

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

## DECISION SCHEDULE



Friday 23rd June 2006

at 3.00 pm

in Committee Room "B"

Councillor Hargreaves, Cabinet Member responsible for Children's Services will consider the following items.

1. **KEY DECISIONS**

Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) and Youth Capital Fund (YCF) 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 - *Director of Children's Services*

2. **OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

1. Engagement of a Training Provider for the Higher Level Teaching Assistant Programme – *Director of Children's Services*
2. School Term and Holiday Dates: School Year 2007/2008 – *Director of Children's Services*
3. School Improvement Partners – *Assistant Director of Children's Services (Performance & Achievement)*
4. Corporate Parent Forum – *Director of Children's Services*

3. **REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS**

None

### EXEMPT ITEMS

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

4. **KEY DECISION**

None

5. **OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

Children's Homes: Regulation 33/34 Reports – *Director of Children's Services (para 1)*



## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

Report to Portfolio Holder  
23 June 2006

**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** YOUTH OPPORTUNITY FUND (YOF) AND YOUTH CAPITAL FUND (YCF) 2006/2007 AND 2007/2008

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### **SUMMARY**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider approval for proposals related to the process for spending Hartlepool's Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) and Youth Capital Fund (YCF) for 2006/2007 and 2007/2008.

#### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The report gives the background to the development of YOF and YCF funds resulting from the government's "Youth Matters" agenda. It details the guidance given related to the funds, the main part of which is that how the funding is to be spent will be determined by young people themselves. The funds, which are ring fenced, total £155,000 for each year, and the report details a process for forming and supporting a representative group of young people, who will determine the spending on activities and facilities of their choice. The report recommends proposals for an appropriate process and context for this to happen.

#### **3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

The responsibility for Youth Service issues falls within the remit of the portfolio holder.

#### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

This is a key decision both in terms of amount of funding and the implications for Hartlepool Young People, tests i and ii apply.

#### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Via the Children's Services Portfolio 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2006.

**6. DECISION REQUIRED**

The approval of the process outlined, so that a representative group of young people from Hartlepool, can be formed to determine the process for spending the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds.

**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** YOUTH OPPORTUNITY FUND (YOF) AND YOUTH CAPITAL FUND (YCF) 2006/2007 AND 2007/2008

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider approval for proposals related to the process for spending Hartlepool's Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) and Youth Capital Fund (YCF) for 2006/2007 and 2007/2008.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Youth Green Paper: "Youth Matters" set out the government's response to teenagers (13 – 19 years), as part of the broader Every Child Matters Agenda. Its aim is to ensure that the Every Child Matters five outcomes are achieved by all young people.
- 2.2 Empowering young people is a key theme in Youth Matters, and the provision of significant funding (£155,000 per year for Hartlepool) to the YOF and YCF represents a real commitment from government, to give young people more influence and choice over provision and facilities in their area.
- 2.3 By being part of the process for allocating these funds, young people will have a central role as decision makers, grant givers, project leaders and participants.
- 2.4 The funds are ring-fenced for the next two financial years and are additional funds, and must not be seen as a substitute for mainstream provision.
- 2.5 Local Authorities are required to act as leaders for the development and delivery of Youth Services, working with the voluntary and private sectors, as well as with young people. The YOF and YCF are seen as a springboard for giving more choice and influence to young people in conjunction with these partners.

## **3. GUIDANCE**

- 3.1 The DfES has provided guidance for Local Authorities, who are responsible for delivering the funds. The guidance encourages new approaches to strategic investment in youth facilities, particularly in deprived neighbourhoods.

- 3.2 The involvement of young people, especially disadvantaged young people, is central to this initiative. They will need support to develop the skills necessary to both administer the funds and develop ideas.
- 3.3 The main purpose of the funds is to:
- Give a voice and influence to young people, (particularly those who are disadvantaged), and convey a powerful message that their needs and aspirations are important.
  - Change the way local authorities and their partners provide activities and facilities for young people.
  - Improve things to do and places to go in line with young people's wishes.
  - Provide opportunities for young people's development in managing the funds.
  - Contribute to the achievement of the Every Child Matters five outcomes.
  - Increase young people's engagement with services and the democratic process at a local level.
- 3.4 The YOF targets the provision of positive activities and things to do and there are no restrictions on the range of the initiatives that can be covered, provided they are supporting the outcomes of Every Child Matters.
- 3.5 The YCF will provide a discrete capital budget for a two-year period, to be spent on what young people want, and is designed to work in tandem with the YOF. It can be matched by the local authority, with other capital funding.
- 3.6 Central to the operation of the funds are access and inclusion. All young people 13-19 should be able to participate in the initiative if they wish, especially those from disadvantaged and hard-to-reach groups.
- 3.7 The funds provide the opportunity for young people to shape provision and facilities in their neighbourhoods, which can also fit in with existing initiatives.
- 3.8 Evidence on how the funds are being used by young people, and how they impact on facilities and activities, will be provided to Government Office, who will monitor the initiative.
- 3.9 Each local authority will be expected to develop, in consultation with key stakeholders and young people, arrangements for administering the funds. They must also publicise the initiative, and have in place open and transparent arrangements for setting out the allocations and the decision making process.
- 3.10 YOF and YCF should have a particular focus on hard-to-reach young people, disadvantaged communities and community cohesion.

