

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

12 OCTOBER 2011

STATEMENT OF SCHOOLS PORTFOLIO HOLDER

COUNTY COUNCILLOR ARTHUR BARKER

Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Statement to Council on 13 October 2010 set out the approach being taken under the Children and Young People's Service Savings and Transformation Strategy which is committed to giving highest priority to frontline services, while acknowledging that the scale of savings needed means that they cannot be protected completely. In 2011-12 the CYPs MTFs target as set by Budgets 1 and 2 is £9.150m. This target has been spread across 18 projects, plus turn-off projects funded by grants which have ended or been reduced.

Overall achievement is well on target at this stage. Indeed, as reported to Executive as part of the Q2 monitoring, it is likely that savings will be accelerated by up to £2m from later years, giving a cash benefit although the overall 4-year target does not change.

The Directorate has set aside a specific MTFs reserve to ensure that cash savings are achieved over the next 4 years. This is still the intention and these will be used in addition to the acceleration referred to above to ensure the maximum cash benefit for the Council.

This information appears in the Statements to Council for both Executive Members for the Children and Young People's Service as this reflects their joint responsibility for all the relevant resources.

Academies

Since my last report, there have been no further conversions to Academies in North Yorkshire, nor any new applications. There are therefore still eight Academies open in the county: Harrogate Grammar School, Skipton Girls Grammar, Norton College, South Craven College, Rossett School, St. Aidan's, Ripon College and Great Smeaton (the only primary). Two other schools (Malton and Harrogate High) have also applied and had expected to open by now but conversion continues to be delayed. The majority of schools in North Yorkshire are not voluntarily pursuing the option for the present time.

The proportion of conversions in North Yorkshire remains below the national average – 2.2% of local schools compared with 6.5% nationally. The government expects the national figure to increase, although applications have slowed down in recent months, partly due to uncertainty of funding.

We continue to await the government's decision on the future of academy funding, following the national consultation in July.

Adult Learning and Skills Service

We are nearing the end of the assimilation process as a consequence of the full service staffing review. Staff have now been appointed into posts although a small number (7) have lost a number of hours from their current substantive contracts. They will be given the first opportunity to apply for posts still available in the structure - thereafter any vacancies will be advertised to all staff across the Council. The implementation date for the new structure is 1st February 2012 and a senior manager from the service will be attending each of the January round of Area Committees to update members on the new structure and how this will work in practice. It is

important to note that the review was not about the learning opportunities the service provides to the public - this will continue to be driven by community need, funding agency priorities and the availability of funding.

Local area meetings (in the four new management areas of Hambleton/ Richmondshire, Harrogate/ Craven, Selby/ Ryedale and Scarborough) will be held in February to ensure that all area based staff are informed of, and engaged with, the new structure. The service is also looking to hold joint planning events in February with Children Centres to develop provision which meets the needs of local communities.

Reorganisation of the Youth Support Service (Project 4 - phase 2)

Assimilation into posts within the Youth Support Service (YSS) following the phase 2 review of the staffing structure was completed by the end of October 2011. Currently there are 3 full time equivalent (fte) staff, plus a further 2.3 fte posts made up of 20 people who work low numbers of hours who are at risk of redundancy. These staff are being supported to find alternative posts through the redeployment process.

An induction programme is being undertaken with staff who have been appointed to posts and a communication plan is being developed to ensure that young people, staff, partners and other stakeholders are kept informed about any changes which may impact on service delivery. Disruption will be minimal but there are a number of vacancies needing to be filled and some staff will be undertaking new roles within the service and will require some professional development and training to enable them to meet their new responsibilities.

County Councillor Arthur Barker
Executive Member for Schools