Project Initiation Document

Project Details

Project: South East Region DfE Project Phase 2

Project Sponsors: Lucy Butler – DCS West Sussex; Peter Sandiford, Chief Executive ICHA

Project Lead: Mark Evans (SESLIP)

Project Manager: Rosemary Perry (SESLIP)

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Document Details

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Approvals

This document requires the following approvals:

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| Name | Role | Signature | Date | Version |
| Mark Evans | Project Lead |  | 3.12.20 | 1.2 |
| Lucy Butler | Co-Project Sponsor |  | 21.12.20 | 1.3 |
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| Project Board | Project Board |  |  |  |
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Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

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| Mark Evans | Project Lead | 12th November 2020 | 1.1 |
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Purpose of the Project Initiation Document

This Project Initiation Document describes the project known as “DfE Project Phase 2” (this is a working title which will be changed to reflect the relevance of the project as it proceeds). The project is funded by the Department for Education (DfE) as part of its “Improving Sufficiency Planning to Increase Stability and Permanence for Looked after Children” Programme. The sum awarded for the project is £128,600 for the financial year 2020/21

The project builds on phase 1 which was also partly DfE funded and which successfully reported in May 2020.

**The overall aim of the second phase of this project is**:

To work with four local authorities, provider associations and, through them, providers to develop new and innovative provision for looked after children with a particular focus on the following key elements:

* Flexible, creative provision designed to meet the needs of complex children, including options to ‘step across’ various forms of provision (e.g. residential to fostering)
* Keeping children local, as close to their home address as possible
* Working with providers who already offer both residential and fostering services, developing joined up partnerships, enabling movement between each as appropriate to need
* Exploring options for considering lifetime costs for placements, the potential to invest in more intensive early interventions, with a view to improving outcomes and potentially reducing longer term costs
* Including measures of progress for children placed based on assessment at the point of placement (regularly reviewed up until placement end using an evidence-based assessment tool)

This project will be co-sponsored by Lucy Butler, Director of Children’s Services, West Sussex County Council and Peter Sandiford, Chief Executive, Independent Children’s Homes Association (ICHA). The project will involve four of the 19 authorities which make up the south east region for children’s services (West Sussex, Kent, Portsmouth and Milton Keynes) and who are members of the South East Sector Led Improvement Programme (SESLIP) as well as providers.

Project Lead and Project Management resources will be provided through SESLIP but paid for by the grant funding.

The project will have a separate project organisation, including project sponsors, project board and project manager and will be managed through a standard project management methodology.

Background to the Proposed Work

The SE Region DFE Project phase 2 develops solutions from the successful “Strategic Needs Analysis and Recommendations for Future Commissioning Arrangements” submitted May 2020.

Referencing the conclusions in Chapter 15 of the document, the project continued over the summer, with funding from SESLIP (SE Sector Led Improvement Programme). Directors of Childrens’ Services (DCSs) were engaged, identifying the most pressing areas for service development and implementation. The following key themes were identified for further work:

* **Keeping children local**: the needs analysis evidenced that many children are placed at considerable distance due to placement availability rather than need (200 children - 16.5% placed over 100 miles from home). The belief is that it is generally better for children, local authorities and providers for children to be placed close to home.
* **Preventing the use of unregistered care:** The needs analysis highlighted a small but significant group of children placed in high cost settings that are not regulated.
* **Sufficiency:** The analysis identified children from the South East placed in other distant regions for no obvious good reason. It suggested that there are children in residential care whose needs could possibly be better met in foster care. Future work needs to include options that promote permanency which are sustainable and good value.
* **New placement options (e.g. hybrid local authority/independent providers, developing links between residential and foster care):** The DCSs were firmly of the view that traditional approaches cannot resolve the challenges faced and that true innovation and some element of risk sharing, both in the placement options developed and commissioning approach adopted are the only way to make real progress.

