

## Local Authority concerns about system readiness for Families First



### Families First Partnership programme

Changes to case management systems to support the reforms

May 2025

At the May NVEST meeting, 212 members attended representing 89 Local Authorities. The theme was Families First and Tom Griffiths attended on behalf of the DfE.

Discussions which took place evidenced that there is significant concern about the programme being rolled out ahead of the case management systems being adapted to support it and NVEST have now written to the DfE asking for a response to the concerns that have been raised.

To read the full briefing, visit here: [Adapting Case Management Systems for Families First \(NVEST Briefing May 2025\)](#)

## Invitation to participate in Data Standards development

In our last newsletter we told you about a DfE project introducing new standards and that some workshops would be taking place to identify the right use cases that would most helpfully be solved through developing standards. 14 local authorities that are part of the NVEST community contributed to the first round of workshops and provided invaluable feedback on what was most important for children and families.

Following those workshops, the DfE have now agreed the first set of standards. These are

- 1) A standard data set about a child which will form the basis of multi-agency information sharing
- 2) Data standards to support multi agency information sharing, in particular the ability to look up key information that another agency holds about a child social care are involved with.
- 3) A standard data set about children and placements which will form the basis of starting to develop local and national intelligence to Local Authorities about placement sufficiency, costs and associated trends.

Social Finance who are partnered to deliver this with the Open Data Institute are looking for interested Local Authorities to become members of a standards working group. This is an opportunity to be involved in steering a national programme for change in case management systems.

*This is a strand of the Government's overall Data and Digital Strategy for Children's Social Care.* The first workshop will take place on **July 10<sup>th</sup> 15:00 – 16:30**. If you would like to attend, please email: [Andrew.newman@theodi.org](mailto:Andrew.newman@theodi.org).

*You can read more about the strategy here:* [Children's social care data and digital strategy - GOV.UK](#)

## Digital and Data Solutions Fund Publications

Two more publications have been published which gives insights into pilots that have been taking place in Local Authorities.

### Evaluation of Bristol's Think Family Database and associated 'single view' products

Somerset Council, in partnership with Bristol Council, commissioned Social Finance to deliver an independent evaluation of the implementation and impact of 'single view' products being used in Bristol - which include Think Family Database, Think Family Education, and associated products.

The evaluation helped inform the 'single view' guides also published by Data to Insight; and should be of interest to any local authority considering implementing a 'single view' in their area.

### Reimagining Case Management in Children's Social Care Pilot (North Yorkshire)

North Yorkshire Council report on two digital tools they have prototyped: a 'one click' retrieval tool, which could greatly cut the time practitioners spend finding information in their digital systems; and a tool that automatically generates ecomaps of a child's network, which could help practitioners identify people and places that might support or be a risk to the child.

The report should be of help to any local authority that may be interested in implementing similar technology in their area.

North Yorkshire Council also report their further ideas for how digital case management might be reimagined.

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## Keep up to date with NVEST

We now have our own dedicated email address [nvest@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:nvest@eastsussex.gov.uk) for membership enquiries or to tell us about things you are doing locally that you think we should know about, feel free to email us.

The next NVEST meeting will be held on **16<sup>th</sup> September 2025 (9.30 to 12.30)** more details to follow in due course. If you haven't already received an invite for this meeting and would like to attend, please email us and we will send you an invite.