

## **Data to Insight Briefing August 2020**

**Data to Insight** is a sector led improvement project delivered through the South East Sector Led Improvement Programme (SESLIP), sponsored by Stuart Gallimore, with East Sussex as the lead local authority. Our aim is to get local authorities to use data better by enabling resources to be shared that were developed for visualisation, analysis, benchmarking and forecasting. This will help inform strategic and operational decision making and ultimately improve the experiences of the system, and improve the outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and their families.

The work programme of the project is overseen by a partnership between SESLIP (Alastair Lee), the London Borough of Waltham Forest (Rashid Jussa), the London Borough of Wandsworth (Jean Malo), Brighton and Hove City Council (Daryl Perilli), Ofsted (Adam King) and Social Finance (Tom Rintoul).

Since the Data to Insight event in November 2019 we have been working hard to develop the project. I would like to thank everyone who attended for your support and helping crystallise the vision and providing advice and next steps. With the support of Julia Yong at the DfE we received some project funding for 2020/21 which also included funds to develop a data analytics apprenticeship specifically for analysts working as part of children's services departments.

### Project Manager

We have successfully recruited a project manager, Alistair Herbert ([alistair.herbert@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:alistair.herbert@eastsussex.gov.uk)), who will take up post on 1<sup>st</sup> September. The work priorities are to:

- A) make sure all existing products are up to date and functional
- B) foster closer relations between the CSD analyst community, and key partners in government, academia and the third sector
- C) Look at options for hosting the online community, tools already in use and those for shared development

### Current Tools

The current site where the tools are hosted has restricted membership, with approval by the group's administrators. At the end of July 2020, it had 598 members from all 151 LAs in England. The tools are:

- The ChAT which is used by LAs to support greater understanding of strategic and operational performance, and by LAs and Ofsted to support inspection.
- The Children's Social Care benchmarking tool, which allows LAs to benchmark all indicators from a range of DfE statistical returns.
- LAC 903 Statistics Prediction tool, which allows LAs to load in their SSDA903 data files and get a prediction of that year's LAC statistics, along with a comparison against the DfE data from the previous year.
- The CIN Census Submission Report which provides the local authority with a summary of provisional data as submitted in Collect and can be used to sign off the CIN Census.

## Covid-19

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic we have worked on a couple of tools to support LAs with specific Covid-19 related work.

- a) A weekly Covid-19 report based on the Ofsted Annex A reports
- b) We are facilitating the sharing of demand modelling tools that are being developed in LAs. A model initially developed by Kent County Council has been shared with an open source licence and a group of other local authorities are testing and adapting it. Other local authorities are developing their own approaches and sharing their approaches among the community. We carried out a survey to investigate what people were doing which showed that many were already developing something or had been asked to start thinking about it. Local authorities are hoping to use the models to anticipate future demand and plan resources. The Greater Manchester combined Authority (GMCA), with our support, successfully gained funding from the MHCLG to refine the Kent model and develop it further. These models will not be able answer the questions on their own and will support managers with discussions and testing of different scenarios.

## Data Analyst Apprenticeship

As part of the funding from the DfE we were asked to develop a data analyst apprenticeship specifically for analysts in local authority children's services. This work is being led by Social Finance who have previous experience in this area. They are carrying out research with LAs about what they would like the apprenticeship to deliver for their teams and what has worked well/less well in current apprenticeships. There is a lot of interest as many of the generic data science apprenticeships do not work for children's services. Some of the technical content is not relevant to what analysts typically do, and the assignments and exercises tend to simulate private sector activities (e.g. modelling stock market fluctuations or sales), making it difficult to apply new skills to typical children's services tasks.

For more information contact: Celine Gross ([celine.gross@socialfinance.org.uk](mailto:celine.gross@socialfinance.org.uk))

## Data to Insight next steps

In the autumn, with our new project manager in post, we will be consolidating the work to date, developing the professional network and looking for new opportunities to support local authority children's services to make better use of their data to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

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