**SE ADCS scoping document**

**Children’s Social Care Workforce Project (CSW Project)**

This project has been commissioned by the SEADCS as part of the Sector Led Improvement Programme and will be directed by Rachael Wardell (DCS West Berkshire).

**Terms of reference:-**

1. To investigate new and different ways of staffing to meet the needs of young people
   * Identify innovative practice to strengthen quality and stability
   * Alternative routes to qualification (e.g. social work apprenticeships?)
   * Alternative work design
   * Recruiting for values, attitude and skills and facilitating routes to attain qualifications
   * Establishing a new ways of working with Agencies

2) Explore options for making the region attractive

* + Common approaches to leadership programmes
  + Transferable career paths
  + Shared staff development programmes
  + Regional model of employment/contract terms

The project needs to include the following considerations

* Embracing flexible approaches is not an alternative to proper risk management
* SEADCS continues to advocate that the most sensitive statutory duties should be handled by staff who are appropriately trained and supported
* Promotion of ‘blended approach’ and ‘skills mix’ can only be considered if in the best interests of children and the duty to assure their safeguarding.
* The scope should also include some appreciation of the current position of the College of Social Work and engagement with the HE sector
* The position of the wider workforce i.e. non-qualified CWF and protect SW for the statutory work
* Vulnerability of the Unitaries particularly the M4 corridor - regarding the poor market, high levels of churn

**Project Team:**

**Di Smith Project Lead:** Leadership development lead for SE Sector Led Improvement programme

**Mark Evans: Former Head of Children’s Services West Berkshire**

**Ros Garrod –Mason:** Workforce reform consultant and author of ‘*Professional capabilities framework for the wider children’s workforce: early* *intervention and prevention’* on behalf of Yorkshire and Humber children’s workforce leads

In meeting the specification for the CSW project the team have drafted the following outcomes for the project. The key outcome for the project is the first outcome - securing high quality staff in the recognition that this will have a positive impact in delivering the other proposed outcomes:

**Proposed Outcomes for CSWP**

1. **Increase confidence in the quality of SW practitioners and the wider social care workforce**

**Lead: Ros**

- improve the quality and consistency of early intervention and prevention work with children young people and families through the development of team leadership and supervision

- improve the quality of social work graduates through effective partnerships with relevant HEI's/ regional Frontline project- particularly need to focus on developing intellectual rigour as part of any training offer

- identify and replicate best practice in the region e.g. social work academies (Surrey and Medway)

 - identify and develop the skills and qualities and roles needed to improve the quality of practice and develop associated regional training offer e.g. higher apprenticeship for assistant practitioner , apprentice route from BTEC social care work (Ros is already working with Bishop Grosseteste University in Lincoln on developing a pilot apprenticeship programme which we can also pilot in the region.)

* Identify from the 11 HEI offering SW courses in the regions partner(s) to work on the pilot apprenticeship programme
* Facilitate a bid for Government funding for the pilot programme
* establish a regional professional capabilities framework for the wider children’s workforce together ( Ref work done in Y and H and East Sussex where they have developed a 360 review for front line family workers)

1. **Reduce by xxx% the number of social work agency staff**

**Lead: Mark**

Audit current situation particularly reasons for attractiveness of Agencies and propose new models of staff deployment for example:-

* consider building new ways of working, using resources (posts and learning and development) more effectively,
* enable the most qualified staff to deal with the most complex needs and to support and supervise other staff to undertake routine (and some non-routine) cases (NHS ‘ *Creating Capable Teams’* excellent example which has transformed the mental health units)

1. **Reduce the churn and % difference of retention of social workers across the authorities that make up the SE region and enhance the attractiveness of the region**

**Lead: Mark**

Audit current patterns of employment contracts, induction and staff development and develop:-

* a regional model of employment for social workers/ commissioning model?

**Lead: Di**

* consistent induction and training and development pathways for social workers
* grow your own social workers from the community
* a regional staff development offer that includes cross LA development programmes and a SE leadership development programme for team leaders and managers
* increase capacity and capability of SW managers through participation in existing relevant regional programmes including ‘Coaching to improve Performance’. A pilot change management course is under development to support managers to lead and manage change.
* build sustainability for staff development by adopting a ‘Train the Trainer’ model for regional courses
* a regional career pathway model which utilises transferable skills.
* establish a return to social work programme to attract back the significant number of qualifies SW’s currently undertaking different roles within Childrens’ services.

**Progress to date**

* Consultation has taken place with AD Safeguarding network meeting on June 13th and their feedback has been incorporated in the scoping document
* Collation of all the available information in the region as a baseline for the project is underway
* Windsor and Maidenhead have been contacted and agreed to forward their research on SW terms and conditions of employment in 16 of the SE LAs

**Next Steps**

* Final version the scoping document for circulation to the SEADCS on July 4th
* Design methodology to meet the agreed outcomes to include:
  + Identification of a nominated Lead in each LA as the contact for this project and establish as reference network group.- request to SE ADCS for nominations on July 4th
  + allocation of specified outcomes agreed between the project team to maximise experience and expertise.
  + analysis of data on receipt
  + establish contact with the 11 HEI’s

Di Smith

July 3rd 2014