Residential and fostering providers were engaged in this discussion and, with the considerable support of the Independent Childrens’ Homes Association (ICHA), whose Chief Executive remains co-sponsor, and the National Association of Fostering Providers (NAFP), whose Chief Executive is a member of the Board, a conference was arranged in July 2020, which was attended by 8 local authorities, 6 residential care home providers, one IFA and Ofsted. The conference was tasked with discussing the above themes and agreed that they should be further explored and used as the basis of a bid for further funding from the DfE as part of their wider “Improving Sufficiency Planning to Increase Stability and Permanence for Looked after Children” programme.

Objectives

The project will involve local authorities, provider organisations and providers (through a formal market consultation exercise), and young people, designing this new approach with a view to local authorities choosing to start delivery by July 2021. To achieve this the project will deliver:

* A co-produced framework (authorities, providers and young people) for the new service(s) to support procurement by local authorities (starting in July 2021)
* Market interest in delivering services in accordance with the co-produced service framework
* Legal framework/road map for roll out of the work (robust documentation to support authorities in implementation)
* Financial mechanism that balances the needs of providers and authorities which evidences value for money
* Outline business processes and forms, including data items and KPIs which can be used by local authorities and providers in developing their services
* Compelling outline business case for use by local authorities

Values statement

The local authorities and the provider organisations to looked after children are joint partners in the development of this project. Central to its success is recognition of the importance of working together within permitted legal and procurement frameworks to understand mutual issues and developing a sense of openness and challenge across sectors.

Scope

The project will deliver an innovative, co-produced model for local authorities to use to support procurement of packages of fostering and residential services to meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people who are looked after.

It is a “proof of concept” project which will stop at the point where a framework is complete ready for use; the project will not be involved in the actual tendering or procurement of any such service.

The scope of the project covers the following:

* Four local authorities and two provider associations in the south east region, who will contribute to the detailed project work and the production of the framework
* Children and young people who are looked after and who have complex needs (and possibly those on the edge of care - as defined by Phase 1 of the project)
* The remaining 15 authorities in the south east (within the SESLIP region) who have an interest in the outcome of the project and who may use the model in the future

Any provider who may respond to the market consultation process

The scope of the project does not include:

* Children known to the local authorities but not looked after (unless on the edge of care – see above)
* Children aged under 10 and/or those who do not have complex needs
* Authorities outside the south east region

Risk & Issue Management Strategy

Risks and Issues will be identified and managed by the project manager and routinely escalated to the project team and then (if necessary) Project Sponsors. Unresolved risks will be escalated by the Project Sponsors to the Project Board

Deliverables

Each deliverable relates to a workstream in the project, each with a workstream lead who will ensure that the components of the workstream are delivered to time, cost and quality

