



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Bid Pack

Attachment 3 – Statement of Requirements

Contract Reference: 24825

Reducing Parental Conflict Local Grant evaluation

ITT_9920

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) (The Authority) wishes to commission an independent research organisation to conduct a mixed-method evaluation of the Local Grant component of the new Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) programme, which started in April 2022 and is due to run until 2025. Building on the previous RPC programme, which ended in 2022, this new phase of the programme aims to continue the process of embedding the RPC agenda into local area family services through to 2025.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

- 2.1 The Authority, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), is a major Government Department responsible for welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy. DWP is the UK's biggest public service department and is supported by 15 agencies and public bodies to administer the State Pension and a range of working age, disability and ill health benefits to around 20 million claimants and customers.
- 2.2 DWP has taken the lead on the RPC programme, and the Local Family Offer pilots which preceded it, since 2015. One of the department's current objectives is to "support the most disadvantaged and enhance social mobility by designing and delivering inclusive policies for all; supporting families and providing effective housing support".¹ One of the ways the department will achieve this is by continuing to implement the RPC programme in England, to reduce parental conflict, especially in disadvantaged and workless families.
- 2.3 For more information on the work and overall objectives of the department, visit the gov.uk pages: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/about>

3. POLICY BACKGROUND, EXISTING EVIDENCE AND THE OVERALL EVALUATION STRATEGY

Policy background

- 3.1 The Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) programme targets interparental conflict below the threshold of [domestic abuse](#) because there is strong evidence that conflict between parents, whether together or separated, can have a significant negative impact on children's mental health and long-term life chances. Not all conflict is damaging, but where it is frequent, intense, and poorly resolved, it can significantly harm children's outcomes.²
- 3.2 From 2015 to 2017, the DWP piloted the provision of expertise and evidence across 12 local authorities in England to develop innovative strategies to

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-work-and-pensions-single-departmental-plan>

² Harold et al. (2016) [What works to Enhance Inter-Parental Relationships and Improve Outcomes for Children](#). London: Department for Work and Pensions.

promote relationship quality. This pilot was called the [Local Family Offer](#) and informed the development of the first RPC programme, as part of [Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families](#).

- 3.3 The [parental conflict indicator](#), developed through this work, showed that 12 per cent of children in couple-parent families were living with at least one parent reporting relationship distress. The data also showed that parental conflict was twice as likely in workless couple-parent families compared to where both parents were working.
- 3.4 The first RPC programme, which ran between 2018 and 2022, aimed to improve outcomes for children, with a focus on disadvantaged families. Its objectives were to:
 - 3.4.1 help local areas integrate support to reduce parental conflict in local services for families; and
 - 3.4.2 develop the evidence base on interventions that work to reduce parental conflict, to inform future commissioning practice.
- 3.5 Under the previous RPC programme, the DWP commissioned and tested 7 different RPC interventions in 31 local authorities (LAs). Evidence from the ongoing evaluation of these interventions is building the UK-specific evidence base on what works to reduce conflict in disadvantaged families.
- 3.6 Alongside these tests, 151 English LAs were supported to build their capacity to deliver light-touch and moderate intensity early support for parents. However, by 2022 it was evident that capacity and capability was varied and there was still a significant need for additional funding to provide the resources needed to embed RPC approaches throughout local area services.
- 3.7 More information on the previous RPC programme is available on the gov.uk [Reducing Parental Conflict](#) pages.
- 3.8 The current RPC programme, which includes the Local Grant, began in April 2022 and also includes a new Challenge Fund, an Evidence Development Grant (currently awarded to the [Early Intervention Foundation](#)) and continued integration support from family services experts in the DWP.
- 3.9 The Local Grant, worth up to £19 million, is the primary mechanism being used to encourage LAs to continue to:
 - 3.9.1 integrate RPC focused practice and organisation into local area services for children and families;
 - 3.9.2 build the capability of frontline practitioners who support parents and families; and
 - 3.9.3 improve the overall RPC support offer for families.
- 3.10 The process by which we expect the RPC agenda to be integrated into local area services for children and families, and RPC service designed is

summarised by the theory of change shown in **Annexe A**. This should be used to guide the evaluation approach and the design of key research instruments.

- 3.11 The process by which we expect to improve interparental relationships, parenting and child outcomes, using RPC interventions, is summarised by the theory of change shown in **Annexe B**. Again, this should be used to guide the evaluation approach and the design of key research instruments evaluating the experiences and outcomes of parents accessing support and the impacts on their families.
- 3.12 As RPC is a relatively new type of service in the UK, LAs are still exploring whether to purchase interventions or build RPC capability and capacity within their in-house family services. This is a key theme we wish to explore through the evaluation.

Local authority service organisation

- 3.13 The issues associated with integrating RPC into family services differ across England due in part to the different ways that services are configured.
- 3.14 Local Family Services and Children's Services are structured differently depending on the size and composition of the local authority. Usually, there is a Strategic Director of Children's Services who is responsible for several service areas. These services are often called different things but broadly cover Children's Social Care, Education, Early Help, Commissioning and 0-19 health services.
 - 3.14.1 Children's Social Care includes activity such as Adoption & Fostering, Children's Safeguarding, Child in Need and Child Protection, Looked After Children & Care Leavers, Multi-Agency Front Door, Children with Disabilities, Child Sexual exploitation and Missing children.
 - 3.14.2 Early Help incorporates Family Support, Early Years services, sometimes the management of nurseries, oversight of childcare provision, can also include youth services, youth offending prevention, a range of commissioned services and projects covering support for asylum seekers and refugees and SENDIAS Services.
 - 3.14.3 Education includes activity around finance, business & infrastructure support, admissions, transport, SEND assessment & provision & cared for children education and pupil support, a range of specialist support services & specialist teachers such as sensory and autism.
 - 3.14.4 0-19 health services include school health advisors, health visiting and midwifery and are closely linked in the structure to Early Help.

Interrelated policy agendas and research

- 3.15 Over the next few years as many as 75 English LAs will have moved or will be moving towards the [Family Hub model of service delivery](#) that co-locates services to create single access points for families to enable multi-agency assessments and coordinated support for families. The Department for Education will evaluate Family Hubs transformation separately, but under this research contract the Supplier must seek to understand how RPC dovetails with Family Hubs and what the local landscape for family services looks like within or outside the Family Hubs model.
- 3.16 The [Supporting Families](#) Programme (previously Troubled Families) works closely with Family Hubs. The Supplier must explore the dynamics of this setting and how RPC could be further interwoven into the Supporting Families Programme to enable early identification of families in conflict.
- 3.17 Projects established under the new Challenge Fund will be delivered and evaluated by a delivery partner, as with the previous Challenge Fund. Learning from the [Challenge Fund](#) will help all LAs to understand how they can better support families with additional support requirements.

