

## Delegated Decision Notice

This form is the written record of a key, significant operational or administrative decision taken by an officer.

<b>Decision type</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Significant Operational Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Decision
<b>Approximate value</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Below £500,000 <input type="checkbox"/> £500,000 to £1,000,000 <input type="checkbox"/> over £1,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/> below £25,000 <input type="checkbox"/> £25,000 to £100,000 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> £100,000 to £500,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Over £500,000	<input type="checkbox"/> below £25,000 <input type="checkbox"/> £25,000 to £100,000
<b>Director<sup>1</sup></b>	Director of Children & Families		
<b>Contact person:</b>	Peter Storrie, Head of Service Performance Management and Improvement	Telephone number: 0113 224 7053	
<b>Subject<sup>2</sup>:</b>	Acceptance and use of Department for Education grant funding for Children's Social Care Data and Digital Solutions – 2a User research into social worker inputted data to CMS and approval to directly award a contract to Social Finance Limited under Regulation 32(2)(b)(ii) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.		
	<p>What decision has been taken? (Set out all necessary decisions to be taken by the decision taker including decisions in relation to exempt information, exemption from call in etc.)</p> <p>The Chief Officer Resources &amp; Strategy agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve the receipt of the DfE grant funding and acceptance of terms for the grant.</li> <li>• Directly award a contract to Social Finance Limited ("Social Finance") to support work and undertake key background and research aspects of this work under Regulation 32(2)(b)(ii) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.</li> </ul> <p>A brief statement of the reasons for the decision (Include any significant financial, procurement, legal or equalities implications, having consulted with Finance, PACS, Legal, HR and Equality colleagues as appropriate)</p> <p>The work was bid for in response to a DfE prospectus asking authorities to contribute to the national social care practice and digital agenda. As an outstanding authority Leeds undertook as successful bid application aligning the DfE's detailed specification with our local priorities. In this case to researching potential improvements to social work case recording to ensure that we have quality case records while reducing the administrative burden and releasing capacity to work</p>		

<sup>1</sup> Give title of Director with delegated responsibility for function to which decision relates.

<sup>2</sup> If the decision is key and has appeared on the list of forthcoming key decisions, the title of the decision should be the same as that used in the list

with children and families. Part of this is ensuring how we have locally and nationally robust, but not unnecessarily burdensome in its collection, data (evidence). The DfE will fund by invoice costs incurred up to the limits of the grant award. Legal and procurement advice has been incorporated.

DFE – funding agreement letter highlights that  
*Recording of information and data is an important element of social work. It provides information for decision-making, and records that help those that have received children’s social care services make sense of their life story. Part of what social workers record is directly relevant to their social work with and record-keeping for the children and families on their caseload. They also spend part of their time recording information and data for wider audiences and purposes not directly related to this.*  
*CMS are designed to support both social work with children and families and statutory data collection, but we have been told that statutory data collection is prioritised in how they are structured. It has been suggested that this can get in the way of achieving CMS that support good social work.*  
*Social workers frequently told the independent review of children’s social care that strict conditions for when, how and what data must be input into CMS directly influences their practice*  
*To help us think about how recording could be made less burdensome and time-consuming for social workers, we want to understand in more detail what information and data social workers are recording, and how social workers’ data recording is impacting their social work practice. We also want to understand more about the value of the information and data that social workers record through their CMS (to them and the children and families they work with, and to others), and whether there might be ways to gather information and data that is of benefit to the wider CSC system in a way that reduces the recording burden on social workers and makes it easier to design CMS that support good social work*

This work will help improve outcomes and mitigate demand pressures and it is supportive of local workforce priorities. It provides Leeds City Council up to £319,151 of grant funding, split £153,568 for 2022/23 and £165,583 for 2023/24. The later is dependent on progress by the end of March 2023.

Social Finance Limited can meet the Council’s specific requirements given: the nature of the work; the DfE bid timetable and requirements to ensure a ensuring a credible and successful bid; and importantly meeting DfE timescales for delivery. This had to be approached as a partnership. This contract is awarded in response to a successful funding awarded from the DfE.

- In early October 2022, the DfE published an application prospectus for DDSF bids, these needed to be submitted by 4 November 2022. The bid prospectus was specific in bid requirements and deliverables especially those to be delivered by end of March 2022/23. To effectively respond we needed to match the bid to a recognised Leeds priority and then to one where existing preparatory work gave as the ability to respond to the expected timescales.
- We were notified of a successful bid on 22 December 2022 this then led confirmation of the project deliverables with the DfE through January 2023.
- These included milestones by 31 March 2023, which are needed to secure funding for 2023/24. Successful funding for 2023/24 will also involve further clarification of deliverables. Again there will be expectations of moving at pace. A partnership approach is required.
- Dialogue had occurred with Social Finance Limited on user research into case recording and the potential for joining up if future government grant

opportunities presented. This could also have included DLUHC in addition to the DfE opportunity that emerged. Social Finance Limited is a not for non-profit partner, who have experience of working with the DfE and with Leeds City Council. Working with Social Finance Limited supported a timely and successful bid. Social Finance Limited were named and costed in the bid.

