

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2007 at County Hall, Northallerton.

PRESENT:-

County Councillor Heather Garnett in the Chair.

County Councillors Andrew Backhouse, John Blackburn, Tony Hall, David Heather, Michael Heseltine, Christopher Pearson, Caroline Seymour, Jim Snowball and Melva Steckles.

Members other than County Councillors:- Michael Barrie (Parent Governor), Mrs Helen Suckling (Parent Governor).

In attendance: - Executive Members County Councillors Caroline Patmore and Carl Les.

Officers:- Stephanie Bratcher (Scrutiny Support Officer), Leslie Ingleson (Youth Offending Team), Ian Marr (Children and Young People's Service) and Jane Wilkinson (Committee Services).

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of County Councillors Michelle Andrew, Elizabeth Casling and Brian Simpson.

One member of the public.

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

85. MINUTES

Minute No 78 – SEN Review

Reference was drawn to the Minutes of the previous meeting and in particular the suggestion that Task Groups were established to monitor both the use of delegated resources and implementation of the SEN Review. After a brief discussion, in view of the importance of the review and the continued high level of Member interest it was agreed that the future monitoring of the SEN implementation and delegated resources should remain the responsibility of the whole Committee as opposed to a small number of Members nominated to form task groups. It was further agreed that when the Committee considered implementation of the SEN review at its July 2007 meeting the methodology used to monitor its effectiveness was set out in the report.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2007, having been printed and circulated be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.
- (ii) That a monitoring report on implementation of the SEN Review be referred to the Committee later in the year.

86. PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR STATEMENTS

The Committee was advised that no notice had been received of any public questions or statements to be made at the meeting.

87. EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT

CONSIDERED –

The report from County Councillor Caroline Patmore identifying issues affecting her portfolio during the previous quarter.

She added that since writing the report she had attended a Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP) meeting in Scarborough at which a school nurse had voiced her concerns regarding the withdrawal of administrative support by the North Yorkshire and York Primary Care Trust (PCT) for her post because of their financial overspend. This meant that the school nurse was now responsible for carrying out her own administrative work which would reduce the amount of time she had available to conduct contact appointments. At this stage she had no information as to whether the withdrawal of administrative support was temporary or if the same measure would be applied across the whole of the County and if so what the impact of this would be. The situation was being monitored and Members would be kept informed of further developments.

Members of the Committee were grateful for the information about school nurses and agreed to monitor the situation closely in their own electoral divisions. Members acknowledged the difficulties facing the PCT but were concerned at possible attempts to shift costs from the PCT to the Council.

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee thanked County Councillor Caroline Patmore for her attendance and the information she had provided to the Committee.

RESOLVED –

That the content of the Executive Members Progress report be noted.

88. WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Corporate Performance asking Members to add to the list of matters shown in the work programme attached as Annex A of the report.

The Chairman referred to the visit by Members to Beverley Park Outdoor Education Centre as part of the Committee's Scrutiny Review of Sports Provision. Arising from the visit it had become apparent that there was a need for a separate small discrete piece of scrutiny work on the outdoor education service to be done. She had discussed this with County Councillor Elizabeth Casling who was in agreement with this course of action and the Chairman sought the agreement of the Committee to conduct both reviews simultaneously. The Chairman proposed that she lead the Scrutiny Review work on the Outdoor Education Service. She confirmed that the final report when available would be referred to the Committee for consideration. Members were in agreement with this approach.

Young People and Diversity – it was suggested that when the Committee did commence this piece of work the review should include children living on farms and

the affect of the recent influx of Polish people into North Yorkshire. It was also suggested that the scrutiny review currently underway by the Communications Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Engaging With Hard to Reach Groups could be relevant to the work of the Committee and that this final report when available is referred to the Committee in due course.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the information contained in the report be noted.
- (ii) That the Committee's Work Programme be amended to include:-
 - (i) A Scrutiny Review on the Outdoor Education Service in North Yorkshire.
- (iii) That a copy of the final report of the Communications Overview & Scrutiny Committee on Engaging With Hard To Reach Groups be circulated to the Committee when available.

