



Record of meeting

West Midlands north sub-regional improvement board

3 May 2018

Attendance

Sub-regional improvement board members

Chris Quinn	Regional Schools Commissioner West Midlands, (Chair)
Richard Gill	Teaching Schools Council
Kelvin Peel	Teaching Schools Council
Jacky Forster	Cheshire East Council
Mark Bayley	Cheshire East Council
Christine Ridley-Thomas	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Mark Parkinson	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Chris Penn	Chester Diocese
Kelvin Platt	Diocese of Shrewsbury

Invited representatives

Robert Johnstone	Stoke on Trent City Council
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DfE officials in attendance included

Ceri Morgan, Jason Henderson

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 it was felt that 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

West Midlands north sub-regional improvement board

7 December 2017

Attendance

Sub-regional improvement board members

Chris Quinn	Regional Schools Commissioner, West Midlands (Chair)
Jacky Forster	Cheshire East Council
Mark Parkinson	Stoke on Trent City Council
Adam Hardy	Archdiocese of Birmingham
Damian Cunningham	Diocese of Shrewsbury
Tim Moss	Staffordshire County Council
Sue Noakes	Chester Diocese
Robert Johnson	Stoke on Trent City Council

DfE officials in attendance included
Ceri Morgan, Jonathan Goldstein

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:

- KS2 performance
- progress and attainment at KS4 in English, maths and science
- attainment and progress of disadvantage pupils which may include, but not exclusively, a focus on;
 - rurality

- transition
- parental engagement
- wellbeing and emotional resilience of learners
- attainment at KS2 and KS4 for pupils with SEND

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 SSIF adviser Kelvin Peel. 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

West Midlands north sub-regional improvement board

30 October 2017

Attendance

Sub-regional improvement board members

Chris Quinn	Regional Schools Commissioner, West Midlands (Chair)
Richard Gill	Teaching Schools Council
Jacky Forster	Cheshire East Council
Damian Cunningham	Archdiocese of Birmingham
Kelvin Peel	Teaching Schools Council
Mark Bayley	Cheshire East Council
Christine Ridley Thomas	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Rob Johnstone	Stoke on Trent City Council
Tim Moss	Staffordshire County Council
Justine Lomas	Archdiocese of Birmingham

DfE officials in attendance included

Ceri Morgan, Jonathan Goldstein

Apologies

Colin Hopkins	Lichfield Diocese
Adam Hardy	Archdiocese of Birmingham
Chris Penn	Chester Diocese
Mark Parkinson	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Louise Rees	Stoke on Trent City Council
Helen Riley	Staffordshire County Council

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 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 broadly in support of the applications submitted; on the whole, the applications were viewed as thoughtful and collaborative. All applicants, with the exception of two cross-regional applications, met the sub-regional priorities. The majority of applications targeted appropriate schools for support, 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.

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

West Midlands north sub-regional improvement board

13 September 2017

Attendance

Sub-regional improvement board members

Chris Quinn	Regional Schools Commissioner, West Midlands (Chair)
Kelvin Peel	Teaching Schools Council
Alex Jones	Wolverhampton City Council
Lynda Poole	Walsall Borough Council
Emma Balchin	Wolverhampton City Council
Chris Mathews	Shropshire County Council
Liz Smith	Telford Borough Council
Andrew Timmins	Sandwell Borough Council
Suzanne Edwards	Dudley Borough Council
Justine Lomas	Archdiocese of Birmingham
Colin Hopkins	Church of England Central Education Trust (CECET)
Damian Cunningham	Diocese of Shrewsbury
Philip Sell	Herefordshire Diocese

DfE officials in attendance included

Ceri Morgan, Jonathan Goldstein

Apologies

Richard Gill	Teaching Schools Council
Karen Bradshaw	Shropshire County Council
Chris Ward	Sandwell Borough Council
Tony Oakman	Dudley Borough Council
Clive Jones	Telford Borough Council
Adam Hardy	Archdiocese of Birmingham

Discussion points

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

An overview was provided of the outcome of round 1 of the Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF), noting the DfE announcement from early September setting out the relatively high success rate of applications from Wolverhampton, Dudley, Walsall, Sandwell, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin compared to the average nationally.

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 the successful delivery of the SSIF in Wolverhampton, Dudley, Walsall, Sandwell, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin was discussed.

The closing date for round 2 applications to be sent to DfE was confirmed as 20 October. Updated guidance has been published together with an updated application form as part of the launch of round 2 on 12 September 2017.

The monitoring process for successful projects was discussed and that certain projects will require visits from Educational Advisers as part of this monitoring.

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 Wolverhampton, Dudley, Walsall, Sandwell, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin:

- closing the gap for vulnerable groups
- developing inclusive practice to reduce persistent absence and exclusion rates
- SEND - specifically focused on raising the attainment of pupils with SEND; (including focus on identifying SEND, putting in place effective interventions, commissioning specialist support, parental involvement, transitions, minimising exclusion and preparation for adulthood)
- low attainment – KS3/KS4 core subjects
- rurality/small schools in Shropshire.

The role as set out in the terms of reference of all sub-regional improvement board members, especially the Teaching Schools Council, in disseminating these priorities for potential round 2 applicants was noted.

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 some important areas for focus and, subject to the Secretary of State's decisions in due course, potential SSIF funding.