

# **Slough Learning Partnership**

## **Business Case for Future Funding**

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## Summary and proposal

The Slough Learning Partnership was established in January 2012 using grants from headroom to support staffing costs. Additional income has been generated through a membership fee and the development of traded services.

The SLP has a three-fold remit around

- a) Development of CPD activity
- b) Brokering school-to-school support
- c) Utilising economies of scale to gain advantageous terms in contracts.

The Local Authority wishes to take a more strategic lead in school improvement in line with the requirements of the Ofsted framework for inspecting School Improvement. The Slough Learning Partnership, working with the Slough Teaching School Alliance, can play a significant role in providing a range of school improvement services.

Future sustainability of the Slough Learning Partnership depends on a funding model which comprises a number of elements:

- DSG funding to support the basic organisational running costs
- Affiliation fees from schools
- Grant funding from National College of Teaching and Leadership (Teaching School grant and other ad-hoc grants)
- Revenue from traded services (eg courses and other CPD events)

The current reserves will support the operation of the SLP until April 2015. Three options are proposed for the future:

- Option 1** Continue to operate at the current scale providing a core offer of services, a significant proportion which would be considered 'Teaching School' activity.
- Option 2** Aligned with the LA's strategic plan for school improvement, develop the offer during 2014-15 to provide an agreed range of CPD and development services which meet the needs of schools.
- Option 3** Continue a narrow range of activity focusing on NQT administration and support and other aspects of Teaching School programme until the residual funding runs out.

Taking into account potential income from affiliation fees and grants, the Slough Learning Partnership therefore requests:

- a) An allocation of **£60,000** from 2013-14 DSG underspend to cover operating costs and contingency until the end of August 2015 (*Option 1*.)
- b) An additional allocation of **£100,000** from 2013-14 DSG underspend to enable the SLP to deliver a range of additional school improvement services during 2014-15. (*Option 2*).

To sustain the SLP from September 2015 and beyond requires:

- c) An ongoing allocation of approximately **£175,000** per annum from DSG or retained school improvement funds to cover the core costs and provide the basis service (*Option 1*).
- d) An additional ongoing allocation of approximately **£100,000** from DSG or retained school improvement funds to support the delivery of the additional school improvement services as set out in this proposal (*Option 2*).

The Slough Learning Partnership requests the approval of Schools Forum for ongoing funding from DSG to ensure the Partnership's long-term viability and its commitment to providing and facilitating a range of school improvement activities aligned with the Local Authority's strategy for school improvement. The

rest of this Business Case sets out the background to the SLP's current funding position, and provides more detail on the core and extended school development offers.

# Part 1

## a) Background

The Slough Learning Partnership was set up in the autumn of 2011 by a group of primary and secondary headteachers working on behalf of the whole community of schools in Slough. The key drivers for the organisation were the loss of the Local Authority school improvement function and the increasing marginalisation of education as the Local Authority responded to budget cuts and other local priorities.

The SLP was specifically promoted as a 'by schools for schools' organisation with a headteacher steering group. The organisation was intended to respond to school needs with a three-part remit:

- a) Provision of high-quality continuing professional development
- b) Brokering of school-to-school support and consultancy
- c) Securing cost-effective services for schools through economies of scale

It was quickly realised that the remit was largely that of a Teaching School, and as a strategic partner in the successful bid to the National College, the SLP essentially represented the wider schools network for the Slough Teaching School Alliance.

Originally set up as an informal network with a constitution, the SLP is now a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee with a separate trading arm and employing staff in its own right. **See Appendix 1 for a summary of SLP activity in 2013-14.**

## b) Funding sources

The SLP currently has five sources of funding:

- 1) Historic allocations from DSG 'headroom' in 2011 and 2013, totalling £340,000.
- 2) Teaching School core grant (£60k in 2013-14, decreasing to £50k in 2014-15, and £40k in 2015-16); the majority of this fund is passed to SLP to support the administration of Teaching School activity.
- 3) Affiliation fees, paid on a per-pupil basis by schools from their individual budgets.
- 4) Occasional small grants to support delivery of particular activity on behalf of the National College – eg £10k grant to arrange CPD for primary schools on the delivery of the new national curriculum.
- 5) Income from traded services (eg courses), theoretically balanced by expenditure as activity run on not-for-profit basis.

## c) Financial position at end of 2013-14 financial year

The SLP's income from affiliation fees was never intended to cover the operating costs; the historic allocations from DSG headroom were intended to support salary and other operating expenses.

