

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

10th October 2007

YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee has met three times since the last full Council. The committee continues to address a full work programme that reflects the County Council priorities and the five key outcomes under Every Child Matters. The following items continue to be considered by the Committee in their varied work programme.

In-depth Scrutiny Reviews

1. Outdoor Education Service – ‘Learning in the Wet and Mud’

This draft scrutiny report on the Outdoor Education Service was presented to the Committee for their comment and consideration. The focus of this review was to take a holistic look at the strengths and opportunities and of the Outdoor Education Service; draw comparisons between North Yorkshire’s Outdoor Education Service and the voluntary and public sector Outdoor Activity providers.

The report whilst wholly supportive of the Outdoor Education Service was not uncritical and had identified a number of areas where further work was needed.

Members comments have been incorporated into the final draft report which will be presented to the Executive shortly together with the scrutiny report on Sports Provision.

2. Scrutiny Review on Sports Provision - ‘A Sporting Chance’

Draft Report of the Task Group was presented to Committee for their comments which will be fed into the final report. This report will be brought back to Committee on the 31st October.

School Meals: call-in – 25th July 2007

The Committee considered a decision taken by the Corporate Director, in consultation with Executive Members, to introduce an increase in the price of a school meal from £1.62 to £1.80 from September 2007

Members of the Committee debated the issue fully but decided not to refer the decision relating to the increase in the price of a school meal back to the decision maker or to refer the matter to full council.

Overview Reports – 31st July 2007

Members received an update outlining the current position following the Committee’s Scrutiny Review in 2006 on Sex and Relationship Education by the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Co-ordinator and the North Yorkshire & York PCT.

Overview Reports – 28th September 2007

Trust Schools

Members were briefed on the key differences of changing the category of an existing school to 'Trust' status. By way of an explanation Members were handed a very useful table which described the characteristics of all categories of secondary schools, and how these compare with one another in relation to governance, staffing, admissions arrangements, ownership of buildings and land etc.

SEN Review

The Committee received a progress report on the Review of Provision for SEN and Behaviour Review and Phase 1 implementation. Members welcomed this report and are keen to remain involved and aware of developments.

Truancy Patrols

Members were briefed on how Truancy Patrols provide an opportunity to promote the importance of regular school attendance and can act as an effective preventative measure. They learned that these Truancy Patrols can also provide an opportunity to identify vulnerable pupils so that appropriate support can be given; that North Yorkshire's emphasis is on awareness raising and the provision of information to pupils and parents/carers which promotes regular attendance.

Local Democracy

Members were pleased to learn that Youth Councils/Forums are being developed to get young people involved in politics and encourage them to have their say. We will monitor this development with interest.

Forward Work Programme

The Committee continue to work towards developing an annual work programme for in-depth scrutiny reviews and overview reports which has the flexibility to include topics and issues to be brought to Committee as and when they arise.

**County Councillor Heather Garnett,
Chairman Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee**