

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE
CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S MEETING WITH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

16th January 2024

APPROVAL TO ACCEPT AN OFFER OF GRANT FUNDING – UP TO £325,000

Report of the Assistant Director – Children and Families Service

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To recommend that the Executive Member for Children and Families, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, and the Executive Member for Finance authorises the acceptance of an offer of grant funding from the Department for Education's 'Sector Led Improvement Partner (SLIP)' Programme up to a sum of £325,000.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The current Department for Education (DfE) SLIP Programme, of which NYC are a lead partner LA, ends on the 31st March 2024.
- 2.2 Sector-led improvement is about local authorities supporting each other to improve their children's services. The programme aims to improve the overall performance of children's social care by using the strongest performing local authorities to provide peer support to authorities who are working to improve their services. Sector led improvement support can be accessed by any local authority rated as inadequate or requires improvement, or by local authorities rated as good, where there is significant evidence of a decline in performance.
- 2.3 In September 2023, the DfE announced funding for a further SLIP Programme which will run during 2024-2025. As this is under a new DfE grant funding opportunity NYC would need to put in a competitive bid to become a Lead Partner under the new Programme.
- 2.4 On 17th October 2023, NYC received approval to apply for grant funding up to £350,000 from the Executive Member for Children and Families and Assistant Director- Resources. (The figure of £350,000 was a maximum figure of funding that NYC would seek to apply for, in the absence of DfE funding criteria having been released).
- 2.5 The DfE deadline for bids to be submitted was 1st November 2023, and NYC's bid was submitted in advance of this.
- 2.6 On 21st December 2023, the DfE wrote to NYC to confirm writing to confirm that this bid has been successful, and they will work with NYC to confirm the final amount of grant funding in February-March 2024 (up to a total of £325,000).

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The DfE bid criteria required each local authority to provide a figure for a minimum funding bid, and a maximum funding bid.
- 3.2 Upon receiving the DfE's funding criteria for 2024/2025 NYC have calculated and since submitted a final funding figure for a minimum of £303,500 and a maximum for £325,000.
- 3.3 If it is approved that NYC can accept this grant funding, the maximum funding that would be received would be £325,000.
- 3.4 The bid figure is in line with the level of delivery and funding NYC has undertaken each year under the current SLIP Programme, which we can evidence has been manageable in terms of resources and capacity to deliver the Programme and attain the associated funding required to cover costs and contribute to wider council benefits.
- 3.5 The DfE have confirmed the Programme will be funded by a Section 14 Grant.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The DfE terms and conditions have been reviewed by legal services

5.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to accept an offer of grant funding from the DfE.
- 5.2 NYC's participation will be to support local authorities external to North Yorkshire and therefore there will not be any impact on North Yorkshire service provision.

6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. Consideration for equalities issues have been undertaken within the scoping for grant application and acceptance, in addition to adhering to any terms and conditions imposed by funding bodies. The Equalities Impact Screening Form has been appended to this report.

7.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report. Consideration for climate change issues have been undertaken within the scoping for grant application and acceptance, in addition to adhering to any terms and conditions imposed by funding bodies. The Climate Change Impact Assessment Form has been appended to this report.

8.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Reputationally, participation in the SLIP Programme as a Lead Partner has resulted in extremely positive feedback by DfE colleagues who see NYC as a credible and

trustworthy partners

- 8.2 Financially, participation has enabled NYC to use any variance in funding to secure additional resource capacity and training, to support internal improvements, and this would be expected to continue if able to participate through 2024-25.

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Executive Member for Children and Families in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Executive Member for Finance authorises the acceptance of grant funding of up to £325,000 from the DfE under the Sector Led Improvement Partner Programme.

Mel Hutchinson
Assistant Director – Children and Family Services
COUNTY HALL, NORTHALLERTON
2.1.24

Author of Report – Samantha Clayton

Appendices:

- Equality Impact Assessment Screening document
- Climate Change Impact Assessment Screening document

Initial equality impact assessment screening form
 This form records an equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether or not a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.

Directorate	Children and Young Peoples Services
Service area	Children and Families Service
Proposal being screened	To apply for approval to accept grant funding under the Department for Education's 'Sector Led Improvement Programme' 2024-2025
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Sam Clayton
What are you proposing to do?	<p>To apply for approval to accept grant funding to cover the costs of NYC participation in the DfE's Sector Led Improvement Programme 2024-2025. This would enable NYC to continue to be a DfE lead partner who would provide support to eligible local authorities who require support to improve their children's services.</p> <p>This would require NYC to work with other LAs to understand what priority areas they want to improve in their own authority and to scope work accordingly to help them to move toward understanding the changes they would want to take forward. This would be undertaken via meetings (mostly online with occasional face to face/site visits if this was the only way to facilitate a session).</p>
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	The desired outcome is to successfully apply for approval to accept funding to cover the required programme costs and ensure NYC can deliver the programme with no financial detriment.
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	The proposal requires a time commitment from existing NYC employees, pre-agreed with line managers. A total of between 160 - 180 working days commitment.

Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYC's additional agreed characteristics
 As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions:

- To what extent is this service used by particular groups of people with protected characteristics?
- Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important?
- Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to?

If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be an adverse impact or you have ticked 'Don't know/no info available', then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your directorate representative for advice if you are in any doubt.

Protected characteristic	Potential for adverse impact		Don't know/No info available
	Yes	No	
Age		No	
Disability		No	
Sex		No	
Race		No	

Sexual orientation		No	
Gender reassignment		No	
Religion or belief		No	
Pregnancy or maternity		No	
Marriage or civil partnership		No	
People in rural areas		No	
People on a low income		No	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		No	
Are from the Armed Forces Community		No	
Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts (for example, disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	No		
Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (for example, partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.	No – NYC will provide short term peer support and ideas on areas where a local authority can improve their services but NYC will not directly develop or implement any changes into other organisations.		
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Continue to full EIA:
Reason for decision	No changes will be implemented by NYC as part of this work.		
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	Mel Hutchinson		
Date	18.12.23		

Initial Climate Change Impact Assessment

The intention of this document is to help the council to gain an initial understanding of the impact of a project or decision on the environment. This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. Dependent on this initial assessment you may need to go on to complete a full Climate Change Impact Assessment. The final document will be published as part of the decision-making process.

Title of proposal	To apply for approval to accept grant funding under the Department for Education's 'Sector Led Improvement Programme' 2024-2025
Brief description of proposal	<p>To seek approval to accept grant funding from the Department for Education (DfE) to participate in, and to cover the associated programme costs of, the DfE's Sector Led Improvement Programme (SLIP) 2024-2025. NYC have been a DfE SLIP Lead authority under the current SLIP programme for over 2 years, which is a programme set up to provide short packages of advice and support from Good our Outstanding LAs into LAs who require support to improve their children's services.</p> <p>NYC received approval to apply for funding through North Yorkshire Council's grant approval process in October 2023, and subsequently submitted a bid to the Department for Education for up to £330,000 of funding.</p> <p>If NYC are approved to be part of the next Programme by the DfE this would mean NYC will work with eligible LAs to understand and scope priority areas they want to improve in their own authority. NYC would then work to develop a joint plan with agreed activities and meetings required to support them to achieve this.</p> <p>This work would be undertaken via meetings with individual LA colleagues of which the vast majority of are online (over 90% for the current programme) with occasional face to face/site visits if work cannot be undertaken virtually. At the point of starting the Programme NYC would not know which LAs would be eligible and therefore it is not known who we would be working with, to reasonably estimate any impact on travel arrangements. However, as noted, the main option is to seek virtual sessions, and minimise any need for travel by car or by public transport.</p> <p>This Impact Assessment is to accompany an application to seek approval to apply for grant funding to become part of this Programme for 2024/2025.</p>
Directorate	Children and Young Peoples Services
Service area	Children and Families Service
Lead officer	Samantha Clayton
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	Sarah Whorlton, Senior Project Manager

The chart below contains the main environmental factors to consider in your initial assessment – choose the appropriate option from the drop-down list for each one. Remember to think about the following;

- Travel
- Construction
- Data storage
- Use of buildings
- Change of land use
- Opportunities for recycling and reuse
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Environmental factor to consider	For the council	For the county	Overall
Greenhouse gas emissions	Increases emissions	No Effect on emissions	No effect on emissions
Waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste
Water use	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage
Pollution (air, land, water, noise, light)	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution
Resilience to adverse weather/climate events (flooding, drought etc)	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience
Ecological effects (biodiversity, loss of habitat etc)	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology
Heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape

If any of these factors are likely to result in a negative or positive environmental impact then a full climate change impact assessment will be required. It is important that we capture information about both positive and negative impacts to aid the council in calculating its carbon footprint and environmental impact.

Decision (Please tick one option)	Full CCIA not relevant or proportionate:	✓	Continue to full CCIA:	
Reason for decision	The service to provided through funding from this grant is in relation to providing support and guidance to other local authorities outside of North Yorkshire, in the form of peer reviews and workshop sessions, of which the large majority are delivered through online sessions.			

	The team involved in the Programme would be small (1 or 2 lead colleagues) and travel is minimalised wherever possible.
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	Mel Hutchinson
Date	18.12.23