

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

22 JULY 2020

STATEMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Medium Term Financial Strategy & 2020 North Yorkshire – February 2020

Although NYCC, along with other local authorities and groups such as f40, were successful in lobbying for additional funding for High Needs for 2020-21, the local authority continues to experience significant cost pressures arising from a rise in the number of children and young people assessed as requiring an Education, Health and Care Plan since 2014. The local authority has continued to underpin the additional costs in High Needs and SEN Transport within the Medium Term Financial Strategy and we will continue to lobby for a fairer funding settlement for North Yorkshire.

The Directorate has developed plans to meet the savings target in 2020-21 and we expect to be able to deliver most of these despite the potential impact of Covid-19. Financial pressures are regularly reviewed and a formal assessment of spending scenarios due to Covid-19 will form part of the Quarter 1 Finance and Performance update.

Although this information appears in my Statement to Council it should be noted that both Executive Members for the Children and Young People's Service have joint responsibility for all relevant resources.

Children & Families and Children in Care

North Yorkshire's Children & Families Services continues to perform strongly. Our re-referral rate over the course of Quarter 4 matched the full-year figure of 16.3%, down from a low 17.8% in 2018/19 and almost every Children & Families assessment is completed within the statutory deadline of 45 days (99.1% in Quarter 4). We are continuing to see the number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan reduce, down to 327 at the end of Quarter 4. Quarter 4 has seen a significant increase in the proportion of repeat Child Protection Plan and work is underway to better understand this.

Over the course of the lockdown, performance has remained strong and stable across the service, although we have seen an increase in the number of Children in Care, largely due to family networks who would ordinarily support the child being unable to do so, leading to the child being brought into care.

North Yorkshire Partners in Practice & Strengthening Families, Protecting Children Programmes

The Partners in Practice programme has received extension funding for a further 12 months from the Department of Education for 2020/21. The funding continues in two parts; Sector improvement work and understanding excellence, which focuses on innovative practice with children and their families in North Yorkshire. The Sector improvement work sees North Yorkshire continue to support a range of Local Authorities across the country with intensive work being undertaken with Hull and Middlesbrough until the Autumn 2020. The understanding excellence arm of the project will build on existing work to progress the Single view of the child IT project; development of the restorative academy; extensive specialist training for staff in

family finding and systemic practice; alongside further development work with leaving care, fostering and youth justice.

Extensive funding was also secured to deliver the Strengthening Families Protecting Children programme. The objective of this programme is to improve social work practice and decision making so that the best outcomes are achieved for every child. By taking this approach there should be a reduction of demand at the critical end of the child welfare system and reduced spend on children's social care. The NWD practice model is being adapted and adopted in many other LAs and is supported by an NYCC 'central delivery team'. It is a sector leader, thinking differently about residential and edge of care services, keeping young people close, improving outcomes and improving life-long opportunities. Significant funding over five years will deliver NWD to an additional six LAs.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR JANET SANDERSON