| Item | Components | Project Objective |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Co-produced framework, including outline business case  (lead Mark Evans) | * Development of agreed vision * Development of underpinning principles * Outline scope of potential new service(s) for informal consultation * Design and deliver informal consultation process for local authorities and provider associations * Initial legal and procurement advice * Evaluate outcome of informal consultation * Design, model and test potential commercial structures * Design, model and test potential financial arrangements * Detailed scoping and specification for further consultation process * Consultation process * Establish market interest through consultation process * Evaluate consultation process * Refine detailed specification * Re-draft legal documents * Develop business processes and data requirements for the new service * Deliver outline business case * Deliver detailed framework, legal, procurement and business processes for new service | A co-produced framework (authorities, providers and young people) to support procurement by local authorities (starting in July 2021)  Market interest in delivering services in accordance with the co-produced service framework  Legal framework/road map for roll out of the work (robust documentation to support authorities in implementation)  Financial mechanism that balances the needs of providers and authorities, which evidences value for money  Outline business processes and forms, including data items and KPIs which can be used by local authorities and providers in developing their services  Compelling outline business case for use by local authorities |
| User Participation  (lead Luke Rogers) | * Consult with young people to propose a meaningful name for the project * Identify how voice of children and young people can contribute to the project * Ensure appropriate support is given to participate * Commission specific responses as part of the consultation process for the framework * Develop appropriate media (e.g film. Photography) to support the project * Deliver learning (e.g. a new or improved set of skills) for the young people who participate in the project | A co-produced framework (authorities, providers and young people) to support procurement by local authorities (starting in July 2021) |
| Legal & Procurement Frameworks/Tools  (lead Leonie Cowen) | * Initial legal and procurement advice * Draft MOU between parties * Proposal for process for informal consultation stage * Provide comment and support to informal consultation process * First draft “Heads of Terms” of legal documents * Develop outline commercial and legal options * Support to consultation pack * Evaluation of consultation * Redraft of Heads of Terms for inclusion in outline business case * Finalisation of outline business case * Transfer of knowledge to LA procurement and legal professionals | A co-produced framework (authorities, providers and young people) to support procurement by local authorities (starting in July 2021)  Legal framework/road map for roll out of the work (robust documentation to support authorities in implementation)  Compelling outline business case for use by local authorities |
| Communications and Document Management (Lead Isabelle Gregory) | * Ensure appropriate branding of the project * Ensure appropriate communication and dissemination of the project * Set up and run appropriate groups to feed into the consultation (eg Lead LA Commissioners) * Upload appropriate information onto the SESLIP website * Assist other stakeholders with website content * Identify mechanism for the secure storage of and access to key documents | A co-produced framework (authorities, providers and young people) to support procurement by local authorities (starting in July 2021) |
| Project Management (Lead Rosemary Perry) | * Ensure MOU is signed by all authorities * Develop PID for sign off by the Board * Develop and maintain project plan * Develop and maintain risks and issues log and report to project board as required * Monitor the financial plan for the project * Identify resource issue for the project and escalate as required * Liaise with SESLIP Programme * Liaise with DfE and ensure that project monitoring requirements are met * Manage information flows to the Project Board and Project Team | All Objectives |

Stakeholders

| Stakeholder | Interest |
| --- | --- |
| Looked After Children | May be impacted by the outcomes of the project; would expect to have at least as good or improved outcomes as a result of the project |
| SESLIP Programme | SESLIP provides project resources and ensures feedback to local authority DCSs not directly involved in the project |
| DfE | Provides the funding and will expect deliverables; timescales and budget to be adhered to |
| Independent Children’s Homes Association (ICHA) and National Association of Fostering Providers (NAFP) | Providing nominated resources and direction to the project; feedback on progress of the project to membership through both Chief Executives |
| Participating LAs | Involved in the day to day workings of the project; interested in the outcomes and development of future strategies; local authority budget holders and setters will be interested in the efficiency outcomes of the project; current purchasing/procurement processes may change as a result of the project |
| Participating Providers | Have the opportunity to formally work in partnership and co-produce the strategic intentions of the project; may be impacted by changes in commissioning intentions/strategy |
| Other agencies | Commissioning decisions in local authorities may have an impact on future decision making in other agencies |

Project Management Team Structure

**Project Governance**

The project is funded by the Department for Education (DfE) as part of its “Improving Sufficiency Planning to Increase Stability and Permanence for Looked after Children” Programme. The sum awarded for the project is £128,600 for the financial year 2020/21

The Project will have a stand-alone governance structure with a Project Board representing the major project partners/interests, There is also a number of groups/interests which the project will need to report to on a regular basis (hereafter referred to as the Key Groups):

a) **The DFE**: to report back as required by the DfE in terms of progress against the plan and budget and key deliverables for the project

b) **The SESLIP Steering Group:** The SESLIP Steering Group provides resources for the project as part of its overall programme of work; regular reports will be made back to the Steering Group as required by the Programme Manager

c) **The DCS Group:** The Directors of Children’s Services of the 19 authorities involved in the project will receive regular reports on the project from the DCS West Sussex (Joint Project Sponsor). The DCS Group will be involved in setting the overall direction for the project; agreeing the engagement of their own authorities; make recommendations for future phases and/or funding

d) **The Provider CEO Group:** This group will receive regular updates from the Chief Executive of ICHA (Joint Project Sponsor) and will contribute to setting the overall direction for the project; agree the engagement of their own agencies and make recommendations for future phases and/or funding

