

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2010 at County Hall, Northallerton.

PRESENT:-

County Councillor Paul Richardson in the Chair.

County Councillors:- John Batt, John Blackie, David Blades, Elizabeth Casling, Chris Pearson, Caroline Seymour and Tim Swales.

Members Other Than County Councillors:-

Jos Huddleston (Non-Conformist Church), and Suzanne Morris (Parent Governor).

In attendance:-

Executive Members:- County Councillors Jim Clark and Caroline Patmore.

Officers:- Cynthia Welbourn and Carly Walker (Children and Young People's Service), Stephanie Bratcher (Scrutiny Support) and Jane Wilkinson (Legal and Democratic Services).

Present By Invitation:-

NHS North Yorkshire & York: Gareth Whiles, Jo Harding, Jayne Richardson, George Lee, John Clare, Barry Wright and Kevin Pratt.

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors, Andrew Backhouse, Janet Jefferson, Joe Plant, Melva Steckles and Geoff Webber and Dr Patricia Stowell (Parent Governor), Anne Swift (Primary Teacher Representative), Helena McGouran (Roman Catholic Church), Chris Head (Secondary Teacher Representative) and Bjorn Risi (Voluntary Sector).

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

18. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2009 having been printed and circulated be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

19. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

20. HEALTH SERVICES COMMISSIONED AND PROVIDED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN NORTH YORKSHIRE

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Corporate Performance.

The Scrutiny Support Officer said the report should be treated as a source of reference by Members as it outlined the background and structure of universal, targeted and specialist support services for children and young people in North Yorkshire. The Chairman considered it vital that Members understood the contribution of partners to this agenda. At previous meetings the Committee had expressed a desire to enter into dialogue with partner organisations and agencies. The Chairman had therefore invited representatives from NHS North Yorkshire and York to attend the meeting that day to provide Members with an overview of acute and ongoing healthcare services currently commissioned and provided for young people in North Yorkshire and to gain a better understanding of the priorities and work of the Primary Care Trust.

The Committee received a joint presentation from representatives of NHS North Yorkshire and York that focused on community childrens' services, commissioning services for disabled children and sexual health services. It was explained that the presentation would not cover maternity or hospital services as different representation was needed for this. (A copy of the slides used during the presentation is in the Minute Book). The purpose of the presentation was to:-

- Identify key national and local priorities.
- Highlight some key health services commissioned and provided and some key improvement areas.
- Provide insight into potential key strategic future commissioning initiatives.
- Invite comments and respond to questions.

Committee Members made the following comments:

- The lack of any financial details in the presentation made it impossible for Members to compare the level of spend in North Yorkshire with other areas of the country. Officers responded that the Primary Care Trust spent approximately £100m on children's healthcare services which equated to approximately 9% of its annual budget.
- That access to children's healthcare services was inequitable across North Yorkshire. Officers from the Primary Care Trust acknowledged that inequality existed and said it was a remnant of the four former Primary Care Trusts in North Yorkshire. NHS North Yorkshire & York were committed to plugging gaps in services however financial constraints meant that additional requests submitted for resources had yet to be confirmed. Members responded saying that one of the advantages put forward for the merger of the four primary care trusts was that access to services would be uniform across North Yorkshire and it was disappointing that two years later this had not been achieved.
- Asked what links and liaison there was between healthcare providers for those looked after children who resided either outside of or on the boundaries of North Yorkshire. Officers agreed to provide this information following the meeting.

The Chairman thanked the representatives of NHS North Yorkshire and York for their presentation.

RESOLVED –

That the presentation and the issues raised be noted.

21. **NHS NORTH YORKSHIRE AND YORK ACTION PLAN ARISING FROM OFSTED INSPECTION OF SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN NORTH YORKSHIRE.**

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Corporate Performance on the outcome of the joint inspection of safeguarding and looked after children's services by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission in North Yorkshire in September 2009.

Attached to the report was the post inspection action plan of NHS North Yorkshire and York. The Chairman invited representatives from NHS North Yorkshire and York to brief the Committee on the content and timetable for implementation of the action plan.

