

North Yorkshire County Council

Corporate and Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Northallerton on 11 September 2017 at 10.30 am.

Present:-

County Councillor Derek Bastiman in the Chair.

County Councillors Margaret Atkinson, Caroline Goodrick, Paul Haslam, Richard Musgrave, Andy Paraskos, Cliff Trotter, Callam Walsh, Geoff Webber (substitute for Cllr Bryn Griffiths), Annabel Wilkinson

Also in Attendance

Odette Robson, Head of Safer Communities at North Yorkshire County Council, Dr Justin Ives, Chair of the North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership, Deb Hugill, Senior Strategy and Performance Officer, Strategic Support Service, NYCC, Jonathan Spencer, Project Manager, North Yorkshire Refugee Resettlement, NYCC and Daniel Harry, Scrutiny Team Leader, NYCC

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Bryn Griffiths (Vice Chair) (substitute Cllr Geoff Webber), Tony Randerson (substitute Cllr Stephanie Duckett), Stephanie Duckett

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

18. Declarations of Interest

None.

19. Public Questions or Statements

There were no public questions or statements.

20. Minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 19 June 2017 and 31 July 2017

Accepted as a true record.

Daniel Harry drew attention to the following actions from the meeting of the committee on 19 June 2017, which were being progressed:

Digital self-service - a workshop is being setup to review the use of the Customer Portal and how issues raised by Councillors are recorded and acted upon.

HR Annual Plan – the year on year comparison of the total amount spent on employee pay, covering the past 5 years has been circulated to Chair, Vice Chair and Spokes. At the request of the Chair, this will now be circulated to the full committee.

Youth Justice Plan – a visit is being arranged for a sub-group of the committee to visit HMYOI Wetherby on 31 October 2017 to meet with young people from North Yorkshire who are currently in custody to better understand why they offended and what actions and interventions may have helped them to stop. The outcome of the visit will be fed

back to the full committee.

The committee Chair, Cllr Derek Bastiman, noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire, Julia Mulligan, had expressed concerns about the conduct of the committee meeting on 31 July 2017 at which the Local Business Case for proposed changes to the governance of the North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service was considered.

Cllr Bastiman made the committee aware of the specific issues raised and invited members to respond. In concluding, those members present who had been at the committee meeting on 31 July 2017 noted that the committee meeting had been well organised and run and had enabled members to consider the arguments being put forward by both the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority in an open and fair way. As such, Cllr Derek Bastiman concluded that the issues raised by the Police and Crime Commissioner were groundless.

21. North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership - update

Considered -

A presentation by Odette Robson, Head of Safer Communities at North Yorkshire County Council, and Dr Justin Ives, Chair of the North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership, providing an update on the work of the partnership.

Dr Justin Ives introduced the presentation and stated that the Community Safety Partnership works with a broad range of agencies, organisations and groups to help promote community safety in the county. The 'responsible partners', as defined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 are the Police, Local Authorities, Fire and Rescue Services, Probation (National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company) and Health (Public Health, Foundation Trusts, CCGs, Mental Health Services).

Odette Robson gave the presentation, highlighting the following:

- The priorities for 2017/18 are: the development of the partnership's connections with other groups and partnerships to enable effective joint working on cross cutting issues; development of Integrated Community Safety Hubs; protecting vulnerable people (Prevent and Domestic Abuse)
- The priorities are identified using the Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment that is produced by North Yorkshire Police every year
- The statutory responsibilities for the partnership are: tackle crime and disorder (Serious and Organised Crime Board); tackle anti-social behaviour; tackle alcohol and substance misuse (North Yorkshire Drugs and Alcohol Partnership); tackle any behaviour which has a negative effect on the local environment (95 Alive); undertake Domestic Homicide Reviews
- Each District and City of York have integrated community safety hubs
- Domestic abuse work focuses upon prevention, early intervention, support for victims and rehabilitation of offenders
- Prevent is the one element of the UK Counter Terrorism Strategy. Its focus is upon identifying and working with people at risk of radicalisation. Locally, there is a strong focus upon extremist right wing groups
- A large part of the work of the partnership is around training and awareness raising. An example of this is the development and distribution of a graphic novel, aimed at young people and young adults, highlighting the risks associated with radicalisation.

