DfE Regional Adoption Agencies Programme

REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY

(Families for Children, Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council and Borough of Poole)

Project Initiation Document

Project Title	Regional Adoption Agency (RAA)		
Project No or Ref	Not applicable	**Document Version Ref**	Final V03
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PID history

Revision History

Revision date	Author	Summary of Changes
11-Dec-15	Julie Saunders	New – first draft for initial review by Project Lead
14-Dec-15	Julie Saunders	Updated with feedback from Project Lead
23-Dec-15	Julie Saunders	Updated with feedback from Project Board

Review and approvals

This document has been reviewed and received the following approvals.

Name	Approval date	Role
Graham Pellew	16 December 2015	Project Lead
Venessa Collins	TBC	Work Stream Lead
Sheila Meakin	16 December 2015	Project Board Member
Heather Freeman	16 December 2015	Work Stream Lead
Penny Lodwick	16 December 2015	Project Board Member
Jennifer Warr	16 December 2015	Work Stream Lead
Kendra Bell	16 December 2015	Project Board Member
Karran Stroud	16 December 2015	Work Stream Lead

Records of approvals are noted in the minutes of the Project Board Meeting on 16th December 2015

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1 Background

In October 2015, Famillies for Children (FFC), Bournemouth Borough Council (BBC), Dorset County Council (DCC) and Borough of Poole (BoP) were successful in receiving approval to proceed from the Department for Education (DfE) to develop a proposal for setting up a new Regional Adoption Agency.

Following DfE approval, representatives from these four agencies have commenced working together on the initial phase of the project, which is to scope and define how individual services could be merged to form a single agency. The key outputs of this phase will be an Options Appraisal and a high level Transtion Plan to be developed by end March 2016.

This PID outlines the project scope, proposed approach and milestones of the project relating to the proposal for the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA). It brings together the key information needed to provide project management of the key workstreams which comprise this first (Scope and Define) phase of the project.

Council officers and voluntary agency staff will work in partnership to deliver the key elements required to establish the proposal. An overview of the project organisation structure is outlined in Section 2.6 below.

2 Project outline

2.1 Project objective

The objective of the project is to manage all of the Scope and Define phase activities necessary to consider the options, identify the best operating model for the RAA, and to prepare financial and transition plans to move to the implementation (Develop and Deliver) phase of the project after end March 2016.

A high level summary of the scope that the project will address is:

1. Governance and accountability for the initial project phase

2. Service delivery pathways and best practice process design across:

   o Recruitment, assessment and preparation of prospective adopters

   o Family finding, matching and placement of children

   o Permanency planning, adoptions panels and agency decisions – including Fostering to Adopt

   o Adoption support – including adopted adults and birth parents

3. Operating model assessment and recommended approach

4. Cost/benefit analysis and financial sustainability

5. Stakeholder management and engagement.

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2.2   Project timetable

The Scope and Define phase will be split into 3 stages – mobilisation, service design and options appraisal. The project plan will provide a more detailed timeline, but in summary the timetable is:

Mobilisation Stage (November/December 2015):

- Identify and mobilise project manager and work stream leads

- Establish programme organisation and governance requirements

- Identify back office support functions for advice needs – expected to include Comms, HR, IT, Legal, Procurement from relevant agencies

- Develop timetable for service design across work streams

- Create stakeholder engagement and communications plans.

Service Design Stage (January/February 2016):

- Review current service delivery pathways and identify best practice processes

- Baseline data on costs and demands across agencies

- Stakeholder engagement – staff, trustees, elected members, support services, children, adopters, unions and partners.

Options Appraisal February/March 2016

- Financial analysis

- Options review and development of proposal

- Provision of an outline transition plan (high level business case).

2.3   Delivery strategy for the "Scope and Define" Phase

Funding and practical support from the Department for Education is being provided initially until the end of March 2016, with the possibility of further funding in the future - dependent on the outcome of the cross-Government Spending Review. FFC will lead on the initial phase of the project, which is focussed on scoping and defining the new arrangements. Those affected by the proposed changes including adopters, staff in the four agencies, and other professionals, will be consulted during this period to inform the future shape of adoption services in the region.

The uniquely challenging context of working across multiple agencies will require a collaborative effort across all organisations and at all levels towards a commitment to service improvement. Identification of optimal service designs and proposals for an operational model will need to address the key challenges faced by the adoption sector which HM Government have identified as:

- **Inefficiencies:** Although the adoption system has improved further reform is needed on the way adoption as a whole is managed.

