



RAC Project Decision Form

Version 3.0(23 May 2016)

Title of Project	Renfrewshire Council social care data analysis	
Lead applicant	Prof Nick Bailey	
Date of RAC Panel meeting	1 st June 2016 (by telephone)	
RAC Panel decision	Support proposal	
	Support proposal subject to revisions and conditions in Part E	Yes
	Proposal acceptable standard but not supportable due to resourcing constraints - option to re-submit in next <i>Call for Expressions of Interest</i>	
	Do not support	

Part B: Grading summary

Criterion	Yes/No
Privacy and ethics	Yes ¹
Feasibility	Yes ²

Please provide the average review panel score for each section listed below.

Criterion	Grade (out of 4)
Scientific merit	3
Potential for public benefit impact	3 ³
Alignment to UBDC objectives	3 ⁴

Total (out of 12):

9

Part C: RAC Panel Priority Grade

Priority	Yes
4 - Very high priority	
3 - High priority	
2 - Medium priority	Yes
1 - Low priority	
0 - Do not support	

¹ Subject to approval of College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, University of Glasgow.

² Subject to comments & conditions in Section D & E

³ More accurately 3.33.

⁴ More accurately 2.66

Part D: Applicant feedback

Comments will be sent to the applicant(s) as feedback

Given the general lack of robust evidence as to the benefits of social care, this work is urgently needed. Part of the strength of this project is that it will scope out a potentially important data resource. In addition, the work will enable the development of capacity through the development of understanding of available administrative data sources, as well as in the research training afforded to a doctoral student.

The application perhaps could have expanded more on the NHS CHI data it potentially could be linked with and that there are firmer plans in place to do this in order to maximise the potential of this work. It might be helpful to understand the project plan for this wider piece of work which is not explored in this application (beyond 4.7).

Note that there is no team member (Part C) from the Scottish Government or Renfrewshire Council which may add to the public benefit aspect of this piece of work. (See Part E below).

Data sharing agreement in place with the Scottish government and Renfrewshire council is assumed.

It would be useful if the proposer indicated why so few projects have been completed in this area, despite the willingness of public bodies to share. If there are obstacles, will these impact on the project? Is there a reason Renfrewshire has been chosen? Have other stakeholders expressed views on the need to progress this type of work?

I'm not clear whether the project will of itself produce data or whether this could be made available to other researchers, presumably in aggregate, anonymised form. Key to this will presumably be the terms on which the council will make the 'controlled data' in question available. Will it be limited to the researcher in question?

It could be made explicit who the PhD student is who will undertake the project. I assume it is Mr Henderson, who is the only person who will have access to the controlled data. I have minor reservations over the extent to which the PhD student has the necessary quantitative skills, the only reference is to a 'work placement'. However, my guess is that his PhD may require further training in this area and he will have the support of his eminently qualified colleagues.

Part E: Required revisions and conditions of acceptance

Para section 4.1 of the proposal states that it will inform future research using data from a number of local authorities in the greater Glasgow area. There is no assurance provided that this work is supported by a number of councils. Some assurance should be sought at this early stage that this engagement is underway to underpin the potential of this piece of work.

Dissemination at section 5.2 is mainly via academic researchers, conferences and academic papers. A clearer understanding of how opportunities will be established to engage and work with the public sector, including integrated joint boards, should be given at this early stage.

Overall there needs to be more distinction between the larger PhD project and the proposed data exploration and it is not always clear what will be done at this stage. For example, why is there a need to request surname and forename if there is no data linkage. At section 3 it is indicated that the controlled data service is needed; however, in Part B.2.6 it transpires that it is not required in this pilot phase. Pilot phase is not explained elsewhere in the application, so the true level of resources or full support required from UBDC probably need explored further. There is a question whether what is proposed is an 'exploratory' study rather than a 'pilot' study – it is useful to clarify the nature of study.

Finally, the proposed data exploration does not seem to test any hypothesis or have a set of research questions and it should be revised to include these. The project could outline more clearly what questions can be answered with these data.