**Project Organisation**

Key Groups

DFE

SESLIP Steering Group

DCS Group

Provider CEO Group

Joint Project Sponsors

DCS West Sussex

Chief Executive ICHA

Project Board

(See below for membership)

Project Team

(see below for membership)

Stakeholder Groups

e.g Local Authority representative groups

Local/national provider groups/management committees

User representatives

| Name | Role | Responsibilities |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Lucy Butler  Peter Sandiford | Joint Project Sponsors | Lead and direct the project; chairs the Project Board; makes key decisions on behalf of the project board; updates the Key Groups; takes key decisions and recommendations back to the Board; signs off documentation |
| Lucy Butler (DCS West Sussex); Peter Sandiford (CEO ICHA); Harvey Gallagher (CEO NAFP);  Alison Jeffrey (DCS Portsmouth);  Mac Heath (DCS Milton Keynes);  Matt Dunkley (DCS Kent); Andrea King (Local Authority Adviser, NHS England)  Mark Evans, Project Lead;  Rosemary Perry, Project Manager; | Project Board | Signs off key project documentation, including PID, project plan and risk and issues log;  Ensures that all memoranda of understanding and data sharing protocols are in place;  Ensures that the Project is meeting its objectives and delivering to time, cost and quality:  Takes key decisions relating to the project and ensures that these are regularly communicated to all stakeholders  Regularly reviews project risks and issues and ensures that appropriate action is taken:  Ensures that Key Groups are kept updated, consulted and that their views are fed into the development of the project:  Takes appropriate action to ensure that the project budget is monitored and used for the purposes of the project  Ensures that regular reporting is submitted to the DfE  Signs off deliverables of the project  Develops and signs off any funding bids for the next stage of the project |
| Mark Evans  Rosemary Perry | Project Lead Project Manager | Delegated authority from the Project Board for the day to day management of the project, including routine decision-making ;undertakes project work; maintains the project plan and project budget and other key documents; updates the Project Board and Project Sponsors; leads the project team |
| Mark Evans – Project Lead  Workstream Lead - Co-produced framework including outline business Case  Rosemary Perry – Project Manager  Workstream Lead – Project Management  Leonie Cowen – Specialist Legal and Procurement Adviser  Workstream Lead - Legal & Procurement Frameworks/Tools  Luke Rogers – Facilitator of user involvement/engagement  Workstream Lead – User Participation  Isabelle Gregory – Communications Lead  Workstream Lead – Communications and Document Management  Liz Cooper – Independent Children’s Homes Association  Andrew Rome – Specialist Financial Adviser  Sue Thompson – Data and business processes  Susan Tanner – West Sussex lead  Sivay Heer - Milton Keynes lead  Christy Holden - Kent lead  Caroline Smith – Kent lead  Hayden Ginns – Portsmouth lead  Stephen Humphries – WSCC link procurement/commissioning | Project Team | Work under the direction of the Project Managers/Leads and the Project Board to deliver the objectives of the project |
| SESLIP, DfE, LA and Providers Senior Representatives | Key Groups | Supports the Project Sponsors in guiding and directing the project; making key decisions on the project; ensuring that all organisations are engaged and active in the project |
| LA and Providers Representatives | Stakeholder Groups | Acts as link between project, local authority and providers; ensures project work is undertaken in LAs and providers; updates the project on risks and issues |

Financial Plan

A separate financial plan has been constructed and is available with a suite of papers available to the Board

Project Plan

A full project plan exists to reflect the steps required to fulfil each objective; this is a live document which is updated regularly and is available to the Board and other project members as required.