

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

12 NOVEMBER 2014

STATEMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

COUNTY COUNCILLOR TONY HALL

Medium Term Financial Strategy & 2020 North Yorkshire

The Children and Young People's Service has continued to meet its savings targets. The scale of budget cuts required – and achieved to date, whilst maintaining service levels - has been a significant challenge. The objective has been to protect front-line services as much as possible, thus enabling a restructured Directorate to operate effectively across its universal, preventative, targeted and acute service responsibilities, in line with legislation.

Over the four year period 2011-15, the Directorate will have made savings of over £20m. As Members will be aware, the Council faces continuing work to deliver a balanced budget over the period 2015-19 and the Directorate's target within the 2020 North Yorkshire programme is a further £16m. A detailed programme is in place and will be implemented over that timeframe. The programme will result in a major transformation of delivery arrangements for some of our services, targeting our support on the most vulnerable and those with the greatest level of need. We have however also recognised the importance of early intervention and of continuing to deliver our statutory responsibilities in terms of safeguarding, special educational needs and disabilities and school improvement. Elements of the transformation programme will of course continue to be subject to public and staff consultation at appropriate stages in their progression.

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

Looked After Children

The safe reduction in the number of looked after children remains a priority and consequently the number has decreased every month of this financial year to the current figure of 448 compared to 471 at the beginning of the year, a decrease of 23 (5%) in year. In the year to date 97% of reviews for looked after children have been conducted on time with 82% of looked after children participating in that review. The short term placement indicator (% with more than three placements in year) currently stands at 8.3%, and the long term indicator (% in place for two years+) at 63.4% which are both better than the last known statistical neighbours figure. The year to date figures for health and dental assessments are 80.5% and 85.6% respectively which are both an improvement on the previous quarter.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) has been high profile in the media recently since the Jay report into Rotherham Council was published. We, along with partner agencies, have done much work in relation to this issue and have dedicated resource working on policy and strategy around CSE. A multi-agency group chaired by the Head of Crime Operations, North Yorkshire Police, has existed since 2012 taking forward a range of issues, such as advice and information for schools, e-safety, development of a CSE strategy, practice guidelines. The group has benchmarked North Yorkshire against both the Jay Report and national recommendations, and is now implementing an action plan.

Officers from the Children and Young People's Service and North Yorkshire Police meet on a monthly basis to review cases and to ensure that follow up actions are appropriate and

timely. In North Yorkshire the route for concerns about children and young people at risk of child sexual exploitation is exactly the same as any other concern, in that if a child is suspected of being at risk then referrals are made to the customer service centre. The local approach to CSE has been discussed both at a Member briefing session but also at the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee on 24 October.

Children's Social Care Performance

Quarter 2 saw sustained good performance in Children's Social Care. Demand has continued to rise – with the second highest number of initial assessments completed in any quarter in three years - and 12 % increase on the same quarter in 2012-13. Child Protection cases have increased by 10 % since the last quarter. However plans lasting for two years or more have decreased to only two indicating that work has progressed significantly whilst children are on child protection plans in order for agencies to confidently take children off plans.

A new Plan for Children, Young People and their Families

A very successful launch of the new Children and Young People's Plan 2014-17, known as "Young and Yorkshire". was held on 20 September in Harrogate. Young people from schools and representatives of the Youth Council of North Yorkshire joined county councillors and officers, including representatives from partner agencies, in celebrating the publication of this key strategic document which aims to improve the outcomes for all children, young people and their families in North Yorkshire through:

- Ensuring education is our greatest liberator, with a greater proportion of children attending good or outstanding schools and settings
- Helping all children enjoy a happy family life, with a safe reduction in the children and young people looked after by the county council
- Ensuring a healthy start to life, with more children and young people leading healthy lifestyles

The launch included a drama performance by Fuse Theatre, an inclusive theatre project running in North Yorkshire, funded by North Yorkshire Youth Support Service alongside the Big Lottery, a performance by a young singer from of St Aidan's School, Harrogate; and a graphic novel presentation on domestic violence by Harrogate's Safe and Sound youth group.

Excellent coverage of the new plan has also appeared on local television with contributions from pupils at Bilsdale, Midcable & Chopgate/Carlton & Faceby Primary Schools and from a member of the Youth Council.

The plan will steer the work of the Children's Trust and its multi-agency members over the next three years.

Update on CYPS 2020 Programme

You will recall that, as part of the Director's 2020 Programme, proposals were consulted upon to create a single 0-19 Prevention Service, replacing separate discrete services such as education social work, integrated services including children's centres and youth support. The consultation with staff and unions has now closed and this project has progressed to the assimilation stage. The new service is designed to provide support to children, young people and families at the earliest point to avoid late, more costly and more complex interventions and will be launched in April 2015.

Staff consultations have also been launched in relation to proposed changes to the portfolio responsibilities held by the Directorate's Assistant Directors to ensure these better reflect the

remodelling of services as part of the Council's 2020 Programme and in relation to residential services for Looked After children and young people, linked to the "No Wrong Door" DfE Innovation Project referred to below.

DfE Innovation Project (No Wrong Door)

As announced recently by Edward Timpson MP, Minister for Children at the National Adult and Children's Services, we received news from the DfE that we have successfully secured grant funding of £2.15million from the Government's [Children's Social Care Innovation Program](#). This was the first grant awarded nationally under the category of 'Rethinking Care for Adolescence' following a robust submission process through an investment board of industry experts. The award will jointly fund the development of two 'No Wrong Door hubs' which aim to improve and increase targeted edge of care interventions (maintaining more young people and adolescents at home) and improve stability in care for our hardest to reach and engage young people. The model will provide a multi-agency team around the child to manage risk and develop innovative interventions and solutions to help young people engaged with the specialist support they require at the point they most need it. The hub will reduce the number of unnecessary placement moves and provide young people with a 'Staying Close' secure attachment with a known adult during key transitions, including the difficult process of moving towards independence.

Developing Stronger Families

The Developing Stronger Families programme continues to make significant progress. As at 30th September 2014, we have worked with 831 identified families, which represents 98.3% of the total number of families needing to be worked with in North Yorkshire by March 2015. Excellent progress has also been made with regard to turning families around and making reward claims for the successful outcomes, with claims now made for 73% of the total number of 845 families.

As a result of the progress made by the Developing Stronger Families programme, North Yorkshire was asked to become an 'early starter' for phase 2 of the National Troubled Families programme. During the period 1st September 2014 to April 2020, North Yorkshire has been tasked with turning around the lives of a further 2,830 families.

Adult Learning and Skills Service

A full Ofsted inspection of the Adult Learning and Skills Service has just been undertaken week commencing 3 November. At the time of writing this statement, the outcome is not known. Members will recall that the service was last inspected in May 2013 with an overall judgement of "requires improvement". Much work has been undertaken since then working with a nominated HMI to drive improvement.

County Councillor Tony Hall, Executive Member for Children's Services