- **Matching:** Research shows delays in matching are not only damaging to children but also costly. Moving to a new delivery model has real potential to improve matching.

- **Recruitment:** A regional recruitment strategy which uses specialist techniques for recruiting adopters for hard to place children, would potentially lead to fewer children waiting.

- **Adoption Support:** Although high quality services for children and families exist, these are not yet widespread enough high quality services required.

Project planning and delivery will also need visible leadership, supported by effective project management and stakeholder engagement plans.

2.4 Deliverables

By end March 2016, the project needs to deliver an Outline Business Case to include:

- Proposed service delivery pathway design across the four work streams
- Recommended organisational structure to support the proposed service design
- Options appraisals of the operating models
- Cost/benefit analysis
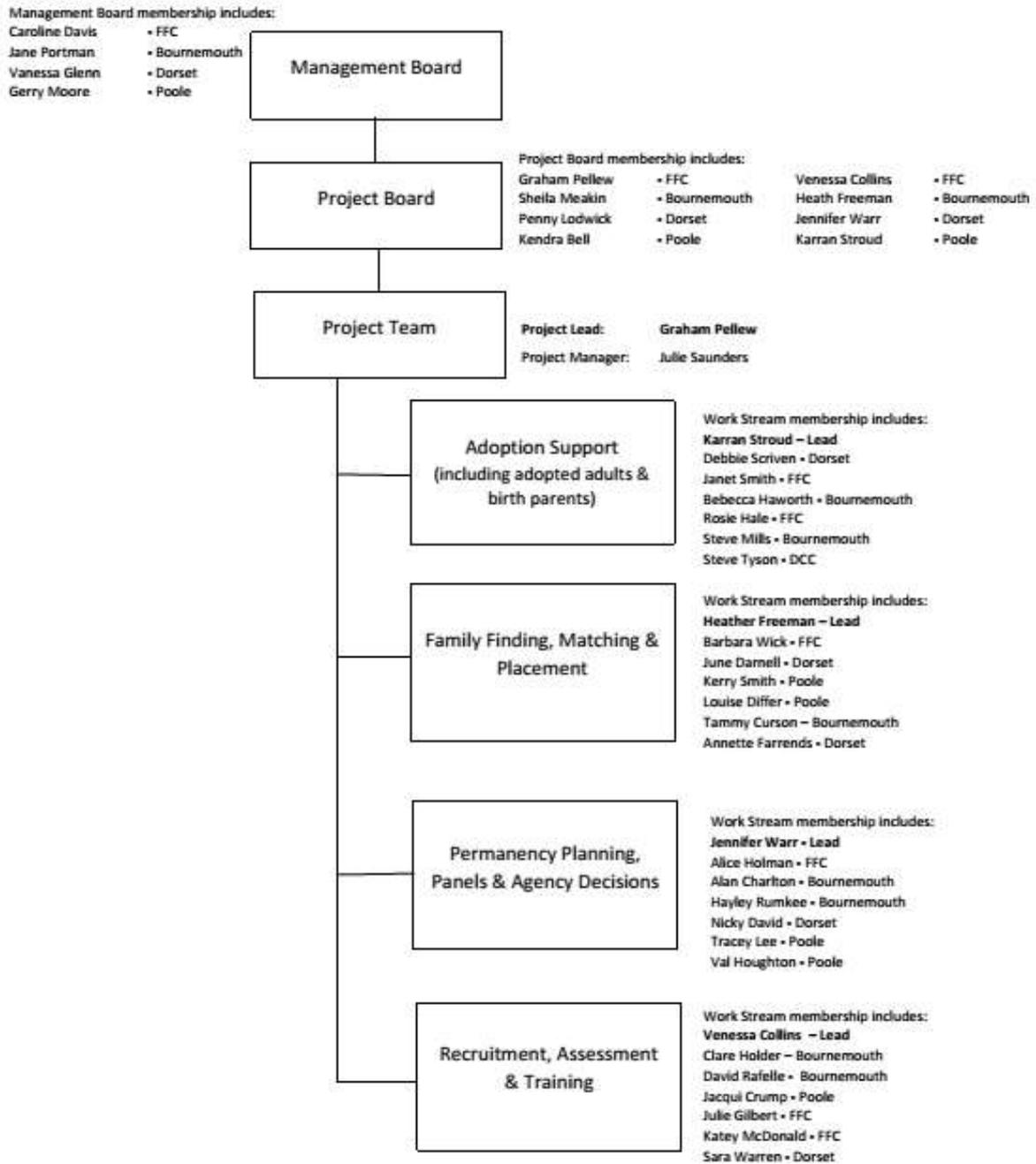- Transition plan with key milestones.

