

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 April 2007

Parenting Support Strategy

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To give an overview of progress so far towards in developing a Parenting Support Strategy for North Yorkshire.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The paper taken to the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board, (CYPSPB), on 20 Nov 2006, attached as Appendix 1, sets out the purpose and motivation for developing a countywide Parenting Support Strategy. It also sets out how progress was to be made.

3.0 Progress Report

- 3.1 As outlined in the report to the Strategic Board, a working group was set up to develop a strategy and to examine how it would be implemented. It initially met as an internal group, with representation from each service group in the Directorate. For the second meeting, the invitation was extended to external partners for contributions. This approach was taken so that we could ensure that there was internal agreement over how to proceed, but always with the intention of developing a multi-agency strategy.
- 3.2 Based on the discussions within the group and from researching other authorities, a draft strategy was drawn up. This was circulated amongst partners for comments in preparation for wider discussion at a Working Conference, initially scheduled for late February. A copy of the draft strategy is attached as Appendix 2. Members will see that it defines purposes and principles and sets the work in a national and local context. It then seeks to define an entitlement to services for parents within four different levels of need – universal, coordinated early intervention, complex and intensive support. The expectation then is that, following audits of current activity, Improvement Plans will be developed locally to ensure that the entitlements are being delivered all across the county.
- 3.3 In the event, (because of the date of publication of Job Evaluation results), it was not possible to proceed with the conference in February. Instead, it was held on 26 March and was attended by about 70 delegates from a wide range of agencies.
- 3.4 A copy of the programme for the conference is attached as Appendix 3 and members will see that the main purposes were to provide an opportunity for delegates to comment on, contribute to, and improve the draft strategy and to seek some agreement about the best way to develop the Improvement Strategies at a local level.

- 3.5 The first objective was achieved with the broad thrust of the strategy being supported and many detailed suggestions being made by way of improvement. Work is now underway to produce a second draft of the strategy which will be considered by the working group on 25 April and thereafter circulated to all those who attended the conference on 26 March for any further thoughts. The Strategy will then be taken to the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board on 14 May 2007 for its agreement to proceed (and then back through NYCC's Executive for formal approval).
- 3.6 The discussions about the best way to proceed to develop the Improvement Strategies at a local level provided a less clear cut outcome. There was agreement that the notion of delivering on a countywide entitlement at a local level was the correct way to proceed and that the approach should acknowledge good work already underway, existing arrangements for coordination – eg the existence of Parenting Forums in some parts of the county - and be multi-agency in approach. Critically, it should also involve parents directly. Furthermore, Integrated Service Managers were noted as the key players and facilitators but it was also suggested that some dedicated time might need to be made available to enable designated staff to act as Parenting Support Champions and / or coordinators in each area. There was no absolute agreement to what the areas should be – localities, Area Committee areas, ISM patches, etc - so discussions are continuing with relevant colleagues to try to resolve matters. It is hoped that the Working Group will be able to take a clear view on 25 April so that a recommendation can be made to the CYPSPB on 14 May.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

This is an exciting piece of “work in progress” and members of the CYPOSC are invited to offer comments and suggestions so that they may be incorporated into the strategy, the plan for implementation and therefore into the recommendations to the CYPSPB and NYCC's Executive.

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