

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE
CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S MEETING WITH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

7 February 2023

Request to accept Digital and Data grant from the Department for Education

Report of the Corporate Director – Stuart Carlton

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report is to request that the executive member for Children and Young People, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Service, the Corporate Director Strategic Resources and the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) authorise the Corporate Director Strategic Resources to accept the grant offer from the Department for Education which will be used to explore the potential benefits of machine learning and data analytics.

1.2 Children and Young People's Service alongside Data and Intelligence and Technology and Change submitted a bid to the Data and Digital Solutions Fund to undertake the work which would initially be piloted within Children and Young People's services but would have a benefit to the council as a whole, especially to the new council.

1.3 We were notified by the Department for Education that the bid had been successful on the 20th December 2022.

1.4 The amount available to us is £642,657 to run a project until 31st March 2024.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The project uses Microsoft Azure analytics to help make sense of unstructured data. This is data that doesn't fit neatly into a table or a database.

2.2 We know that the average cost of providing a child with a social worker is £14k p/a and that the cost of care proceedings and foster placements is significantly increased over this figure.

2.3 Social Workers currently spend 80% of their time at their computers and 20% of their time with families but research suggests that with access to better technologies and case management systems time with families could be doubled and significant reductions in children coming into care could be achieved.
<https://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/report-sets-out-new-blueprint-for-councils-to-deliver-a-reshaped-childrens-services/>

2.4 We anticipate that this project will help us identify people who can help to keep children safe, quicker. We also anticipate that this work will save social workers a

significant amount of time, meaning they can spend it directly with children and their families instead.

- 2.5 The technology will be piloted in Children and Young People's services where we hold a large amount of unstructured data, which includes Social Worker case notes and analysis as well as narrative statements and assessments.
- 2.6 We will use this technology to help make accessing the right information easy for Social Workers and will use the analytics component to simplify complex information and display it in a user-friendly format.
- 2.7 This work will improve the quality of service we can provide to the children and families in North Yorkshire, will help us keep children safe and will save significant amounts of social work time.
- 2.8 It will also give us an understanding of how the technology will benefit the other areas of the council.
- 2.9 If accepted we would be working alongside Microsoft and Coram I to help develop this technology and share our learning from it.
- 2.10 The original acceptance date deadline was the 23rd January 2023 but has been extended to the 8th February to allow time for consideration.

3.0 Performance Implications

- 3.1 We are not anticipating any negative performance issues. The budget included funding to increase capacity in teams to assist with the development of the work.
- 3.2 If the work is successful, which we anticipate it will be, we expect that we will see an increase in performance and outcomes for children.
- 3.3 To be successful this work will require input from Children and Young People's service, Technology and Change, Data and Intelligence, Data Governance and Finance who have all been part of preparing this bid. The bid contains funding for each of these departments in recognition of this.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 We could accept the bid and undertake the pilot work, evaluating its impact and future potential.
- 4.2 We could reject the bid with no detrimental impact to our services except the loss of this opportunity.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The funding available for this bid is significant at £642k. This funding has been confirmed, subject to the authority accepting it.
- 5.2 There are no matching requirements to the funding so there will be no financial exposure to the council. The entire cost of the project will be met through the grant.

5.3 We will be responsible for meeting the agreed outcomes from the bid which are achievable.

5.4 If we were to fail to meet the requirements of the bid the Department for Education would have the right to withhold future grant payments.

6.0 Impact on Other Services/Organisation

6.1 This project will require cross departmental support to deliver. The bid was put together with the support of members from Children and Young People's Service and Strategic Services.

6.2 The bid contains remuneration for all areas of the service that will be affected by this work.

6.3 There is an equality impact assessment screening form attached as an appendix to this report.

6.4 There is a Climate Change impact assessment attached as an appendix to this report.

7.0 Risk Management Implications

7.1 There are no anticipated risk management issues with the project. No data will be leaving our secure network and all existing security protocols will continue to apply.

8.0 Human Resources Implications

8.1 There will be new posts created as a result of this project but we expect that these will be internal posts which the funding will recredit for.

9.0 Reasons for Recommendations

9.1 Accepting this grant will provide us with an opportunity to pilot using new technologies in a totally different way.

9.2 By doing this we can position ourselves as sector leaders and can be at the forefront of shaping developments in this space

9.3 By accepting this grant we will be able to develop all of this at no cost to the authority.

10 Recommendation(s)

10.1 The Executive Member for Children and Young People's Service in consultation with the Corporate Director for Children and Young People's Service, Corporate Director, Strategic Resources and the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) authorises the Corporate Director Strategic Resources to accept the £642,657 grant funding from the Department for Education for delivery of this digital and data grant programme.

Stuart Carlton
CORPORATE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE.

