



YORKSHIRE URBAN
RURAL TEACHING
PARTNERSHIP

INSPIRING SOCIAL WORK

Communication and Engagement Strategy

July 2018

Background

The Yorkshire Urban and Rural Teaching Partnership was awarded Department of Education (DfE) funding in Autumn 2016 to drive forward the education and development of pre-qualifying and post-qualifying Social Workers across the partnership. The Partnership includes:

- Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
- City of York Council
- Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council
- North Yorkshire County Council
- University of Huddersfield
- University of York

Social Work Teaching Partnerships are defined as: an accredited collaboration between HEIs and employers which delivers high quality training for social work students and qualified practitioners and equip them to practise to specified standards in statutory settings. Teaching Partnerships are part of the government's broader strategy to strengthen the quality of practice learning and continuing professional development (CPD) within the social work profession.

The Partnership is currently grant funded until March 2019. This strategy has been refreshed to reflect the partnership's priorities in phase two, learning from the phase one evaluation and the need to work towards a sustainable delivery model to ensure continuation of the Partnership in the future.

Our Vision

- ❖ We will **promote** and **develop excellence in social work practice** and **education** to inspire **person centred** and **relationship based** social work.
- ❖ By working **collaboratively** across our partnership and with wider stakeholders we aim to **grow, develop, inspire** and **sustain** a highly skilled and confident social work workforce.
- ❖ By developing Social Workers able to meet the complex challenges of frontline practice, we will achieve **our overall aim of supporting children, adults, their families and communities to achieve positive outcomes.**

Purpose

Meaningful, regular communication is at the heart of successful partnership working. The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that all partners communicate and promote the Yorkshire Urban and Rural Teaching Partnership and the delivery of the Partnership's vision in the same way, with **the aim of raising the profile of the Partnership within member organisations, with social work students, practising social workers and other interested audiences.**

Getting the right internal communications infrastructure in place can help facilitate a culture of:

- Coherence (everyone knows what is expected of them and why)
- Commitment
- Knowledge

Getting our external communications right is just as important, as it:

- Facilitates a sense of belonging among our social work students and the wider workforce
- Influences the Partnership's reputation
- Is a significant marker for the transparency of the Partnership
- Helps promote the Partnership's 'brand'

The Communication and Engagement strategy aims to outline how the partnership will:

- ❖ **Communicate information about the Yorkshire Urban and Rural Teaching Partnership** in order to:
 - Embed awareness and understanding of the Partnership among the identified target audiences;
 - Develop awareness regionally and nationally about the implementation of the new requirements for social work education.
- ❖ **Ensure effective communications internally within the Teaching Partnership** in order to:
 - Secure commitment and understanding of the Teaching Partnership's aims and objectives within all levels of partner organisations;
 - Ensure that staff within partner organisation are informed about:
 - Their roles and responsibilities within the Teaching Partnership governance and operational delivery structures;
 - Opportunities offered by the Partnership
 - Partnership progress and development.

Our Starting Point

- ❖ **Learning from Teaching Partnership pilots** - Independent evaluation of the four Teaching Partnership pilot projects identified the importance of a clear communication strategy from the outset with partners, front-line social workers, students, HEI staff and service users. The evaluation also highlighted the challenges partnerships faced in realising their communication aims.
- ❖ **TP Implementation Plan** - The Communication strategy and activity plan don't exist in isolation. The Teaching Partnership's Implementation Plan identifies the activity being undertaken to realise the Partnership's vision; the activity detailed in the Communications Plan needs to be aligned to this and reviewed and updated in line with changes to the implementation plan.
- ❖ **Our stakeholders** - A stakeholder mapping exercise has been undertaken with partners to identify the key internal and external audiences of interest. As the partnership develops and evolves, this will need to be revisited; all members have a responsibility to identify any gaps or required changes so that the strategy and activity plan can be updated.
- ❖ **Phase 1 evaluation** – A Partnership commissioned independent evaluation of phase 1 activity (March 17 – April 18) has highlighted the need to increase the level of communication and engagement across the partnership and includes the following recommendation: *there needs to be even more communication. There is not enough awareness and as a result not enough buy in within the partnership's organisations both at a senior level and operational level (outside immediate stakeholders). Using the organisations' core communication mechanisms should be explored.* Version 2 of this strategy and the Communications Activity Plan reflect the learning from the evaluation and the need to focus activity to improve awareness of the partnership across all stakeholder groups.
- ❖ **Our Resources**
 - TP Strategy and Operational board members - Communication Champions who take the lead on cascading information within their own organisations
 - Work stream members
 - TP posts – Project Manager, Practice Educator Consultants (PECs), Lecturer Practitioners (LPs)
 - Communications, marketing and PR teams within each member organisation