2.5 Assumptions

- The Management Board will support the proposed approach to project delivery
- All agencies have the resources available to actively lead on and participate in agreed work streams and achieve the deliverables within agreed timescales set out in the plan
- Required project funding outlined in the finance plan submitted to the DfE is made available
- Processes for risk management and escalation of issues is established from the outset of the project
- Management board and Project board members are able to provide the time commitment to provide challenge and support to resolve issues where required
- From the outset of the project, all stakeholders—and in particular, workstream leads—understand their roles and responsibilities within this project as well as the interdependencies across the workstreams
- Representatives from back office support functions are available to provide advice and guidance in the development of the options appraisal and transition plan development
- The agencies' internal governance processes and procedures are compatible with the achievement of project objectives within the agreed timescales.

2.6   Project structure

The project will governed under the following organisation framework:

Project Organisation Structure

Management Board membership includes:
Caroline Davis   • FFC
Jane Portman   • Bournemouth
Vanessa Glenn   • Dorset
Gerry Moore   • Poole

Management Board

Project Board membership includes:

Graham Pellew	• FFC	Venessa Collins	• FFC
Sheila Meakin	• Bournemouth	Heath Freeman	• Bournemouth
Penny Lodwick	• Dorset	Jennifer Warr	• Dorset
Kendra Bell	• Poole	Karran Stroud	• Poole

Project Board

Project Team

Project Lead: Graham Pellew

Project Manager: Julie Saunders

Adoption Support
(including adopted adults &
birth parents)

Work Stream membership includes:
Karran Stroud – Lead
Debbie Scriven • Dorset
Janet Smith • FFC
Bebecca Haworth • Bournemouth
Rosie Hale • FFC
Steve Mills • Bournemouth
Steve Tyson • DCC

**Family Finding, Matching &
Placement**

Work Stream membership includes:
Heather Freeman – Lead
Barbara Wick • FFC
June Darnell • Dorset
Kerry Smith • Poole
Louise Differ • Poole
Tammy Curson – Bournemouth
Annette Farrends • Dorset

**Permanency Planning,
Panels & Agency Decisions**

Work Stream membership includes:
Jennifer Warr • Lead
Alice Holman • FFC
Alan Charlton • Bournemouth
Hayley Rumkee • Bournemouth
Nicky David • Dorset
Tracey Lee • Poole
Val Houghton • Poole

**Recruitment, Assessment
& Training**

Work Stream membership includes:
Venessa Collins – Lead
Clare Holder – Bournemouth
David Rafelle • Bournemouth
Jacqui Crump • Poole
Julie Gilbert • FFC
Katey McDonald • FFC
Sara Warren • Dorset

Membership of the **Management Board** will include Director level and/or Senior Management representatives from each of the 4 agencies. Terms of Reference for the Management Board will be defined but it is expected that this group will ensure adequate resources are available to the Project for the delivery of the project timetable.

Membership of the **Project Board** consists of the Project lead, Project Manager, Work Stream leads and Service Managers from each of the 3 local authorities. Terms of Reference for the Board will be defined and approved by the Management Board, however it is expected that the Project Board will oversee project performance including:

- Managing Project Risks

- Managing Project Issues

- Agreeing internal and external communications

The **Project Lead** is the Deputy Chief Executive of Familiies for Children. His role is to:

- Own the overall approach to project delivery and ensure that the project meets initial phase objectives

- Alert the Management Board should there be a trend towards cost escalation or delay, or if the objectives of the project change radically, along with the recommendation of action to take.

The table below sets out other key role descriptions within the project team structure:

Name (s)	Title (s)	Role (s)	Function (s)
Julie Saunders	Business Change Officer	Project Manager	Responsible for overseeing and managing the overall RAA project plan on behalf of the Project Lead to ensure that the desired project objectives are delivered. This includes • Producing project highlight reports • Defining and managing project interdependencies • Managing project risks.
• Karran Stroud • Heather Freeman • Jennifer Warr • Venessa Collins		Workstream Leads	Accountable for managing individual workstream project activities and ensuring the delivery of scheduled workstream outputs. This includes: • Providing updates to the Project Manager • Reporting new issues and risks in their workstream to the Project Manager

Project admin support will be provided on an ad hoc by individuals within the business support normally provided to Work Stream leads – mainly supporting the arrangements for meetings and workshops.

