

**This version is due for a major review and update during Autumn 2021**

**2018-  
2020**

**MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION  
The East Midlands Regional Partnership  
Arrangements for the Supply and Engagement of  
Children's and Adults Social Workers**

**Between:**

**Derby City Council  
Derbyshire County Council  
Leicester City Council  
Leicestershire County Council  
Lincolnshire County Council  
Northamptonshire County Council  
Nottingham City Council  
Nottinghamshire County Council  
Rutland County Council**

**Date: October 2018 (Version 5)  
Drafted by: East Midlands HR Leads Network, on behalf of  
Regional Directors of Children's Services (DCS) Group and  
Regional Tier 2 Safeguarding Leads Group**

## **1. Introduction**

The East Midlands Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) has been in place since December 2015, working with the principles of a collaborative and agreed approach on pay rates for agency workers and other workforce matters. The MoC Principles, reviewed in this document, and the current rationale for the continuation of working collaboratively under the MoC are summarised as follows:

- Nationally there are a number of regional MoCs in operation, with the potential to share good practice across regions;
- Increasing budgetary pressures across the East Midlands, mean that there is potential for high levels of dependency on agency workers and unmanageable escalation of market pay rates;
- There is a need for an increased focus on data analysis, shared intelligence on recruitment and retention measures, and quality of development and training, to ensure a sustainable high quality workforce;
- A need for a full understanding of the Accreditation process and the Social Work Apprenticeship Standard;
- Increased emphasis on partnership working and sharing of pressure points

## **2. Aims:**

This MoC currently covers the Children's Social Work Professional Workforce for both permanent and temporary/agency workers

The MoC will:

- Enable collaborative work with agency suppliers to develop mechanisms to ensure that rates and charges for supplying agency workers appropriately reflects the skills and experience of workers, and is aligned to the remuneration received by permanent employees;

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- **Ensures that suppliers of agency workers are required to comply with the agreed standards for the completion of pre-employment checks and provision of references;**
- **Ensures that references or End of Placement Reviews for agency workers are objective, completed accurately and in good faith, and provide all information set out and agreed by the participating authorities, and on the templates provided by the receiving organisations, to ensure that workers who present as unsatisfactory or in need of development may be identified.**

### **3. Governance:**

**Regional Directors of Children's Services (DCS) Group** are accountable for ensuring that their Service Managers and Directors/Heads of HR and agency suppliers adopt the protocols. They will receive regular progress updates and, where necessary, determine actions and give instruction and a steer based on recommendations presented to them by the Regional Tier 2 Safeguarding Leads Group and the East Midlands HR Lead Network Group. They will support the Principles and Ways of Working set out as part of this document (see Section 6).

**Regional Tier 2 Safeguarding Group** have delegated responsibility (via the Regional Directors of Children's Services (DCS) Group for the development of activity aligned to the Memorandum of Cooperation. The East Midlands HR Lead Network Group will provide regular progress reports/briefings to the Safeguarding Lead Group at scheduled bi-monthly meetings, and as required. They will support the Principles and Ways of Working set out as part of this document (see Section 6).

#### **East Midlands HR Lead Network Group:**

The East Midlands HR Lead Group, meet monthly to consider workforce and agency worker themes and provide report and recommendations for action to both governance boards. They will support the Principles and Ways of Working set out as part of this document (see Section 6).

### **Measuring Success:**

The Regional DCS Group and Regional Tier 2 Safeguarding Lead Group will note reports and updates from the East Midlands HR Lead Network Group, including reports on the overall impact of the MoC on workforce planning and service delivery, including where there is evidence of financial efficiencies, improvements in quality of supply of agency workers and stability in the overall workforce.

### **4. Memorandum of Cooperation Objectives:**


- To work collaboratively, and with an open mind with partners, including learning providers and organisations, e.g. The Teaching Partnership, to improve the quality of social work in the region.
- The appropriate sharing of information and intelligence on workforce terms and conditions, including pay rates and measures to provide incentive around recruitment and retention of workers, to inform workforce planning across the region.
- Consider and create opportunities to develop regional solutions to resourcing and supply of the local social care workforce, including career progression, qualification routes and impact of accreditation.
- Review the impact of implementation of the Standardised Agency Worker Rates for the East Midlands Region. The aim being to reduce agency spend, avoid escalation of the market rates, and increase stability in local workforce. Using data and information across East Midlands and across bordering regions, determine any change in agency rates set.
- Use of the End of Placement Review process to embed a common minimum standard for referencing and identification of the need for personal development to help prevent 'recycling' of poor quality permanent and agency workers. Implement pilot process with a view to wider implementation across the region.
- Demonstrate a commitment to using strategies to secure a financially sustainable workforce within the region.

**5. Principles and Ways of Working for the Memorandum of Cooperation**  
**All Local Authority signatories to the Memorandum of Cooperation**  
**(MoC) agree to adopt the following principles and ways of working:**


- It is recognised by the Regional DCS Group that there may be exceptional circumstances that are imposed on an individual Council that require that it take measures, for a specified period of time, that may not be aligned to the agreed regional standardised pay rates for agency Social Workers. It is therefore, also acknowledged that in such exceptional circumstances the Governance Groups will acknowledge and support the requirement for flexibility with regard to this protocol and that the all parties will continue to retain the spirit of the Memorandum of Cooperation.
- To work towards fully implementing the terms of this MoC via all their suppliers, i.e. main contractor and any 2<sup>nd</sup> tier suppliers.
- Each authority to keep suppliers, agency and permanent workers updated on key principles and objectives of the MoC.
- In the spirit of supporting Sector Led Improvement, each authority supports the sharing of good practice and lesson learnt in recruitment, retention, deployment and development of the their respective agency and permanent workforce.
- **It is also important to note that due regard will be given to the legal and regulatory implications of implementing the Protocols outlined within the Memorandum of Cooperation. Where appropriate, it is agreed that professional advice will be sought to ensure any resulting actions are legally compliant.**


**EAST MIDLANDS REGION MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION**


We the undersigned endorse and agree to uphold the Protocols outlined in the revised East Midlands Regional Memorandum of Cooperation dated xxx

<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Director of Children's Services Derby City Council</b>	


<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Director of Children's Services Derbyshire County Council</b>	

<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Director of Children's Services Leicester City Council</b>	


<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Director of Children's Services Leicestershire County Council</b>	


<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Director of Children's Services Lincolnshire County Council</b>	

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<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Director of Children's Services</b> <b>Northamptonshire County Council</b>	

<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Director of Children's Services</b> <b>Nottingham City Council</b>	

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<b>Director of Children's Services</b> <b>Nottinghamshire County Council</b>	

<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Director of Children's Services</b> <b>Rutland County Council</b>	