

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

18 JULY 2012

### 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 initial CYPS MTFs target as of £9.150m has been more than achieved. As reported to Executive in the outturn report, acceleration of our MTFs by over £2.6m will give a cash benefit (although the overall four-year target does not change) and will begin to contribute to the One Council savings.

The target for 2012-13 is £2.8m. This is from a 5-year total of £23.2m, of which over 80% was achieved in the first two years, 2010-12.

The Directorate is facing a number of cost pressures over the next few years, principally arising from external changes in policy and legislation (e.g. troubled families, costs of secure remand and high cost placements for some teenagers, the transfer of responsibilities from the Young People's Learning Agency and Friends & Family Care) and is committed to meeting these pressures from within its own resources

A specific MTFs reserve for the Directorate has been set up to ensure that cash savings are achieved over the next four 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.

##### **Youth Support Service - phase 2 re-structure**

The final phase of the review of Youth Support Service staffing is nearing completion as formal consultation with affected staff on some changes to delivery staffing concluded on the 12th June. There was generally a lot of support for the proposals which would result in an increase in the number of staff working directly with young people in local areas and would have a positive impact on the ability of the service to maintain, and in some areas to increase, its provision. Staff will be advised of the final decisions within the next few days and then following an assimilation and appointments process the YSS will provide across the county the full continuum of services and support for young people aged 11-19 (up to 25 for those with SEN) ranging from open access youth clubs where young people go to socialise to individualised support to vulnerable young people.

##### **Department for Education consultation on School Funding Reform**

On 28<sup>th</sup> June, the Department for Education published the outcome of the most recent consultation on proposals for School Funding Reform. Although the government continues to state that this is part of a process towards a National Funding Formula for schools, it is clearly not the case for now. Instead, LAs will receive the same Dedicated Schools Grant for the next two years, adjusted only for changes in pupil numbers

The decision not to move money between LAs is welcomed in North Yorkshire where we have fears – backed up by figures from the Institute of Fiscal Studies – that money allocated to schools in the County over a number of years by Members would be lost.

However we continue to have real concerns about the restrictions that are being placed on us by the Department regarding how we allocate the funds to schools and the Leader of the Council has written to our local MPs to ask for their support in ensuring that there are no unintended consequences caused by these restrictions on schools in the county. Our consultation response asked the Department to reconsider the proposal which would have prevented the appropriate funding of schools with large numbers of service children and we are pleased to see that the final outcome will now allow us to do that. However in other respects there has been little movement. We also remain unimpressed with the Department's proposals on High Needs and SEND funding which we believe will lead to the withdrawal of delegated funds and choice from schools and increased bureaucracy. We have therefore asked for an urgent meeting with the DfE to ensure their officials are aware of how the current situation works in the county.

### **Adult Learning and Skills Service Course Fees**

Course fees for adult learning courses for 2012 / 13 have been set to reflect the Skills Funding Agency guidance that, whilst fee levels for Community Learning courses should not be a barrier to learners accessing courses, those who can pay should pay. Community Learning courses are traditionally non-qualification courses to support personal development and leisure learning. Learners who are accessing benefits have a reduced rate for all accredited and non-accredited learning and eligible learners who are undertaking accredited courses to develop their employment skills can also access support for travel and childcare costs. There is also support available for learners with additional needs who may need teaching assistant support or specific resources. Prospectuses for 2012 / 13 will be available in libraries and other local community venues from the first week of July and course information can also be accessed on-line where many courses can also be booked and paid for.

**County Councillor Arthur Barker**  
**Executive Member for Schools**