

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

17th December 2008

YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee has met twice since the last County Council. The committee continues to address a full work programme that reflects the priorities of the Council and the five key outcomes under Every Child Matters. I would like to highlight the main areas of the Committee's work and these are set out below:

1. In-depth Scrutiny Review – Young People affected by domestic abuse

Domestic Abuse has been a complex and sensitive area to scrutinise. Our report has focussed on the services provided to children and young people affected by domestic abuse but it was difficult to separate this one aspect from the whole question of domestic abuse, both at a national and local level.

The final report of the Task Group was presented to the Executive on the 2nd December to consider the recommendations set out in the report. Members of the Executive welcomed the report and congratulated the Task Group on an excellent report. They agreed this was a difficult area to cover but felt that the issue had been raised significantly by bringing this matter to their attention.

It was suggested that an appropriate way forward was for Executive Members, Overview & Scrutiny and Senior Officers to meet and discuss the recommendations with partners.

2. Joint Scrutiny Review – Transport for Young People (TrYP)

There are a number of challenges facing North Yorkshire in relation to the 11-19 Strategy but in particular the issue of School to School Transport has been raised as a significant challenge.

The Joint Scrutiny Review Group (Membership is drawn from the Transport & Telecommunications and Young Peoples Overview & Scrutiny Committees) has met on three occasions. During their visit to Malton School the Group was given an opportunity to meet and talk to a group of students from Norton College. These students are participating in the Ryedale pilot and therefore benefiting from a greater choice of courses provided by the partnership.

During the discussion the students raised a number of issues which focussed on travelling time, timetabling and travel arrangements. However, despite some teething problems the students considered the partnership to be of benefit.

The Joint Scrutiny Review Group continues to develop a wider understanding of the transport issues for young people in North Yorkshire and to liaise with its paired authority in Derbyshire.

3. Overview Reports – 28th November 2008

3.1 Local Safeguarding Children's Board

Members of the Committee were provided with a detailed progress report on the reconfiguration of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The first part of the re-configuration was the formation of a new Executive Committee with membership drawn from senior officers in the PCT, Police, Probation, Social Care and the NSPCC.

Committee Members are keen to be kept informed and look forward to a receiving regular updates in due course via the Mid Cycle briefings.

3.2 Transition planning for children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities

In 2006 the Joint Area Review of Services for children and young people recommended that an action in the longer term should be for the Council and its partners to develop and implement an integrated approach to the delivery of services for children with learning difficulties and/or disability and improve the range and coverage of these services'.

Members of the Committee were provided with an updated on the steps being taken to improve the transition planning for disabled young people. All agreed this is not only a complex but an extremely important area and Members are eager to retain their interest and to continue to monitor progress.

3.3 Local Area Agreement 2 (LAA2)

The Committee were interested to learn of the progress being made against LAA2 targets linked to children and young people. They also received an explanation on why particular indicators were causing concern which seemed to be due to data collection and reporting problems. They were given reassurances that measures are in place to rectify these problem areas.

Members were also advised the LAA2 will be refreshed to incorporate deferred indicators and update baselines where appropriate. The process will take place between November and February, with ministerial approval at the end of March 2009.

It was agreed by the Committee to continue to overview these targets on an ongoing basis.

3.4 Extended Services in Schools

Members were pleased to learn about the progress towards the delivery of full core offer for extended services and progress to meeting national targets for schools. In North Yorkshire there are 261 schools delivering the Core Offer and 49 schools delivering four elements of the Core Offer. The target set by the DCSF for September 2008 is 212, which means we have exceeded the target and have a green rating. It is expected that North Yorkshire is on track to achieve the 2010 target but some action will be necessary to support a few school clusters.

3.5 Children & Young People's Service – Value for Money Plan 2009/10

The Committee were pleased to receive a briefing on the Value for Money Plan 2009/10 for the C&YP Service and noted that the Service is "on target" to achieve the required savings in 2008/09. Members were also advised,

however, that currently there remains a shortfall against targets in 2009/10 and 2010/11 and that there are many projects being undertaken within the Directorate to achieve the required savings and maximise potential efficiencies.

4. 9th December Call-In – (Chaired by Cllr Caroline Seymour) of the Decision to institute Judicial Review Proceedings in relation to the School Adjudicator’s decision on school admission arrangements.

It was not possible to include the outcome from the Call-In held on the 9th December due to agenda deadlines.

5. Forward Work Programme

The Committee propose to develop and theme their Work Programme for 2009/10 around the five key outcomes under Every Child Matters. Using the Children & Young Peoples Plan we will monitor progress and achievements whilst ensuring there is involvement and participation by young people. The Work Programme will continue to have the flexibility to include topics and issues as and when they arise.

It has been another busy but extremely interesting year for the Committee and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved and to wish you all the very best for 2009.

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

9th December 2008