Identifying the right service design and delivery model will involve a complex project of work involving a number of staff from each agency as set-out above in the Project organisation structure. There will also need to be participation from back office support functions including:

- Communications
- Finance
- HR
- Legal
- Procurement

to provide professional advice and input during the Options Appraisal stage. Involvement from Finance will be key in carrying out cost/benefit analysis and the development of financial proposals.

External support to is being provided by a coach appointed by the DfE to guide the project team to identify the right delivery model and transition plan for the RAA. DfE will support coaches and projects by providing policy information and support to achieve project aims.

3 Communication Management Strategy

While the Project lead retains overall accountability for the successful communications for the project, the Project Manager will develop and maintain a communications plan on a day-to-day basis. The parties interested in the project and the means and frequency of communications between them and the project will be set out in the Project Communications Plan – example shown in Appendix A.

4 Project controls

This section describes the expected project planning arrangements relating to Risks, and Issues, together with how these will be translated in to robust project management arrangements.

4.1 Meetings and reports

The Project Board will meet at least once every month with frequency increasing as demands of project increase. Actions will be noted and reported.

The Project Manager will provide to the Project Board Highlight Reports, issues and risk logs, normally 4 working days prior to the Board meeting dates.

The Project Manager may provide exception reports to the Project Board as required outside of usual reporting periods.

4.2 Risk and Issue Management

The Risk Management process enables managers, and in particular the Project Board, to minimise the impact of risks, and provides assurance that risks are proactively and effectively managed. This includes:

- Identifying, assessing and prioritising the risks faced by the project ensuring that the risks are fully managed, each under the responsibility of an assigned single owner

- Ensuring that mitigation actions are planned and identifying any viable fallback actions that may be necessary if a risk occurs

- Monitoring/managing movement of the risk exposure over time

Risk management processes will occur both at workstream and at project levels. These will be augmented with appropriate processes of timely and systematic escalation through project governance structures.

Project delivery also involves the management of issues which occur during delivery. The Issue Management process captures issues as they arise in a consistent and reliable way, to ensure that they are managed and addressed in a timely basis. Issues are to be identified, assessed and addressed in much the same way as risks. Management of Issues will include:

- Identifying, assessing and prioritising the issues faced by the project

- Ensuring that the issues are fully managed, each under the responsibility of an assigned single owner

- Mobilising any necessary resolution actions and resources

- Ensuring that all issue logs are regularly reviewed

- Ensuring that all issues are escalated as appropriate

To facilitate the analysis and monitoring of risks, a project Risk & Issue Log will be created and will be maintained throughout the duration of the project – template shown in Appendix B.

5 Initial risk analysis

Some of the key risks that are likely to arise during the Scope and Define phase are:

Risk	Mitigating Actions
Lack of availability of staff from agencies to participate in and support the delivery of the project and lack of officer time at the right moment	- Prioritisation of participant's/supporters workload by senior management - Understand the capacity to change and provide change management support as required - Clear project plan with milestones and workstream/dependencies identified
Service user and/or staff groups opposed to solution	- Continued targeted communications programme throughout implementation - Promote anticipated benefits of the changes

	• Provide mechanisms for questions and feedback
Project delay impacting on cost and staffing availability	• Ensure realistic planning and timescales are agreed and quantify costs of delay
Inability for all agencies to reach a consensus on recommended delivery model	• Identify range of appropriate model options and escalcate to Management Board for decision
Uncertainly surrounding how back office support functions will work together across the agencies, in particular Finance	• Robust project management control
Current financial constraints may lead to expectation of significant cost savings to individual agencies by implementing a regional organisation	• Ensure realistic expectations are agreed with the Management Board

6 Appendices

Included in this document are:

Appendix A – Example Project Communications Plan/Schedule

Appendix B – Example Risk and Issue Log (RAID)

Appendix A – Communications Plan

An example of a communications delivery schedule:

