



Doncaster Council

Report

To the Chair and Members of the Cabinet

Date: 3 July 2018

COMMISSIONING SUPPORT - SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROVISION

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Councillor Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools	All	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. To enable continuing and sustained improvement of Doncaster's primary, secondary and special school education settings it is our commissioning intention to seek an external provider(s) to deliver school improvement programmes for all 106 Doncaster primary settings including – maintained schools, academies, special schools, maintained Pupil Referral Units, 18 Secondary Academies and 5 Special Schools in partnership with Doncaster Council.

The programme will provide Doncaster Council with continued robust intelligence on the effectiveness of all Doncaster schools, academies, special schools and maintained Pupil Referral Units including enabling early identification and swift response for schools needing additional support. For education settings it will provide robust external evidence, validating self-evaluation and informing standards in education, children's services and skills (Ofsted) inspections.

2. The programme will be expected to receive continuous highly positive feedback from education settings monitored, with outcomes of high levels of satisfaction amongst system leaders and improvements in Ofsted gradings. The development of the programme identified in this report must be sustainable over the lifetime of the contract period, including extension over a further two years, following funding agreement by the School's Forum. The successful provider will be monitored in line with the Local Authority's contract management arrangements.

EXEMPT REPORT

3. This report is not exempt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4. The Chair and Members of the Cabinet are asked to :
 - a) Note the contents of this report

- b) Approve the commissioning intention for the School Improvement Provision.
- c) Approve the use of funding for this programme that was agreed at School's Forum on 11 April. This funding will finance the programme for the academic year 2018/19
- d) Review school improvement provision in April 2019 with a view to approving a school improvement programme for a further 2 academic years.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

- 5. Local Councils play a key role in helping to shape and drive forward improvement in education settings and it is important that they are involved in shaping the quality of provision in their area.

BACKGROUND

- 6. Since September 2016, Kirk Sandall Teaching School Alliance (Partners in Learning) has been grant funded by Doncaster Council through school's forum Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to support the Council's Standards and Effectiveness Team with the delivery of a school improvement programme for all maintained primary and special schools and the 2 maintained Pupil Referral Units, the Levett School and Maple Medical Centre. This programme is the Standards and Effectiveness Partner programme (STEP). The original funding was made by way of a grant to Partners in Learning to facilitate the market through a representative partnership model. Hungerhill Teaching School's Alliance (Partners in Learning) has been grant funded to provide support for Secondary Transition and Key Stage 4 Improvements in Secondary Academies.
- 7. Over the last two academic years, the school improvement programme delivered by Partners in Learning has provided high quality support and challenge to all our maintained schools and is highly valued across Doncaster schools and other education settings. Partners in Learning has also represented Doncaster schools in a variety of regional events and is highly regarded for the progress and contribution it has made in a number of key activities, including the establishment and development of the Research School and delivery within the Social Mobility Opportunities Area programme.
- 8. The education market is now more developed, with the changing educational landscape and the increase in the number of academies, it is essential that the reach of this programme is extended to include all schools to enable equality of provision. The development of this programme means that the School's Forum as agreed to extend the provision to all schools, regardless of designation, to benefit from a rigorous but supportive school improvement provision.
- 9. A school improvement provision is an essential part of the Local Authorities School Improvement Strategy, enabling us to risk assess schools accurately and target support and challenge appropriately.
- 10. The provision allows for strong alignment between school risk assessments and inspection outcomes to ensure that the Council has a firm grasp of the state of the primary sector.
- 11. The current school improvement partnership provision received a positive mention in the recent Association of Directors of Children's Services Peer Review of school improvement in Doncaster.

12. There has been an upward trend in the percentage of good or better primary schools from 58% in 2016 to 81.4% in 2018 as evidenced by 'Watchsted'. During the same period, secondary OFSTED outcomes have only shown marginal improvement, with 50% of secondary schools in Doncaster rated good or better in 2018 ranking 144th out of 150 local authorities
13. The successful delivery partner(s) will work in close partnership with the Council to ensure the alignment of the work programme to meet the needs of all education settings. Information is shared via elements of the current Council's Nexus system which allows the sharing of findings and intelligence using a digital solution.
14. The provision will be reviewed quarterly through to the period in April 2019, with a view to extending the school improvement for a further 2 academic years. The extension will require School's Forum approval, pending funding availability and therefore will be presented to School Forum in autumn 2018, with a detailed proposal being progressed for decision in April 2019 for the subsequent academic year (2019/2020). This timescale will also be followed for 2020/21.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

15. The below options were considered:

- a) Do nothing – this option was discounted due to the ambition of Doncaster Council to continuously support education settings to improve.
- b) Stay the same – there is now a developed market and therefore the option to grant award was discounted.
- c) Commissioning of a School Improvement programme – to continue to build on our current performance this option is the preferred option, extendable up to a further two academic years.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

16. The recommended option is to commission a School Improvement programme.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	<p>The programme will contribute to establishing firm foundations in all education settings for children and young people to flourish and pursue their ambitions.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within 	<p>Children and young people benefit from improved education and attending local schools with</p>