Cllr Geoff Webber queried whether jihadist fighters returning from Syria and Iraq posed a risk to North Yorkshire.

In response, Odette Robson stated that this was potentially a risk and that such a risk

was monitored by the Channel Panel and Special Branch. The Channel Panel is a multi-agency group that identifies and provides support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Intelligence is also gathered and analysed on an ongoing basis and used to inform the annual local profile for counter terrorism.

Cllr Cliff Trotter queried how community safety priorities are identified in the county and how various concerns that may be raised are weighted.

Odette Robson replied that the Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment, which is produced by North Yorkshire Police every year, is the basis for identifying priorities. Many community safety issues, however, do not fall within the remit of the Police and demand interventions by a broad range of agencies and organisations.

Cllr Paul Haslam noted that the scope of the community safety remit was very broad and that such a broad remit must be difficult to manage.

Odette Robson acknowledged that there was a risk that efforts to promote community safety could be diluted where an all-encompassing approach was taken. As such, it is important to be focused and tackle a small number of the key priorities and enable partners to promote community safety and tackle locally identified issues.

Cllr Derek Bastiman queried how the North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership compared to those in other similar local authority areas.

In response, Odette Robson stated that North Yorkshire compared favourably to other community safety partnerships in the North East. When compared to other partnerships, such as Safeguarding Boards, community safety partnerships were a number of years behind. That is why a priority for 2017/18 is to develop the partnership.

Cllr Andy Paraskos asked whether there was a particular hot spot in the county where young people and young adults were at greater risk of being radicalised.

Odette Robson replied that there is no particular hotspot. Instead, there was a range of individuals across the county that Special Branch are aware of. This then means that the Prevent programme has to raise awareness across the county as a whole.

Cllr Cliff Trotter raised concerns about speeding in villages across the county and the lack of effective enforcement of speed limits by the Police.

Cllr Andy Paraskos queried why 20mph speed limits did not appear to be being enforced by the Police.

A number of committee members also raised concerns that the Police mobile safety camera vans were not always sited at the point where there was greatest risk of an accident. Instead, it was suggested that they were often sited at a point where there would be the greatest number of people breaking the speed limit.

Odette noted the concerns of members about the enforcement of speed limits and offered to pass them onto the appropriate person in the community safety partnership.

Cllr Derek Bastiman thanked Odette Robson and Dr Justin Ives for attending the meeting and asked that a further update on the work of the North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership be given in 12 months' time.

Resolved -

The committee resolved to:-

- Note the presentation

- Thank Odette Robson and Dr Justin Ives for attending the meeting
- Receive an update on the work of the North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership in 12 months' time, with a particular focus upon rural issues.

22. Council Equality and Diversity objectives – overview of progress

Considered –

A report by Deb Hugill, Senior Strategy and Performance Officer, Strategic Support Service, NYCC that provided an overview of Council's Equality and Diversity objectives and what progress is being made towards achieving them.

Deb Hugill provided a summary of the key aspects of the report, highlighting the following:

- The objectives are seen as being enablers that will help support independence and greater economic activity
- Considerable progress has been made with the achievement of Objective 3, 'Improve the wellbeing and inclusion of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans children and young people (LGBT)'. The Council has come second in the Stonewall Education Equality Index 2017, out of 39 Local Authorities who submitted, with a score of 98%. Also, the report by a Task and Finish group of Councillors from the Young People Overview & Scrutiny committee (October 2015) had led to positive changes in Council policy.
- Objective 7, 'Take opportunities, where it is proportionate to do so, to improve physical accessibility around towns', was being driven by local Disability forums across the county. These are highly motivated and several local forums have carried out their own street audits.
- An increasing amount of performance data, information and analysis is being used to inform the development of the objectives and measuring progress towards achieving them
- A key element of the work around equality and diversity is raising awareness
- An aim is to move towards more co-design, drawing upon people's experiences to enable more informed decisions to be made that promote accessibility and equality
- The quality of Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) is improving and EqIAs are being used at the early stages of any proposed change to policy or practice, rather than after the fact as a paper exercise.

