

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

12 NOVEMBER 2014

STATEMENT OF SCHOOLS AND EARLY YEARS PORTFOLIO HOLDER

COUNTY COUNCILLOR ARTHUR BARKER

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.

CYPS 2020 Programme

As part of the Directorate's 2020 programme, projects are progressing in relation the use of children's centre buildings and, following the publication of the Commission's recommendations, in relation to delivery of school improvement services.

We have consulted with local communities on proposals to change the use of some of our children's centre buildings. Following those consultations we have enabled premises in East Whitby, Falsgrave, Harrogate South, Sowerby and Stokesley to be used by schools to provide additional school places, or by local early years providers to increase the numbers of childcare places. DfE approval was gained to such changes of use in order that they do not seek to claw back the capital previously granted to build the centres. We have also withdrawn from sole use of rooms in Pickering and Markington. This term consultations have taken place on the future of our children's centre building on the site of Grassington Primary School and we are expecting to see proposals about that later this year, which will involve the school and the local early years provider. Consultations are planned in Easingwold, Catterick and Skipton over the next few weeks, which is it hoped will produce viable projects in all of those places.

All of these developments have included careful discussion with the users of the centres and have been undertaken with a view as to how the services of a children's centre can still be available and accessible to parents, even if we are not maintaining a specific building. The team has been working very closely as part of the Stronger Communities 2020 workstream and it is expected that community based plans that involve children's centre services being organised by the local community will be developed in at least four places.

In relation to **School improvement**, discussions have continued around the Commission for School Improvement's proposals. The overall ambition is for all schools and settings in North Yorkshire to be good or outstanding. The focus has been on sector-led improvement with Headteachers and collaboratives playing a more significant role in school improvement. Draft proposals were considered at meetings with Headteachers and Governors recently and feedback has been constructive. It is expected that the Education Partnership and the Improvement Partnerships will be in place by April 2015. The model will be more transitional, as will the funding, and will evolve over time so there will be a greater number of LA officers working with the Partnerships than originally expected. This is in direct response to feedback from Headteachers and Governors. It is also proposed that, in addition to the five primary, one secondary and one special school Partnership, there will also be an Early Years Partnership. It is crucial, however, that Early Years is fully integrated with the Primary Improvement partnership so this needs to be explored carefully. The remodelling of the School Improvement Service has started with a staff engagement day. Proposals for both the Improvement Partnerships and the service must be completely aligned and firmed up proposals will be shared with Headteachers and Governors at meetings in January 2015.

HMS Heroes Annual Service at Ripon Cathedral

I am pleased to report that a very successful service was held last month at Ripon Cathedral, attended by over 600 children and young people from about 30 schools, all of whom have significant numbers of Service pupils on their rolls. They were joined by school staff, guests and VIPs from both the civilian and military communities, including the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire. The event followed last year's service to dedicate the organisation's Standard and reflected on the theme of support in this special year of commemorations for World War One. In particular, the service celebrated the role of HMS Heroes, a schools-based peer support initiative for Service Pupils, which aims to give young people a voice, to help support each other recognising the unique needs that go hand in hand with being part of a military family, and to encourage Service pupils to actively participate in their local communities. The schools who attended also contributed to an exhibition of work linked to World War 1 which is currently on display at the cathedral. HMS Heroes continues to grow and this year, for the first time, they are participating in the Royal Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall and the two North Yorkshire standards will be borne in front of the Queen by two students from Ripon Grammar School and Bedale High School.

2014 Pupil Performance Outcomes

The most recently available unvalidated pupil performance data for 2104 shows that North Yorkshire has maintained its high performance at GCSE and A-level and has made significant improvement in both Early Years and at Key Stage 2 (end of primary).

In 2013 there was a substantial change to the Early Years Foundation Stage profile assessing children's development at the end of the Reception year. Unusually the outcomes in North Yorkshire fell some way below the national in 2013. In 2014 61% of pupils achieved a good level of development – an improvement of 17% and twice the national rise – placing North Yorkshire again above the national figure.

At the end of Key stage 2 pupils are assessed using National Curriculum tests for reading and for mathematics and by teacher assessment of writing. The key accountability measure is the proportion of pupils achieving level 4+ in all of reading, writing and mathematics. Following disappointing results in 2013 schools and the local authority worked closely together to identify strategies to improve outcomes. In 2014 the outcomes for reading, writing and maths combined for North Yorkshire improved from 73% to 77% - a 4% rise compared to a national rise of 2%. There remains work to do - the 2014 North Yorkshire results place the authority just below the national average. Changes to assessment methods in key GCSE subjects – most notably in

English – and to the way in which results are to be published in the performance tables have resulted in some lack of clarity and volatility. It is not possible to directly compare 2014 results with previous years. The key indicator of the proportion of pupils achieving at least 5 GCSEs at A* to C including English and maths is 60% in North Yorkshire compared to 56% nationally – both indicators have fallen by around 5% compared to last year. North Yorkshire has maintained its position in the top 20% of all local authorities.