	<p>and beyond school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	<p>improved standards.</p> <p>Teachers, School Leaders and Governors benefit from additional training and support opportunities and shared intelligence products.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	<p>A good or better education setting ensures that children have the best start in life</p>
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	<p>Children and Young people of Doncaster will be provided with high quality, appropriate provision to meet their needs and enable them to flourish.</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

17. Reputational Risk: There is a risk to the council that not achieving the outcomes of the School Improvement Provision would result in a lack of appropriate provision within the Borough. Children and young people would be educated within less appropriate provision increasing the risk of them being unable to reach their full potential.
18. Financial Risk: There would be a risk of increasing pressure on the High Needs Block due to higher cost of alternative education provision, out of authority placements and transport costs.

19. Procurement Risk: this procurement process bears some risk in ensuring that the Council attracts the most skilled and capable supplier to undertake the school improvement activity. The preparation of the specification will clearly allow the market to understand the Council's requirements and the open and transparent procurement process will help mitigate against the procurement risk.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

20. The Education Act 1996 places a statutory duty on the Council to: ensure that efficient primary, secondary and further education is available to meet the needs of the local population and to ensure that its education functions are discharged with a view to promoting high standards

21. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides the Council with a general power of competence, allowing the Council to do anything that individuals generally may do. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council the power to purchase goods and services.

22. The procurement of a provider to deliver a school improvement programme must be procured in accordance with the Council Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

23. Further legal advice and assistance will be given as the programme develops.

[Officer Initials NJD Date 30th May 2018]

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

24. Funding of £340k was approved for the 2018/19 academic year at an extraordinary Schools Forum meeting held on 11th April 2018, in order that the LA could undertake a School Improvement Programme for all Primary Schools, Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units. The funding of £340k is a maximum amount, based on all 106 schools participating in the programme.

25. Funding of approximately £80k would be required to undertake a School Improvement Programme for all Secondary Schools, with the intention being that a proposal for funding is to be presented for approval at the next School Forum meeting on 28th June 2018. Should this approval not be granted then budget would need to be reprioritised and identified from within LOCYP general fund budget for 2018/19.

[Officer Initials DB Date 29/5/18]

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

26. While there are no specific HR implications related to the decision to commission a school improvement programme it is possible that there may be implications once the outcome of the tender process is known, for example possible TUPE implications for the current provider. This will become clearer once the successful bidder is identified and any specific HR implications can be clarified at that point.

[Officer Initials MLV Date 25/05/18]

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

27. ICT Deliver a variety of services e.g. Admin/Curriculum/SIMS/Internet connectivity/FMS etc. to over 50 schools presently in Doncaster as part of the traded services 'Buy Doncaster' offering. If new technological service/solutions/requirements are identified by the partner, these will require further reviewing and funding or alterations to the buyback offer, including potential staffing implications. Therefore, any requirement for new, enhanced or replacement technology to support the delivery of this work and/or resulting outcomes, must be submitted via the prescribed Business Case pro-forma for consideration by the ICT Governance Board.

[Officer Initials ME Date 29/05/18]

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

28. Learning outcomes and health outcomes are intrinsically linked. On the whole, investments in improving learning outcomes should also improve health outcomes. Evidence shows that education, training and employment are key socio-economic factors in determining health status (Marmot, 2010). A School Improvement Programme would enhance education, training and employment prospects for children in Doncaster

29. Any school improvement measures should be inclusive supporting the health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and wider school community. The public health programme Healthy Learning Healthy Lives will support educational settings to promote a better level of health and wellbeing for their school community

[Officer Initials CW Date 23.05.18]

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

30. The provision of a School Improvement provision for all primary, secondary and special education settings will allow continuous improvement to ensure that all children's education and development continues to benefit; this will increase and strengthen our Local Offer and support our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

31. The Council's duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 when exercising its functions to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not share that protected characteristic, ensure fair access to learning and opportunities for all Doncaster children and young people.

[Officer Initials JM Date 08/05/18]

SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

32. This programme will allow the council to promote social value through improving standards of education across all phases and therefore help the council to meet its objectives in the **Doncaster Learning** strand of *Doncaster Growing Together*. This programme also aligns with the Social Mobility Opportunity Area programme specifically around Priorities One and Two.

CONSULTATION

33. Discussions have been held with members of the School Forum regarding this programme.
34. Following discussions with the School Forum a commissioning model has been developed.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Grant to Partners in Learning - [Revenue Budget 2017/18](#)

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

Paul Ruane, Head of Service – Education, Learning and Opportunities: CYP
Telephone: 01302 737658
Email: paul.ruane@doncaster.gov.uk

Jane Mills, Commissioning Manager, Learning and Opportunities: CYP
Telephone: 01302 735166
Email: jane.mills@doncaster.gov.uk

**Damian Allen, Director of People (DCS/DASS)
Learning and Opportunities: Children and Young People/Adults, Health and
Wellbeing Directorates**