## 4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1. In consultation with partners, stakeholders and young people it is proposed to set up a broad and representative group of young people to administer the funds. In line with the guidance, the local authority will lead on this, with the Principal Youth Officer as lead officer. Use of existing and established groups will be the starting point for such a process, (e.g. the Participation Network, Hartlepool Young Voices, schools councils, U.K.Y.P., Connexions, youth groups).
- 4.2. The group of young people will receive appropriate training, support and guidance so that they can discharge their duties in respect of the YOF and YCF as well as developing ideas and initiatives. This will be given by youth workers in the main, but specialist support (e.g. on finance), will be sought if and when required. Materials for the training are readily available, as are models of operation for young people to consider (e.g. models provided by Youthbank and Keyfund). Every effort will be made to ensure appropriate recognition and accreditation of young people's development during the process.
- 4.3. The initiative will be publicised as widely as possible to encourage the broadest participation, in line with the funds' principles of access and inclusion. A press release will initiate this process, and this will be built on by further advertising to youth groups, schools, etc., as well as targeting under-represented and potentially marginalised young people (e.g. looked after children; young people with differing physical and mental needs; young carers; B.M.E. representatives; gay and lesbian young people).
- 4.4. Processes will be agreed with the representative group of young people which:
- Are in line with their needs and aspirations.
  - Are fair, open, transparent and accountable.
  - Are in line with the guidance related to YOF and YCF.
  - Give recognition and value to young people's participation and contribution.

## 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The YOF and YCF for Hartlepool in total amounts to £155,000 for 2006/2007 and 2007/2008. The breakdown of the annual total is:

<b>2006/2007</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>2007/2008</b>	<b>£</b>
YOF	90,000	YOF	90,000
YCF	50,000	YCF	50,000
Development and support	15,000	Development and support	15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>155,000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>155,000</b>

- 5.2 The funds are ring fenced and are additional monies. There is some provision for carry over in respect of the YCF but not the YOF.
- 5.3 Financial management of the funds is covered by section 31 guidance based on the Local Authority Finance Act 2003, and the process will be linked into Government Office, who will release the funds on completion of satisfactory reporting.

## **6 RISKS**

- 6.1 The development and support of an appropriate and representative group of young people to administer the YOF and YCF will take some time, and at present we have no idea as to what their priorities may be. Thus, there is the potential for timescales to be tight and a risk of YOF spend not being achieved within the financial year. However, if young people are made aware of this possibility, we can be confident they will accommodate this in their deliberations, to ensure deadlines are met.

## **7 RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 That the proposals related to the process for spending of Hartlepool's Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) and Youth Capital Fund (YCF) for 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 are agreed.

**Contact Officer:-** Peter Davies – Principal Youth Officer

**Background Papers:-** Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund Guidance Notes.

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

Report To Portfolio Holder

23 June 2006



**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** ENGAGEMENT OF A TRAINING PROVIDER  
FOR THE HIGHER LEVEL TEACHING  
ASSISTANT PROGRAMME

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### **SUMMARY**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval to engage a single training provider to provide the necessary training for applicants for higher level teaching assistant status.

#### **2.0 SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The government sponsored Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) awards grant funding to local authorities to promote its three-year higher level teaching assistant programme and fund training and assessment for applicants. Many applicants for higher level teaching assistant status require additional specialist training to enable them to qualify for assessment and this needs to be delivered by TDA approved providers.

#### **3.0 RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

The Department is proposing to engage Trinity and All Saints College of the University of Leeds as training provider to deliver training for staff in Hartlepool schools who apply for higher level teaching assistant status, which would be delivered in Hartlepool.

#### **4.0 TYPE OF DECISION**

Non-key.

#### **5.0 DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Children's Services Portfolio meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2006.



**6.0 DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

To approve the engagement of Trinity and All Saints as training provider for the higher level teaching assistant programme.

**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** ENGAGEMENT OF A TRAINING PROVIDER  
FOR THE HIGHER LEVEL TEACHING  
ASSISTANT PROGRAMME

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek approval to engage a single training provider to provide the necessary training for applicants for higher level teaching assistant status.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In 2005 the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) established a national programme for the introduction of higher level teaching assistants (HLTA) into schools, which is part of the government's programme of workforce modernisation and remodelling of the workforce in schools.
- 2.2 Following a process of annual bidding from local authorities the TDA allocate grant funding to support local HLTA programmes and for the financial year 2006-07 Hartlepool successfully bid for £44,600, which includes funding for specialist training of applicants in preparation for assessment for HLTA status.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The Council's Procurement Procedures apply together with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. Advice was sought in respect of the proposed engagement of the training provider and the Officer's Guide to Procurement followed.
- 3.2 Within the Council's Constitution – Contract Procedure Rules – Part A allows for exceptions to normal contract procedural rules. Part A Section 1 (ii) states:

“With the exception of (vii) below, these rules do not apply to contracts with professional persons or contractors for the execution of works or the provision of services in which the professional knowledge and skill of these persons or contractors is of the primary importance or where the contract is for the provision of caring services to children or vulnerable persons.

