

North Yorkshire County Council

Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Committee

Minutes of the remote meeting held on Wednesday 6 November 2020 at 10.30 am via TEAMS

Present:-

County Councillors Derek Bastiman, Eric Broadbent, David Chance, Liz Colling, David Jeffels, Janet Jefferson, Clive Pearson (Vice Chairman), Joe Plant (Chairman), Tony Randerson and Roberta Swiers.

Officers: Richard Marr (Highways Area Manager); Matt George (CYPS Strategic Planning Officer); Howard Emmett (AD Strategic Resources); Sally Dunn (Head of Finance, Schools & Early Years); Julie Pattison (Principal Educational Advisor); Carol-Ann Howe (Head of Inclusion); Melanie Carr (Democratic Service & Scrutiny); Daniel Harry (Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager) and David Edwardes (IT Support).

Also Present: Paul Carter (Head of Corporate Affairs at Yorkshire Water).

Apologies for Absence: County Councillors Andrew Broadbent & Andrew Jenkinson.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

64. Minutes of the meeting of the Scarborough & Whitby Area Committee held on 16 September 2020

Resolved -

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2020, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

65. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Andrew Broadbent & Andrew Jenkinson

66. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

67. Public Questions or Statements

There were no public questions or statements.

67. Yorkshire Water Environmental Performance Update

Considered - A presentation on the Environment Agency's Environmental Performance Assessment of Yorkshire Water for 2019, published in September 2020.

Paul Carter - Head of Corporate Affairs at Yorkshire Water, confirmed the performance assessment looked at pollution incidents, water treatment plants, sewage treatment and environmental improvement schemes. He provided:

- A brief reminder of the factors that had resulted in Yorkshire Water's two star 'Poor' two star performance assessment of 2018 e.g. the number of pollution incidents and the low levels of rainfall during the year.
- A more detailed overview of the measures put place in 2019 to improve performance, including spending an additional £50m on pollution improvements, which had resulted in a 'Good' three star rating for 2019.
- An overview of the national picture regarding performance of water and sewage companies

Finally, members received a update on the figures for this year up to September 2020, which showed ongoing performance improvements in year, which if maintained would likely result in a four star rating for 2020. However, it was noted that as of Jan 2021, a new assessment methodology was being introduced which would make it harder for water and sewage companies to achieve a higher rating, meaning Yorkshire Water would have to work harder to maintain its higher rating when the new assessment methodology was applied in 2021.

Members acknowledged the improvements in the last two years and went on to raise the issue of the quality of the bathing water in Scarborough and the major problems in Stathes during periods of heavy rain.

Paul Carter confirmed the issue in Stathes was one of combined sewage and surface water drains, something Yorkshire Water were looking to address. He also confirmed bathing water improvement works were ongoing (at a cost of £1m), but there had been a reduction in the sampling programme this year, in part due to COVID. He offered to provide a further presentation specifically on those improvement works at a future committee meeting.

Members thanked Paul Carter for his attendance and it was:

Resolved – That:

- The presentation be noted.
- An update on the ongoing bathing water improvement works be provided at the Committee's March 2021 meeting.

68. Schools Educational Achievement & Finance

Considered – A detailed report on the local educational landscape, educational achievement and the financial challenges affecting schools in the Scarborough & Whitby constituency committee area.

Matt George - CYPS Strategic Planning Officer, presented the report and Members asked a number of questions.

In regard to targeted mainstream provision, County Councillor Joe Plant welcomed East Whitby and West Cliff Academies being approved for C&I and SEMH.

In regard to funding, Members noted the data provided on schools in financial difficulty and the expected increase in the number of schools in deficit by 2022/23. They also noted the reduced levels of funding for primary and secondary pupils in North Yorkshire compared to other areas of the country.

County Councillor Joe Plant expressed his concerns for small schools and rural schools going forward, and as Chair, he confirmed he was minded to write to both the local MP and to Gavin Williamson, Minister for Education to highlight the committee's concerns about the national funding formula and its detrimental effect on North Yorkshire etc. He also suggested that both should be invited to attend the Committee's next meeting in January 2021.

