / business area at Adullam has a Team Workplan with clear priorities and milestones, for which progress is monitored through the quarterly Team Plan Management Meeting, led by the Quality Assurance Manager and Executive Director of Housing and Support.

The purpose of this group is to provide a quarterly update on progress made against workplan priorities stated in Team Workplans and to inform on any risk or concerns identified. This is completed through a 'surgery' meeting with key operational leads and senior officers. Risks highlighted will be amalgamated into one document with lead officers identified for actions. They can then be shared at SLT and noted or where required form part of a memorialised summary report to whichever committee is relevant or suitable.

4.6.3. Project Health Scorecards (PHS) and PHS Contract Compliance Review

The Quality Assurance Manager is responsible for the completion of internal Service Reviews based on failing KPIs raised by Regional Managers through monthly monitoring and quarterly reporting of the Project Health Scorecards.

Purpose of PHS review – quarterly review of PHS reports identify those that need further scrutiny or review per the regional Managers. The Quality Team will meet with the relevant regional manager and liaise on actions, outcomes and updates. Reports will then be generated within PHS quarterly on progress. Areas for review and updates and progress will also be highlighted in the overall quality report sent to SLT.

4.6.4. Monthly HR Metrics to SLT

The HR Department produces monthly HR Metrics to SLT by Corporate Area, Region and Business Area.

4.6.5. Quarterly Performance Reporting

This report compares performance in operational areas against the previous quarter and helps staff to address areas where there is underperformance. The production of this data also assists staff when reporting to local authorities and other commissioning bodies. Regional reports are also provided separately so data can be further reviewed and analysed by managers.

4.6.6. Internal Audit

The Finance and Risk Management Committee (FARM) will advise the Board on the appointment and remuneration of internal auditors and the scope of their work, approve the annual audit plan and monitor progress on delivery of the plan, consider the issues and management responses presented within internal audit reports, monitor progress against actions, to ensure that management react appropriately to implement any recommendations arising from the reports. FARM will receive an annual report from Internal Audit and build this into the Committee's annual report to the Board. They will also meet with the Internal Auditors at least annually without the presence of officers.

4.6.7. Adullam Homes regulation/statutory compliance:

- Consumers Standards
- Sector Risk Profile
- Tenant Satisfaction Measure's
- Ofsted
- The Housing Ombudsman Service
- *The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 – still in consultation*

#See also point 5

4.6.8. Benchmarking

The Quality Assurance Team work closely with Acuity to produce comparable data for reviewing performance against KPI's and the balanced scorecard. The PI's for benchmarking includes data relating to Finance, HR, Assets, Complaints and Customer Satisfaction. Acuity have recently added PI's that correspond to the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

4.6.9. Government Data Quality Assessment Framework Review – current compliance

- **Adullam Homes Data Quality Policy** - This policy sets out Adullam Homes approach to data quality, the quality of data, how it is captured, stored and used.
- **Adullam Homes Data Maturity Model** - Data maturity models are tools used to assess an organisation's level of data capability and to highlight areas where progress can be made. Data capability is broken down into a set of themes which are assessed against a series of maturity levels. Adullam Homes are currently assessed at levels 2 to 3.
- **Adullam Homes Data Quality Action Plan** - this plan details the business-critical data areas for Adullam Homes.

4.6.10. Adullam Homes Business Planning Process

The Adullam Homes Business Planning Process formalises and details how we will improve and manage our Strategic Plan/Business Plan Objectives/Internal Control and Risk. The plan will seek to utilise current controls/forums/groups/meetings to monitor and report risk, compliance and the achievement of key goals. These areas will discuss, review and address actions raised and the emerging risks affecting the housing sector/Adullam generally.

The objectives of the Plan are:

- To utilise current reporting forums and groups to monitor risk
- For delegated reporting groups to meet to review progress of the Business Plan and actions with the relevant staff or designated officer if required
- To monitor progress on audit findings and risk and address any operational problems.
- To put in place solutions where challenges arise operationally.
- To ensure Adullam's Board/Staff are kept informed of progress where required.
- To ensure Adullam Homes successfully implements improvements and actions identified that are delivered on time, to the required quality and provide better value for money for all its services.

4.7. Relationship Management

In line with our Co-Production, Involvement and Engagement Strategy we ensure that Adullam Tenants, Residents and Service Users (TRS) are at the heart of what we do, helping the Association meet our values, achieve our mission, improve our performance and shape our services. We will continue to collect and analyse data/feedback to find trends and issues that could be useful for improving communication and the services we provide.

Good/effective relationship management will help Adullam Homes to:
- Attract new business.
- Mitigate risks.
- Help us to be more cost effective.
- Build our brand.
- Improve efficiencies.
- Enhance communication.

As well as our TRS, Adullam and its staff, suppliers, contractors, commissioners and other partners / stakeholders are all interdependent, we will strive to develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships to improve efficiency and quality within all Adullam services.