- 3.3 Those seeking to become providers of the specialist training must be registered with a consortium of TDA approved HLTA assessors. Currently the only such approved training provider in close proximity to the North-East which can deliver all relevant specialist training in locations in Hartlepool is Trinity and All Saints College in Leeds and it is considered that the above paragraph applies to this contract.
- 3.4 The amount to be spent on training depends upon the number of applicants and their individual training needs. From September 2006 Hartlepool will have 18 applicants with a maximum associated training cost of £13,680. This funding is available in full from the TDA grant mentioned above in 2.2.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 That the engagement of the training provider as specified above in 3.3 be approved.

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

Report To Portfolio Holder

23 June 2006



**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES:  
SCHOOL YEAR 2007/2008

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### **SUMMARY**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek the agreement of the Portfolio Holder to the pattern of school term and holiday dates for the school year 2007/2008 for community and controlled schools in Hartlepool.
- 1.2 To seek the agreement of the Portfolio Holder in recommending those dates to the governing bodies of aided schools in Hartlepool.

#### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

- 2.1 A report is attached detailing the current state of play nationally, regionally and locally on the pattern of the school year, and recommendations for the school year 2007/2008.

#### **3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

- 3.1 The Portfolio Holder has responsibility for Children's Services issues.

#### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

- 4.1 Non-key decision.

#### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

- 5.1 Portfolio Holder's meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2006.

**6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

- 6.1 Approval by the Portfolio Holder of Hartlepool term dates for school year 2007/2008.
- 6.2 Agreement to recommending these dates to governing bodies of Aided schools in Hartlepool.

**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES:  
SCHOOL YEAR 2007/2008

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek the agreement of the Portfolio Holder to the pattern of school term and holiday dates for the school year 2007/2008 for community and controlled schools in Hartlepool.
- 1.2 To seek the agreement of the Portfolio Holder in recommending those dates to the governing bodies of aided schools in Hartlepool.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 As the local authority (LA), the Council has the responsibility for setting the school term and holiday dates for community and controlled schools in Hartlepool. Aided school governing bodies are responsible for setting their own school holiday pattern within the agreed national framework of working days. Traditionally the LA and the governing bodies of all the aided schools work together to try to ensure a consistent pattern across the town in respect of school term and holiday dates, though in the case of Roman Catholic schools in particular, some variation does occur in some years.
- 2.2 The pattern proposed for 2007/2008 provides for an "envelope" of 195 days, of which 190 are days on which pupils attend, a legal requirement stipulated in The Education Regulations 1999. The remaining five days are designated by the school as Professional Development (PD) days. Five PD days are provided for in the Conditions of Service and can be taken in combinations of part-day "twilight" sessions at the direction of individual schools.
- 2.3 Regional consultation has taken place via the Regional Directors of Children's Services Network meetings. The local authorities in the North East region are committed to achieving broad consistency across the region when considering the school year pattern for 2007/2008 and subsequent years.
- 2.4 The Local Government Association (LGA) is attempting to achieve an overall national consensus based on a number of principles:

- To start the school year on a September date as near as possible to 1<sup>st</sup> September;
- To equalise teaching and learning blocks (roughly 2x7 and 4x6 weeks);
- To establish a two week spring break in early April irrespective of the incidence of the Easter bank holiday;

### 3. CONSULTATION

- 3.1 In the Autumn Term, a regional meeting of North East LA representatives took place to discuss the school year pattern. Various models were shared, including the LGA recommended model. At the meeting the North east authorities present agreed that all individual LAs would consult locally on a common preferred model.
- 3.2 Following that meeting, arrangements were made to consult all headteachers in Hartlepool and also the relevant associations/unions through the Director's termly meetings. The outcome of the consultation with stakeholders was unanimous agreement on the regional preferred model. The North East preferred model differs slightly from the LGA proposed version in that the Christmas break consists of two entire weeks rather than the split weeks put forward by LGA.
- 3.3 The general consensus from LAs in the region was to adopt the regional model although slight variations may occur.

### 4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 It is proposed that Hartlepool should follow the proposed regional model on which consultation took place. This is shown in **Appendix 1**.

### 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Portfolio Holder is requested to consider the following recommendations:
- To approve the schedule of term and holiday dates for 2007/2008 for community and controlled schools in Hartlepool as shown in **Appendix 1**.
  - To recommend the schedule of term and holiday dates for 2007/2008 to the governing bodies of aided schools in Hartlepool as shown in **Appendix 1**.

Contact Officer: Rachel Smith, Education Officer.