Adults Local Authority Trading Company (LATC)								Version 1 - Draft	
Communications Delivery Schedule									
Week commencing	Event	Description	Key Messages	Delivery Method	Developed by	Approved by	Delivered by	Audience	Planned date	Actual date
January 2015 and earlier	Customer engagement	Bournemouth.gov News item	What its about and why - See External web 20141217	Bournemouth. gov.uk	Corporate Comms					17 December 2014
	Project Mobilisation	First meeting of Implementation Group organised by Andy Sharp	Introduction Design structure, governing arrangements and structure Implementation planning and decision making requirements	Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Andy Sharp	Workstream leads+ Dave Harrop Hugh Lambourne Kevin Balchin Jane Potter Sean Hawkins Beccy Brookwell	12 January 2015	12 January 2015
	Project Mobilisation	Confirmation of Project management lead	Confirming Julie Saunders as Project manager for the implementation	Email	Andy Sharp	Not applicable	Andy Sharp	Workstream leads		27 January 2015
	Project Mobilisation	Initial contact with workstream leads	Initial contact and intention to meet	Email	Julie Saunders	Not applicable	Julie Saunders	Workstream leads		28 January 2015
	Stakeholder engagement	Initial contact with Commercial Manager		Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Julie Saunders Clive Dov-Dixon Mark Wagstaffe	Hugh Lambourne	30 January 2015	30 January 2015
	Project Governance	Pan Dorset Implementation Board		Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	See Plan worksheet for membership	09 January 2015	09 January 2015
	Project Governance	Pan Dorset Executive Shareholder Group		Meeting	Not applicable	Not Applicable	Not applicable	See Plan worksheet for membership	26 January 2015	16 January 2015
02 February 2015	Project Mobilisation	Initial contact with Operations workstream lead	Introduction to project and next steps including C and H Solutions involvement	Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Julie Saunders	Jenni Collis-Heavens	02 February 2015	02 February 2015
	Staff engagement	Biz article	What its about and why - See Intranet article 20150202	Biz	Duncan Flint	Andy Sharp	Corporate Comms	All Council staff	02 February 2015	02 February 2015
	Project Mobilisation	Initial contact with ICT workstream lead	Introduction to project and next steps including C and H Solutions involvement	Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Julie Saunders	Gary Tanner	02 February 2015	02 February 2015
	Project Mobilisation	Initial contact with Legal workstream lead	Introduction to project and next steps including C and H Solutions involvement	Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Julie Saunders	Sian Balingall	03 February 2015	03 February 2015
	Project Mobilisation	Initial contact with Finance workstream lead	Introduction to project and next steps including C and H Solutions involvement	Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Julie Saunders	Jo Collis-Heavens	04 February 2015	03 February 2015
	Project Mobilisation	Initial contact with Procurement workstream lead	Introduction to project and next steps including C and H Solutions involvement	Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Julie Saunders	Jill Johnson	04 February 2015	04 February 2015
	Project Mobilisation	Initial contact with Comms lead	Introduction to project and next steps including C and H Solutions involvement	Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Julie Saunders Clive Dove-Dixon	Georgia Turner	04 February 2015	04 February 2015
	Project Governance	Pan Dorset Shadow Management Group		Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	See Plan worksheet for membership	Fortnightly from 19/02/2015	04 February 2015
	Project Mobilisation	Initial contact with HR lead	Introduction to project and next steps including C and H Solutions involvement	Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Julie Saunders Clive Dove-Dixon Mark Wagstaffe	Jon Matthews	05 February 2015	05 February 2015
	Pan Dorset Company structure	Initial meeting to discuss planned company structure approach		Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Russell Thompson Phil Rook Jim McManus	Ian Milner Jo Collis-Heavens Andy Sharp	05 February 2015	05 February 2015
	Project Mobilisation	Initial contact with Property workstream lead	Introduction to project and next steps including C and H Solutions involvement	Meeting	Not applicable	Not applicable	Julie Saunders Clive Dove-Dixon	Gary Platt	06 February 2015	06 February 2015
	Project Mobilisation	Second meeting of Implementation Group organised by Andy Sharp	Introductions Project Overview Proposed Project Organisation Gathering questions and concerns Plans for future meetings	Meeting	Julie Saunders Clive Dove=Dixon	Andy Sharp	Clive Dove-Dixon	Workstream leads+ Dave Harrop Sean Hawkins Beccy Brookwell Hugh Lambourne	06 February 2015	06 February 2015

Appendix E – Risk and Issue Log

RAID template:

Project - Risks

Ref	Risk Description	Workstream	Date Raised	Raised By	Status	Impact L/M/H	Likelihood L/M/H	Required Date	Owner	Comment
R-1										
R-2										
R-3										
R-4										
R-5										
R-6										
R-7										
R-8										
R-9										
R-10										
R-11										
R-12										
R-13										
R-14										
R-15										
R-16										
R-17										
R-18										
R-19										
R-20										

Project - Issues

Ref	Issue Description	Workskstream	Date Raised	Raised By	Status	Impact L/M/H	Required Date	Owner	Comment
I-1									
I-2									
I-3									
I-4									
I-5									
I-6									
I-7									
I-8									
I-9									
I-10									
I-11									
I-12									
I-13									
I-14									
I-15									
I-16									
I-17									
I-18									
I-19									