

North East Interim Regional Planning Group

16-19 Transfer Briefing Note

Welcome to the first North East Interim Regional Planning Group Briefing Note. This is the first in a series of briefing notes aimed at stakeholders and partners in the region with an interest in 14-19 reform, particularly the transfer of the responsibility for the commissioning of 16-19 provision from the LSC to the region's local authorities.

We will issue these briefing notes periodically, as and when required.

This briefing has gone out to a wide mailing list, however, we would be extremely grateful if you would forward it to colleagues within your networks, who can register their interest by emailing skillsnortheast@onenortheast.co.uk. Please e-mail any feedback and comments to this address.

Background

The publication of the White Paper Raising Expectations: enabling the system to deliver, marked the start of a period of discussion and debate to support the creation of a stronger and more effective system for delivering a range of entitlements for young people, and meeting the skills needs of the economy.

The White Paper builds upon the Sub-National Review, the Machinery of Government changes and sets out Government's intention to transfer responsibility for commissioning £7bn of funding for 16 – 19 provision from the LSC to Local Authorities, giving "*Local Authorities the necessary funding and commissioning powers to effectively deliver the new entitlements and raise the participation age.*"

A key aspect of the structures which Government wishes to see to effect the transfer of 16-19 learning is the development of Sub-Regional Groups (SRGs) that reflect local travel to learn patterns. Local authorities will work together to plan the commissioning of learning in a sub-region to ensure that the needs and entitlements of learners are met and that learning reflects economic conditions and opportunities. The SRGs will then come together in a Regional Planning Group (RPG) which will provide a strategic overview of the SRG Commissioning Plans.

Further information can be found in Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver update and next steps, and specific guidance regarding SRGs, which are available from the [DCSF website](#).

Within the region the LSC has aligned resources to support the local authorities in their work in leading the development of the SRGs, and ONE NorthEast is supporting the work of the Interim Regional Planning Group. Over recent weeks dialogue has taken place between local authorities, partners and providers regarding the development of SRGs and the RPG progress is summarised below.

Development of Sub regional Groups in the North East

Submissions have been made from the North East to DCSF indicating a preference for three sub regional groupings in the region namely County Durham, Tees Valley, and Tyne and Wear and Northumberland.

These submissions made a robust case for the establishment of three sub-regional groups which reflect the travel to learn patterns of 16-19 year olds. In the case of Tyne and Wear and Northumberland and Tees Valley the SRG proposals align with the City Region Multi Area Agreements. The Durham submission recognises Durham's position in having significant numbers of learners accessing provision within the County, whilst around a quarter of resident learners attend provision outside of the county, travelling to both City Regions in similar numbers.

The Stage one proposals were considered by Government in October. In early December feedback was received on these proposals, along with guidance on the next stage of the process. The three proposed SRGs have been invited to submit more detailed proposals before the end of February 2009. Establishing these new ways of working will be an ongoing process and partners will have ample opportunity to engage with the development of the SRGs and the RPG during 2009.

Durham SRG

Durham County Council is taking the lead in the development of the Durham SRG. Dialogue is underway with partners in the county and a Stakeholder event is planned for the 30th of January 2009.

If you would like further information on, or have any comments to make regarding the development of the Durham SRG please contact Dave Ford of Durham County Council on david.ford@durham.gov.uk

Tees Valley SRG

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has agreed to take the lead in facilitating the development of the Tees Valley SRG. Dialogue is ongoing with partners in the sub-region regarding the structure and governance arrangements for the SRG and how the local authorities will work together to commission provision.

An initial consultation event was held in November, following which a SRG Steering Group has been formed comprising representatives from the five local authorities and colleagues representing schools, sixth form colleges, general FE colleges and independent training providers.

If you would like further information on, or have any comments to make regarding the development of the Tees Valley SRG please contact Julia Morrison of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council on Julia.Morrison@stockton.gov.uk

Tyne and Wear and Northumberland SRG

North Tyneside Council has agreed to take the lead in facilitating the development of the Tyne and Wear and Northumberland SRG. Dialogue is ongoing with partners in the sub-region regarding the structure and governance arrangements for the SRG and how the local authorities will work together to commission provision.

If you would like further information on, or have any comments to make regarding the development of the Tyne and Wear and Northumberland SRG please contact Steve Rutland of North Tyneside Council on steve.rutland@northtyneside.gov.uk

Development of the Regional Planning Group

In addition to collaboration at a sub-regional level to plan and commission provision, local authorities will need to come together with other key stakeholders such as RDA, GONE, Young People's Learning Agency and the new Skills Funding Agency as part of a Regional Planning Group (RPG).

The Regional Planning Group will scrutinise the commissioning plans of the Sub-Regional Groups to ensure that they are coherent, fall within the overall budget available and deliver the entitlement for all young people in the region. The RPG will also work with the Regional Skills Partnership to make sure that commissioning plans reflect local skills needs. Indeed recent national guidance indicates an expectation that at a regional level 'the voice of employers' should be 'strongly represented in helping to ensure that economic growth is driven forward and the needs of the labour market are being met'.

In the interim, a Regional Planning Forum has met to take a strategic overview of the development of Stage 1 and Stage 2 proposals. This forum includes Directors of Children's Services, representatives from the FE sector, schools and workbased learning providers, Government Office, the LSC and One Northeast.

In addition, an Interim Regional Planning Group (IRPG) has been established to support the work of the three SRGs, provide a forum for communications and develop proposals in respect of the formal RPG, including how it would relate to existing structures, for example the 14-19 Commission. It is not concerned with detailed discussions regarding the commissioning of provision. The IRPG comprises representatives of the three SRGs, the LSC, Government Office North East and ONE North East and has close links with the region's Directors of Children's Services, providers and other stakeholders through the Regional Planning Forum.

Proposals regarding the possible regional governance structure will be consulted upon shortly **N.B** however, that we await further guidance from DCSF regarding the role and remit of RPGs.

If you would like further information on, or have any comments to make regarding the development of the Interim Regional Planning Group please contact Jeff McCloud of One North East on jeff.mccloud@onenortheast.

Frequently Asked Questions

DCSF has produced a useful FAQ document which addresses issues frequently raised by partners, it can be found on the [DCSF Website](#).