Summary financial position for the 2013-14 financial year:

Income in 2013-14 (including traded services)	£171,000
Expenditure in 2013-14	£273,000
Operating surplus for the year (deficit)	(£102,000)
<b>Remaining reserves</b>	<b>£185,000</b>

The SLP currently has sufficient reserves to enable it to continue in operation until approximately April 2015 based on the current levels of activity and income and projections of expenditure.

#### **d) Core costs and traded services**

The SLP incurs a level of **core costs** to maintain the organisation itself, currently estimated at £195,000. This includes salaries and on-costs, premises and office management expenses, IT support and website maintenance etc. This core organisation has the capacity to organise a range of activity, which can be provided at no charge to schools, or as **traded services**.

The current position is that activities such as CPD courses and programmes are traded services where the income from participation fees is intended to balance the expenditure on venues, speakers, facilitators etc. Fees for traded service activities do not include any contribution towards SLP salary costs, as these are considered to be covered by the combination of the residual headroom grants, affiliation fees and the Teaching School administration grant. Some traded CPD activities have run at an operating loss in 2013-14 due to poor uptake despite initial enthusiasm.

#### **e) Income from affiliation fees**

Any funding for the SLP other than external grants effectively comes from the DSG:

- An allocation from underspend reduces the amount that can be passed out to schools to increase their individual budgets;
- Future allocations from centrally retained DSG are essentially a 'top slice' from schools' funds at source;
- Affiliation fees are paid from schools' individual budgets, which come from the DSG (or EFA parallel funding for academies).

Schools are most directly impacted by having to pay out from their individual school budgets, and it is important to retain the SLP affiliation fee at a level which does not seem prohibitive for schools and which encourages 'buy-in' to the organisation.

An affiliation fee of £3 per pupil means approximately £3,000 for a typical secondary school and £1,500 - £1,800 for the majority of primary schools. The income for the SLP clearly depends on the number and size of schools affiliating. A rough calculation assuming a Slough school population of 25,000 (primary and secondary phase) and 60% uptake from schools would suggest a potential income from affiliation fees of around £45,000 per year. ***It is considered unlikely that schools would continue to support the organisation if the affiliation fee was raised above this point.***

#### **f) Future position**

Three possible options for the SLP could take in the medium term (3 years) are:

- Option 1** Continue to operate at the same scale as now – an organisation of approximately 2 full-time equivalent staff – providing a core offering of services centred around CPD, support for NQTs and school-to-school support. A significant proportion of these services would be considered 'Teaching School' activity.
- Option 2** As part of the Local Authority's strategic plan for school improvement, develop the CPD offering and other support services during 2014-15 to provide an agreed range of CPD and development services which meet the needs of schools. This would require funding for the expansion of the core organisation in order to provide sufficient capacity for delivery and administrative support of an enhanced programme of activity.
- Option 3** Continue a relatively narrow range of activity focusing on NQT administration and support and other aspects of Teaching School programme until August 2015 when the residual funding effectively runs out. At this point the Partnership would be wound up; the administrative support could be directly employed by the schools in the Teaching School Alliance for Years 3 and 4 of the Teaching School designation.

## **g) Funding options**

To fund **Option 1** up to August 2015 would require an additional £60,000 (including an element of contingency) on top of the existing reserves, and approximately £200,000 per annum thereafter to support the core organisation.

Potential funding sources to support the core organisation for this option are:

- An affiliation fee per pupil in Primary and Secondary schools.
- Grants from 2013-14 DSG underspend, approved by Schools Forum
- A top-slice of DSG for 2015-16 and beyond at the budgeting stage, approved by Schools Forum
- School improvement funds currently held by Cambridge Education as part of their contract with the Local Authority
- A proportion of the Teaching School Core grant (maximum £50k in 2014-15 and declining)

**Option 2** requires additional administrative capacity to deliver the proposed programme of school improvement activity. There are three possible ways to fund this expansion:

- a) On a fully traded basis whereby participation charges cover the full costs of the activity including the additional salaries. This would raise participation charges to commercial levels and would discourage attendance at events.
- b) Raising the core Affiliation Fee to cover the additional salary costs, and running the activity on a traded break-even basis. This would most likely lead to a minimum of an additional £5 per pupil for primary and secondary schools, based on the programme proposed in Part 2.
- c) Seeking additional funding from DSG underspend in 2014-15 and centrally retained DSG thereafter (as for Option 1) to cover salary costs, and running the activity on a traded break-even basis.

**Part 2** provides additional detail of the core offer and additional proposed activity. **Appendix 4** details a draft programme for additional school development activity in 2014-15. The additional capacity required to deliver the full programme proposed is approximately £100,000 to cover the increased salary and on-costs.