The Committee then received a presentation that focused on those areas where action had been identified by the inspection as being required. (A copy of the presentation slides is in the Minute Book). The Action Plan (copy attached to agenda) described, the work needed to be done, timescale, the responsible officer and anticipated outcome.

Committee Members asked the following questions:

- **Staff training** - The inspection findings referred to inadequate staff training yet the Action Plan contained no reference to provision of staff training. Officers from NHS North Yorkshire & York responded that the PCT employed 4500 staff for whom many had to receive training in line with statutory guidance. The issue highlighted by the inspection was that the PCT had no robust method of calculating what percentage of its staff had undergone training. Whilst the majority of staff had received training the PCT was not able to demonstrate this. Significant progress had been achieved in this area and a robust data collection system was now in place. The PCT now provided its staff with on-line learning which had been a great advantage during the recent bad weather.
- **Health Visitors** - Asked how many health visitors there were in North Yorkshire. The Committee was told that over the course of the past five years 67 staff had left the employ of the PCT. Of those that remained 51% were aged 50 and over. Approximately 45% of staff caseloads were currently higher than the recommended level. As a result talks about whether the PCT still had the ability to provide a safe service had been held. The PCT had used the inspection findings as an opportunity to review universal 0-19 services. The review was being prioritised and was due to complete in October 2010. Actions arising from the Review would be implemented in 2011.
- **School Nurses** – were aware that there was a reduction in the number available and asked if the core-offer was being met. Financial pressures three years ago had led to the service being remodelled. Staff leaving the service had not been replaced. The new model required staff to have different skills and competencies and created greater integration with health visitors. Recruitment was a national problem all of which meant that the PCT struggled to meet the core offer. Those areas with the greatest need were being prioritised but it was acknowledged that the current level of resources available was not sufficient.

The Chairman said that that the performance of NHS North Yorkshire and York was directly linked to the imposed financial constraints and unless there was increased

awareness of the children and young people's services agenda within the primary care trust there seemed little prospect of improvement.

A Member asked if any information was available on the amount spent by other primary care trusts on children's services. The Committee was advised that the only information available along those lines was the results of a child health mapping exercise. The work done by Peter Brambleby on programme budgeting did not cover children's services. Officers from the PCT said that they would endeavour to find some comparison figures for Members but could not guarantee they would be successful.

Assurances were given that post inspection several meetings had taken place between the primary care trust and the County Council involving both clinicians and management staff.

The Chairman thanked the representatives of NHS North Yorkshire and York for their attendance and presentation. Officers from NHS North Yorkshire and York undertook to respond to any further questions submitted by Members via the Scrutiny Support Officer following the meeting.

RESOLVED –

That the presentation and issues raised be noted.

22. WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented the Committee's forward Work Programme which Members noted without comment.

In the absence of the Chairman of the Corporate Parent Standing Group, County Councillor Tim Swales briefed the Committee on the outcome of a meeting of the Standing Group held on 8 January 2010. He also described a meeting that had taken place between elected members and looked children and young people at which concerns about there being no procedure for payment of pocket money or receipt of birthday gifts had been raised. He said it was a cause of real concern that children looked after had no real understanding of what a corporate parent was and that Members themselves had struggled to provide adequate answers. Following a seminar in Leeds further training events were planned. The Committee noted the significant increase in the number of looked after children in North Yorkshire during the previous six months.

The Scrutiny Support Officer reported that the Council diary for 2010/11 had now been agreed and Members were asked to make a note of the following future meeting dates for the Committee:-

- 26 March 2010 at 10.30.am.
- 11 June 2010 at 10.30 am.
- 10 September 2010 at 10.30 am.
- 12 November 2010 at 10.30 am.
- 14 Jan 2011 at 10.20 am.
- 15 April 2011 at 10.30 am.

The Chairman concluded by saying that during the recent severe weather many schools in North Yorkshire had been forced to close. He was pleased to report however all pupils sitting exams had not been affected by the closures.

RESOLVED –

That the content of the report, business scheduled for future meetings and information provided at the meeting be noted.

JW/JD