2007/2008

2007	July	August	September	October	November	December
Monday		27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31
Tuesday		28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25
Wednesday		29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26
Thursday		30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27
Friday		31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28
Saturday			1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29
Sunday			2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30

2008	January	February	March	April	May	June
Monday	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30
Tuesday	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24
Wednesday	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25
Thursday	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26
Friday	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27
Saturday	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28
Sunday	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29

2008	July
Monday	7 14 21 28
Tuesday	1 8 15 22 29
Wednesday	2 9 16 23 30
Thursday	3 10 17 24 31
Friday	4 11 18 25
Saturday	5 12 19 26
Sunday	6 13 20 27

**195 DAYS** ALL PD DAYS INDICATED

Easter Weekend 21 - 24 March



## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

Report To Portfolio Holder

23 June 2006



**Report of:** Assistant Director of Children's Services  
(Performance & Achievement)

**Subject:** SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS

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### **SUMMARY**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval for the use of an external partner to implement the School Improvement Partner element of DfES' New Relationship with Schools from September 2006.

#### **2.0 SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The report explains the requirements now placed upon the Local Authority to employ School Improvement Partners as part of schools' annual 'Single Conversation' with DfES. It also explains what arrangements currently exist and how these will be adapted when the SIPs are introduced. The report identifies a preferred option for roll out of the SIP function in Hartlepool using an external partner, Northern Education. Financial implications are included.

#### **3.0 RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

The Portfolio holder for Children's Services is required to approve the use of an external partner to carry forward the SIP function in Hartlepool.

#### **4.0 TYPE OF DECISION**

Non key decision.

#### **5.0 DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Children's Services Portfolio Holder meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2006.

## **6.0 DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

Portfolio holder is recommended to approve the use of a third party/external partner to implement the SIP element of the DfES' New Relationship with Schools.

**Report of:** Assistant Director of Children's Services  
(Performance & Achievement)

**Subject:** SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval for the use of an external partner to implement the School Improvement Partner element of the DfES' New Relationship with Schools in Hartlepool secondary schools from September 2006.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 In January 2004, at the North of England Conference in Belfast, David Milliband, then Minister for Schools Standards, outlined a 5 year strategy for schools and introduced the concept of a new relationship between central government and schools.

2.2 The new relationship was detailed further in a joint DfES/Ofsted document published in June 2004, entitled 'A New Relationship with Schools' (NRWS). The document includes a number of initiatives under the general theme of a simplified approach to school improvement, the overarching aim being, to 'help schools raise standards – with clearer priorities and less clutter for schools, and more information to parents'.

2.3 In terms of content, the NRWS brings together a range of initiatives including;

- The Single Conversation
- School Improvement Partners
- School Profiles
- Data Collection
- Communication
- School Inspection.

This report focuses on the School Improvement Partner element of the New Relationship.

## **3. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNER (SIP)**

3.1 The work of SIPs is described as a key element of the NRWS. DfES intend that by September 2006 every Secondary (and by September 2007 every Primary) school will be allocated an accredited SIP whose role will be to provide high quality support, challenge and monitoring.

This kind of work has until now been carried out by school advisers usually employed as part of local authority School Improvement Services. SIPs are expected to be, in the main, external to local authorities school improvement teams. They will be under contract to local authorities who are responsible for the quality of their work.

- 3.2 The SIP is intended to act as critical professional friend to the school, focusing on the school's development. The role is intended to help the school identify its future priorities and to build its capacity to evaluate its performance and implement change.
- 3.3 SIPs are required to undergo an accreditation process, administered through the National College of School Leadership. DfES expect there to be four types of accredited SIPs:
  - serving headteachers, who work as SIPs in their own authority areas or with schools maintained by other authorities;
  - self-employed people, including recently retired headteachers and other former headteachers;
  - employees of consultancy organisations, including private and charitable organisations and other local authorities;
  - direct employees of the contracting authority, typically members of its school improvement service.
- 3.4 A pool of accredited SIP details will be maintained by the National Strategies contractor (Capita), who will provide each local authority with sufficient names to give it some choice in its selection of SIPs.
- 3.5 Responsibility for contracting with, deploying, professionally developing and quality assuring the work of the SIPs rests with the contracting local authority, however the National Strategies contractor will support as necessary.
- 3.6 DfES have provided a grant of approximately £2,000 per school to support the introduction of SIPs to local authorities. The SIP is required to commit between 5 and 9 days depending on a school's needs, together with 4 days to the local authority for training, briefing and networking activities.
- 3.7 The authority is expected to ensure that:
  - 75% SIPs are current or former Secondary headteachers.
  - The SIPs include some individuals with substantial recent experience of work outside the local authority and its schools.

Because Hartlepool is a small local authority with only six secondary schools, one secondary special school and a Pupil Referral Unit, DfES, through its regional adviser for SIPs, has strongly recommended that we engage SIPs who are external to the authority and who are serving or recently retired headteachers.

- 3.8 In addition to discussing the school's performance, setting targets and agreeing key priorities, the SIP will also advise the governing body on the performance management of the headteacher and the school's performance management arrangements. Essentially the SIP will combine the role of School Improvement Adviser with that of External Adviser for Performance Management.
- 3.9 When assigning SIPs the local authority is expected to consult with schools, and take account of any reasons a school puts forward for not accepting a particular individual, but the final decision rests with the authority.