Action Agreed
Executive Member
Date:

Action Requested
Corporate Director
Date:

List of Appendices

1. Climate Change Impact
2. Initial equality impact assessment screening form

Appendix 1 Climate change impact assessment



The purpose of this assessment is to help us understand the likely impacts of our decisions on the environment of North Yorkshire and on our aspiration to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030, or as close to that date as possible. The intention is to mitigate negative effects and identify projects which will have positive effects.

This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. The final document will be published as part of the decision making process and should be written in Plain English.

If you have any additional queries which are not covered by the guidance please email climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk

Version 2: amended 11 August 2021

Please note: You may not need to undertake this assessment if your proposal will be subject to any of the following:

Planning Permission
Environmental Impact Assessment
Strategic Environmental Assessment

However, you will still need to summarise your findings in the summary section of the form below.

Please contact climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk for advice.

Title of proposal	Using Technology to reimagine CMS
Brief description of proposal	A project to look at how data analytics can help us unlock valuable insight from unstructured data.
Directorate	CYPS

Service area	Children's Social Care
Lead officer	Jonny Hoyle
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	Jonny Hoyle – Development Lead
Date impact assessment started	23/1/2023

Options appraisal

Were any other options considered in trying to achieve the aim of this project? If so, please give brief details and explain why alternative options were not progressed.

This project will be undertaken alongside our existing teams. It is anticipated that it will save time and efficiencies whilst not increasing our impact on the environment over and above our current impact.

What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

Please explain briefly why this will be the result, detailing estimated savings or costs where this is possible.

The project will be fully funded by the Department for Education and therefore will be cost neutral.

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>	
<p>Minimise greenhouse gas emissions e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.</p>	Emissions from travel	X			We expect this project will make our teams more effective at accessing the right information, easily. This will reduce unnecessary visits to families and telephone calls.		Initially we want to pilot this work with CYPS but eventually we want to roll this technology out to other areas of the council's services.
	Emissions from construction		X				
	Emissions from running of buildings		X		This project won't involve additional time working from buildings.		

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes over and above business as usual Evidence or measurement of effect Figures for CO₂e Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>	
	Emissions from data storage		X		The data from this project will be stored in the azure cloud based system which is an existing part of our network.		
	Other						
<p>Minimise waste: Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic</p>		X					
<p>Reduce water consumption</p>		X					
<p>Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)</p>	X			<p>Having access to the right information quicker and easier should result in less car journey's to visit families (in order to gather information we already have) which will minimise pollution.</p>			

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes over and above business as usual Evidence or measurement of effect Figures for CO₂e Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
<p>Ensure resilience to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers</p>		X				
<p>Enhance conservation and wildlife</p>		X				
<p>Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of North Yorkshire's landscape</p>		X				

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
<p>Other (please state below)</p>						

Are there any recognised good practice environmental standards in relation to this proposal? If so, please detail how this proposal meets those standards.

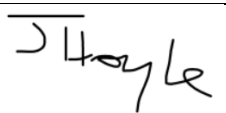
This project will work alongside our existing Children and Young People’s environmental standards.

Summary Summarise the findings of your impact assessment, including impacts, the recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

This project will work to enhance our existing services ability to access information quickly and easily. If successful it will have marginally positive impacts on the environment but most importantly won't have any detrimental impact.

Sign off section

This climate change impact assessment was completed by:

Name	Jonny Hoyle
Job title	Development Lead
Service area	CYPS
Directorate	CSC
Signature	
Completion date	23/1/2023

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature):

Date:

Appendix 2

Initial equality impact assessment screening form

This form records an equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether or not a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.

Directorate	CYPS		
Service area	CSC		
Proposal being screened	Using technology to reimagine CMS		
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Jonny Hoyle		
What are you proposing to do?	Using new technologies to unlock unstructured data and present it to social workers in a user friendly way.		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	We believe by doing this we will be able to save significant social worker time, make better decisions and keep children safe and within their families in a better way.		
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	No – the project will be funded entirely by the Department for Education.		
Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYCC's additional agreed characteristics As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is this service used by particular groups of people with protected characteristics? • Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important? • Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to? <p>If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be an adverse impact or you have ticked 'Don't know/no info available', then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your Equality rep for advice if you are in any doubt.</p>			
Protected characteristic	Potential for adverse impact		Don't know/No info available
	Yes	No	
Age		X	
Disability		X	
Sex		X	
Race		X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Gender reassignment		X	
Religion or belief		X	
Pregnancy or maternity		X	
Marriage or civil partnership		X	
People in rural areas		X	
People on a low income		X	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		X	
Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts (e.g. disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	This project won't involve new work with any groups of people. Instead, it will enhance our abilities to understand the information we hold with the groups we already work with.		
Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (e.g. partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with	No – the project won't mean more work or wider groups of people being provided with services. Instead, it will mean we can build a better understanding of the unstructured data we currently hold.		

protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.				
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Continue to full EIA:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reason for decision	This project will not have additional impacts upon people. Instead it will help us unlock the power of unstructured data we already hold.			
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)				
Date				