- ❖ **Budget** – The Partnership’s Financial Plan for 2017/18 includes limited funding allocated to support communications activity and development of the Partnership’s website. Any required expenditure above allocated amounts would require approval by the project executive and must comply with DfE’s terms and conditions on the use of grant funding.
- ❖ **Timescales** – Appendix 1 (Communication Activity Plan) provides a high level timescale for delivery of communications activity for April 2018 – March 2019. The current DfE funding award will run until March 2019 any continuation or exit plans should be covered in strategy updates and as part of the regular review of the Communication Activity Plan.

What we want to achieve and how we are going to do it – New activity for phase two is highlighted in red

Communication Objective	Target Audience	Key Messages/Information to share	Communication tools/methods
<p>Inform & Engage people about the TP</p>	<p>Social Work practitioners – NQSW to SW managers and leaders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How national policy around SW education and development is being implemented locally • Changes to progression pathways and CPD programmes • Changes to practice education approaches • TP funded CPD activity e.g. MRes, masterclasses • Research opportunities • Opportunities to support curriculum design and delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local updates via team meetings, management meetings • Monthly e-news • CPD marketing material e.g. programme • Involvement in work stream groups and delivery of TP activity • Information cascaded via PECs • Viral change model – identify champions for new approaches/ways of working • Twitter • PE flyers outlining PE mentor and WBS roles • Partnership Development Day – late autumn
	<p>Current social work students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of studying in the TP in relation to placements, curriculum, progression, ASYE and post qualifying CPD • Employment opportunities in TP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TP website – course information, case studies, films • Twitter • Social Care Matters website & CSWM annual conference • Promotional material • Information cascaded via PECs
	<p>Social Work research and teaching staff within partner HEIs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local approach to implementing national policy around SW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement in work stream groups and delivery of TP

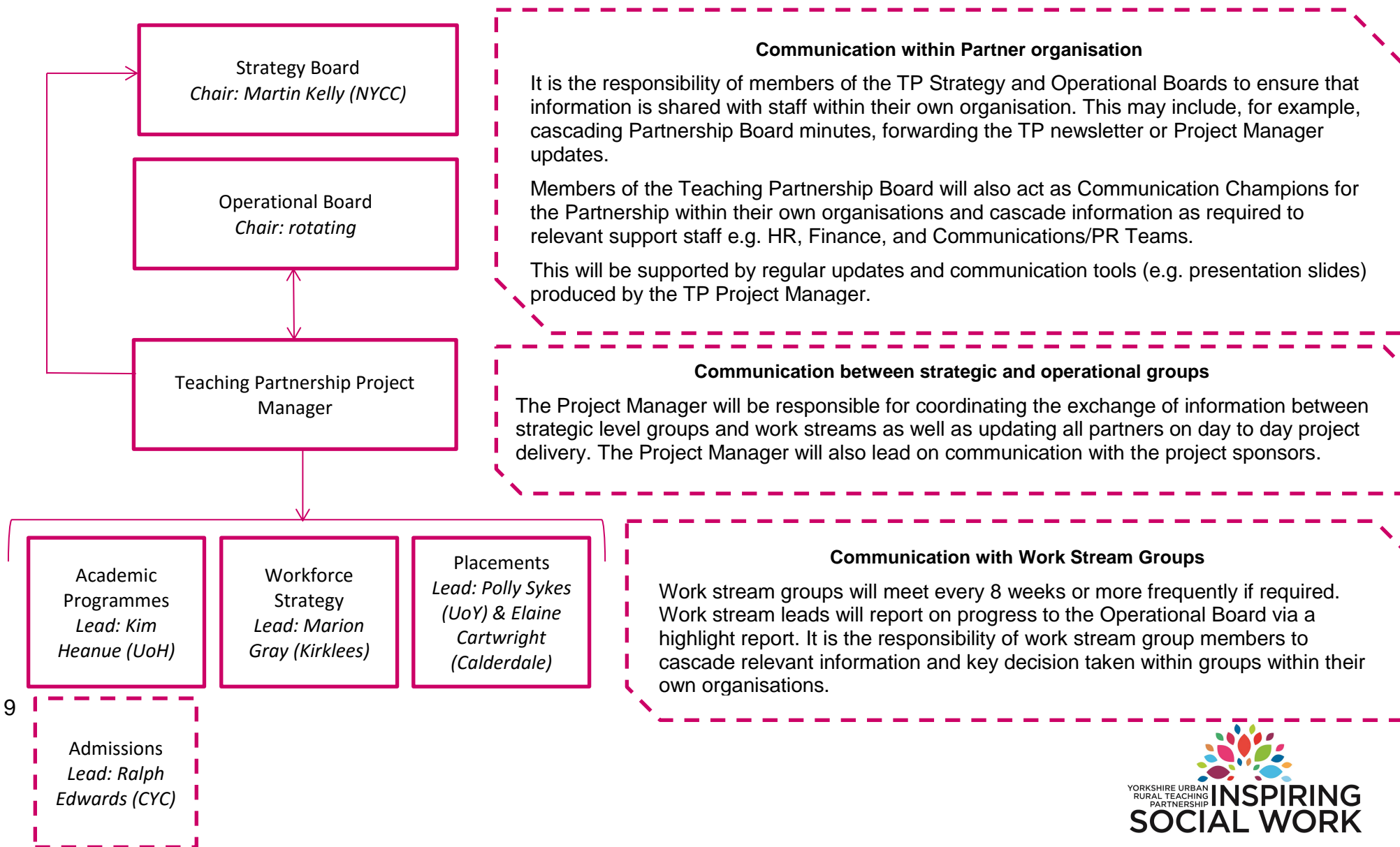
		<p>education and development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to spend time in practice/contribute to research informed practice • Changes to admissions processes and procedures • Increased support and governance to develop courses that meet need of SW market 	<p>activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly newsletter • Local updates via team meetings, school management meetings • Partnership Development Day – late autumn
	Local Authority Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of TP to local authority services • Improved recruitment and retention for statutory posts • Opportunities to deliver training and learning on regional footprint – economies of scale • Strategic workforce planning to deliver more stable workforce; reduce workforce movement within local area and aid succession planning • Opportunity for LAs to shape SW qualifying education to align with local needs • Opportunity for TP shape future policy and lead on innovative approaches to deliver SW reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local briefings/presentations as required • Information cascaded from TP Strategy Board members • Phase 1 case studies • Dissemination of phase one evaluation report and phase one review presentation
	Senior HEI staff, Head of School, Dean of Faculty etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance to current and future plans for SW education • Opportunities to align HEI offer to meet needs of SW market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefings/presentations as required • Information cascaded from Strategy Board