#### **4. THE SINGLE CONVERSATION**

- 4.1 The SIP's work will focus on a number of exchanges with the school's leadership about how well the school is serving its pupils and how the school needs to improve. This exchange is referred to as the Single Conversation, although it is recognised that it will involve a number of meetings, over time. The calendar produced by DfES suggests half termly, half day monitoring visits.
- 4.2 The 'Conversation' will be focused upon pupil attainment and the factors which contribute to it. The conversation will lead to a report to the Governing body, which will include:
- a commentary on the quality of the school's self-evaluation;
  - a commentary on the priorities and targets in the draft school plans;
  - a recommendation about the action planned by the school, and external support needed.
- 4.3 In addition, the SIP will advise the Governing body on their management of the headteacher's performance.
- 4.4 SIPs will advise the local authority where a school is causing concern, at which point the authority may want to use its statutory powers to intervene. Maintained schools' key accountabilities, set out in statute, are to their maintaining authorities and to central government. The local authority remains accountable through CPA and the JAR for the performance of its schools.

#### **5. EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS**

- 5.1 Much of the work envisaged that SIPs will carry out in secondary schools is currently done by local authority Link Advisers. Hartlepool has a rigorous school improvement strategy which is based on robust support, challenge and intervention procedures that have been developed in partnership with schools and governors over a number of years. This

has been driven by LA Link Advisers employed as part of the school improvement service. This strategy was a cornerstone of the authority's education department plans, agreed with DfES and is now included in the Operational Plan for the Performance & Achievement Division of Children's Services. The existing model for school improvement has:

- ensured that the local authority has robust and detailed knowledge of the performance and capacity to improve all its schools;
- kept accountability for, and ownership of, priorities firmly in the hands of Governors and Schools, particularly where the school is giving cause for concern and intervention is necessary;
- supported the identification and dissemination of practice worth sharing, and facilitated the co-ordination of collaborative working, particularly at leadership level, across Hartlepool;
- enabled focused intervention in inverse proportion to success to be planned to maximum effect, ensuring impact and value for money.

5.2 Despite the success existing arrangements have brought about all local authorities are still required to appoint School Improvement Partners, preferably from external services and with current or recent headteacher experience. In Hartlepool it will be important to ensure that the new SIPs build upon existing good practice, confirm to accepted policies and procedures and sustain effective and positive relationships with schools.

## **6. IMPLEMENTATION**

6.1 In accordance with advice from DfES and following discussions with secondary headteachers it was agreed to contract with SIPs who are serving or recently retired headteachers and, because of our small size in terms of numbers of schools, who are also external to Hartlepool.

6.2 Two options available to the LA were considered:

- Recruit SIPs on the open market from a list provided by the DfES' strategic partner (Capita). SIPs are required to inform Capita of the local authorities in which they are prepared to work.
- Use a third party/external partner to provide the SIP service.

6.3 The number of accredited SIPs who indicated their readiness to carry out their role in Hartlepool is very low and some live considerable distances from the town. They would therefore be unavailable at short notice and would incur oncosts if used such as accommodation, travel etc.

6.4 The use of a third party was therefore further investigated by the Assistant Director of Children's Services and secondary headteachers. Discussions with DfES identified Northern Education Consultants as a possible third party/external supplier of the SIP function in Hartlepool.

- 6.5 Northern Education is a company whose prime concern is supporting improvement of the secondary education sector. The company operates across Northern England from offices in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, supported by the business and professional services of Clothier & Lacey Ltd. It provides high quality support in relation to identified need. The company works with LAs and schools by establishing a support team primarily consisting of people with successful experience of secondary headship. The company currently works with five different LAs including Oldham, Bradford and Newcastle.
- 6.6 Northern Education worked with Newcastle-upon-Tyne Education & Libraries Directorate as one of the six designated SIP pilot projects during 2004/05. Feedback to the DfES from the Prime Minister's Delivery unit (which reviewed their work) indicated that the company model of a partnership between schools, the LA and an external third party had much to commend it, particularly in contrast with LAs which had based their pilot on headteachers internally acting as a SIP for each other, including mutual appraisal.

## **7. ADVANTAGES OF USING A THIRD PARTY TO SUPPLY SIPS**

- 7.1 Northern Education is the Children's Services Department's preferred supplier of the SIP function in Hartlepool. It draws upon extensive experience of the practical operation of the SIP model and its complexities. A co-ordinated team of accredited SIPs will be provided who have been recruited through the company's recruitment process. All will work in more than one LA and bring that of experience with them.
- 7.2 Northern Education will continue to maintain its interface with the LA through a single point of contact, who will be the SIP Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator will represent the SIP network at meetings where multiple attendance is impracticable and will disseminate key messages to the SIP team, thereby providing an efficient communication route to and from the LA. They will evaluate schools' collective and individual priority support needs by analysing Self-Evaluation Forms, School Development Plans and Notes of Visit. Further, the Co-ordinator will ensure that SIPs are up to date with current LA issues and priorities so that co-ordinated support and challenge is provided across all schools.
- 7.3 Experience in Newcastle and elsewhere shows that the quality of the SIPs is crucial to the success of the Single Conversation. Under the third party provider model, SIPs are external to the LA, bringing objectivity to the support and challenge process. Further, operational protocols and confidentiality arrangements are agreed and consistent through the team. In addition, 360 degree performance management of Northern Education SIPs is carried out annually as part of the contract, in full partnership with headteachers and LA officers.

