

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES CABINET MEMBER**

**DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION LOCAL AUTHORITY SECTOR LED IMPROVEMENT  
PROGRAMME**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To clarify the scope of the Department for Education Local Authority Sector Led Improvement Programme, as detailed in the guidance published in December 2020.
- 1.2 To seek approval for North Lincolnshire Council to submit the application to become a Sector Led Improvement partner to provide a joint package of support across children's social care and SEND.
- 1.3 Urgent approval is requested due to the requirement to submit the application by 11 February 2021 as set out in the guidance by the Department for Education.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The Department for Education (DfE) published guidance on how to apply to become a Local Authority (LA) Sector Led Improvement (SLI) partner on 16 December 2020.
- 2.2 The SLI programme is designed to help LAs support each other to improve their children's services by working collaboratively, sharing good practice and providing constructive challenge. The programme is designed to encourage collective responsibility for the performance of the sector.
- 2.3 Previous examples of SLI support across children's social care has covered a vast range of practice areas and support has been provided through diagnostic services, case audits, mentoring, training and disseminating learning through conferences and events.
- 2.3 To date, there has not been a SLI approach to SEND and the DfE are also seeking LAs who can also offer SEND improvement support including support for strategic planning and leadership, effective financial management, workforce development, joint working and commissioning, needs assessment and coproduction with parent carers, children and young people.

- 2.4 LAs are invited to submit an application to work with the DfE as a SLI partner to support children's social care improvement, or combined improvement for children's social care and SEND.
- 2.5 As part of the application process, it is necessary to secure evidence of elected members and chief executive support prior to submission. Key milestones are as follows:
- 11 February 2021 - Application to be submitted
  - 1 July 2021 to 31 March 2022 – Successful LAs to begin set up/delivery of support

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 An application for North Lincolnshire Council to become a combined SLI partner for both children's social care and SEND has now been developed. It is proposed that North Lincolnshire Council submit the application by 11 February 2021 in line with defined timescales.
- 3.2 The application enables us to demonstrate:
- the strength and stability of local leadership and our commitment to delivering sector improvement
  - programmes and initiatives we are involved in and how we will provide effective oversight
  - the strength of our social care and SEND services
  - our experience in successfully providing improvement support and/or sharing learning to improve outcomes
  - our areas of expertise to provide support and the impact we would expect to see
  - the type of support we would expect to offer
  - clarity regarding the risks to delivering the programme and any mitigating actions

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1 Those wishing to become a SLI partner must be a high performing LA already delivering excellent services to children and young people, and willing and able to support other LAs to improve their services. North Lincolnshire meets the mandatory requirements to become a SLI partner, as follows:
- We have an outstanding overall Ofsted judgement for children's social care and are at least good across all sub judgements
  - We have not yet had a SEND inspection, but we are able to provide strong evidence for the quality of our SEND services and our capacity to provide SEND support to another area
- 4.2 SLI delivers dual benefits, promoting a culture of improvement for both the recipient and the delivery partner. Retaining the learning and development within the sector that comes from SLI is an important benefit of the

programme. This lends itself to North Lincolnshire's growth mindset and learning culture.

**5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)**

5.1 The anticipated total maximum funding for the period up until March 2022 across the whole scope of the programme is £7.78 million including £280k for SEND SLI support. This may change or be reduced to nil as funding is subject to business planning processes following the spending review settlement. There is no guarantee of funding.

5.2 The proposed support package to be offered for support across children's social care and SEND is 60 days. The scope of the support activities includes organisational analysis, coaching and mentoring, peer review, learning events, strategy development and auditing. This support would be offered from identified individuals across the Services to Children leadership and management team. Executive level officers would receive a day rate of £800 per person, while management level officers would receive a day rate of £600 per person.

5.3 As part of the application process, the scope of the offer of support and the anticipated resource allocation across the Services to Children leadership and management team has been clarified.

5.4 Any funding received would enable the provision of backfill as required and contribute to internal leadership development, which would ensure a continued level of high quality leadership and management functions across children's social care and SEND services.

**6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)**

6.1 Not applicable.

**7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

7.1 Not applicable.

7.2 As part of the application process, consideration has been given to the risks to SLI programme delivery and the mitigating actions are clearly articulated on the application form.

**8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

8.1 Led by the Director of Children and Community Resilience, the application has been developed and approved across the Services to Children leadership team.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 For Cabinet Member to approve North Lincolnshire Council's application to become a Sector Led Improvement partner to provide a joint package of support across children's social care and SEND, to be submitted within the defined timescales as identified in the report.

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### **Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Guidance: [Local authority sector-led improvement programme: apply to be a partner - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-authority-sector-led-improvement-programme-apply-to-be-a-partner)

Local authority sector-led improvement programme application form