Existing evaluation evidence

- 3.18 Focusing on the process of integration, training of frontline practitioners and other professionals who work with families, intervention delivery and parents' experiences of interventions, the commissioned evaluation of the previous RPC programme has so far published three reports:
- 3.18.1 [Reducing Parental Conflict programme evaluation: report on early implementation](#)
- 3.18.2 [Reducing Parental Conflict Programme evaluation: second report on implementation](#)
- 3.18.3 [Reducing Parental Conflict Programme Evaluation: Third report on implementation](#)
- 3.19 The research undertaken by the Supplier will build on the evidence in these reports by continuing to explore the processes by which different LAs integrate RPC practice into local family services and evaluate the experiences and outcomes of parents accessing RPC support and its impacts on their children.

The overall evaluation strategy

- 3.20 Overall, the evaluation of the Local Grant element of the 2022-25 RPC programme will aim to explore how LAs have spent their grant funding and what this has achieved, assess how integrated into local family services the RPC agenda has become and evaluate the RPC support offer for parents.
- 3.21 Analysis conducted by the Authority and the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF), using management information and LA self-assessments, will focus on assessing how funding has been spent and what LAs have delivered. It will

also measure the progress made by LAs over the lifetime of the programme in relation to integrating the RPC agenda into family services.

- 3.22 The research undertaken by the Supplier will build upon these analyses by exploring the process of integration, focusing on understanding the decisions that a sample of LAs have made – why they have focused on certain priorities and challenges, and how they have approached them. This will involve qualitative research exploring LAs’ experiences of early implementation and case studies with a sample of LAs in Year 2 of the programme (2023/24).
- 3.23 In addition, the Supplier will conduct a quantitative survey of parents to evaluate their experiences of specialist RPC support. A key difference between the previous RPC programme and the Local Grant is that specialist RPC interventions are not provided centrally by DWP in any local area; LAs can choose to commission specific interventions themselves or to build the capability of their own practitioners to deliver them in house. This is so that local family services can more closely meet the needs of local families. The Supplier must evaluate the quality of support provided and seek to understand how the switch from central to local commissioning has affected delivery and integration in LAs and the quality of RPC support received by parents/families.

How the research will be used

- 3.24 Together, evaluation findings will be used to inform and improve integration and service design in real time, to form a view on whether funding via a local grant is an effective way to perpetuate the RPC policy agenda and help determine the level of funding and the type of central government support/intervention that might be required beyond 2025.
- 3.25 In addition, over the next few years as many as 75 English LAs will have moved, or will be moving, towards the Family Hub model of service delivery. As explained above, the Family Hubs transformation will be evaluated by the Department for Education, but under this research contract the Supplier must seek to understand how RPC dovetails with Family Hubs and Supporting Families, and what additional challenges or advantages there are when RPC and Family Hubs and Supporting Families operate together. Evaluation insights will also help policy officials to decide where future RPC activity best sits in government (e.g., as part of the Supporting Families Programme, Family Hubs or within DWP).

4. WIDER EVALUATION ACTIVITY

Overall evaluation objectives

- 4.1 The objectives of the overall evaluation, including DWP and EIF analyses of local authority bids, management information and self-assessments, will be to:
- 4.1.1 assess how much progress has been made by LAs in relation to integrating RPC focused practice and organisation into family services;

- 4.1.2 establish what LAs have achieved with their grant funding (i.e., what they delivered in terms of the numbers of frontline practitioners and other professionals trained and the numbers of parents and families supported);
 - 4.1.3 understand how the LAs have spent their funding and how this has varied across England;
 - 4.1.4 understand how LAs in different circumstances, especially those moving to a Family Hubs model and those that benefited from DWP-commissioned specialist RPC interventions under the previous programme, have approached specific challenges and problems in their local areas to further embed RPC and improve their overall support offer for families; and
 - 4.1.5 evaluate the quality of support for parents who access specialist RPC interventions (or support with a significant RPC component) to identify key outcomes and establish if and how the overall RPC support offer has changed under the Local Grant.
- 4.2 A key underlying aim will be to identify best practice, effective models of service configuration and delivery, and any other lessons, to benefit other LAs and promote rapid progress in relation to embedding the RPC agenda into family services and improving the overall RPC support offer for families in conflict.

Analysis conducted by the Authority

- 4.3 DWP will analyse LAs' bids for Local Grant funding and their subsequent (quarterly) returns of Management Information over the lifetime of the programme to establish **what** LAs have delivered and **how** they have spent their funding. This will deliver a national (England-wide) picture of what has been delivered and where, including the total number of parents/families supported, training courses delivered, and professionals trained. Refer to **Annexe C** to see the research questions guiding these analyses.

Analysis conducted by the Early Intervention Foundation

- 4.4 Separate to the research undertaken by the Supplier, the Early Intervention Foundation (and their successor) will continue their work to assess integration and how much progress is made by LAs during this phase of the programme, towards fully embedding the RPC agenda into local area family services. They will do this by analysing returns of the 'RPC Planning Tool' (a self-assessment tool designed by EIF under the previous RPC programme). This analysis will be funded through a pre-existing arrangement. Refer to **Annexe D** to see the research questions guiding this analysis.

Links with the commissioned research

- 4.5 The research conducted by the Supplier will complement and supplement the DWP-led and EIF-led analyses so that the process of integration can be understood, and the different rates of progress made by LAs explained. Key outputs from analyses of Local Grant bids, management information and the

RPC Planning Tools will be shared with the Supplier to inform the selection of LAs chosen for the case studies and the design of corresponding research instruments, so that good progress and barriers to integration can be explored.

- 4.6 A core high-level evaluation design, showing how the research and analyses should fit together, is provided in **Annexe E**.

Estimating the impacts of RPC interventions

- 4.7 The Authority plans to explore the feasibility of estimating the impacts of locally commissioned RPC interventions on conflict and other relationship dynamics, so that the benefits for parents and families can be quantified. This impact assessment will rely on the viability of the parent survey, undertaken by the Supplier, and the cooperation of a subset of LAs. This research will be scoped in autumn 2022 once the Authority has a clearer picture of the overall RPC support offer being delivered by LAs.

5. THE RESEARCH REQUIREMENT

- 5.1 The research conducted by the Supplier must include:

- 5.1.1 **core research**, using prescribed methods described below;
- 5.1.2 **contingency research with parents** who have accessed RPC support, if a quantitative survey of parents proves unviable; and
- 5.1.3 **additional research to provide added value** to the wider evaluation, using methods to be proposed by the Supplier, included within the maximum contract price.