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to research through opportunities for academics to engage with practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies • Dissemination of phase one evaluation report and phase one review presentation
	Prospective Social Work students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of studying with TP in relation to placement offer, curriculum, post-qualifying curriculum, ASYE, future development • Employment opportunities within the TP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TP website • Twitter • HEI open days and assessment days • HEI course marketing information
	People who use services and carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership is more responsive to needs of s/users and carers and help them achieve desired outcomes • Partnership provides opportunities for involvement in design and delivery of its activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TP website • Twitter • TP email address • Experts by experience leads and representatives on work streams/operational board
Advocate for the TP	Elected Councillors including cabinet & Lead Member/Portfolio Holder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of TP to local authority services • TP as a leader in the development and delivery of the govt's SW reform agenda • TP as example of innovation and good practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local briefings/presentations as required by strategy board and operational board members
	Project sponsors (DfE/DH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TP as a leader in the development and delivery of the govt's SW reform agenda • TP as example of innovation and good practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TP website • Twitter • 18/19 end of funding report • Phase one evaluation • National PM network • Case studies

Promote the TP	Wider social work community – including training providers, PVI organisations, professional membership organisations that promote/share good SW practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive outcomes/impact from TP • Sharing of good practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twitter • Opportunities to represent TP at regional/national events
	Other local authorities (not included in Yorkshire Urban and Rural TP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing of good practice and learning from TP • Promotion of improved outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Twitter • Opportunities to represent TP at regional/national events • Case studies • Evaluation reports • National TP Project Manager network • HEI/LA regional or national networks

Partnership Communication

It's important that all partners involved in the development and delivery of the Partnership understand our internal communication structures and their own roles and responsibility within this to ensure effective sharing of information.



Measuring our success

The Communication Strategy is owned by the Teaching Partnership Board which also has responsibility for ensuring delivery of the outcomes. The Communication Activity Plan (Appendix 1) will be reviewed at 8 weekly meetings of the Teaching Partnership Board. We will review the Communications Strategy on a 12 month basis.

We will continue to identify the role that communication has played in contributing to the development and delivery of the Partnership and the impact it has had on our ability to reach our key audiences.