The complex range of qualifications post-16 means that there is not one key headline as for the other key stages. The most common headline outcomes are average points score per entry and average points score per student for A-level and equivalent. The highest A-level grade A* equates to 300 points with 270 points for an A grade, 240 for a grade B and so on. The average points per student have risen by over 30 points placing North Yorkshire in the top 10 of all local authorities and the points by entry has risen by 3 points placing North Yorkshire in the top 25.

OfSTED Outcomes

Ofsted data on 1 October 2014 showed that 81% of primary schools and 71% of secondary schools in North Yorkshire are good or outstanding with 79% of primary and 77% of secondary pupils attending good or better schools in North Yorkshire. The proportion of pupils attending good or better schools has improved since July 2014 by 1% at primary and by 3% at secondary, whilst the national averages are little changed. This compares with national averages for the percentage of schools being good or outstanding at 81% for primary and 71% for secondary. Nationally, 81% of primary pupils and 75% of secondary pupils attend schools which are good or outstanding.

Of the five primary schools OfSTED had judged to be inadequate in July, there are now only three schools - Farnley, Skipton St Stephen's and Skipton Ings. Skipton Ings has just had a very positive OfSTED visit and is on the verge of coming out of the category. Barrowcliff Junior and Braeburn Junior have merged with their respective infant schools as a result they lose their previous serious weakness judgements. The local authority continues to provide intensive support to both schools. Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) continue to be satisfied with the progress of those primary schools judged as requiring improvement.

There are currently two secondary schools in special measures - Graham School and Filey School. Filey school had been inspected at the time of the last statement, only 14 months after their previous inspection, but the result had not then been published. Graham School has had a second positive HMI monitoring visit. Aireville School (which had been in special measures) has become the Skipton Academy with sponsorship from the Craven Education Trust. There are currently 10 schools judged as requiring improvement with HMI are currently undertaking their Autumn Term monitoring visits.

School Funding

In my last update to Council, I noted that we had just responded to the latest DfE consultation on moving to a national funding formula and we asked for some changes regarding the allocation of funding for sparsity, a recent component introduced by the Department as a result of lobbying by this and other councils. We also commented positively on the DfE's plans to determine that the Schools Block element of LA Dedicated Schools Grants would be recalculated from April 2015. As a result of this, the Schools Block DSG for North Yorkshire would have increased by £7.1m or 2.2%.

In July, the DfE confirmed the results of its consultation. While the additional funding has actually been increased for schools in North Yorkshire (now £9.8m or 3.1%) the additional flexibility on funding of sparsity has not been quite as hoped for. The changes do bring an improvement but we continue to have concerns about the impact on small sparse secondary schools. We will therefore continue to lobby DfE on this point. We have been working with the Schools Forum to ensure that

this additional funding is allocated equitably to all schools in the county. There will be no top-slicing and every extra £ will be delivered in full to headteachers and governors.

Schools Organisation

A number of school organisation proposals have been implemented since my last statement to Council. Richard Thornton's CE VA Primary School in Burton in Lonsdale closed on 31 August 2014. In Scarborough three pairs of infant and primary schools were amalgamated from September 2014 to form three enlarged schools – Gladstone Road Primary School, Barrowcliff Primary School and Braeburn Primary School.

Whitby Community College and Caedmon School amalgamated on 31 August 2014 through the closure of Caedmon School and enlargement of Whitby Community College to create an 11-18 school, Caedmon College Whitby, operating across two sites. Discussions are continuing with Eskdale School following the DfE's refusal to allow their conversion to Academy status earlier in the year.

In addition a number of further school organisation proposals are now being progressed. A consultation has been undertaken on a proposal to amalgamate Northallerton College and Allertonshire School to form an 11-18 school operating across the current school sites from 2 April 2015. It is proposed that this will be achieved through the technical closure of Northallerton College and the change of age range and enlargement of Allertonshire School. The federation governing body is proposing that Allertonshire School becomes a voluntary controlled school to allow historical links with the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral to be maintained.

Planning is progressing on the development of a new primary academy to serve the Staynor Hall development in Selby town. An evaluation of bids from potential sponsors has been undertaken and a preferred sponsor selected. A recommendation will shortly be made to the Department for Education who will take the final decision. A planning application has been submitted for the new school site and building.

Consultation opened in June 2014 on the provision of additional primary school places to serve the Sowerby Gateway development in Thirsk. A decision will be taken later in the Autumn Term on whether this should be through the expansion of existing schools or the development of a new primary academy. The places will be needed by September 2017 or 2018 depending on the speed of housing completions.