- 5.2 The Authority invites suppliers to suggest alternative methods to those prescribed under the core research requirement, if a convincing rationale can be given.

- 5.3 The additional research to provide 'added value' aims to encourage innovation from suppliers and offer additional insights into the delivery and outcomes of the RPC programme.

Core Research Requirement

- 5.4 As a minimum, the Supplier must undertake the following strands of research:

- 5.4.1 At least **six early learning focus groups** or workshops (split by regional area), focusing on examples of best practice or specific challenges faced in Year 1 of the Local Grant, must be conducted in late 2022 and early 2023. These will aim to gather and share information and early lessons with all LAs in an open (non-confidential) environment so that learning can be fed directly into Year 2 plans (i.e., by April 2023).

- 5.4.2 At least six in-depth **steady-state case studies**, conducted in 2023/24, to interview key LA staff about the grant mechanism and

explore how RPC is being integrated into LA services, including how delivery is aligned with Family Hubs, and how the RPC support offer to parents is changing. Case studies will be selected according to the following criteria:

- 5.4.2.1 At least two local authority areas previously covered by DWP-commissioned RPC interventions and at least two areas not previously covered.
- 5.4.2.2 Around two areas currently using or moving to the Family Hubs model. The aim will be to achieve a mix of LAs in different situations, but this will depend on the prevalence of established, transformational and non- Family Hubs areas by mid-2023.
- 5.4.3 Each case study should involve around 15 telephone or face-to-face interviews with local authority staff at management and frontline level, providers (where external service providers are used), DWP programme staff such as the Regional Integration Leads, and potentially parents who have accessed RPC support.
- 5.4.4 A high-level theory of change, showing what one might expect to see as RPC focused practice is embedded into family services, is provided in Annexe A to guide the design of research instruments.
- 5.4.5 A quantitative **survey of 1,500 to 2,000 parents**, comprising:
 - 5.4.5.1 At least 1,000 survey interviews (lasting ~45mins) with parents who completed an intervention (hereafter referred to as completers) to understand the experiences of those who participated and assess the frequency/nature of conflict (and other relationship dynamics) achieved after participation; and
 - 5.4.5.2 Around 500 telephone interviews (lasting 30-40mins) with parents who failed to complete an intervention (hereafter referred to as non-completers) to establish why some parents dropped out early.
- 5.4.6 Survey questions will mainly be closed with multiple choice, pre-defined answers. A handful of questions may be free text, with the intention to back-code answers during the survey or at the end.
- 5.4.7 Some questions for both completers and non-completers will be standardised to enable comparisons between the two groups and with the previous programme and provide indicative evidence on how the switch to local commissioning has affected the quality and suitability of RPC support and its impacts on interparental relationships and child outcomes.
- 5.4.8 A high-level theory of change, showing the process by which interparental relationships, parenting and child outcomes are

expected to be improved, is provided in **Annexe B** to guide the design of research instruments.

- 5.4.9 A variety of relationship metrics are currently in use across LAs, including the Quality of Co-parental Communication Scale, the Relationship Question Index and the Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale, and a selection of subscales drawn from the Iowa Family Interaction Rating Scale, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the O'Leary Porter Scale.³ The survey questionnaire will draw from these subscales and be mindful of their wider use so that, where feasible, pre and post intervention comparisons can be made.
- 5.4.10 The Authority will work with a subset of LAs to acquire parent contact details and provide the Supplier with a suitable sample frame. This will be stratified to include a range of parent types (e.g., intact and separated parents, employed and unemployed parents, parents with health conditions and disabilities and parents from a wide range of ethnic groups) and may cover a range of different interventions.
- 5.4.11 If the Authority is unable to provide a sample frame of parents large enough to support the survey (e.g., if enough LAs are unwilling to cooperate or referral volumes are very low), the Supplier will have to find other means of sampling parents who have been referred to and/or participated in a specialist RPC intervention to top up the sample or develop one from scratch. Bidders must explain how they plan to do this, for example, by working directly with LAs or using other networks, to construct a suitable sample frame. The costs for this extra work must be itemised separately (see Attachment 4 – Price Schedule). If this extra sampling work is necessary, some of the additional research to provide added value will be cancelled or reduced to fund the work.

A contingency plan for the parent survey

- 5.5 The Authority invites suppliers to suggest alternative research to evaluate the experiences of and outcomes for parents accessing RPC support, if for any reason the parent survey proves complete unviable, for example, if it proves impossible to acquire (via any means) the contact details of parents who have accessed support in sufficient volumes to support a quantitative survey. This contingency research must be costed separately (see Attachment 4 – Price Schedule).

Additional research to provide added value

- 5.6 In addition to meeting the core research requirement above, the Authority invites suppliers to suggest any additional research that would complement and/or supplement the core research requirement, the analyses conducted by the Authority or the (EIF) Planning Tool analysis, to boost the overall strength of the evaluation and its ability to meet its objectives.

³ [Measuring parental conflict and its impact on child outcomes | Early Intervention Foundation \(eif.org.uk\)](https://www.eif.org.uk)

- 5.7 Suppliers are invited to propose up to two strands of additional research:
- 5.7.1 one strand of research to be conducted alongside the core research requirement, whether additional work to create a sample frame for the parent survey (see paragraph 5.4.11) is necessary or not; and
 - 5.7.2 one strand of research to be conducted alongside the core research requirement if the Authority provides an adequate sample frame for the parent survey and any extra work by the Supplier to create/boost the sample is not necessary (see paragraph 5.4.11 above). This strand should therefore be of roughly equal value to any sample creation activity so one piece of work can replace the other without any impact of the total contract price.
- 5.8 Proposals for additional research to provide added value must be included in the total contract price, with costs (including for any additional reports or presentations) fully broken down and itemised.
- 5.9 A clear rationale must be given for all strands of additional research, explaining how it would complement or supplement the core research requirement in relation to meeting the overall research objectives, the research questions listed below and in annexes C and D, or filling an identified evidence gap.
- 5.10 All additional research must be deliverable by mid-2024 so that findings can be included in the final evaluation report in September 2024.

Possible combinations of research within the maximum contract price

- 5.11 Depending on whether the Authority can deliver an adequate parent sample, or whether the survey proves viable at all, three combinations of research should be possible for a similar price within the maximum contract value. Each scenario will be costed separately in Attachment 4 (Pricing Schedule).
- 5.12 This assumes that the parent survey and contingency parent research are of equal/similar value and the sample creation work and one strand of the additional research are of equal/similar value.