- Social Finance Limited have an existing relationship with the DfE (and other government departments) that added credibility to the bid. Successful bids from other local authorities have also included a similar partner organisation to support the work. They offer skills and capacity to move at pace against the DfE timetable. All costs and relationships were clear in the bid document and agreed with the DfE in awarding the funding.
- DfE will ask for invoicing for costs incurred. This will include Social Finance Limited. Leeds City Council cost will include an element for overheads.

Social Finance Limited will undertake £105k of work in 2022/23 and £90.5k in 2023/24, the later dependent on progress and DfE continuation if funding. Further specification of outputs will be undertaken in the second phase. This is about learning, and responding to findings will shape the work.

The contract will detail a schedule of works for the contract and associated schedule of payments. The provider will provide reports at the end of each phase to the Head of Service – Performance and Improvement who will liaise with the Service Delivery Manager for Capacity and Change in agreeing progress.

Funding will cover for this work

- Delivery Manager - Social Finance
- Senior Advisor - Social Finance
- Senior User Researcher - Social Finance

Social Finance Limited will enable delivery of DfE DDSF agreement Annex F – List of objectives for which the grant is being paid Project 2a: User research into social worker inputted data to Case Management Systems (CMS).

Brief details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the decision maker at the time of making the decision

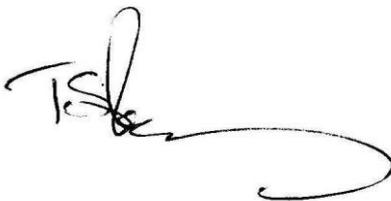
The prospectus was considered and best fit options evaluated. This option related to an agreed Leeds priority where there was a basis to ensure a successful bid. This included building on existing relationships and exploratory conversations that had already happened.

Decisions were driven by DfE timescales and then their funding arrangements, specifically the application window and then by deliverables in 2022/23.

Solely internal delivery was considered but not chosen. Staffing resources are already prioritised and while some capacity will be directed to this work it was not possible to redirect sufficient capacity to ensure progress. A fully compliant procurement exercise of a contractor or other temporary capacity was considered but bid requirements and resulting timescales, including no window to induct or bring up to speed, meant we needed a partner who could help shape and immediately

	support delivery.
<b>Affected wards:</b>	N/A
<b>Details of consultation undertaken<sup>3</sup>:</b>	Executive Member N/A Has been briefed.
	Ward Councillors N/A
	Chief Digital and Information Officer <sup>4</sup> N/A
	Chief Asset Management and Regeneration Officer <sup>5</sup> N/A
	Others PACS – Category Manager Legal – Assitstant Commercial and Procurement lawyer Director of Children & Families Chief Officer – Children’s Social Work Chief Officer – Resources & Strategy: Children & Families
<b>Implementation</b>	Officer accountable, and proposed timescales for implementation Head of Service – Performance and Improvement
<b>List of Forthcoming Key Decisions<sup>6</sup></b>	Date Added to List: - N/A
	<b>If Special Urgency or General Exception</b> a brief statement of the reason why it is impracticable to delay the decision N/A
	<b>If Special Urgency</b> Relevant Scrutiny Chair(s) approval Signature _____ Date _____
<b>Publication of report<sup>7</sup></b>	If not published for 5 clear working days prior to decision being taken the reason why not possible:
	If published late relevant Executive member’s approval Signature _____ Date _____

<sup>3</sup> Include details of any interest disclosed by an elected Member on consultation and the date of any relevant dispensation given.  
<sup>4</sup> See Officer Delegation Scheme (Executive Functions) CDIO must be consulted in relation to all matters relating to the Council’s use of digital technology  
<sup>5</sup> See Officer Delegation Scheme (Executive Functions) CAMRO must be consulted in relation to all matters relating to the Council’s land and buildings.  
<sup>6</sup> See Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 2.4 - 2.6. Complete this section for key decisions only  
<sup>7</sup> See Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 3.1. Complete this section for key decisions only

<b>Call In</b>	Is the decision available <sup>8</sup> for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
	<b>If exempt from call-in</b> , the reason why call-in would prejudice the interests of the council or the public: Is a Significant Operational Decision and is not subject to call in.		
<b>Approval of Decision</b>	Authorised decision maker <sup>9</sup> Tim Pouncey – Chief Officer, Resources & Strategy		
	Signature	Date: 23/3/23	
			

<sup>8</sup> See Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 5.1. Significant operational decisions taken by officers are never available for call in. Key decisions are always available for call in unless they have been exempted from call in under rule 5.1.3.

<sup>9</sup> Give the post title and name of the officer with appropriate delegated authority to take the decision.