



CASE STUDY | ICS ASSESSMENT SERVICES

## Increasing system capacity through a full end-to-end managed service

UK public sector organisations are coming under growing pressure to manage the increasing demand for social care services. Local authorities have been tasked with creating a service that is fit for purpose despite facing significant external pressures and funding constraints.

Our customer was a large city council in the North East of England who had identified issues across their Children's Services department with growing demand in conjunction with internal staff retention challenges. The council approached Bloom to identify a supplier who could deliver an output-focused managed service to increase the capacity of the social care system.

Following a mini competition, ICS Assessment Services (ICSA) were awarded the project and began to work on a tailored solution to specifically match the needs of the council.



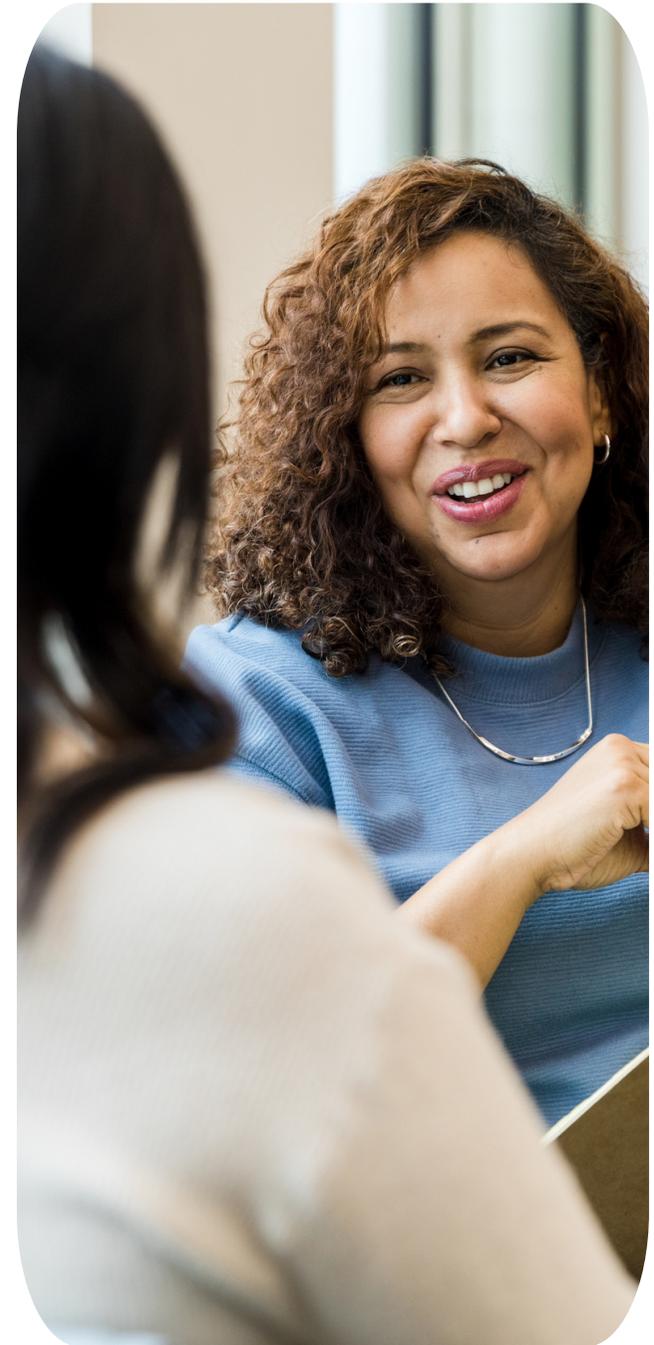
## The Challenge

The council had experienced significant growth in demand for front door social care services. This was compounded by issues with recruiting and retaining staff and agency workers, creating increased pressures on longer-term teams across Child in Need (CIN), Child Protection (CP) and Looked After Children (LAC) who lacked the capacity to meet demand.

The resulting backlog of work for the council necessitated the appointment of a supplier with the ability to increase the capacity of the system through a full end- to- end managed service. The supplier would be required to undertake statutory duties and work with children and their families utilising a significant project team of experienced, qualified social work resource to manage demand across the council's front door and long-term services.

This included service level management, case auditing, quality assurance and management oversight and weekly reporting to the council's Directorate.

Through the selected supplier managing the recruitment and onboarding of a social work project team, the council avoided the time and resource consuming recruitment of temporary agency workers, in addition to freeing up the council's management team, as quality, oversight and governance was handled by the supplier's management team. This enabled the council to focus their resource on a wider strategic move to a new operating model.





## The Solution

ICSA worked in two phases over an 18-month period, delivering extra capacity to progress over 1,000 cases of Child in Need (CIN), Child Protection (CP) and Looked After Children (LAC) within the city's localities, whilst the council progressed their own recruitment and retention programme.

The overall aims of the programme were to ensure the council's statutory responsibilities were met, provide high-quality front door assessments and progress long-term plans to closure or transfer to Early Help / signposting to universal services where required. Emphasising high quality social work was key in ensuring the voice of the child and families were met whilst maintaining a high profile for the council Children's Services.

## The outcome

ICSA progressed over 1,200 cases in an 18-month period, supporting the council to meet its statutory duties. They utilised a team of over 65 social workers, team managers and service managers through the life of the project, which in turn contributed to the project closing 52% of all cases at assessment with 98% of all assessments completed in less than 8 weeks.

ICSA completed over 8,000 statutory visits, with 95% of meetings held within timescales, in addition to managing a number of LAC placements through the council's new children's placement processes. This ensured they had met the set monthly management KPIs, relating to statutory reporting, assessments, visits and placements to the council



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within timescales



**1,200**  
cases held



**52%**  
of all cases closed

**“Our end-to-end managed service enabled us to provide the council with a robust response to the growing pressures they were under. This increased capacity, helped the council shift their focus towards recruiting permanent members of staff and wider strategic transformation work.”**

**Simon Whitaker**  
Head of Strategy & Performance,  
ICS Assessment Service



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