

North East Interim Regional Planning Group 16-19 Transfer Briefing Note

Welcome to the third North East Interim Regional Planning Group (IRPG) Briefing Note. This is one of a series of bulletins aimed at stakeholders with an interest in the transfer of the responsibility for the commissioning of 16-19 provision from the LSC to the region's local authorities.

[The previous bulletin](#), sets out the background to the development of Sub-Regional Groups (SRGs) and the Regional Planning Group (RPG) in the region.

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.

The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act.

[The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act](#) (ASCL) received Royal Assent on 12 November 2009, enacting proposals initially set out in the White Paper: Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver.

In summary the Act, *inter alia*:

- Dissolves the Learning and Skills Council
- Transfers to local authorities the responsibility for funding education and training for young people aged 16-19 and up to 25 with learning difficulties, and those young people in youth custody aged 10 to 18.
- Creates the Young People's Learning Agency, which will: support local authorities ensure local commissioning decisions are made within a consistent national framework; secure national budgetary control; provide a strategic analysis service to local authorities; and support the local, sub-regional and regional infrastructure.
- Strengthens the accountability of children's services.
- Provides for a statutory framework for apprenticeships and creates a right to an apprenticeship for suitably qualified 16-18 year olds.

In transferring responsibility for commissioning of 16 – 19 provision to local authorities, the ASCL Act gives them the necessary funding and commissioning powers to effectively deliver the new entitlements and raise the participation age.

16-19 Transfer to Local Authorities

In anticipation of the ASCL Bill receiving Royal Assent, local authorities, both individually and collectively within their SRGs and the Interim RPG, have been working closely with LSC colleagues to ensure a smooth transfer of responsibilities and the establishment of effective systems and governance structures.

Significant progress has been made including:

- The matching of LSC staff to posts within local authorities and the YPLA.
- Local arrangements to familiarise LSC colleagues with the work of local authorities.
- Local authorities shadowing the LSC in undertaking the local strategic analysis and developing local statements of priorities.
- Utilising the 14-19 Commission, as part of interim arrangements for the RPG, to enable partners to shape the development of the [Regional Statement of Priorities for Young People's Learning 2010/11](#).

- Agreeing a regional approach to maintaining the regional course information database to support local area wide prospectuses.
- Developing proposals for regional governance structures from April 2010 (see below).
- Development of work-streams at a sub-regional level to maximise the opportunities sub-regional working offer on the broader 14-19 agenda.
- Within Tyne and Wear and Northumberland SRG and Tees Valley SRG the development of shared service arrangements to support local authorities in the efficient and economical management of their new responsibilities.

The LSC remains accountable for the commissioning of learning in the academic year 2010-2011, this process will be completed in March 2010. Contracts for learning in the current academic year and the year 2010/11 will transfer to local authorities on the 1st April 2010. The commissioning process for learning in 2011-2012 will commence in the late spring of 2010 and will be the first led by and entirely managed by local authorities. An outline timetable for these cycles is attached at Appendix 1.

National Commissioning Framework

[The National Commissioning Framework \(NCF\)](#) sets out the systems for planning, commissioning, procuring and funding the education and training for 16-19 year olds, young people up to age 25 with learning difficulties, and young offenders in youth custody. It aims to ensure that there is the required degree of consistency to the commissioning of learning to ensure efficiency, equity and budgetary control.

A draft version of the full NCF has been published for consultation, which will run until the 5 February 2010. The final version of the NCF will then be published by the Young People's Learning Agency in April 2010. The DCSF, LSC and the emerging shadow YPLA continue to work closely with representatives from the 14-19 sector to review and develop the detail of the full NCF.

The consultation draft of the NCF sets out:

- The processes for planning and commissioning provision.
- The process for the flow of funds.
- The data and information management systems that will underpin the process.
- Technical guidance on issues such as provision for LLDD and Young Offenders, and the national funding formula, which will continue to apply.

The 14-19 Commission will make a regional response to the consultation. If you wish to feed in any comments to this exercise please email your thoughts, referencing the consultation questions to which they relate if applicable, to skillsnortheast@onenortheast.co.uk.

Regional Planning Group (RPG) Structures

The North East RPG will:

- Set and communicate regional strategic priorities to ensure the alignment of learning for 16-19 year olds with wider regional and longer term economic strategies.
- Support collaborative commissioning decisions and provide endorsed 16-19 commissioning plans to the YPLA which meet regional priorities.
- Support the resolution of any issues or disputes at regional or sub-regional level both within and across SRG boundaries.
- Support the promotion and exchange of good practice.
- Identify and inform commissioning best negotiated at a regional or national level.

Proposals in respect of the RPG have been developed by the IRPG and agreed by the regions Directors of Children's Services. Reflecting that it is local authorities who (along with

the YPLA) will be statutorily accountable for the discharge of 16-19 commissioning functions, within their overarching statutory responsibilities for children and young people; and that within local authorities DCSs are accountable for local authority functions relating to the education of children and young people.

These proposals were developed through consultation with regional stakeholders and are based upon a tripartite structure. Proposals are summarised in Appendix 2.