Cllr Derek Bastiman noted that the work around promoting equality and diversity in the county and changing attitudes was critically important. Cllr Bastiman stated that he had met with some young people in Scarborough, as part of the Task and Finish group of Councillors from the Young People Overview & Scrutiny committee, and had been shocked to hear of the extent of bullying and intimidation that people had experienced as a result of their sexual identify. Cllr Bastiman expressed his pride that the Council had positively responded to the concerns raised by the Task and Finish Group and that the work around equality and diversity was having an impact, as noted in the Stonewall Education Equality Index 2017.

Deb Hugill stated that a key element of the work was to meet with people and understand their experiences. In the case of Highways, engagement with the local Disability forums had led to a doubling of investment in the highways accessibility fund.

Cllr Derek Bastiman highlighted the key role that County and District Councillors had to play as local representatives and community champions. They all had an opportunity to challenge discrimination and promote equality and diversity.

Cllr Derek Bastiman then queried who at the Council was held accountable for the progress that was made with the Council Equality and Diversity objectives.

In response, Deb Hugill stated that in legal terms accountability rested with the Council as a whole. In terms of the day to day oversight of the Equality and Diversity objectives, this was the remit of the Corporate Equality Group, which is made up of equality and diversity lead officers from each of the Council's departments. There is no full time team of officers working on equality and diversity. Instead, the expectation is that all officers of the Council promote equality and diversity through their day to day work.

Cllr Derek Bastiman queried whether there was sufficient funding to enable to work to be effectively delivered.

Deb Hugill acknowledged that additional funding would help more proactive work to be undertaken. The financial challenges facing local government have meant that any additional funding is highly unlikely. Instead, there has been a focus upon empowering and supporting local groups to do more for themselves and enable them to engage with those people in the Council who plan, design and deliver services.

Cllr Paul Haslam suggested that the document could be strengthened by having a clear statement up front of exactly what it is that the Council is seeking to achieve. Perhaps as previously suggested by Deb Hugill, to 'help support independence and greater economic activity'.

Cllr Geoff Webber raised concerns about the increasing number of children and young people who were being identified as having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and whether the services were in place to support them and their families.

Deb Hugill said that she was unaware of any recent increase in SEND but would follow up with the equality and diversity lead in the Council's Children and young people's service.

Cllr Geoff Webber also raised concerns about the apparent lack of community and in-patient mental health services in the county. He noted that the Harrogate and Rural District Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) had recently called a halt to the development of a new mental health in-patient facility in Harrogate.

In response, Daniel Harry informed the committee that the North Yorkshire Scrutiny of Health Committee was looking into the provision of mental health services for people from North Yorkshire, both in the county and in neighbouring areas like Middlesbrough or Darlington. At the Scrutiny of Health Committee meeting at 10am on Friday 22 September 2017, the early findings of the outcome of a public consultation, by the Hambleton Richmondshire and Whitby CCG and the Tees Esk and Wear Valleys Foundation Trust, on the future of the 2 mental health in-patient wards at the Friarage in Northallerton would be discussed.

Daniel Harry stated that he would forward details of the meeting to members of the committee.

Cllr Caroline Goodrick queried why there was not one, named person who had responsibility for equality and diversity at the Council. She also noted that, as a member of the Council's Appeals Committee for Home to School Transport, it was often difficult to make decisions where SEND was noted as a key issue.

Deb Hugill suggested that she meet with Cllr Goodrick outside of the committee meeting to discuss her concerns further. Deb Hugill also stated that, whilst there was not a single person whose sole role was to promote equality and diversity in the Council, there was a single point of contact, as follows – equality@northyorks.gov.uk.

Resolved -

The committee resolved to:-

- Note the report
- Thank Deb Hugill for attending the meeting
- Receive an update on the progress against the Council's equality and diversity objectives in 12 months' time, at a meeting of the committee's Mid Cycle Briefing.

23. North Yorkshire Refugee Resettlement Programme - overview of progress

Considered -

The report of Jonathan Spencer, Project Manager, North Yorkshire Refugee Resettlement, NYCC providing an overview of the first 12 months of the resettlement programme.

Cllr Geoff Webber declared an interest in this item as a member of the Harrogate City of Sanctuary.

Cllr Derek Bastiman declared an interest in this item as a member of the Migration Yorkshire and Humber Strategic Migration Group.