Parent survey is viable		Parent survey not viable
DWP provides sample	Supplier creates sample	
Y1 Focus Groups	Y1 Focus Groups	Y1 Focus Groups
Y2 Case Studies	Y2 Case studies	Y2 Case studies
Added value #1	Added value #1	Added value #1
Parent survey	Parent survey	Contingency parent research
Added value #2	Sample creation work	Added value #2

Scenario One- Parent survey is viable and DWP provides the sample

- 5.13 The preferred combination of research is possible where DWP acquires sufficient parent data from LAs. This will mean that the Supplier will not need

to create the parent sample frame and will be able to spend that money on an additional strand of research, thereby delivering up to two pieces of additional research alongside the full core research requirement.

Scenario Two- Parent survey is viable but the Supplier creates the sample

- 5.14 If the Authority is unable to acquire sufficient parent data from LAs, the Supplier will need to create the parent sample frame. This change will be funded by dropping one of the proposed additional strands of research, thus keeping the change cost neutral. In this scenario the Supplier will deliver just one piece of additional research alongside the full core research requirement.

Scenario Three- Parent survey is not viable

- 5.15 If a quantitative survey of parents proves completely unviable, for example, if very few LAs are willing to cooperate or referral volumes are very low, the Supplier will deliver the contingency parent research, as designed by the Supplier. The contingency research should be of similar value to the survey so that the change is cost neutral. In this scenario, the Supplier will deliver both pieces of additional research alongside the Year 1 focus groups, the Year 2 case studies and the contingency parent research.

Management activities included in the requirement

- 5.16 The research requirement and associated costs must include the following:
- 5.16.1 Project management oversight of the research, including any required admin, contacting parents to take part in research and dealing with any complaints, regular reporting of progress and findings, attending meetings with DWP officials as required, supervision and monitoring of parent data, if needed.
 - 5.16.2 Working with LAs and other delivery agents and service providers to deliver the case studies and focus groups (DWP will work with the successful bidder to facilitate access).
 - 5.16.3 Developing a detailed research design.
 - 5.16.4 Implementing and managing fieldwork, including monitoring progress.
 - 5.16.5 Developing a full timetable for the research programme, including delivery of key outcomes.
 - 5.16.6 Producing draft reports, final reports and giving presentation(s) to DWP and, where appropriate, LAs at each reporting stage (as detailed in sections 6 and 7 below).
 - 5.16.7 Reporting research findings and outcomes in reports of a publishable standard using the DWP house style:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dwp-research-reports-style-guide>.

5.16.8 Detailed costs associated with each of the above elements.

Research questions underpinning the core research

5.17 As a minimum, the core research requirement must answer the research questions listed below between paragraphs 5.14 and 5.41. Key research questions, loosely grouped around the three main strands of the core research requirement, are set out in Annexe E.

5.18 All research questions are based on the theories of change summarised in annexes A and B. In line with standard evaluation practice, these research questions will be reviewed and refined with input from the DWP Evaluation Steering Group and the Supplier prior to each round of fieldwork.

Integration and service design

5.19 What were the main influences on LA decision-making in relation to integrating RPC practice and service organisation into local area services for children and families?

5.20 What local priorities have LAs had to focus on and how do these vary?

5.21 What challenges to RPC integration have LAs had to address and how were these overcome?

5.22 What cultural changes have needed to happen for LAs to fully or further embed the RPC agenda?

5.23 How did these challenges differ between LAs? Specific comparisons must be made between:

5.23.1 urban and rural LAs

5.23.2 LAs previously covered by centrally commissioned RPC interventions and LAs not previously covered

5.23.3 LAs bidding in clusters and those bidding individually (including LAs that recently 'declustered' – i.e., they were part of a cluster but are now bidding as single LA)

5.23.4 Mature and less mature LAs (according to recent RPC Planning Tool assessments)?

5.24 How did the change from centrally commissioned interventions affect relevant LAs in Year 1? How did these impacts change in Year 2?

5.25 Where there has been a focus on training certain professionals (e.g., social workers, GPs, police officers, etc.), why have LAs chosen to prioritise RPC training for these professions?

5.26 When and why have LAs chosen to train their own practitioners to deliver RPC support or commission interventions (including digital products) from external providers?

- 5.27 How have different LAs been able to draw on different funding streams to improve the overall offer for families in conflict?
- 5.28 How has movement towards the Family Hub model affected RPC integration and delivery to parents?
- 5.28.1 How does RPC support dovetail with other support offered within Family Hubs and what additional challenges or advantages are there when RPC and Family Hubs operate together?
- 5.29 What were the experiences of different local authorities in Year 2 of the programme (2023-24)? In what ways is this likely to affect Year 3 plans and bids?
- 5.30 What examples of best practice are there in terms of delivery of provision to parents, service organisation or integration of RPC into local services?
- 5.31 What was the impact of the change from centrally commissioned specialist interventions to locally commissioned provision on the overall RPC support offer for families in affected LAs? How does the support offer compare with LAs where centrally commissioned interventions have never been available?
- 5.32 How have different LAs approached improving the overall RPC support package since 2021/22?
- 5.33 How do LAs think that specialist RPC interventions (or interventions with an RPC component) can be delivered sustainably into the future?
- 5.34 What lessons can be learnt from the first two years of the Local Grant and what should LAs prioritise in Year 3?

The Local Grant model and future support

- 5.35 Was the Local Grant an effective method of embedding RPC practice and service organisation into local services for children and families?
- 5.36 How can the grant application process and its administration be improved?
- 5.37 How do LAs think the grant funding model has helped them to integrate RPC activity into local family services alongside other family policy initiatives?
- 5.38 How can RPC remain a sustainable, long-term priority for local area family services?
- 5.39 What continued practical support and funding is required from central government to perpetuate the agenda?

Parents' experiences of support and outcomes

- 5.40 Overall, research with parents should seek to understand the views and experiences of parents who accessed specialist RPC interventions (or support with a significant RPC component). Key research questions to be answered include:

- 5.41 How were parents identified and referred?
 - 5.41.1 What were parents' reasons for participating and were they motivated to complete the provision?
 - 5.41.2 What were the main relationship and co-parenting problems being experienced prior to referral?
 - 5.41.3 Where present, was domestic abuse identified early and were parents offered more appropriate support?
- 5.42 What was the induction, assessment, and action planning process like?
 - 5.42.1 Were parents' relationship and parenting problems identified and understood by the professional(s) who delivered the intervention?
 - 5.42.2 Was an action plan with clear goals agreed at the outset?
- 5.43 What did participation involve and were the sessions well-delivered?
 - 5.43.1 What modes of delivery were used (face-to-face, virtual/online with support from qualified practitioners, self-help e-learning packages)?
 - 5.43.2 Were communications and logistics good/adequate?
 - 5.43.3 Did they develop good rapport with the professional(s) who delivered the provision?
 - 5.43.4 Did both parents attend the provision? Where parents participated without the cooperation of the other parent, what was the effect on them (including motivation and outcomes)?
 - 5.43.5 Was the provision delivered on an individual/one-to-one basis, in a group setting or a mixture of the two?
 - 5.43.6 Did anything external (e.g., life events) interrupt participation?
- 5.44 What kind of support was provided and what did parents learn?
 - 5.44.1 What kind of relationship and communication skills did parents acquire?
 - 5.44.2 What kind of support was received to help parents understand their own behaviour?
 - 5.44.3 What kind of support was received to help parents manage their own emotions and stress?
 - 5.44.4 What kind of parenting and co-parenting support was received?
- 5.45 What were the outcomes of the provision?