It is recognised that the funding request for expansion of the SLP organisation is based upon a proposed programme of school development activity (**See Appendix 4**) drawn up in response to local needs. Additional funding secured over and above the requested amount would enable more activities to be developed. If the funding allocation is less than requested, the activity programme would have to be reduced to match the funds available.

## Part 2

### a) SLP Core Funding

The core funding for the SLP would provide it with the capacity to organise and deliver a range of activities and services to meet schools' needs at preferential rates.

Core funding is intended to cover the SLP's basic organisational costs:

- Salaries, on-costs and other employee expenses for the Coordinator and Manager (ie two full-time equivalent staff)
- Office rental and resourcing
- SLP website design and maintenance
- IT support
- Financial management software and professional services
- Data, online-learning and support software group licences for schools

The total basic organisational cost per annum is approximately £195,000.

Assuming an uptake of 60% of Slough schools and approximately 25,000 pupils across the borough, the "Affiliation Fee" required to provide this core funding without addition funding streams would be approximately £13 per pupil for primary and secondary schools (contributions from Nursery schools would be lower)

If the affiliation fee was capped at £3, this would generate £45,000 of income based on the uptake proportion assumed above. Additional funding from DSG of at least £150,000 per annum would be required. Raising the fee to £5 per pupil would reduce the demand on the DSG to minimum of £120,000 but runs the risk of significantly reduced affiliation levels from schools.

The core funding allows the SLP to provide a range of basic services for affiliated schools:

- a) FFT data for all Slough primary and secondary schools
- b) Access to Educare online learning resource package – Level 2 training in 16 core areas of school practice and administration, eg safeguarding/child protection, safer recruitment etc.
- c) Negotiation of group discounts on behalf of schools
- d) Organisation and facilitation of optional traded CPD programmes (ie courses/events additionally charged per delegate). **See part (b)**
- e) Online directory of local expertise and resources
- f) 'Brokerage' of school-to-school support – matching request for support with locally available resources.
- g) Core NQT support programme including training for mentors (See Appendices 2 and 3)**
- h) Signposting to range of best-value services for schools eg DBS checks, governor training, HR support.
- i) Networking on behalf of schools to build links with local commerce, neighbouring Teaching School Alliances, Higher Education providers etc.
- j) Administrative support for local networks eg subject or phase meetings
- k) Facilitation of non-residential cross-phase mini-conferences (in collaboration with Cambridge Education)

- l) Welcome event for new headteachers

## b) Core traded CPD programme

The core organisation of 2 FTE staff has the capacity to organise and deliver or facilitate a range of traded CPD programmes, courses and events:

- Slough Headteachers' annual residential conference
- Slough Chairs of Governors' annual residential conference
- NQT cross-phase residential conference
- Approx 5 curriculum-themed training events across each phase addressing agreed priorities for school improvement, each event repeated (20 events in all)
- TA training (two days, cross-phase)
- Licensed 'Outstanding Teacher Programme' (primary and secondary)
- Licensed National College NPQML programme (primary and secondary)

These CPD events and programmes are a traded service operating on a break-even basis. Schools are charged per delegate to cover the costs of venues, catering, external speakers, resources etc. The cost of SLP staff time to organise the programme is included in the basic Affiliation Fee.

## c) Additional school development activity

Expansion of the offer of service (whether CPD or other services related to school development, traded or non-traded) is dependent on increasing the staff capacity of the SLP beyond the core of 2 FTE. This could include the employment of function-specific administrative support eg finance support, events management.

- a) Recruitment service
  - Database of school vacancies and coordinated response to enquiries
  - Targeted recruitment campaign
- b) CPD programmes, conferences, courses and events including
  - Focused training programme/events for NQTs
  - Further networking conferences eg deputies/senior leaders
  - 'Reactive response' workshops or training input
  - Additional curriculum-themed training in response to need.
  - Operational training for support and administrative staff eg IT competency, HLTA, bespoke courses according to need.
  - Licensed 'Improving Teacher Programme'
  - Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) courses
- c) Masters programme focusing on educational leadership and management (eg with Oxford Brookes)
- d) Expansion of online resources eg 'New to Headship Toolkit', 'New to Governance' Toolkit.
- e) Development and coordination of peer-led diagnostic review service.

A capacity of approximately 2.5-3 full-time administrative support staff over and above the core would enable the SLP to organise, deliver or facilitate the range of additional activity listed above. **See Appendix 4 for a draft programme.**



The approximate cost of this would be approximately **£100,000** per annum to employ the additional staffing capacity. The additional expenses incurred in arranging many of the deliverables (eg venues, speakers etc) would be covered by participation fees and other traded service arrangements.

