

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

20 February 2013

YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

1.0 Since the last meeting of the County Council the Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee met for its scheduled meeting on the 25th January 2013. The Mid-Cycle Briefing, using three-way video conferencing, is arranged for the 15th March 2013.

2.0 **25th January 2013 – Committee Meeting – Items included on the agenda:-**

2.1 **Executive Member's Update**

Executive Members, Cllr Tony Hall and Cllr Arthur Barker, provided the Committee with updates and responded to questions regarding:

- Funding of sixth forms
- The 10% increase in Child Protection Plans at the end of Quarter 1
- Whether Children's Centres in North Yorkshire are reaching the 'hard to reach' families?

We also heard from Cllr Jim Clark, Chairman of the Scrutiny of Health Committee, that the Secretary of State had called for an Initial Review, by the Independent Reconfiguration Panel, on the future of paediatric and maternity services at the Friarage Hospital. The panel is to report by 22nd February on whether a full review is needed.

2.2 **Additional Budget Savings**

The Committee received a report which presented the current position of the County Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and confirmed that by the end of the current four year MTFS, 2014/15, the County Council's plans are in line to make savings of £69m. However, as Members will already be aware as a result of the Chancellor's autumn statement announced in December 2012 and the County Council's Provisional Government Settlement for 2013/14, this figure has increased by £24m to £93m.

Members were advised of the potential savings areas identified by the Children & Young People's Directorate and had the opportunity to ask questions and contribute to the discussions.

2.3 **Payment by Results(PbR) Trial**

Members were provided with a report and presentation on the core objectives of the Payment by Results trial and learned that North Yorkshire and East Riding have been working together on a number of project areas overseen by a PbR trial management group which is made up of officers from both local authorities.

Members asked about performance and projected payments information and were advised that baseline figures were submitted in May 2012 so performance data would not be available until May 2013. I hope that, in due course, we will have some information on both actual payments and actual results.

2.4 **Outcome of the Children's and Young People's Plan Review**

The Committee received a copy of the results of the Children and Young Peoples Plan review 2011-14 – One Year On and were advised that progress across the principal objectives has been fairly consistent with a number of the objectives in the plan designed to make an impact over the next three years.

Members asked about feedback and evaluation from young people directly and about how measuring and assessing impact was going to be undertaken. I was disappointed that the

targets, which had been delayed coming to the committee in the early life of the plan, did not appear in the review.

2.5 Annual Report of the Looked after Children – Members Group (LAC-MG)

County Councillor John Batt as Chairman of the Members Group presented his annual report saying that since taking up his role as Chairman he had been on a steep learning curve and had been well supported by officers and the young people themselves. He considered that the group had made stronger links with the Young People's Council who have an open invitation to attend the LAC-MG and contribute to the agenda.

The Members Group meets quarterly and receives reports and briefings on educational attainment, the support provided to care leavers and detailed information on looked after children who have gone missing or not returned on time.

County Councillor Tony Hall thanked the group and reminded everyone that all North Yorkshire County Council Officers and Members are corporate parents. He advised the Committee of "The Pledge", newly developed by young people in care, which is a promise from North Yorkshire County Council to all children and young people in North Yorkshire's care.

2.6 Post Implementation Action Plan following the Ofsted Inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children - October 2012

Members were provided with a briefing and presentation on the Post Inspection Action Plan which put into context the ten Ofsted recommendations and areas for improvement. The proposed key actions required together with the monitoring and reporting arrangements were set out in this document. Members were advised that one recommendation was actioned immediately and referred to the recording of children's views in social care case files; four recommendations required action within three months and the remainder within six months.

The Committee will continue to monitor progress against all ten recommendations, not least ensuring "that elected Members routinely scrutinise the effectiveness of child protection and preventative work".

3.0 In-depth Scrutiny Review

The Task Group Chaired by Cllr Andrew Backhouse met with representatives of Harrogate District Foundation Trust to discuss the School Nursing Service across the whole of North Yorkshire. The next step is for the Task Group to draw up a draft report which will be shared with our health colleagues before it is presented at our next Committee meeting in April.

4.0 And finally the Committee welcomes the appointment of Mr Peter Dwyer as Director of Children and Young People's Services, and looks forward to continuing its 'critical friend' relationship with the Director and his staff.

County Councillor Keith Barnes
Chairman
Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee
February 2013