

The North Yorkshire Council

Children and Young People's Leadership Team Meeting

13th March 2025

DfE SLIP Funding Programme

Report of the Assistant Director Children and Families Service

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 That the Assistant Director- Resources authorises the acceptance of the grant in the sum of up to £499,000.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The current DfE SLIP Programme, of which NYC are a lead partner LA, ends on the 31st March 2025.
- 2.2 Sector-led improvement is about local authorities supporting each other to improve their children's services. The aim is to improve the overall performance of children's social care nationally, 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 As a DfE SLIP Programme lead authority, NYC have previously applied for a total amount of funding per annum from the DfE, which is used to cover the costs of delivering an agreed amount of support to a range of different local authorities. Costs factored into the funding application cover resource time to undertake planning and direct work with local authorities, back office and project management costs, and any other ad hoc costs, including travel and accommodation where required.
- 2.4 Over the duration of the current one-year SLIP Programme, and the previous three-year SLIP Programme, and Partner in Practice (PIP) Programmes, NYC has supported numerous local authorities to improve their practice with children and young people. Alongside this NYC has also benefited as a partner organization through gaining experience in expanding skills within CYPS and other departments, and through the development of professional, reusable tools and approaches both externally and internally within NYC. In addition, where there have been variances in income generation this has supported the funding of a range of CYPS related posts and training which have undoubtedly contributed to the most recent 'Outstanding' Ofsted judgement.

2.5 The DfE have announced that they are extending the current SLIP Programme to run for a further 12 months across 2025/26 and that this will be delivered through the existing cohort of 21 SLIP Lead partners (including NYC) for this next financial year.

2.6 A decision to approve applying for grant funding up to £499,000 was made on 6th February 2025.

3.0 [DETAILED PRESENTATION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE]

3.1 A decision was made on 6th February 2025 to approve the service's application to apply for DfE grant funding up to £499,000. The service is now seeking approval to accept grant funding from the DfE.

3.2 This report is to request approval from the Corporate Director in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer sub-delegated to the Assistant Director- Resources for approval to accept grant funding from the Department for Education's 'Sector Led Improvement Partner (SLIP)' Programme up to a sum of £499,000.

3.3 The DfE are currently still undergoing their process to determine grant allocations for the SLIP 2025/26 and as part of this, are asking Lead SLIP partners to provide an indication of SLIP capacity for next financial year. They have indicated this should be a realistic estimation of the SLIP support we are able to provide and deliver in in 2025/26. Therefore, we do not yet have confirmation from the DfE of the level of grant funding that will be allocated to NYC for 2025/26.

3.4 If approval to accept this grant funding is received, the maximum grant amount that NYC would be accepting would be up to £499,000.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 The alternative option would be for NYC to not participate in the programme for 2025/26.

4.2 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 partner, and 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 2025/26.

5.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS

5.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to accept the offer of grant funding from the DfE.

5.2 NYC's participation will be to support local authorities external to North Yorkshire and therefore have no impact on North Yorkshire's service provision.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS)

- 6.1 NYC must submit a costed proposal for the number of delivery days and associated funding NYC would be seeking for 2025/26.
- 6.2 As noted in section 3.3, the DfE are currently undergoing their process to determine grant allocations for the SLIP 2025/26 and therefore we do not yet have confirmation from the DfE of the level of grant funding that will be allocated to NYC for 2025/26 in order to provide a precise figure in this report.
- 6.3 However, should approval to accept this grant funding is received, the maximum grant amount that NYC would be accepting would be up to £499,000 for programme delivery during 2025/26.
- 6.4 This 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.
- 6.5 The DfE have confirmed that final decisions on SLIP grant allocations will be made in March 2025 and communicated to all SLIP Lead Partners in time for the start of the new financial year and followed by issue of formal grant offer letters. The timing of this request is to ensure there is no delay in being able to respond to the grant offer upon receipt from the DfE.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Currently the grant terms are not available however any legal agreement required to be signed, will be reviewed by Legal Services and if any of the terms and conditions present unacceptable risk for the Council then the grant offer would be declined.

8.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 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.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 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.

10.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The resource time required to deliver this programme will be managed within the existing staffing establishment of the Council. Where additional capacity is required, this will be managed through short term contracted arrangements which will end 31st March 2026 in line with the end of the grant funding period.

11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 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 partner.
- 11.2 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 2025/26.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- i) That the Assistant Director- Resources authorises the acceptance of the grant amount of up to £499,000.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment Screening document

Appendix B – Climate Change Impact Assessment Screening document

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Document attached, is the report seeking approval to apply for grant funding up to £499,000, which approved on 6th February 2025.



CYPLT SLIP 2025
2026 - Grant Approva

Stuart Carlton
Corporate Director – *Children and Young People's Services*
County Hall
Northallerton
13th March 2025

Report Author – *Sarah Whorlton, Programme Manager*
Presenter of Report – *Mel Hutchinson, Assistant Director – Children and Family Services*

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

PLEASE ALSO NOTE THAT IF ANY REPORTS / APPENDICES INCLUDE SIGNATURES THESE MUST BE REMOVED / DELETED PRIOR TO SENDING REPORTS / APPENDICES TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES. Appendices should include an Equality Impact Assessment and a Climate Impact Assessment where appropriate.

Appendix A – Equality 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 to accept grant funding under the Department for Education's 'Sector Led Improvement Programme' 2025-26	
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Sarah Whorlton	
What are you proposing to do?	<p>To accept grant funding to cover the costs of NYC participation in the DfE's Sector Led Improvement Programme. 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).</p>	
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	The desired outcome is to successfully apply for 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. An estimated total of 180 working days commitment, based on the previous year's workload.	
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	

	Yes	No	Don't know/No info available
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 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	26.2.25		

Appendix B – Climate Change Impact Assessment Screening document

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 to accept grant funding under the Department for Education's 'Sector Led Improvement Programme' 2025-2026
	<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). 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>The DfE have confirmed that they intend to fund a further SLIP Programme during 2025/2026.</p> <p>NYC will work with eligible LAs to understand and scope priority areas they want to improve in their own authority. NYC will work to develop a joint plan with agreed activities and meetings required to support them to achieve this.</p> <p>This work will 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 do not know which LAs would be eligible and therefore it is not known who we will 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 2025/2026.</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, Programme 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
-

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	<p>This is for the application of grant funding only at this point. This is with a view to providing support to local authorities in terms of advice, peer reviews and guidance – most of which is delivered through online sessions.</p> <p>The team involved in the Programme would be small (1 or 2 lead colleagues) and travel minimalised wherever possible.</p>			

Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	Mel Hutchinson
Date	26.2.25