## **Appendix 1 - SLP activity in 2013-14**

The significant majority (approximately 60%) of the SLP's activity is as the operational and delivery arm of the Slough Teaching School Alliance.

In 2013-14 this has included:

### ***NQT induction support***

- Administration of the NQT Manager system for the Appropriate Body service, covering 164 NQTs.
- Quality assurance of NQT induction provision in schools – visits to approx 1/3 of schools.
- Negotiation around extensions to induction period.
- NQT support/training programme
  - Induction and celebration events
  - Primary training sessions
  - Secondary NQT conference

### ***Middle and senior leadership training***

- Organisation and facilitation of NPQML programme – two cohorts
- Finance training for senior leaders

### ***General CPD courses***

- Pilot programme of science courses for teachers and technicians
- Computing in the primary curriculum
- Negotiation of discounted on-line training package (Educare)
- English and Maths new curriculum

### ***School-to-school support***

- 'Behind the scenes' support for a number of schools in response to need.
- Administration support for Primary Heads
- New Heads Network meetings and training

The remaining 40% of the activity does not specifically come under the 'Teaching School' remit, and includes:

- Organisation of the Slough Headteachers' Conference
- Governors' conferences organised in collaboration with Cambridge Education
- Assessment conference

Previous SLP activity on behalf of schools has included renegotiation of two major contracts; Sophos and web appliances, broadband and firewall, individual school audit and support, and FFT license for school data.

## Appendix 2 - NQT Induction arrangements

### a) The role of the Appropriate Body

An Appropriate Body is responsible for the quality assurance of the induction process. Langley Grammar School and Lynch Hill Primary School are registered as Appropriate Bodies for the induction of NQTs in the Slough area. Registration of NQTs, the organisation of the NQT support programme and the quality assurance process are carried out on behalf of the Appropriate Bodies by the Slough Learning Partnership.

Schools receive a notional allocation within their individual school budget to enable them to buy the services of an Appropriate Body in relation to statutory requirements for induction of newly-qualified teachers. The only funding open to an Appropriate Body are the charges made to schools who use their services; there are no additional funding streams available from either DfE or the NCTL.

### b) Appropriate body services

Schools affiliated to the Slough Learning Partnership will pay an affiliation fee of £3 per pupil on roll in 2014-15. The core NQT support programme (*see Appendix 3*) including training for mentors is offered to affiliated schools at no additional cost.

Affiliated schools may then secure the services of the Appropriate Body for an additional cost of £300 per NQT. This enables the Slough Learning Partnership to provide the following services to member schools on behalf of the Appropriate Bodies:

- Registration of NQTs with the Appropriate Bodies through the NQT Manager software, and tracking of NQT assessments;
- Reports and termly statutory returns to the National College for Teaching and Leadership;
- Final decisions on extensions to the induction period, and whether NQTs have met the required standards, based on recommendations by headteachers and induction tutors;
- Quality assurance of the induction process;

Schools not affiliated to the Slough Learning Partnership may access the Appropriate Body services at a charge of £600 per NQT, and the core NQT support programme on a traded basis.

### c) Quality assurance

Quality assurance of the induction process involves monitoring the quality of written assessments and making visits to a proportion of the schools each year to assess the quality and effectiveness of each school's:

- NQT assessment processes
- CPD programme and specific support for NQTs
- Timetable and mentoring arrangements

Written reports on the quality assurance visit are provided for each school.

### d) NQT training and support

The Slough Learning Partnership organises a core support programme for NQTs. Participation in this programme is funded from the SLP affiliation fee. A wider programme of chargeable activities, including an NQT conference, will be developed during the year if funding levels permit. Secondary schools generally arrange their own NQT induction programmes, but will also have access to aspects of the wider programme.

### e) Support for NQTs experiencing difficulties

Schools may need additional specific support, over and above the Appropriate Body's normal quality assurance process, to help them monitor and evaluate NQTs who are experiencing significant difficulties. Subject to agreement by the Appropriate Bodies, such additional support may be commissioned through the Slough Learning Partnership, and may be chargeable depending on the circumstances.



### Appendix 3 - NQT Core offer 2014-15

Month	Event
September	Welcome event Introduction to the year – NQT Booklet Mentor Network
December	Cross phase network meeting Themed focus and networking opportunities
April	Cross phase network meeting Themed focus and networking opportunities Mentor Network
July	Celebration Event Opportunity to share good practice and celebrate achievements  Where next?

