Data Standards for Child Social Care **Standards Working Group**

Term of Reference

1. Introduction/Purpose:

This document outlines the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Standards Working Group(s) established to develop Data Standards for Children's Social Care Case Management Systems.

Standards Working Group(s) will be convened to ensure standards are developed that meet the needs of all stakeholders and directly address requirements identified by the reference group and within the guardrails (strategic vision and policies) set by the steering group.

The Standards Working Group(s) will be responsible for making technical recommendations to the steering group and DfE.

2. Initiative Overview:

The Data Standards for Children's Social Care initiative has been established by the DfE to resolve long standing issues with the creation, use and accessibility of data about children in the English social care system. The initiative aims to develop and implement open standards for data to improve data quality and accessibility across child social care systems.

3. Standards Working Group Responsibilities:

The Standards Working Group will:

- Own the enterprise data architecture and technical roadmaps required to enable open data standards to be implemented and adopted by stakeholders.

- Research, recommend or create data standards for CSC Case management systems that respond to the use cases and related user stories identified by the Reference Group and prioritised by the Steering Group.

- Commission the technical infrastructure required to implement the standards.

- Collaborate with the reference group to test the standards and infrastructure delivered by the standardisation initiative to ensure it is operable and performant.

- Promote the adoption of the standards, supporting organisations in developing business cases for change.

4. Membership:

The standards working group will include subject matter experts from the:

1. CMS Vendors - organisations involved in developing CMSs and associated products
2. Users - organisations who will be impacted by the standards
3. Open Data Standards experts – From the CSC sector and associated sectors such as health and education. Including standards experts from within relevant government departments.

The Standards Working Group will be a community of delivery. Membership will be by open, but members will be required to register and commit time to the work of the group. The group will work openly publishing minutes of meetings, drafts products and other artefacts.

The Group will be chaired by a member of the project team.

6. Meeting Frequency and Format:

- The Standards Working Group(s) will work collaboratively as a delivery team; they will meet on a schedule required to deliver recommendations.

- Meetings will be primarily held online, but in-person workshops will be held to co-work on specific products/artefacts. These will be held at a central location, for example, the ODI's offices at St Pancras.

- A shared workspace will enable standards working groups to collaborate between meetings.

- Meetings will be recorded, with a short meeting summary and slides published online.

7. Roles and Responsibilities of Members:

- **Members:** Responsible for actively participating in meetings, providing constructive feedback, and contributing to the overall success of the Initiative.

- **Chair:** Responsible for chairing meetings, ensuring effective discussions, and facilitating decision-making.

- **Secretariat:** Responsible for logistics, and ensuring meetings are recorded and these recordings are shared.

8. Reporting and Communication:

- The Chair will provide regular progress reports from the Standards Working Group to the Steering Group.

9. Decision-Making Process:

- Decisions will be made by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached a simple majority vote will be undertaken.

- Any dissenting opinions will be recorded in the meeting minutes.

- If a consensus cannot be reached the Working Group may ask the Steering Group for direction.

10. Confidentiality:

Outputs from meetings (including papers, minutes and any communications/social media) will be shared openly. These will be published under an open licence (CC-BY).

Working Group attendees' consent to be publicly listed as participants in meetings.

11. 11. Competition Law and Conflicts of Interest

Group members must ensure that in participating in the Group they do not engage in anti-competitive activity. Group members must advise the secretariat if they think there is a risk of anti-competitive activity occurring due to the groups work.

Group members are to declare any direct or indirect interest (whether personal, or by a duty of loyalty to another organisation) that conflicts or might conflict with the interests of this programme at the outset of any discussion on the relevant issue. Declarations of conflicts of interest will be noted in the public record of discussions, together with details of any proposals made.

12. Duration and Review:

- The Reference Group will operate for the duration of the Initiative.

- These Terms of Reference will be reviewed and updated at least annually.

- These Terms of Reference should be reviewed before: 10 July 2026.