Support is being given to the proposers of a new University Technical College in Scarborough. The UTC has "in principle" approval from DfE for opening in September 2016 and will provide education and training in advanced engineering for up to 600 students aged 14-19. The proposal is led by local employers and the Borough Council. If final approval is given the UTC will be an academy funded directly by the Education Funding Agency.

On 30 September the Executive agreed to a two year programme of investment totalling £58m which is designed to create up to 3200 additional pupil places, 1700 of which are expected to be in place by September 2017. The programme will be funded through £40m of LA capital funding plus developer contributions from major housing developments across the County.

Universal Free School Meals initiative

Since September, all infant aged children are eligible for daily Free School Meals. Previously around 10% of infant children qualified as a result of economic circumstances. There has been an additional cost to this. Revenue costs have been supported by a DfE grant and there has also been an acceptance that there would be some capital expenditure required. A national fund of £150m was set aside, and North Yorkshire has been allocated £1,269,049 (plus a further £184,466 for Voluntary Aided schools). Our completed assessment showed that the capital funding allocated

is insufficient for all needs and therefore will need to be carefully allocated. Officers are working through a number of feasibility studies and proposals will be brought forward shortly regarding how best to use this limited funding, with work expected to be carried out during 2015. In the last few weeks, the government has announced a further fund of £20m (which we can bid into by 20 November 2014) and we will be putting together our case to access some of that money.

In the meantime, although interim arrangements have been needed in some schools (such as transporting meals from other schools) until the improvements to building and equipment are completed, our catering service and schools in the county have done a magnificent job in ensuring that we have met the very challenging requirement. The catering traded service has funded necessary improvements in some kitchens and dining centres from its own reserves without any call on the Council's budget. It has also recruited additional staff.

Early indications show that take-up of the offer has been 85%. In terms of meal numbers served by NYCC Caterers, this equates to an additional 7,000 meals (or 40%) being served every day and we expect this figure to increase over time.

Early Years Pupil Premium

I am pleased to announce that North Yorkshire has been selected as one of six Local Authorities nationally to progress early implementation of the Early Years Pupil Premium from January 2015. The EYPP is additional funding to support disadvantaged three and four year olds receiving the early education entitlement. It will be paid to local authorities, through the Dedicated Schools Grant, who will be required to pass it onto early years providers for each eligible child. All registered early years providers will be eligible to claim the EYPP funding those three and four year olds who meet the criteria. The early implementation areas have been sent up to allow DfE to test the delivery model for the early years pupil premium including systems for checking eligibility and allocation of funding.

As part of the trial the early years team will consult with settings, schools and childminders to explore ways to use the EYPP and to measure its impact. Providers will receive EYPP funding early in the spring term 2015. Following this an impact evaluation will be undertaken to identify how the funding has been used to make a difference for children.

Forest Moor (formerly Foremost) School

Following a period of consultation, proposals were determined on 21 October, which make a number of changes to provision at the school. The school can now admit younger pupils, including girls, and has now begun to do so in a managed way and the school will operate as a day school only. In addition, the governing body have renamed the school as Forest Moor School.

The local authority and governing body have monitoring and evaluation arrangements in place and the school continues to receive appropriate levels of support to ensure that progress is maintained towards coming out of Special Measures. It is likely that the next monitoring visit by Her Majesty's Inspectorate will be conducted in November. There has been positive media coverage of the progress being made at the school and a staff restructuring has commenced. This is the start of a financial recovery plan with the aim of returning delegated powers to the governing body in the Spring 2015.

Growing Up In North Yorkshire Survey 2014

This biennial survey took place in schools in the summer term 2014 with an excellent school participation rate (including 100% participation of all local authority maintained secondary schools) well above that of similar surveys in other local authorities. The survey is commissioned from, and developed in partnership with Schools Health Education Unit, Exeter. The combined final sample size was 19,924 pupils across primary and secondary schools.

The questionnaire has continued to evolve to ensure it is collecting pupil perception data on relevant issues related to learning and wellbeing and is closely aligned to the 'Young and Yorkshire' Children and Young People's Plan 2014-17 and performance scorecard. In the 2014 survey there is an increased focus on risk taking behaviours, including additional questions on e-safety, use of e-cigarettes and healthy relationships. There is also an enhanced focus on secondary age pupil perceptions of the Careers Guidance they receive. The questionnaire also includes the use of two new nationally recognised scales to measure pupils' emotional health and wellbeing: primary aged children the 'Stirling Children's well-being scale' and for secondary the 'short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale'. There is also a specific focus on 'self-harm' in the secondary survey. Reporting has been broadened to include a specific focus on outcomes for 'Disadvantaged pupils' in every report where sample size permits.

Early indications from the survey will be reported through the Health and Wellbeing Board on the 26 November with the summary county report being published by the end of December 2014. The outcomes of the 2014 survey will also be shared and its implications debated at the Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2015.

County Councillor Arthur Barker
Executive Member for Schools