- 5.45.1 What was the nature and frequency/intensity of conflict after participation?
 - 5.45.2 What other relationship dynamics were improved?
 - 5.45.3 How do the outcome achieve separated and intact couples compare?
 - 5.45.4 How do the outcomes achieved by parents participating together compare with parents who have participated without the cooperation of the other parent?
 - 5.45.5 For separated parents, what was the impact on arrangements for the payment of child maintenance?
 - 5.45.6 What were the impacts of the support on the children in participating families?
 - 5.45.7 Where there any other impacts of the intervention, including any negative effects?
- 5.46 Where parents failed to complete or attend interventions, what were the reasons for drop-out and were any parent groups / family types more likely to drop-out than others?

6. KEY MILESTONES

6.1 The following contract milestones/deliverables shall apply:

Milestone/Deliverable	Description	Timeframe or Delivery Date
1	Agreed specification of the programme of research	October 2022
2	Focus group/ workshops with local authorities begin	November 2022
3	Presentation of findings and 1 st draft of interim report	March 2023
4	Parent survey starts	April 2023
5	Year two case studies begin	June 2023
6	Presentation of findings and 1 st draft report of publishable standard	January 2024
7	Presentation of findings from parent survey	June 2024

Milestone/Deliverable	Description	Timeframe or Delivery Date
8	Final report of a publishable standard delivered	September 2024

7. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION/REPORTING

- 7.1 The Supplier (as represented by a senior research manager, associate director or equivalent) will report directly to the Authority's Project Manager at regular update meetings.
- 7.2 The Supplier and DWP will agree research outputs to include a minimum of:
- 7.2.1 Fieldwork materials and research instruments to be signed off by DWP.
 - 7.2.2 Regular (e.g., fortnightly) reporting of progress and emerging findings to the Authority, throughout the lifetime of the Contract. This will cover, for example, numbers of interviews or focus groups booked and conducted, and basic statistics on recruitment of key parent subgroups.
 - 7.2.3 A short (~30 pages) summary report of preliminary /interim learning from year 1 learning in March 23 to aid internal learning and be relayed to LAs via the Regional Integration Lead network.
 - 7.2.4 An interim report of publishable standard, around 90 pages in length and available March/April 2024 to support year 3 planning in LAs.
 - 7.2.5 Final evaluation report of publishable standard, around 100 pages in length and available in September 2024.
 - 7.2.6 Presentations of findings to sit alongside all three reports.
 - 7.2.7 A standalone summary of the interim and final research reports.
 - 7.2.8 Reports containing detailed findings will be written to DWP standards (as set out in the DWP style guide, to publishable quality) with drafts as necessary.
- 7.3 The Supplier must adhere to the DWP report template and style guide,⁴ including providing reports to AA WCAG Web Accessibility standards⁵ when producing reports of a publishable standard.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dwp-research-reports-style-guide>

⁵ <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/>

8. VOLUMES

- 8.1 Project scale and quotas are detailed above in section 6. The Authority welcomes suppliers to provide proposals stipulating the finer details of research methodology, to showcase their expertise in this subject area and relevant methods.

9. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- 9.1 The Supplier will be expected to continually improve the way in which the required Services are to be delivered throughout the Contract duration.
- 9.2 The Supplier should present new ways of working to the Authority during any Contract review meetings, and any further meetings as required.
- 9.3 Changes to the way in which the Services are to be delivered must be brought to the Authority's attention and agreed prior to any changes being implemented.

10. SUSTAINABILITY

- 10.1 The Customer does not anticipate that there are any sustainability considerations that suppliers should include in their submissions.

11. RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 11.1 The Supplier acknowledges that the Authority has a responsibility to support and promote wider social sustainability objectives for the benefit of society; and agrees to cooperate with the Authority to improve life chances for those most disadvantaged and furthest from the labour market.
- 11.2 The Supplier acknowledges that the Authority is supporting the Crown's Life Chances and Social Value agendas by aiming to promote opportunities for groups of persons which the Authority regards as meriting priority assistance including but not limited to Apprentices, Disabled People, Young People, Older Workers, Ex-Offenders and Black and Minority Ethnic People.
- 11.3 Diversity and Equality, the Crown's social value agenda and DWP Priority Groups will be discussed jointly by the Authority and the Supplier as an on-going item at Contract review meetings where appropriate.
- 11.4 The Supplier shall, and shall ensure that its sub-contractors, take the following action(s) in respect of DWP Priority Groups:

Apprentices

- 11.4.1 Make available to potential members of Staff used in the performance of the Supplier's obligations information about the National Apprenticeship Service.

Disabled people

- 11.4.2 Take steps to become a Disability Confident Employer.
 - 11.4.3 Make appropriate use of Access to Work to support recruit and retain disabled workers.
 - 11.4.4 Provide Employment Experience to Disabled People as members of staff used in the execution of the Supplier's obligations under the Contract, to develop their skills and experience and increase their employability.
- 11.5 Employment experience: provide employment experience to young people as members of staff used in the performance of the Supplier's obligations under the Contract to develop their skills and experience and increase their employability for:
- 11.5.1 Young People – Under 25
 - 11.5.2 Older Workers – Over 50
 - 11.5.3 Ex-Offenders
 - 11.5.4 Black and Minority Ethnic People
- 11.6 Employee Vacancies: advertise all vacancies for staff via universal jobmatch in addition to any other recruitment agencies with whom the Supplier advertises such vacancies and any other actions the Supplier takes to recruit Staff.

12. QUALITY

- 12.1 The Supplier will adhere to the current Social and Market Research and Data Protection standards
- 12.2 The Supplier will also be required to complete a Generic Security Assurance Document (GSAD) – see Section 16 below – and work with the DWP Project Manager to complete a DWP Security Assurance for Research and Analysis (SARA) process. The SARA will set out and clearly document what data will be collected, where it will be stored, who will have access, what data transfers will take place and between which parties.