Jonathan Spencer gave an overview of the key issues in the report, highlighting the following:

- The national target for the resettlement of Syrian refugees is 20,000
- Yorkshire and Humber is successfully implementing its resettlement programmes, being second only to Scotland for the number of refugees resettled
- North Yorkshire will be resettling in the region of 200 Syrian refugees over 2016/17 to 2018/19
- North Yorkshire has resettled 163 Syrian refugees (33 families) to date
- 40% of the families have included family members with complex needs
- Harrogate and Selby districts met their agreed allocations by April 2017
- Scarborough and Ryedale met their agreed allocations in June/July 2017
- Craven district will have met its agreed allocation in September 2017
- Hambleton and Richmondshire districts plan to start and finish their resettlement programmes in the first half of 2018
- A county-level Programme Board oversees the management of the overall resettlement programme
- Children have been able to secure a school place in their local catchment area
- Some difficulties securing places for secondary school aged-children particularly post-16 year olds
- Only a small number of adults are near to being job ready
- Access to English language provision is critical and a lack of appropriately trained interpreters has been an issue
- County Council's Minority Ethnic Achievement (MEA) Service has been very supportive
- The support from the Refugee Council and of Migration Yorkshire has been invaluable
- A number of welfare benefit issues have impacted adversely on the families
- There have been more than expected complex health needs, particularly around mental health, as it is not always clear what the needs are until a family arrives in the UK
- Support will be in place for 5 years, albeit less intensive as time goes on
- All of the refugees have leave to stay for 5 years, after which their immigration status will be reviewed by the Home Office.

Cllr Derek Bastiman thanked Jonathan Spencer for the high quality of the work that he had done as the Project Manager of the North Yorkshire Refugee Resettlement Programme. In particular, his ability to enable a broad range of different agencies and

organisations to work together as one to deliver the resettlement programme.

Jonathan Spencer noted that the programme was a success due to the collective efforts of a wide range of agencies and organisations.

Cllr Geoff Webber stated that the report was excellent and hoped that committee members would relate to his earlier comments about the pressures upon mental health services in the county. He then queried whether men and women received English language tuition separately or whether the classes were mixed.

Jonathan Spencer stated that all classes were mixed. Also, that the provision of English language teaching had started slowly, due to shortages in Adult Education tutors, but was improving. Jonathan Spencer noted that there were wide variations in the educational attainment of the refugees, with some being illiterate in Arabic.

Cllr Derek Bastiman queried whether all agencies and organisations worked together to support the resettlement programme.

In response, Jonathan Spencer stated that, in general, all those that needed to were fully engaged. It had been a slow start with some partners but this may have been because they did not fully understand what was required of them.

Cllr Andy Paraskos noted that it is often the case that adults moving to a new country who do not have English as a first language will learn enough to get by. Whereas their children will gain fluency relatively quickly.

Cllr Caroline Goodrick suggested that information and communication technology, such as Skype, may increase the availability and accessibility of interpreters.

Cllr Richard Musgrave thanked Jonathan Spencer for all of the work that he had done to make the programme a success and then queried whether the success would mean that North Yorkshire would be expected to take on the resettlement of additional Syrian refugees.

Jonathan Spencer replied that, once the total allocation had been resettled, there may be opportunities for the resettlement of additional Syrian refugees should the District Councils wish to. If they did, then it would be likely that those people considered for resettlement would be 'link families' or those that are related to families that have already been settled through the programme.

In concluding, Cllr Derek Bastiman noted that the scale and extent of the horrendous experiences that the families had endured when in Syria would probably never be known. Also, that the resettlement programme provided a real opportunity for people to rebuild their lives and gain independence once again.

Resolved -

The committee resolved to:-

- Note the report
- Thank Jonathan Spencer for attending the meeting
- Receive an update on the progress in 12 months' time.

24. Work programme

Considered -

The report of the Daniel Harry, Scrutiny Team Leader, NYCC, providing Members with a copy of the committee work programme for review and comment.

Daniel Harry introduced the report and requested that committee members forward any items for possible inclusion on the work programme to him.

Resolved -

The committee resolved to:-

- Note the report.

25. Other business which the Chairman agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances.

No other business was raised.

The meeting concluded at 12:30

DH