- 7.4 Northern Education provides a stable and experienced team of SIPs. However, the company also commits to providing a replacement SIP when required within 14 days. This may be brought about by SIP illness, a SIP/head relationship difficulty or any other reason. With the contract, Hartlepool LA may wish to continue to use Northern Education for additional consultancy, research or support activity, including interim management. Expertise can be sourced by Northern Education and the costs added to the flexible contract without the need for extensive and sometimes complex procurement processes.
- 7.5 The company ensures that SIPs are up to date with current developments in secondary education and the Every Child Matters agenda. Northern Education expects SIPs to understand the context of an LA, and participation in LA meetings is expected, and costed within the proposed contract. Further, Capita expects all SIPs to participate in termly briefings which are covered within the contract.

## **8. SCHOOLS AND THE ALLOCATION OF SIPs**

- 8.1 A model of a core SIP entitlement available to all schools, and a further differentiated allocation available to some schools is proposed for Hartlepool. This allocation process would be agreed in advance with all parties and that it would operate on a fully transparent basis. It will be for the LA to decide which SIP is allocated to which school, and the SIP Co-ordinator would support the process of matching need and capacity to experience.

## **9. IMPLICATIONS FOR LINK ADVISER ROLE**

- 9.1 There is one Senior Adviser with responsibility for secondary schools. This will continue when the SIP function is rolled out although the role is under review. In relation to the 'new relationship' and the SIP function in particular the Senior Adviser will:
- co-ordinate the SIP function and liaise with the third party to ensure that the terms and conditions of the contract are met.
  - ensure that the outcomes of the SIP process are fully integrated into the school improvement strategy of the local authority.
  - co-ordinate additional support and challenge to schools as a result of issues raised during the SIP process.
  - liaise with DfES and Capita at all levels and participate in the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the SIP service in Hartlepool.



In addition the Senior Adviser will continue to carry out existing responsibilities in relation to:

- Every Child Matters
- Excellence in Cities co-ordination
- Secondary Strategy leadership and management
- Behaviour Improvement Programme strategic leadership
- ICT Strategy

## **10. CONTRACT COSTINGS AND PROCEDURES**

- 10.1 Northern Education operates on a daily chargeout basis per completed consultancy day. Hartlepool will know in advance what the full and accurate costings will be. There are no hidden extras such as travelling expenses for consultants. In addition, the company only invoices for days actually delivered.
- 10.2 If approved the agreement with Northern Education will come into effect on 1 September 2006 and continue until 31 August 2008 in the first instance, subject to annual review, unless otherwise terminated. Either party may terminate this agreement by three months written notice.
- 10.3 The Council's Procurement Procedures would normally apply together with the Council's Procedural Rules. Advice was sought in respect of this proposed use of a third party to carry out the SIP function and the Officer's Guide to Procurement was followed.
- 10.4 Within the Council's Constitution – Contract Procedure Rules – Part A allows for exceptions to normal procedural rules. Part A Section 1 (ii) states:
- ‘With the exception of (vii) below, these rules do not apply to contracts with professional persons for the execution of works or the provision of services in which the professional knowledge and personal skills of these persons is of the primary importance or where the contract is for the provision of caring services to children and vulnerable persons.’
- 10.5 Specialist and extensive professional knowledge and expertise are required to deliver the SIP function. DfES have confirmed that no other third party organisation is equipped to provide the service locally. It is considered that the above paragraph therefore applies to this contract.

## 11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Terms of the proposed contract are contained in the confidential appendix to this report (**APPENDIX 1**). (Exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006), namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para. 3).

## 12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 It is recommended that portfolio holder approves the use of Northern Education as external partner in implementing the School Improvement Partner element of the DfES' New Relationship with Schools.

Contact Officer

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## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

Report To Portfolio Holder

23 June 2006



**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** CORPORATE PARENT FORUM

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### **SUMMARY**

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To propose changes to the membership of the Corporate Parent Forum and to seek endorsement from the Portfolio Holder to implement these proposed changes.

#### **2.0 SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

The report provides some background information on the development, remit and achievements of the Corporate Parent Forum. It then reviews the current membership of the Corporate Parent Forum and proposes some changes in line with national guidance. The report also contains proposals, for consideration by the Portfolio Holder, as to how future meetings may be planned.

#### **3.0 RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

The Portfolio holder has a responsibility to ensure that the department is striving to maximise the outcomes for looked after children. The Corporate Parent Forum is a vitally important vehicle in making this happen and exists to ensure that the local authority is doing all a good parent would do in seeking the best outcomes for children and young people in care.