13. PRICE

- 13.1 To manage the flexibility needed for this project and allow for a fair assessment of bids, costs for each of the three research scenarios will be costed separately. This allows the Authority to clearly understand what the cost would be for the intended research (the parent survey is viable and DWP provide the parent sample) and the two alternative scenarios (either the Supplier provides the parent sample or the parent survey is unviable and contingency parent research takes its place).

13.2 Bidders are invited to price the requirement and all other expenses relating to Contract delivery in Attachment 4 – Price Schedule, excluding VAT.

14. STAFF AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

14.1 The Supplier shall provide a sufficient level of resource throughout the duration of the Contract and consistently deliver a quality service.

14.2 The Supplier’s staff assigned to the Contract shall have the relevant qualifications and experience to deliver the Contract to the required standard, outlined in the bid. The Supplier should set out what relevant qualifications and experience those working on the project possess.

14.3 The Supplier shall ensure that staff understand the Authority’s vision and objectives and will provide excellent customer service to the Authority throughout the duration of the Contract.

15. SERVICE LEVELS AND PERFORMANCE

15.1 The Authority will measure the quality of the Supplier’s delivery by completion of specified project outputs to a publishable standard and to the specified timescales. The Supplier will appoint a lead liaison representative who will work with the DWP Project Manager to deliver the agreed work schedules.

15.2 Progress and sign-off of products will be assessed by DWP with representation including the DWP project managers, policy professionals and policy analysts from across Ministerial policy areas.

15.3 The Supplier must have sound processes for quality assurance in place and should demonstrate their internal procedures to assure and control quality in all aspects of the study within their proposal. The Authority will measure the quality of the Supplier’s delivery against the table below:

KPI/SLA	Service Area	KPI/SLA description
#1	Project management and capacity	Specified and clearly defined procedures for working closely with DWP through regular updates. Monthly updates to monitor progress against pre-agreed objectives of the research and timetable (as set out in 7 above) Take clear steps to manage the resource demands concurrent projects, ensuring the necessary capacity, resource and expertise. DWP will monitor Provider staff dedicated to the project against the response to this Statement of Requirements. Any changes in named project staff to be agreed with DWP prior to change. Provider to respond within 1-2 days to DWP queries
#2	Quality assurance	Specified and clearly defined procedures for quality assuring methodological design proposals. Take clear steps to ensure all analysis is quality

KPI/SLA	Service Area	KPI/SLA description
		<p>assured and suitable for informing policy decisions and publications.</p> <p>The provider should set out these procedures and steps in their response to this statement of requirements. DWP analysts will independently assess the quality and robustness of research designs and analysis.</p>
#3	Relevant Expertise	<p>Specified and clearly defined procedures to ensure sufficient levels of relevant expertise, including policy areas and/or methodologies, for all potential projects.</p> <p>Take clear steps to ensure specific expertise is available on all specialist policy areas so that research requirements are sufficiently met.</p> <p>The provider should set out the extent of relevant expertise of staff engaged in the project. They should inform DWP of the relevant expertise of replacement or additional staff recruited to work on it after it has started. DWP analysts will assess the quality and robustness of research designs and analysis.</p>
#4	Analysis and reporting	<p>Clear quality control procedures in place to ensure accuracy and high quality with findings reports. Clear steps to ensure the accuracy and quality does not suffer as a result of concurrent projects and high work volumes.</p> <p>The provider should set out the control procedures in their response to this statement of requirements. The provider should inform DWP of any staff changes or other relevant issue that might impact on the production of analysis and reporting of findings.</p>

16. SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS

- 16.1 Suppliers must adhere to all appropriate security requirements. They will work with the DWP Project Manager to ensure all security procedures are in compliance with Departmental standards.
- 16.2 The Supplier must provide detailed plans for how they will ensure participant data will be securely received, stored and destroyed. They will have an up-to-date Information Security Questionnaire (ISQ), as required by departmental security protocols.
- 16.3 All fieldwork must be gathered, transported and stored securely. Any transfers to and from the Supplier to any subcontractors (for example, a transcription services provider) must also meet DWP standards, using PGP encryption software or equivalent.

- 16.4 All transfers of personal data to and from the Authority must meet the Authority's security standards as agreed in the Information Security Questionnaire (ISQ).
- 16.5 The Supplier must securely store data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. The Authority requires details from the Potential Provider on how this will be undertaken.
- 16.6 The Supplier is required to provide assurance to the Authority that all data will be securely destroyed within a reasonable timeframe, as per current Data Protection Regulations, following completion of the project.
- 16.7 In the case where the Supplier's staff are working from home, the Authority may require sight of the Supplier's working from home policy.

17. PAYMENT AND INVOICING

- 17.1 Payment can only be made following the satisfactory delivery of pre-agreed certified products and deliverables. Payment milestones will be agreed.
- 17.2 Before payment can be considered, each invoice must include a detailed elemental breakdown of work completed and the associated costs and quote the purchase order number which will be supplied.
- 17.3 Invoices should be submitted to: SSCL, PO Box 406, Phoenix House, Celtic Springs, Newport NP10 8FZ. Electronic Invoices. Electronic invoices should be sent to APinvoices-DWP-U@gov.sscl.com

18. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

- 18.1 The Supplier will be responsible for providing overall oversight and management of the research, with DWP working with the successful bidder to help facilitate access to LAs, parents and providers. This should include monitoring and mitigating for possible and emerging risks and issues which could impact on the successful completion of all aspects of the project. It is vital that the Supplier has a robust risk management plan/strategy which is agreed and shared with the DWP.
- 18.2 Attendance at Contract Review meetings shall be at the Supplier's own expense.

19. LOCATION

- 19.1 The Supplier will be based in their offices or colleagues home office space and will be expected to attend Project Management meetings, including travel to DWP Offices if required.
- 19.2 The Supplier will be required to undertake research activity in Great Britain.