5. ACCREDITATIONS AND SUBMISSIONS

Adullam Homes are committed to meeting and achieving all its Registered Provider reporting and statutory requirements and regulations in line with our accreditations and memberships of regulatory bodies.

Regulatory Body/Organisation Requirements:

1. **The Regulator of Social Housing** - We are governed by the Regulator of Social Housing in all social housing activities. We must keep up to date with all regulatory changes and commit to complying with all regulatory requirements. The RSH requires that we submit our Annual Accounts / Audit Management Letter and an annual statistical data return to the NROSH+ Website.
2. **Ofsted** – Adullam achieved Ofsted certified status in February 2024. We must fully comply with the with Ofsted Standards Regulations (2023) under the Department of Education by providing semi-independent and supported housing for Looked after Children and Care Leavers who are aged 16 and 17 years old.
3. **Financial Conduct Authority** - We must submit our Financial Accounts on an Annual basis for review and comply with all other FCA reporting requirements.
4. **Property Redress Scheme** - We are members of the Property Redress Scheme as required by law. We pay an annual membership fee which allows our TRS to complain to the PRS when we have breached our legal obligations or codes of practice / policy and procedures.
5. **Birmingham Voluntary Services Council (BVSC) Supported Exempt Accommodation Quality Standard** - As accredited members of the Supported Exempt Accommodation Quality Standards, we pay an annual membership fee which ensures our arrangements for Supported Exempt Accommodation properties are subject to an annual review by the BVCS Quality Standards Team, resulting in an action plan for improvement which will be monitored internally and by the BVSC.
6. **Homeless Link Membership** - As full members of Homeless Link we pay an annual fee and gain access to a network which offers discounted training courses, consultancy and other events, advice and support, information and resources and other benefits.
7. **Investors in People Silver** (IIP) – Determines how the organisation is performing against the ‘We Invest in People Framework’ and indicates how to improve workplace culture over time in such areas as leadership, employee engagement, communication, organisational culture, and work practices.
8. **Tenant Participation Advisory Service** - By paying the annual membership fee to join the TPAS list of accredited landlords we gain access to a network of landlords and a

platform providing advice, support, guidance and practical resources necessary to exceed the regulatory standards.

9. **ROSPA** - We pay a submission fee every time we require assessment/audit of our Health and Safety arrangements (usually annually). The results of this audit determine the level of our arrangements against national benchmark standards and allow us to use the respective ROSPA kitemark.
10. **Housing Ombudsman Service** - By paying the annual membership fee to the Housing Ombudsman Service our TRSs can use the Housing Ombudsman Service to independently review the way in which we handle our complaints, where TRS are not satisfied by the outcome.
11. **Information Commissioners Office (ICO)** – Adullam Homes are an organisation that processes personal data and is subject to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Under the Data Protection (Charges and Information) Regulations 2018 (the Regulations) we pay an annual data protection fee.
12. ***Note currently at first consultation -***
#The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 *became law in August 2023. The Act gives the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government powers to:*

    - *Introduce National Supported Housing Standards for England, which will provide minimum standards for both the property and the care or support provided in supported homes.*
    - *Require English local authorities to create locally led supported accommodation licensing schemes.*
    - *Introduce a strategic planning duty for local authorities, which will include collecting data on the supply of homes, a forecast of future need, and a delivery plan.*
    - *Create a national expert advisory panel to monitor the sector, which will report to the Secretary of State.*

    #<u>The government may consult in early 2026 on SHROA regulations developed based on the Consultation</u>

6. IMPLEMENTATION/ACCESS/TRAINING

This policy will be published on Policy Hub and disseminated to all staff via the staff newsletter.

7. REVIEW /MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Assistant Director of Quality and Support, Senior Leadership Team and Quality Assurance Manager.

This policy may be reviewed at any time at the request of either staff or management but will automatically be reviewed after the first twelve months and thereafter on a 3 yearly basis from the date of approval or as and when statutory changes are deemed necessary.

Staff can seek advice on this document from their Line Manager/Regional Manager/Quality Assurance Manager/Assistant Director of Quality and Support

8. REFERENCES AND LINKS TO OTHER DOCUMENTS

- ISO9001:2015 Guidance Document
- The Social Housing Regulatory Standards –
    - Sector risk profile
    - Consumers standards
    - Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- Ofsted Standards regulation (2023) DofE
- Children and Young Peoples Services Quality Assurance Procedure DEC 2025
- Business Planning Process
- Board and Sub-Committees' Terms of Reference
- Strategic Priorities - Plan on a Page (Easy Read Strategic Priorities)
- Co-Production, Involvement and Engagement Strategy
- Value for Money Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Communications Strategy
- Team Workplans
- Business Plan
- Risk Register
- Risk Management Policy
- Project Health Scorecards
- Balanced Score Card
- Data Quality Policy/Data Maturity Model/Data Action Plan
- Probity Policy
- Internal Audit Plan
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy

9. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Easy Read Quality Policy