89. DEVELOPING LOCAL DEMOCRACY

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Corporate Performance on developing local democracy following events held in October 2006 as part of the National Local Democracy Campaign.

Members received a verbal presentation from Executive Member County Councillor Carl Les on the work done over the past three years by the County Council aimed at increasing the participation of young people in local democracy in North Yorkshire. He said that the next stage of the project was to develop a sustainable infrastructure and welcomed Members ideas and suggestions as to how this could be achieved. County Councillor Les outlined future initiatives which included a regular feature article for young people in future editions of the North Yorkshire Times, utilisation of project TITAN to facilitate text messaging and the development of a Locality Strategy. He emphasised that it was important for the Committee to give a lot thought to the future role of overview and scrutiny in any infrastructure that was established. Cllr Les informed the Committee of his meeting earlier that week with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the County Council's Area Committees who had agreed to explore with their young peoples development workers ways in which Area Committees could bridge the democracy gap with young people.

County Councillor Tony Hall referred to the report of the Scrutiny Officer and added that dates when the Democracy Wall would be displayed in Selby and Richmondshire libraries were in the process of being finalised. He supported what Cllr Les had said about the role of overview and scrutiny and agreed to circulate a copy of his Annual Report so that Members could comment or add to the terms of reference/role of the Young Peoples Champion as set out in the report.

Ian Marr confirmed that there were varying levels of activity throughout the County and that what was needed was for this work to be co-ordinated and some form of structure introduced.

Members welcomed the report and looked forward to receiving a copy of the report to be considered by the Executive on Member Seminars and the role of Champions.

In the following discussion the following comments were made:-

- (i) That utilisation of premises owned by “Connexions” in market towns is explored.
- (ii) That development of a locality structure based on the boundaries of the 22 areas already agreed is actioned.
- (iii) That training for both Members and young people is provided.
- (iv) That a survey of North Yorkshire school councils is undertaken and the results published to Members.
- (v) That the development of a network of schools councils as the infrastructure for delivery of young people’s democracy was not ideal as democracy was about all aspects of the local community not just school issues.
- (vi) That any infrastructure developed be done in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders, partners and agencies.
- (vii) That care is taken to ensure that existing school councils are not undermined by any process the County Council puts in place.
- (viii) That young people be invited to participate in arranged themed meetings of the County Council Committees.

Members were advised that the Youth Arts Festival was scheduled to take place in Northallerton on 7 July 2007 and all Members were encouraged to attend.

The Chairman noted that this was clearly an area of work in progress and was anxious that a survey of current provision be undertaken as soon as possible so that the results could be used to spread examples of good practice throughout the county.

Members were anxious that young people were given feedback on the consultation they had entered into with the County Council as otherwise their goodwill and enthusiasm for the project could be lost.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the content of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the date of the Youth Arts Festival on 7 July 2007 at the Leisure Centre in Northallerton be noted.
- (iii) That the terms of reference of the Young People’s Champion be circulated to all Members of the Committee for comment.
- (iv) That a survey of young people participating in democracy in North Yorkshire be undertaken and the results reported back to the Committee in due course.

90. NORTH YORKSHIRE YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM (YOT)

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Youth Offending Team Manager giving an overview of the Youth Offending Team Service and in particular the current challenges and priority areas in need of development that had arisen following the outcome of the recent YOT inspection.

Members noted with concern the lack of investment in the service by health and congratulated Leslie Ingleton on the progress she had made following her appointment.

Members noted the drawing up of an Action Plan and requested that the Committee receive a copy in due course to enable it to monitor progress.

Members referred to the conference that took place in January and suggested that the Committee receive further information on restorative work in the future.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the Committee receive a copy of the YOT Action Improvement Plan when available.
- (iii) That the Committee receive an annual report from the Youth Offending Team together with quarterly performance figures and that these items are incorporated into the Committee's Forward Work Programme.

JW/ALJ