20. DEFINITIONS

Expression or acronym	Definition
RPC	Reducing Parental Conflict
EIF	Early Intervention Foundation is a charity established in 2013 to champion and support the use of effective early intervention to improve the lives of children and young people at risk of experiencing poor outcomes. Home Early Intervention Foundation (eif.org.uk)
EDG	Evidence and Dissemination Grant
Challenge fund	Historically, the primary aim of the Challenge Fund has been to gather learning on what works to reduce parental conflict in particular cohorts of disadvantaged families and to develop new ways to digitally engage families in conflict.
WDG	The Workforce Development Grant was available to local authorities in England during the 2021/22 to develop staff skills and capability to identify parents experiencing parental conflict, deliver specialist interventions and provide other support to reduce parental conflict.
Family Hubs	Family hubs bring together services for families with children of all ages (0-19) or up to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), with a great Start for Life offer at their core. They can include hub buildings and virtual offers. Family hubs transformation fund - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Supporting Families	The Supporting Families programme supports vulnerable families to get the right support at the right time. It ultimately aims to build strong multi-agency local partnerships in every area as well as mature local and national data systems that enable partners to identify families in need of extra help, target services more effectively and track family level outcomes over the long term. Supporting Families - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Planning Tool	The RPC Planning Tool is a self-assessment tool used by local authorities to assess their progress towards RPC maturity in relation to integrating RPC focused practice and organisation into family services. It does this by examining progress in eight areas: strategy, workforce, partnership, community, services and interventions, coordinated working, outcomes and customer experience, and evaluation.

ANNEXE A – RPC THEORY OF CHANGE: INTEGRATION AND SERVICE DESIGN

Inputs & assumptions → →	Outputs & intermediate outcomes → →	Target outcomes
<p>Key inputs from DWP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funding of up to £19m Funding awards to individual LAs determined by the prevalence of children in low-income families (according to local area statistics to the year ending 2021) LAs are supported by DWP Regional Integration Leads LAs are given fit for purpose guidance on the application process and grant terms & conditions LAs access practical support from the Early Intervention Foundation (and their successor) <p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAs take-up and make use of Local Grant funding LAs make full use of matched funding or other LA funding sources LA staff are able to make the additional (time) commitments necessary to apply for funding and administer the grant LAs appoint an RPC coordinator and single point of contact to manage the relationship with DWP The DWP RILs perform effectively (e.g., helping LAs to successfully apply for the Local Grant and to make full use of their funding) LAs are receptive to engaging with RILs RILs are able to persuade LAs of value of RPC and help them to take action LAs engage with EIF resources and find them useful LAs have a sufficiently equipped and resourced L&D teams to coordinate delivery of RPC related training LA commissioners are able to identify individuals for training and navigate complex L&D resources 	<p>Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principle of tackling parental conflict is accepted and there is commitment to action. A local vision and multi-agency RPC strategy is agreed, communicated, and woven into relevant strategic plans. An action plan delivers the strategic approach, and progress is monitored at a senior level. Partners share data to inform strategic decisions. <p>Workforce capability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-agency workforce needs on RPC are mapped, and capacity and skills audits or training reviews are underway. There are regular opportunities for staff to receive training. Trainees feel equipped to address parental conflict and use knowledge acquired to address interparental conflict. <p>Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A growing group of partner agencies has lead responsibility for RPC and its impact on children. They deliver actions, share funding and responsibility, and design solutions. <p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The views of children, young people and families directly inform strategy through community consultation. Families co-design the local RPC strategy and are involved in commissioning and governance structures. <p>Services & interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about parental relationships and support services is accessible to and understood by families. <p>Coordinated working</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations are developing integrated parental conflict pathways and processes, in line with DA support pathways. <p>Outcomes & experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence on the customer experience is collected regularly and informs service and workforce development. <p>Evaluation capability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interventions are evaluated and demonstrate good outcomes for families and children (i.e., fewer parents in conflict and less harm caused to children) 	<p>RPC fully embedded into LA family services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best practice fully embedded Others learning from achievements Evidence of significant shifts in investment to reduce parental conflict through early intervention RPC skills and knowledge are part of job specifications, recruitment, and competency frameworks Senior leaders routinely draw on robust evidence to inform resource use and service design <p>Local authority outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >75% of the early help, children's social care and 0–19 health services following workforces have received reducing parental conflict (RPC) training All of those who have been trained are using RPC learning when engaging with families Frequent activities undertaken to support the embedding of RPC practice and support for parents such as practice sharing events or networks, newsletters or champion roles. Has an active team of RPC trainers in their local area Local senior leaders and partner organisations are very aware of the RPC agenda Parental conflict is featured in the strategic plans (including Early Help strategies or Children and Young People plans) of 75% of LAs 75% of LAs routinely collect data on parental conflict in their area (e.g., in case management systems) <p>Services for parents and families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% of LAs offer RPC support for parents in their area 75% of LAs provide a specific pathway of support for parental conflict. 80% of LAs provide a specific offer at moderate level or specialist level A coherent portfolio of evidence-based interventions is embedded into the local family offer LA provides an online offer such as links to RPC information or videos on their services webpages

ANNEXE B – THEORY OF CHANGE: SPECIALIST RPC INTERVENTIONS (FOR PARENTS)

Inputs & assumptions → →	Outputs (immediate outcomes for parents) →	Medium-long term outcomes
<p>Effective identification and referral processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correctly assessing and identifying intensity/nature of conflict • Identifying parents and children who are experiencing domestic abuse and directing them to more appropriate support <p>Comprehensive initial assessment and developing a corresponding action plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying relationship problems and goals • Identifying problem behaviour from children • Developing a sound treatment plan <p>Ensuring intervention delivery and success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents understand how the interventions can help • Parents are motivated and make an active choice to participate (i.e., they do not feel coerced) • Parents can get to the venue or participate virtually/digitally • Service providers offer good quality logistics and communicate the time and place of sessions • Where appropriate, both parents are willing to participate in the intervention (sometimes with the other parent) • Parents are willing to participate <u>without</u> the cooperation of the other parent • Parents are willing to participate in group sessions, where this is appropriate • Parents develop good rapport with the professionals who deliver the interventions • Parents and practitioners communicate effectively • Parents know what to expect • Parents are willing to discuss difficult topics • Parents put their learning into practice during and after intervention completion • External influences and life events do not interrupt or prevent participation 	<p>Relationship skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better problem solving and conflict resolution • Improved family cohesion • Appropriate and proactive limit-setting • Ability to recognise issues/barriers and address them • Positive inter-personal interactions • Giving and responding to constructive feedback • Increased empathy of each other's views • Improved decision making and communication • Proactive strategies for respectful talking and listening • Being motivated to improve your relationship(s) • Parents work as a team to nurture and support each other • Parents able to recognise and communicate issues/expectations • Parents start planning for the future <p>Understanding and managing emotions & behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents more able to manage their own stress and reduce its negative effects on their relationships • Lower levels of family stress • Better understanding of the family's challenges • Better capacity for reflection • Improved emotional awareness and regulation • Better emotional regulation and lower levels of anger • Better resilience and self-awareness • Awareness and understanding of family dynamics <p>Parenting skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the impact of conflict on children • Ability to apply positive parenting approaches • Improved co-parenting, co-operation and parental planning • Improved inter-parental and child-parent communication • Improved confidence/ability to address children's problems • Parents deliver same story about divorce/separation • Children are more able to manage their emotions • Parents able to work with teachers for the child's best interest • Parents able to recognise the child's point of view 	<p>Parental outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved interparental communication • Better relationship satisfaction • Improved separated interparental relationships • Better satisfaction with custody arrangements (separated parents only) • Increased parent-child contact (separated parents only) • Improved relationships (familial and beyond) • Better self-esteem and improved mental health • Improved parenting practice • Enhanced family collaboration and cohesion • Improved resilience to stress and negative events • Lower family stress • Stronger parent-child relationships <p>Child outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger parent-child relationship • Better emotional development (e.g., empathy and resilience) • Better conduct and reduced criminal, violent and/or anti-social behaviour • Less hyperactivity / better concentration • Improved child / youth mental health • Improved educational attainment <p>Later-life outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved mental and physical health • Better employment outcomes • Improved relationship skills • Better parenting skills as • Reduced use of health, welfare and other government services (e.g., family courts, criminal justice, etc.)

