

Progress on previous recommendations

Previous recommendation	Action taken and impact	Categorisation	Improvement still required?
<i>From previous probation inspection (2022)</i>	<i>Summary of action taken and impact</i>	<i>Sufficient progress/ some progress/ no progress</i>	<i>Yes/no If yes, consider repeating the recommendation</i>
Improve the quality of work to assess, plan for, manage, and review risk of harm, and utilise the region's support to achieve this.	Since coming into post, the head of PDU had built links with the region, meeting with performance and quality colleagues twice a month to review work. There was some effective management oversight evidenced through supervision and staff felt well supported. Practitioners told us that managers were sufficiently aware of their caseload, and the cases of concern. There was focus on specific areas during supervision, such as upcoming prison releases. This meant practitioners were scrutinised and oversight of cases did not rely solely on them raising the cases they were concerned about. Concentrator models for riskier domestic abuse and sexual offending cases were now in place, but we saw limited positive impact in our D2 casework. Work to keep people safe was insufficient in three out of the four D2 standards.	Some progress.	Yes
Ensure risk-related information is obtained and shared with other agencies in all relevant cases to support the assessment and management of risk of harm.	The 2022 report recommendation was based on practitioners not obtaining the information, which was far less of an issue during this inspection. Despite some recent improvements to strategic partnerships, there continued to be a barrier to the accessing of good quality information, which then limited the extent to which risk could be sufficiently understood, managed, and communicated to other professionals. Practitioners were engaged in a back and forth with other agencies, which was disrupting safeguarding.	Some progress	Yes

Ensure training is prioritised and evaluated to enhance the skills of the workforce.	There was a focus on a learning culture through peer-led monthly development days away from the office, incorporating lived experience. Practitioners were positive about the value of these events. We also heard of some excellent training for concentrators, such as that covering domestic abuse and brain injury. However, the work of probation services officers was of markedly lower quality than other grades of staff. The PSOs we met were largely committed and enthusiastic, but their potential was not being harnessed. There had been some under-investment in providing more rudimentary skills training to support them in public protection work. The 2022 report outlined poor quality work with staff pursuing PQiPs, which was far less of an issue during this inspection. There was enhanced support, with a structured plan for development/training sessions. We also saw multiple sources of support for staff taking PQiPs to access reflective case discussion.	Some progress	Yes
Ensure diversity is prioritised in strategic and operational practice	The head of service had acted on the previous recommendation by approaching partners at the local community safety partnership. A list of support services for diverse and minoritised groups was compiled and distributed to practitioners. Some initiatives had been developed for specific cohorts with multiple disadvantage (intensive supervision court, the divert scheme). The head of service was undertaking work as part of her role in the Cleveland Reducing Reoffending Group to understand barriers to engagement. However, we still saw practitioners completing work with people on probation without sufficiently considering their identity, background, diversity, and protected characteristics.	Some progress	Yes