



Record of meeting

Tees Valley sub-regional improvement board

9 May 2018

Attendance

Sub-regional improvement board members

Gill Alexander	Hartlepool Borough Council (Chair)
Andrea Williams	Middlesbrough Council
Andrew Smith	Diocese of York
David Major	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Diane McConnell	Stockton Borough Council
Rachel Mays	Teaching Schools Council
Kevin Duffy	Diocese of Middlesbrough
Lucie Stephenson	Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
Mark Patton	Hartlepool Borough Council
Paul Rickeard	Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle
Tony Murphy	Darlington Borough Council
Colin Knights	Regional Schools Commissioner's Office, North

DfE officials in attendance included

Paul Green

Apologies

Jane Wilson	Regional Schools Commissioner's Office, North
John Hardy	Teaching Schools Council, North

Discussion points

Sub-regional improvement board members were reminded of the confidentiality of the papers and discussion at the meeting and that they must declare any actual or potential interests that might impact upon their impartiality in the review and prioritisation of applications. Conflicts of interest were dealt with in line with the published terms of reference.

Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) round 3

An overview was provided of SSIF round 3 applications. Sub-regional improvement board members considered the applications and fed in their views on:

1. the fit of the proposal with the identified sub-regional priorities, including whether the schools selected were those that would most benefit from the support; and
2. whether the applicant and specified providers have the capacity and capability to successfully deliver the activity such that it delivers the desired outcomes.

The views in the meeting on round 3 applications were broadly in support of the applications submitted; on the whole, the applications were viewed as thoughtful and collaborative.

The majority of applications met the sub-regional priorities. The majority of applications targeted appropriate schools for intervention, but there were some where schools with greater needs could have been included. Consideration was given to the proposed providers' capacity, capability and track record in delivering improvement support similar to that proposed in the applications. All of these points were then fed into the Department's assessment of each application.

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Record of meeting

Tees Valley sub-regional improvement board

6 December 2017

Attendance

Sub-regional improvement board members

Gill Alexander	Hartlepool Borough Council (Chair)
Jane Wilson	Regional Schools Commissioner's Office, North
John Hardy	Teaching Schools Council
David Major	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Kevin Duffy	Diocese of Middlesbrough
Sue Picknett	Middlesbrough Council
Tony Murphy	Darlington Borough Council
Andrew Smith	Diocese of York
Diane McConnell	Stockton Borough Council

Invited representatives

Shona Duncan	Tees Valley Combined Authority
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DfE officials in attendance included

Paul Green

Apologies

Joe Hughes	Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
Andrea Williams	Middlesbrough Council
Mark Patton	Hartlepool Borough Council
Paul Rickeard	Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle

Discussion points

An overview was provided of the applications received within the sub-region for round 2 of the Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF). It was noted that the announcement of successful projects would be made in January 2018 and that following the announcement TSC would link with teaching schools and providers to consider:

- eligible schools not yet supported by SSIF projects
- commissioning of projects to address sub-regional priorities for SSIF round 3 which had not been met in round 2.

It was noted that SSIF round 3 will open before Christmas.

Ahead of SSIF round 3 the meeting discussed the data and local intelligence on priority needs for different schools within the areas. These were identified as priorities as areas of focus for some schools and were by no means exclusive.

For some schools, as relevant, across the sub-region:

- improve key metrics for secondary aged pupils:
 - % 'basics' (5+ English and Maths) at KS4;
 - Progress 8;
 - Attainment 8;
 - absence and exclusion rates;
 - education or employment destinations at KS4 and KS5.
- improve key metrics for primary aged pupils:
 - % of pupils achieving national average in Y1 phonics test;
 - % of pupils achieving 'Good Level of Development' at the end of EYFS;
 - reading progress at KS2.

The SRIB is particularly interested in applications that incorporate one or more of the following approaches:

- activity to build sustainable long term improvements across year groups, alongside focused activity to bring about rapid improvements in outcomes at KS2/4;
- multi-agency working;
- reducing teacher workload and contributing to recruitment and retention of high quality teachers;
- supporting teachers early in their career;
- improving behaviour, and better meeting pupil needs, to reduce/avoid exclusions.