#### **4.0 TYPE OF DECISION**

Non-key decision.

#### **5.0 DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Portfolio holder meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2006.

**6.0 DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

- 6.1 To endorse the proposed changes in membership to the Corporate Parent Forum.
- 6.2 To authorise that future meetings of the Corporate Parent Forum be structured in the manner proposed in the report.

**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Subject:** CORPORATE PARENT FORUM

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To review the membership of the Corporate Parent Forum and to seek endorsement from the Portfolio holder on the proposed changes in membership.
- 1.2 To present proposals, for consideration by the Portfolio Holder as to how the agenda for future Corporate Parent Forum meetings might be planned and structured.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The role and remit of the Corporate Parent Forum was agreed at its first meeting on 25 November 2002. It was agreed that a group be formed to:

*“advise and make recommendations to the Council’s decision making bodies and other local organisations on any issues affecting children and young people who are looked after by Hartlepool Borough Council”.*

- 2.2 It was also agreed by those present that Hartlepool Borough Council should create a forum to listen to the views of looked after children and young people. This Forum would ensure that the individual potential of each looked after child was maximised. The underlying ethos of the Forum is to ensure the Council does all a good parent would do in maximising the individual potential of their children. The Corporate Parent Forum is not, and never has been, a decision-making body. It makes recommendations that are considered by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services.
- 2.3 A number of factors linked to necessitate a review and extension of the Corporate Parent Forum Terms of Reference in October 2003. These included:
  - The Hartlepool Joint Review (2003) which recommended that the authority further develop working links with children, young people and carers
  - The publication of the “Every Child Matters” Green Paper in September 2003

- The joint publication in October 2003 by the DfES and the Local Government Information Unit of *"If This Were My Child" - A Councillors Guide to being a good corporate parent..* Copies of this document were supplied to each elected member.

2.4 At a further meeting of the Corporate Parent Forum on 3 February 2004 it was agreed that the Forum would commit itself to:

- Ensure all elected members and officers of the Council, and their partner agencies, do everything a good parent would do to improve the life chances of children looked after
- Ensure the views of children are taken into account when planning services
- Meet with children, young people and carers to hear their views directly
- Monitor care and support arrangements, set targets and monitor outcomes
- Ensure Departments of the Council, and their partner agencies work together on behalf of children looked after
- Maintain a good and contemporaneous knowledge of the needs of children and young people looked after

2.5 Since its creation in November 2002 the Corporate Parenting Forum has:

- Provided a mechanism for elected members, foster carers, young people and Officers to meet and discuss the issues relating to one of the towns most vulnerable groups
- Organised a seminar for all elected members to raise awareness of their corporate parenting responsibilities.
- Engaged elected members in the statutory inspection process of Council run residential establishments
- Been an advisory body in the drafting of a new strategy for services provided to looked after children
- Ensured other council departments contribute to the Corporate Parenting role. For example, foster carers and care-leavers were given "Active Cards".
- Created an ethos that has led to increased levels of participation amongst children, young people and foster carers including a Meet the Corporate Parent event
- Funded and supported a "Celebrating Success" event for looked after children

2.6 The Corporate Parent Forum has developed significantly since its inception. The Forum has gathered momentum and provides an important mechanism for elected members, carers and young people to debate the salient issues relating to looked after children. The Forum allows these key stakeholders to form a view that can be fed into

Portfolio, and/or Cabinet, to inform the Council's decision-making process in relation to looked after children

- 2.7 Full council voted to include the Corporate Parent Forum as a formally constituted Council body in July 2005. This has raised the corporate profile of the Forum. However, it has also introduced a heightened level of formality that is not entirely conducive to involving children, young people and their carers.
- 2.8 The Corporate Parent Forum should also be seen in a wider context; it is one of three main groups that focuses on the specific needs of looked after children. The functioning of the Corporate Parent Forum has to be considered in conjunction with the Multi Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP) and the LAC Steering group.

### 3. **PROPOSED CHANGES TO CORPORATE PARENT FORUM MEMBERSHIP**

- 3.1 The Corporate Parent Forum had agreed that the existing membership of the Forum be reviewed and that the membership guidelines contained within the *"If This Were My Child – A Councillors Guide to being a good corporate parent"* be followed.
- 3.2 The existing membership of the Corporate Parent Forum is detailed in the Terms of Reference and these were last reviewed in October 2005. The existing membership consists of:
  - Children's Services Portfolio Holder ( Chair)
  - Adult and Community Services Portfolio Holder
  - The Mayor
  - 4 Elected members (political balance is not required)
  - 2 children and young people who are, or have been, looked after plus any other looked after children who wish to attend
  - 2 local authority foster carers
  - Director of Children's Services
  - Assistant Director (Safeguarding and Specialist Services)
  - Policy Link Officer(s) within Children's Services
  - Representative from the Hartlepool PCT
- 3.3 The Corporate Parent Forum agreed on 5 April 2006 that in addition to the above, representatives from the following agencies be invited to become Forum members:
  - Housing / Homelessness section
  - Youth Offending Service
  - Early Years providers

It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder agree to the recommended changes in membership.