County Councillor Janet Jefferson confirmed the young People's Overview & Scrutiny Committee were very aware of the funding issues and were regularly scrutinising all of the issues raised in the report. Whilst she was pleased to note the reduction in exclusions and the continuation of the coastal opportunities programme, she expressed concern about the lack of enhanced mainstream provision in primary schools in Scarborough. Finally, she drew attention to the uncertainty around the provision of free school meals and the potential for an increasing number of vulnerable families in the constituency area because of COVID related unemployment.

County Councillor Liz Colling raised the issue of Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP) and questioned the time it took from referral to a Plan being in place, and the process for pre-schools and other early care settings requesting an EHCP so that everything could be in place by the time a child started primary school.

County Councillor David Jeffels acknowledged the detrimental effect of rural school closures on rural communities.

In response, officers confirmed:

- In the next couple of years, 32 provisions similar to East Whitby and West Cliff were planned across the local authority area, covering both communication and interaction, and social emotional mental health;
- A cohort of schools were ready to start opening in the next year across the county, and there were still opportunities for other schools to come forward and volunteer to be part of the provision - Members could support the process by promoting that opportunity to schools in their area, and by promoting the range of support available to those schools;
- The order in which schools volunteered had dictated the order in which they started to deliver targeted provisions. In the meantime, services were still being delivered from the new SEND Hubs;
- Whilst there had been some additional funding nationally for schools it could still be argued that rural schools, particularly small rural secondary schools remained underfunded compared to larger urban secondary schools;
- In 2019, the DFE for the first time acknowledged something was needed around rurality and sparsity, resulting in a small movement for 2021/22 in relation to primary schools, but nothing yet for secondary schools;
- A DFE consultation on rural schools was expected but the proposals and timeframe for it was not yet known;
- A new rigorous weekly system from within the SEND Hubs was now in place to track exclusions and attendance and to support schools to deliver prompt interventions;
- A new intensive support team was in place to deliver social emotional mental health to primary schools, particularly within the Scarborough pupil referral service;

- Early Years settings could initiate requests for EHCPs and they were being actively encouraged to do so;
- The full process (as statutorily laid down) took 20 weeks and Early Years specialists working from the SEND Hubs were continually advising early years' settings to make requests in plenty of time;
- In North Yorkshire, under normal circumstances the majority of plans were completed well within the 20-week period;
- The legislation requiring delivery of an EHCP within 20-weeks had been relaxed during the pandemic and there had been some delays because of COVID, but the number of those was now reducing;
- In some instances, because it took time for the severity of a child's needs to become apparent, it sometimes resulted in an EHCP not being in place in time for the start of primary school. Where needed, interim support for settings was provided;
- The new Overdale School development was on schedule and it was expected that the school would open as planned in September 2021;
- The consultation on the proposed closure of St Hilda's RC Primary School commenced on 2 November 2020 - Members were encouraged to respond;

County Councillor David Chance confirmed that for the Scarborough & Whitby area, a DEFRA grant of £54k had been given to food banks etc, local Councillors had contributed an additional £21k from their Locality Budgets, and the County Council had increased its Local Assistance Fund.

The Committee expressed their thanks to all those involved in supporting young people and vulnerable families, and it was

Resolved – That the annual update be noted.

69. Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Committee Work Programme 2020/21

Considered -

The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) asking Members to review the Work Programme, taking into account the outcome of discussions on previous agenda items and any other developments taking place across the area.

It was proposed that Simon Cox of NHS Trust be invited to attend the January meeting of the Committee to provide an update on the East Coast Review. Members also requested a performance update on patient care and the quality of the existing services at Scarborough Hospital.

Finally, the Committee requested a future update on the Local Assistance Fund

Resolved – That:

- i. The Democracy Officer update the work programme to reflect the decisions made during the meeting.
- ii. The date of the January meeting be subject to the MP's availability.

The meeting concluded at 11:20pm

MLC