

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LEARNING
CABINET MEMBER**

HUMBER SOCIAL WORK TEACHING PARTNERSHIP

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Cabinet Member that North Lincolnshire Council has been successful in its joint bid to develop a new Social Work Teaching Partnership, aimed at improving the education and training of social workers.
- 1.2 To seek approval to accept the grant offer from the DfE, and to lead the shared responsibility of delivering the Humber Social Work Teaching Partnership.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In 2014 two national reviews of social work education were undertaken by David Croisdale-Appleby and Sir Martin Narey. The reports recommended a number of changes to ensure that the supply and skills of social workers better matched the needs of social work employers, and that student social workers were better prepared for undertaking the highly skilled and important role of delivering statutory social care.
- 2.2 In 2016 the government embarked upon a programme of significant children's social care reform. A central feature of this reform agenda, as set out in 'Putting Children First' (DfE 2016), is the need to continue to bring the best and brightest people into social work, and to innovate as to how these people are supported to develop the skills they need.
- 2.3 Following a successful pilot of one such innovation, the government invited applications from local partnerships of employers and higher education institutions (HEI's) for funding to establish formal social work teaching partnerships. The stretch criteria that would need to be met, as set out by the DfE, included the raising of entry-level requirements, providing two statutory placements for students, and establishing greater integration between educators and practitioners.
- 2.4 In June 2016 North Lincolnshire Council submitted an application for funding to create and deliver a Humber Social Work Teaching Partnership, alongside Hull City Council, East Riding Council, North East Lincolnshire Council, University of Hull, NAViGO, FOCUS, and the University of Lincoln. The

application made clear that North Lincolnshire Council would be the nominated lead agency, within a context of collective responsibility.

- 2.5 On 11 November 2016 the DfE and Chief Social Workers announced that the bid was successful, awarding a grant offer of up to £307,736 for the period to 31 March 2017 and up to £584,384 for the period April 2017 to March 2018.

3.0 **KEY FEATURES**

- 3.1.0 The overarching vision for the Humber Social Work Teaching Partnership is: 'Enhancing training, developing practice, improving outcomes'
- 3.1.1 The aim of the Humber Social Work Teaching Partnership is to ensure the highest calibre students choose a long term career in social work, choose to study and then stay in the Humber area, and develop the skills and attributes to deliver an outstanding service to children, adults, and families.
- 3.1.2 The outcomes for children, vulnerable adults, families and communities that the work of the Humber Social Work Teaching Partnership seeks to support as part of a wider strategy are that people:
- Are safe, have good health and emotional wellbeing, and aspire to achieve
 - Have positive family and social relationships
 - Are resilient, confident, and look out for each other
 - Contribute to, and where possible design, their own plans
 - Are empowered to make positive choices, and to know where to go for help
 - Are supported to change and given strategies and skills to maintain this
- 3.1.3 The partnership will contribute towards these outcomes by developing and delivering an outstanding offer for social work training and learning. This will include specific innovations such as the development of a new value-based assessment process, and the establishment of learning hubs where students will benefit from academic and operational social work input.
- 3.1.4 North Lincolnshire Council has been awarded the grant offer on behalf of the Humber Social Work Teaching Partnership and will take the lead as part of a shared responsibility for budgetary, operational, and strategic management, and for achieving progress against the milestones set out in the implementation plan.

4. **CONCLUSION**

- 4.1.0 Leading one of only 15 Social Work Teaching Partnerships in the UK presents a number of benefits and opportunities for North Lincolnshire Council:

- a) Improved training and support for social workers to promote the highest standards of consistently effective practice, and improve recruitment and retention within the profession
- b) A workforce with the skills and attributes to deliver ‘safe, supported, transformed’ communities, focused upon empowering people and families to develop resilience and independence
- c) Potential for future cost-saving, for example in relation to the joint commissioning of training
- d) Economic and social benefits of attracting high-calibre individuals to live and work in the area
- e) Reputational impact of delivering a key government social care reform innovation
- f) Potential for further developing collaboration with regional universities to benefit the citizens and communities of North Lincolnshire, in terms of skills, employability, and investment.
- g) Opportunity for North Lincolnshire Council officers to take part in the scheme. Where there is additional capacity required these posts will be created in line with democratic process.

5. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 5.1 To accept the grant offer of funding for the Humber Teaching Partnership and act as lead partner in a context of shared responsibility.
- 5.2 To decline the grant offer and continue working with regional universities under the previous arrangements.

6. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 6.1 This paper recommends that North Lincolnshire Council accepts the offer of funding due to the potential benefits as set out above.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 7.1 The grant offer of funding will cover all costs related to the administration and management of the Humber Teaching Partnership. Providing an exit strategy is a condition required to access funding therefore plans will be drawn up to ensure sustainability from April 2018.

8. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

- 8.1 Not applicable

9. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

9.1 The views of a range of staff members from the People Directorate have been sought during the design of the teaching partnership bid.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That the Cabinet Member accepts the grant offer and to North Lincolnshire acting as lead partner within the Humber Social Work Teaching Partnership.

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Children's social care reform – A vision for change (DfE 2016)

Putting Children First (DfE 2016)

Re-visioning social work education (Croisdale-Appleby 2014)

Making the education of social workers consistently effective (Narey 2014)