*There will be a Mentor helpline*

Throughout the year there will be a rolling programme of training which will be universally delivered covering core subjects and a two day NQT Conference featuring focused workshops and speakers with an opportunity to network which you will be welcome to attend at an additional cost.

## Appendix 4 - Draft SLP Conferences/Events/Training programme 2014-2015

2014	Conference/Event	Training
September	Cross Phase NQT Welcome Head's mini Conference Newsletter	English Curriculum - Cross Phase NQT Mentor Training – Cross Phase Improving Teacher Practice TA Training – Cross Phase Admin Training – Cross Phase
October	Potential Recruitment Project New Heads Meeting	Maths – Cross Phase Outstanding Teacher Practice PE – Primary TA Training – Cross Phase NQT Mentor – Writing a Report – Cross Phase HLTA Training NPQML Cohort 2 - Current
November	Head's Conference 19-21 Nov Chair of Governor's Conference 28-29 Nov	Assessment Training Science – Cross Phase
December	NQT Networking Meeting – Cross Phase	ICT – Cross Phase Behaviour/Classroom Management NPQML Cohort 2 - Current
<b>2015</b>		
January	Topic Tables – Themes of the moment Network – NQT Mentor – Cross Phase New Heads Meeting Newsletter	TA Training – Cross Phase Improving Teacher Practice English – Cross Phase Masters – Cross Phase Cohort 5 NPQML – Cross Phase NPQML Cohort 2 - Current

2015	Conference/Event	Training
February	Head's Conference/Seminar Deputy Head's Conference	Maths – Cross Phase PE – Primary TA Training – Cross Phase HLTA Training – Cross Phase Outstanding Teacher Practice NPQML Cohort 2 – Current
March	Secondary School's Conference NQT Primary School's Conference NQT } Joint	SEN – Cross Phase Science – Cross Phase NPQML Cohort 2 – Current NPQML Cohort 5
April	NQT Networking Meeting – Cross Phase	Recruitment Fayre NPQML Cohort 5
May	Head's Conference Assessment Workshop – Cross Phase Newsletter	NPQML Cohort 2 – Current NPQML Cohort 5
June	Topic Tables – Themes of the moment New Heads Meeting	TA Training – Cross Phase SEN – Cross Phase Admin Training – Cross Phase NPQML Cohort 5
July	NQT Celebration – to include mentors and new mentors for the following year	Behaviour/Classroom – Cross Phase TA Training – Cross Phase NQT Mentor Training





# SLP - Slough Learning Partnership

## Teachers' professional development pathway

Support for ITT recruitment

Schools Direct training year CPD to supplement HEI provision and provide focus on local issues.

Support for Assessment-only route (potential growth?)

### Post-ITT professional development

- NQT programme (courses, events, conferences, network?)
- General local CPD programme - literacy, numeracy, assessment etc
- Wider subject-based CPD programmes eg Science with Herts & Bucks TSA
- Outstanding teacher programme (franchised or local bespoke)

### Middle leadership development

- NPQML licensed programme (uncertain future?)
- Inspired to Lead programme
- Subject/phase/theme networks
- Bespoke leadership training

### Senior leadership development

- NPQSL & NPQH licensed programmes (uncertain future?)
- Masters' programme - linking with additional HEI

## Support for schools in difficulty

*CEA have contractual monitoring and challenge role*

- Brokerage/information provision/links
- Helpline
- Directory of expertise and support

## Support for school improvement

Helpline

Brokerage - school-to-school support

Website directory of local expertise and available support

General local CPD programme - literacy, numeracy, assessment etc

Training for support staff

- Role-specific
- IT skills

Conferences

- Slough headteachers
- Senior leaders
- Chairs of Governors

Discounted access

- Data packages (FFT)
- Online training (Educare)
- Licences

Appropriate body administration and quality assurance

## Other roles.....

Collective voice for Slough schools

Promotion of the Slough education community

Development of links with local business

Recruitment

- Teaching
- Administrative and support roles
- Related other areas.....

## Areas of focus

**"Good to great"**  
Building sustainability and capacity

Intervention  
Crisis support

**"School improvement"**

## School improvement activity

### Individual professional development

- Initial teacher training
- Post-ITT and NQT
- Middle leadership
- Senior leadership

### General CPD programme

- Events eg conferences
- Courses and programmes
- Targeted at teachers, support staff, governors

### Underpinning services

- Data, licenses
- Operational training

### Individualised support

- School-to-school
- Local expertise
- External consultancy and perspective
- Peer review and audit

### Networking and links

- Supporting local networks eg subject specific
- Developing links across TSAs and Las
- Building bridges to other organisations