- **DCS Network** – regional decision making. Decision-making body for the regional aspects of the 16-19 commissioning process i.e. are the plans collectively affordable, coherent, delivering the 14-19 entitlement and consistent with regional economic development priorities.
- **14-19 Commission** – provision of strategic advice and partner engagement.
- **Officer/Operational Group** (current IRPG) – operational support. This group will work under delegated authority from DCSs to undertake the detailed work required to: support the 16-19 commissioning cycle; ensure that the Regional Statement of Priorities is met; and identify and manage regional issues within the broader 14-19 agenda in support of the Regional Statement of Priorities.

The proposed structure and processes are underpinned by the principle of subsidiarity, recognising the primacy of local authorities and that their collective working at the SRG level will drive the regional agenda. They also reflect the key relationships being developed at the SRG level with MAAs and sub-regional governance structures (not least Employment and Skills Boards), which provide the opportunity to support the 14-19 'asks' within MAAs.

This structure will operate in a shadow form during the 2009/10 and, subject to a light touch review in the light of any further guidance from DCSF, become formal in April 2010.

The Raising Expectations Action Programme (REAct)

[REAct](#) is managed by the Local Government Association and funded by the DCSF. Its aim is to support local authorities in building capacity to ensure the smooth transfer of commissioning and funding responsibilities from the LSC.

The REAct team has produced a [High Level Guide](#) to the ASCL Act, which can be found on the REAct website together with a range of other documents which, whilst aimed at a local authority audience, may be of interest to colleagues across the 14-19 partnership; the site also provides details of how to register for the fortnightly REAct bulletin.

Frequently Asked Questions

DCSF has updated its [FAQ document](#) to address a range of questions including a number linked to the NCF.

NE 14-19 COMMISSION
 Remit: (re 16-19 Commissioning) Strategic Advice and Partnership Engagement :

- To act as an **advocate** for 14-19 agenda in the region
- To **support** the development of the Regional Statement of Priorities and Commissioning plans
- To **challenge** Commissioning Plans/planning in terms of fit with the RSoP
- To **scrutinise** the outcomes of commissioned provision in respect of fit with RSoP
- To make **recommendations** for approval by regional DCSs

Membership: Local Authorities (SRG leads and DCS 14-19 lead), 14-19 Partnerships, LSC ,GONE, ONE, provider reps, learner voice rep, HE, during transition year SFA & NAS as required

Frequency of meetings: Quarterly or exceptionally as required

Chair: Independent during 2009/10*
 * Process to identify future chair to be agreed

DCS NETWORK (RPG EXECUTIVE)
 Remit: Regional Decision making

- Approve RSoP
- Agreement of regional 16-19 Commissioning Plan, for negotiation with and approval by YPLA
- Ensure commissioning plans support the RSoP, deliver the 14-19 entitlement and are budget compliant at the regional level (supported by YPLA)
- Decision-making and dispute resolution
- Overview of the wider support system delivering this agenda.

Membership: 12 DCS, with LSC, GONE, ONE and YPLA, SFA, NAS as appropriate during 2009/10

Frequency of meetings: Within existing cycle or exceptionally as required

Chair: 16-19 Commissioning joint meeting to be jointly chaired by Local Authority/RDA*
 * Process to identify chairs to be agreed

OFFICER/OPERATIONAL GROUP
 Remit: Operational Support

- To take forward regional actions to ensure achievement of the RSoP within the wider support system delivering this agenda
- Provide a forum for a creative and strategic dialogue regarding the development of 14-19 provision and infrastructure
- To undertake detailed operational planning in support of the 14-19 Commission and DCS Network.

Membership: Local Authority SRG leads, LSC, GONE, ONE and YPLA, SFA, NAS as appropriate during 2009/10.

Frequency of meetings: Monthly or exceptionally as required

Chair: LSC during 2009/10y*
 * Process to identify future chair to be agreed

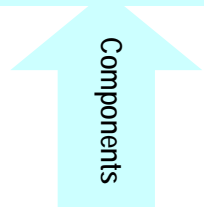
LIAISON WITH REGIONAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES
 SRGS are being closely aligned with MAA structures and Employment and Skills Boards.
 At a regional level the RPG will link with the LA Chief Executives' Group, the RESP (via the 14-19 Commission) and joint RDA/LA governance to take forward the IRS.

LIAISON WITH OTHER RPGs
 Address cross border issues to ensure YPs needs are met through out-of-region provision, in support of sub regional and local dialogues

COMMUNICATION WITH THE BROAD REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP
 With existing regional practitioner and partnership networks e.g. via 14-19 Commission/Forum

LIAISON WITH NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP SERVICE
 Aggregate apprenticeship numbers from the commissioning plans and negotiate with NAS, in support of sub regional dialogues

North East Regional Planning Group (16-19 Commissioning)



YPLA
 Will provide

- Regional data and MI
- Regional indicative budget and negotiating of final budget allocation
- **Final sign off of Commissioning plans**



PURPOSE
 Decision-making body for the regional aspects of the 16-19 commissioning process i.e. are the plans collectively affordable, coherent, delivering the 14-19 entitlement and consistent with regional economic development priorities

AGREE*:

- Regional statement of priorities
- Regional Commissioning Statement
- Regional Commissioning Plan

Ensure alignment with:

- Regional Economic Strategy /new Regional Strategy
- MAA's
- SFA skills strategy
- YPLA National Statement of Priorities
- Linked areas of the Children's Agenda

*Supported by the YPLA

