

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

18<sup>th</sup> May 2011

## YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

**1.0** The Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee has met on two occasions since the last meeting of the County Council - on the 18<sup>th</sup> February and 15<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

**2.0** **18<sup>th</sup> February 2011 – Committee Meeting**

A particular focus for the Committee has been the financial challenges facing the County Council and in particular the Children & Young Peoples Service (CYPS): Savings & Transformation Strategy. The Committee agreed that this should remain a regular item on the agenda.

A summarised latest position statement was delivered by the Executive Members and Corporate Director on the project areas identified in the CYPS Savings & Transformation Strategy. Members' questions centred around the impact on front-line delivery and the additional savings required in relation to the post settlement gap in the County Councils budget.

**2.1** 2010 Ofsted Annual Assessment of Children's Services

The outcome of the Ofsted Annual North Yorkshire Children's Service Assessment was judged as 'performs well – an organisation that exceeds the minimum requirements'. The Committee acknowledged the achievements of the staff and asked that their congratulations be conveyed to them.

**2.2** Core Case Inspection of Youth Offending Work

The summarised findings and recommendations of the Core Case Inspection undertaken in October 2010 by HMI Probation were outlined to the Committee. The inspection focussed on three aspects of work: Safeguarding, Likelihood of Re-offending, and Risk of Harm to others and the outcome of the inspection had exceeded expectations and the findings for North Yorkshire were "very creditable". The Committee congratulated the Manager and her staff for the well-deserved results that reflected progress achieved since the previous inspection in 2006.

However, Members did express their concerns at the lack of certainty regarding the future funding of the Service and agreed to monitor the situation.

**2.3** Health Related and Behaviour Questionnaire Survey 2010

This Survey is completed by pupils in North Yorkshire's schools and is designed to collect reliable information about young people's lifestyles.

Members of the Committee were pleased to learn that there had been a significant increase in the number of schools participating especially amongst primary and special schools and remarked on the positive feedback from participating schools. The key features and trends collected by the survey were highlighted and Members welcomed the initiative to include feedback, for the first time, to the young people themselves.

### **3.0 Committee Meeting – 15<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

#### **3.1 Annual Unannounced Inspection**

The Corporate Director outlined the key points of the unannounced inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment arrangements and informed the committee that the whole inspection process had been thorough, communication had been good and the outcome of the inspection was positive.

Members were pleased to learn that there were no priority areas for improvement identified and the two areas for development neither related to any shortcomings in Children's Social Care or the Children and Young Peoples Service.

#### **3.2 Secondary School Provision in Scarborough**

Following a request for the Local Authority to consult on a proposal to bring two schools - Graham School and Raincliffe School to become a single school, Officers from Children & Young Peoples Service provided a briefing, which summarised the processes and initial investigations undertaken. Members were pleased to note that two public meetings had already taken place and that the initial feedback had been supportive.

Members sought reassurance from the Officers that the Deepdale Housing Development had been considered in drawing up the proposal to develop a single school and that there would be sufficient capacity in the long term for the young people from that community.

#### **3.3 The National Year of Communication**

The Committee were informed that North Yorkshire, in partnership with the Communication Trust, aims to raise the profile of speech and language, and make communications for all children and young people a priority in homes and schools across the county. The aim of the National Year of Communication is to raise awareness of the importance of communication as a life skill.

Members were surprised to learn that up to half of all nursery aged children in some parts of the Country are growing up with significant problems speaking or communicating, and that those troubles can have much wider social consequences.

The range of awareness raising events throughout the year and across the County was noted and Members were encouraged to join in whenever they could.

### **4.0 In-depth Scrutiny Review – Health Visitor & School Nurse Service in North Yorkshire**

The aim of this review has been to obtain a clear picture of the current Health Visitor and School Nurse service across North Yorkshire; and gain a better understanding of what future provision will look like and how equitable that provision will be. We have liaised closely with the North Yorkshire & York PCT and have been appreciative of their support and guidance along the way.

The Task Group has produced the draft final report. Suggestions and amendments have been incorporated into the final version of the report, which will be considered by the Executive shortly.

**County Councillor Keith Barnes**  
**Chairman**  
**Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

9<sup>th</sup> May 2011