The list of priorities within the region will be circulated to sub-regional improvement board attendees after the meeting. This will also be disseminated to MATs after the meeting.

The benefits to potential applicants of the SSIF advisers and the TSC being aware of the number and nature of likely applications was emphasised, including to identify any areas of overlap. Sub-regional improvement board members were encouraged to pass any knowledge of potential applications to DfE, via the TSC representative John Hardy. This again was not for reasons of exclusivity, but to mitigate gaps in provision emerging given that the data and intelligence was showing all attendees at the meeting some important areas for focus and, subject to the Secretary of State's decisions, in due course, potential SSIF funding.

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Record of meeting

Tees Valley sub-regional improvement board

30 October 2017

Attendance

Sub-regional improvement board members

Gill Alexander	Hartlepool Borough Council (Chair)
John Hardy	Teaching Schools Council
Joe Hughes	Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
David Major	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Diane McConnell	Stockton Borough Council
Tony Murphy	Darlington Borough Council
Steve Nyakatawa	Darlington Borough Council
Mark Patton	Hartlepool Borough Council
Paul Rickeard	Diocese of Durham & Newcastle
Andrea Williams	Middlesbrough Council
Jane Wilson	Regional Schools Commissioner's Office

DfE officials in attendance included

Paul Green

Apologies

Shona Duncan	Tees Valley Combined Authority
Joe Hughes	Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
Andrew Smith	Diocese of York

Discussion points

Sub-regional improvement board members were reminded of the confidentiality of the papers and discussion at the meeting and that they must declare any actual or potential interests that might impact upon their impartiality in the review and prioritisation of applications. Conflicts of interest were dealt with in line with the published terms of reference.

Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) round 2

An overview was provided of SSIF round 2 applications. Sub-regional improvement board members considered the applications and fed in their views on:

1. the fit of the proposal with the identified sub-regional priorities, including whether the schools selected are those most in need of support; and
2. whether the applicant and specified providers have the capacity and capability to successfully deliver the activity such that it delivers the desired outcomes.

The views in the meeting on round 2 applications were that the strongest proposals were more collaborative and more directly focused on addressing sub-regional priorities because they were brokered by the sub-regional improvement board and the Teaching Schools Council. The majority of applications targeted appropriate schools for support; however there were some, where schools with greater needs could have been included.

Consideration was given to the proposed providers' capacity, capability and track record in delivering improvement support similar to that proposed in the applications. These points were then fed into the Department's assessment of each application.

Combined authority school improvement funding

It was proposed that members of the Tees Valley sub-regional improvement board may have a role in recommending how to distribute some potential future school improvement funding from the combined authority, to ensure that it brings about improved outcomes for young people and complements sub-regional improvement board investment. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.

Risk register

The risk identified was the need to develop applications relatively quickly between publication of round 2 outcomes and the window for round 3 closing.

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Record of meeting

Tees Valley sub-regional improvement board

15 September 2017

Attendance

Sub-regional improvement board members

Gill Alexander	Hartlepool Borough Council (Chair)
Shona Duncan	Tees Valley Combined Authority
Andrea Williams	Middlesbrough Council
John Hardy	Teaching Schools Council
Jane Wilson	Regional Schools Commissioner's Office, North
David Major	Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Steve Nyakatawa	Darlington Borough Council
Kevin Duffy	Diocese of Middlesbrough
Paul Rickeard	Diocese of Durham and Newcastle
Deborah Fox	Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
Mark Patton	Hartlepool Borough Council
Dianne McConnell	Stockton Borough Council

DfE officials in attendance included

Paul Green

Apologies

Andrew Smith	Diocese of York
Joe Hughes	Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Discussion points

The final terms of reference for the sub-regional improvement board were noted as how the discussions in these meetings would operate and how decisions on funding were for the Secretary of State only.

The next meeting of the sub-regional improvement board will review all applications which relate to the sub-region, including any which have not been commissioned by the sub-regional improvement board, and any that are cross-regional and include schools in the sub-region.

The Board may wish to consider inviting an additional serving Head Teacher to attend sub-regional improvement board meetings (who would not be a formal member).

An overview was provided of the outcome of round 1 of the Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) noting that the DfE announcement from early September included four successful

applications in the North. There were no successful round 1 applications from the Tees Valley sub region.

The features that distinguished projects which the Secretary of State had decided to fund through round 1, compared to those that were not, were noted as:

- clearer articulation and stronger evidence of the need to be addressed in the specific schools identified
- more robust evidence for how and why the proposed intervention would deliver the proposed impact
- stronger evidence of the capacity of providers to deliver the proposed intervention
- a more robust and specific action plan
- more robust plans to sustain the impact of the intervention
- clearer evidence of steps taken to secure value for money

The need to identify and manage risks to successful delivery of the SSIF in the Tees Valley sub-region was discussed.

The closing date for round 2 applications to be sent to DfE was confirmed as 20 October.

The key changes for round 2 of the SSIF were noted as:

- revised and improved online application form
- the guidance includes clarification about what makes a good application
- clearer guidance on the types of evidence DfE would expect to underpin the selected improvement approaches
- more detail about the types of activities that DfE will fund
- extended flexibility on eligibility criteria to PRUs and APUs and where applications are specifically to increase the proportion of children in infant/first schools meeting or exceeding expectations for language and communication, literacy and mathematics
- a requirement for MATs to support at least 25% schools outside of their Trust (or for applications in support of more than 20 schools, a minimum of five schools not in the MAT and not due to join)

Ahead of SSIF round 2 the meeting discussed the data and local intelligence on priority needs for different schools within the areas. These were identified as areas of focus for some schools and were by no means exclusive.

For some schools, as relevant, across the Tees Valley

1. improve social mobility by improving outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable children in secondary schools, with a focus on:
 - maths
 - english (a priority for R3 more than R2)
 - science (a priority for R3 more than R2)
 - absence, persistent absence and exclusions
 - boys' achievement
 - transition from primary school
 - middle leadership

2. improve social mobility by improving outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable children in primary schools¹, with a focus on:
 - reading
 - early language development
 - school readiness

The sub-regional improvement board is particularly interested in applications that incorporate one or more of the following approaches:

- focus on improving and strengthening leadership and governance
- take a multi-agency approach
- reduce teacher workload and contribute to recruitment and retention of high quality teachers
- adopt a whole school approach through the development of effective systems, policies and culture

They key measures that the sub-regional improvement board wish to improve are:

- % of children in good and outstanding schools
- % of pupils achieving national average in Y1 phonics test
- % of pupils achieving 'Good Level of Development' at the end of EYFS
- % of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths (combined) at KS2
- reading progress at KS2
- writing progress at KS2
- maths progress at KS2
- % 'basics' (5+ English and Maths) at KS4
- progress 8
- attainment 8
- absence and exclusion rates
- education or employment destinations at KS4 and KS5

The role of all sub-regional improvement members and especially the Teaching Schools Council (as set out in the published terms of reference for sub-regional improvement boards) in disseminating these priorities to potential round 2 applicants was noted as an urgent priority.

The benefits of maintaining an overview of the number and nature of potential applications was emphasised, including to identify any deficit or excess of applications relating to specific geographies or priority school improvement needs. Sub-regional improvement board members were encouraged to pass any knowledge of potential applications to DfE, via the Teaching Schools Council. This again was not for reasons of exclusivity but to mitigate gaps in provision emerging given what the data and intelligence was showing all attendees at the meeting about some important areas for focus and, subject to the Secretary of State's decisions in due course, potential SSIF funding.

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¹ Applications to the SSIF must be primarily school-based and directly benefit the schools that have been identified as needing support. This does not preclude a focus on multi-agency working during EYFS, but the focus must be on improving the standard of language, literacy and numeracy by the end of reception