#### 4. PROPOSED PLANNING OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 4.1 There is a need to ensure that all five “*Every Child Matters*” Outcomes<sup>1</sup> are covered by the work of the Corporate Parent Forum. With this in mind, a draft programme (see **Appendix A**) is being suggested as a structure for future meetings. This draft programme focuses on a number of key questions that, as pro-active corporate parents, we should know the answers to. These questions should not be viewed as an exhaustive list but as a structured guide to ensure that the Corporate Parent Forum is ensuring the Council as a whole, is doing all it can to improve outcomes for the children in its care.
- 4.2 It is being suggested that Council Officers are asked to demonstrate how their area of service delivery is meeting the particular needs of looked after children. This might flag up gaps in current service delivery and the Corporate Parent Forum can debate the best methods of plugging these gaps.
- 4.3 It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder agrees that the document attached as **Appendix A** be used to structure agendas for future meetings of the Corporate Parent Forum.

#### 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Nil.

#### 6. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 That the Portfolio Holder agrees the proposed changes in membership to the Corporate Parent Forum.
- 6.2 That the Portfolio Holder agrees that the document attached as **Appendix A** is used to structure agendas for future meetings of the Corporate Parent Forum.

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<sup>1</sup> Be Healthy, Stay Safe, Enjoy and Achieve, Make a positive contribution and Achieve economic well-being



### DRAFT CORPORATE PARENT FORUM PROGRAMME - If This Were My Child?

ECM OUTCOME	Key Questions	Who / When
<b>BE HEALTHY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physically Healthy</li> <li>Mentally and emotionally healthy</li> <li>Sexually healthy</li> <li>Lead healthy lifestyles</li> <li>Choose not to take illegal drugs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are measures in place to provide emotional support to LAC?</li> <li>Do LAC receive sexual health advice?</li> <li>Do LAC undertake regular health assessments?</li> <li>Is advice given to LAC on the dangers of alcohol, drugs and solvent misuse?</li> <li>Do HBC provide opportunities for LAC to undertake physical exercise?</li> <li>Are carers given advice and training on the benefits of providing a balanced diet?</li> </ul>	<p>If agreed, a rolling programme would be developed with officers being asked to address the key questions and invited to a future meeting.</p>
<b>STAY SAFE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are safe from harm</li> <li>Have security, stability and are cared for</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many LAC are on the CP Register?</li> <li>Do staff and carers have regular training on child protection?</li> <li>Do staff and carers know what to do if a LAC is being bullied or is bullying someone else?</li> <li>How many LAC live outside Hartlepool – and why?</li> <li>Are the specific needs of disabled LAC addressed?</li> </ul>	<p>If agreed, a rolling programme would be developed with officers being asked to address the key questions and invited to a future meeting</p>
<b>ENJOY &amp; ACHIEVE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be ready for school</li> <li>Attend and enjoy school</li> <li>Achieve stretching national educational standards at school</li> <li>Achieve personal and social development and enjoy recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well are LAC and care-leavers doing at school or college?</li> <li>How many LAC attend pre-school provision?</li> <li>Do all LAC have a PEP?</li> <li>Are LAC attending school regularly?</li> <li>What learning is in place for LAC not in school?</li> <li>Do we recognise the achievements of LAC?</li> <li>Do HBC provide cultural and leisure opportunities for LAC?</li> <li>Are foster carers asked to demonstrate their engagement with the school?</li> </ul>	<p>If agreed, a rolling programme would be developed with officers being asked to address the key questions and invited to a future meeting</p>

<p><b>MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in decision making and support the community and environment</li> <li>• Engage in law abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school</li> <li>• Develop positive relationships</li> <li>• Develop self confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges</li> <li>• Develop enterprising behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are LAC involved in the planning and delivery of services they receive?</li> <li>• Are LAC rewarded when they do something positive?</li> <li>• How many LAC are involved with the YOS?</li> <li>• Are LAC supported in forming positive relationships with peers and others?</li> <li>• Are LAC contributing to their statutory reviews?</li> </ul>	<p><b>If agreed, a rolling programme would be developed with officers being asked to address the key questions and invited to a future meeting</b></p>
<p><b>ACHIEVE ECONOMIC WELL BEING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in further education, employment, training on leaving school</li> <li>• Be ready for employment</li> <li>• Live in decent homes and sustainable communities</li> <li>• Have access to transport and material goods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are LAC &amp; Care-leavers given access to driving lessons?</li> <li>• Does HBC or "Housing Hartlepool" prioritise the particular housing needs of care-leavers?</li> <li>• How many LAC go on to education, training or employment?</li> <li>• Does HBC do enough corporately to prepare LAC for employment?</li> </ul>	<p><b>If agreed, a rolling programme would be developed with officers being asked to address the key questions and invited to a future meeting</b></p>