Note: This is a generic theory of change to represent all the input measures, immediate outputs and medium to long term outcomes that one might expect to see from a face-to-face or digital/virtual intervention with relationship and parenting component.

ANNEXE C – LOCAL GRANT BID AND MANAGEMENT INFORMATION ANALYSES RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What have local authorities delivered with their funding?

- Has the range of specialist interventions available nationally and locally increased since 2021/22 and how did this change over the lifetime of the programme?
- Has the number of places for parents on RPC interventions available nationally and locally increased since 2021/22 and how did this change over the lifetime of the programme?
- How many frontline family practitioners and other staff have been trained to deliver RPC interventions or received other RPC related training since 2021/22 and how did this change over the lifetime of the programme?
- How has the overall number of trained practitioners changed nationally and locally since 2021/22?
- How many parents/families have accessed RPC support that has been funded wholly or partly by the Local Grant, and how has this changed over the lifetime of the programme?
- Has the overall RPC support package available in England improved since 2021/22 (i.e., are there more places available for parents and has the number of families benefiting from support increased)?

How have the local authorities chosen to spend the grant?

- What additional resources and/or funding streams (e.g., Youth Endowment Fund, Public Health funding, Family Hubs, etc.) have LAs used alongside the Local Grant to be able to fund RPC related activities?
- Which types of staff and practitioners have LAs chosen to focus their training on? Has there been a focus on certain professions?
- What kind of methods and modes have been used to train local staff and has there been a predominant approach? How has this changed year to year since 2021/22?
- How regularly have staff who received RPC related training used the skills they have learnt. How has this changed year to year since 2021/22?
- How many LAs have spent their full grant allocation? Where funding has not been fully spent, what were the reasons?
- Have any patterns emerged in terms of how LAs have spent their funding and what they are focusing on, when comparing:
 - urban and rural LAs
 - LAs previously involved in the Local Family Offer pilots and those not involved
 - LAs previously covered by centrally commissioned RPC interventions and LAs not previously covered
 - LAs bidding as a cluster and those bidding individually

- LAs that were previously part of a cluster
 - mature and less mature LAs?
- What was the impact of withdrawing centrally commissioned specialist interventions on affected LAs? What did they need to do differently, compared to LAs not previously covered by centrally commissioned interventions? Did the impacts reduce between 2022 and 2025?

ANNEXE D – PLANNING TOOL ANALYSIS RESEARCH QUESTIONS (EIF)

How well embedded is the RPC agenda into local area family services?

- What number/proportion of LAs are in each of the five progress level categories (Entry Level, First Steps, Early Progress, Substantial Progress and Mature)?
- In which key elements of the planning tool (Strategy, Workforce, Partnership, Services & Interventions, Community, Coordinated Working, Outcomes & Experience, and Evaluation) are LAs more advanced and in which elements are LAs generally less mature?
- In which dimensions and key elements have LAs made the most progress since 2021/22?

What factors and activities underpin progress and what are the main barriers to progress?

- What kind of patterns are apparent in relation to the rate of progress between stages? How does progress in one dimension of planning tool relate to progress in other dimensions?
- What examples or evidence of progress have LAs most cited to substantiate their self-assessment under each key element? What does this suggest are the main drivers of progress across LAs?
- What is the overall narrative on the progress made, i.e., what are those at the different levels broadly doing?
- What sorts of local priorities are cited in the planning tool returns? How do these priorities differ in terms of business priorities (e.g. developing staff, partnerships or evaluation capability) and service priorities (e.g. developing service provision for separated families, ethnic minorities or other parent/family subgroups)?
- How many LAs have arranged for independent researchers and research organisations to help evaluate the delivery and/or outcomes of reducing parental conflict activities?
- What other systems or mechanisms are cited by LAs as being in place for understanding the 'customer experience' of services with a parental conflict element?
- Have any patterns emerged in terms of how LAs have progressed, when comparing:
 - urban and rural LAs;
 - LAs previously involved in the Local Family Offer pilots and those not involved;
 - LAs previously covered by centrally commissioned RPC interventions and LAs not previously covered;
 - LAs bidding as a cluster and those bidding individually;
 - LAs that were previously part of a cluster and other LAs; and
 - mature and less mature LAs?

- What can be said about the LAs that are still working in clusters compared to LAs that are working independently?
- What can be concluded about LAs that have 'de-clustered' since 2021/22? What are the main areas of progress and challenges for LAs that have recently de-clustered?
- What can be concluded from the rate of progress between stages and key enablers or barriers to progress?
- What was the impact of withdrawing centrally commissioned specialist interventions on affected LAs in relation to progress under the key elements of RPC planning? What have they needed to do differently, compared to LAs not previously covered by centrally commissioned intervention? How did the impact change between 2022 and 2025?
- Are there any apparent relationships between the characteristics of LAs and their progress levels, for example, greater progress amongst urban LAs, evidence of a north/south divide, high-deprivation/low-deprivation, and so on?
- Which areas of progress seem to correlate with different approaches?

Remaining steps towards maturity

- What are the main challenges that LAs are trying to overcome?
- What types of activity are commonly cited by LAs as 'next steps' under each key element? What does this suggest are the key next steps for embedding the RPC agenda at national level?
- What were/are the workforce skills gaps that LAs are trying to address?
- Difference between what we see and what it means – what does the overall picture mean for LAs, can we hypothesise about progress in the future.
- How can returns inform policy decisions about necessary support in the future?

ANNEXE E – HIGH LEVEL EVALUATION DESIGN & KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

