

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2011 at County Hall, Northallerton

PRESENT:-

County Councillor Keith Barnes in the Chair.

County Councillors:- Andrew Backhouse, John Batt, David Blades, Bill Houtt (substitute for Caroline Seymour), Heather Moorhouse, Patrick Mulligan, Joseph Plant, Tim Swales and Cliff Trotter.

Co-opted Members:- Anne Swift (Primary Teacher Representative) and Bjorn Risi (Voluntary Sector).

In attendance:-

Executive Members:- County Councillors Caroline Patmore and John Watson.

Officers:- Cynthia Welbourn, Katharine Bruce, Wendy Jamison and Carly Walker (Children and Young People's Service), Lesley Ingleson (Youth Justice Service), Stephanie Bratcher (Scrutiny Support) and Jane Wilkinson (Legal and Democratic Services).

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Paul Richardson, Caroline Seymour and Janet Jefferson and Patricia Stowell & Suzanne Morris (Parent Governors), Judith Bromfield (Voluntary Sector) and Jos Huddleston (Non-Conformist Church) and Chris Head (Secondary Teacher representative).

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

56. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2010 having been printed and circulated be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

57. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

58. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS UPDATE

The Chairman invited the Executive Members to respond to the four questions he had submitted to them in advance of the meeting on the following areas:-

- Children & Young People's Service Savings & Transformation Strategy – progress report.
- Education Bill – implications for North Yorkshire.
- 2010 Ofsted Annual Assessment of Children Services – Outcome.
- Unannounced Ofsted inspection – results.

Savings & Transformation Strategy

A copy of the latest budget narrative document was tabled at the meeting. It summarised the latest position on each of the 18 projects identified in the Savings & Transformation Strategy. The Committee was advised that the Directorate was on target to deliver the required savings. An additional £3.1M in savings over and above the £19.1M already identified was reported. The additional £3.1M would form the Directorate's contribution towards closing the post settlement gap in the County Council's budget.

It was confirmed that as a result of the need to make savings redundancy notices were about to be issued to some staff.

A Member asked what was the likelihood of the reductions to the Integrated Youth Support as described in the tabled report impacting on front line delivery of the Service. The Corporate Director, Children & Young People's Service replied that there would be very little impact on front-line delivery of the youth service. The savings identified in Project 4 would not come into effect until 2014/15 and she hoped that during the intervening period an alternative option would present itself.

In response to questions the Committee was advised that following discussion at the last Children's Trust Board meeting partners agreed to support a number of applications for Performance Reward Grant (PRG) funding.

The following Childrens Trust bids were approved by the North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership (NYSP) Executive, Supporting Looked After Childrens Risky Behaviours (jointly –matched with Healthier Communities Partnership) Youth Justice Service: Obesity and Youth Homelessness. In all instances awards were made to services facing significant financial challenges.

A question posed by the Chairman sought confirmation of which decisions were made by Executive Members and which are delegated to the Corporate Director. Assurances were given that in accordance with the County Council's Constitution all policy decisions were taken by elected Members with copies of the reports available to the public regardless of whether decisions were taken at meetings of the Executive or by using delegated powers.

The Committee requested a regular update report on the Savings & Transformation Strategy at each meeting.

2010 Ofsted Annual Assessment of Children's Services

The results of the 2010 Ofsted Annual Assessment of Children's Services was tabled at the meeting.

The Chairman commended staff on their achievements and asked for the Committee's congratulations to be conveyed to them.

Ofsted Unannounced Inspection

The Corporate Directors said the letter containing the draft results had only just been received and was still embargoed. Following its release the letter would be made available to Members and would be included in the Executive Members briefing at the April meeting.

Education Bill

Members were referred to the statements of the Executive Members made at the meeting of the County Council held on 16 February 2011.

RESOLVED –

That the information provided at the meeting be noted.

That a regular update report on the CYPS Savings & Transformation Strategy be presented to each future meeting.

59. CORE CASE INSPECTION OF YOUTH OFFENDING WORK

The Committee received a report and presentation from Lesley Ingleson, Manager of the North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service.

The presentation summarised the findings and recommendations of the Core Case Inspection of Youth Offending Work in North Yorkshire, undertaken in October 2010 by HMI Probation. The inspection focussed on three aspects of work: Safeguarding, Likelihood of Re-offending, and Risk of Harm to others. The overall scores for North Yorkshire along with regional and national results were tabled at the meeting. The outcome of the inspection had exceeded expectation and HMI Probation had commented that the findings for North Yorkshire were “very credible”.

It was reported that that an improvement plan addressing the recommendations in the Inspector’s report had to be lodged with HMI Probation by 23rd February 2011. Members were invited to comment on the content of the of the draft Improvement Plan appended to the agenda.

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee congratulated Lesley Ingleson and her staff for the well deserved results that reflected progress achieved since the previous inspection in 2006 despite having significant staffing vacancies.

Members expressed concern at the lack of certainty regarding the future funding of the Service and agreed to monitor the situation.

RESOLVED –

That the content of the report and draft improvement plan be noted and approved.

60. A NEW APPROACH TO CHILDRENS TRUSTS

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Corporate Development Officer updating Members on announcements and changes to the status and function of Children’s Trust Boards.

Assurances were given that Officers would ensure that there was no duplication in the work undertaken by the North Yorkshire Children’s Trust and the North Yorkshire Health & Well Being Board.

RESOLVED –

That the content of the report be noted.

61. HEALTH RELATED AND BEHAVIOUR QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY 2010

CONSIDERED –

The results of the 2010 Health Related Behaviour Survey were presented to the Committee by Katharine Bruce, Senior Advisor Inclusion, Children and Young People’s Service.

The Survey completed by pupils in North Yorkshire was designed to collect reliable information about young people's lifestyles. The theme of the 2010 Survey was equalities. An analysis of the responses was available at a school, area and county level. The Committee was advised that in addition to the report attached to the agenda, copies of six local area reports were available upon request from the Corporate Development Officer if Members wanted to see the results for their particular area..

During the presentation by Katharine Bruce, key features and trends were highlighted and the results of previous questionnaires used to benchmark emerging priorities.

Members were pleased to learn that there had been a significant increase in the number of schools participating especially amongst primary and special schools. Members noted that the feedback from participating schools was positive. Many schools considered the survey results to be a valuable source of information which they were beginning to use to develop tailor made programmes. The results of future Surveys would enable schools to measure the impact of these programmes. Members particularly welcomed emerging priorities and recommended actions being fed back for the first time to young people.

Members were advised that the survey results were also disseminated across the County Council's Children & Young People's directorate and the North Yorkshire Children's Trust and were used in service planning.

The Chairman thanked Katharine Bruce for her attendance and an interesting presentation.

RESOLVED –

That the results of the North Yorkshire 2010 Health Related and Behaviour Questionnaire be noted.

62. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF HEALTH VISITING AND SCHOOL NURSING SERVICE IN NORTH YORKSHIRE

County Councillor Andrew Backhouse, Chairman of the Scrutiny Task Group, presented the interim report of the Task Group.

He said that the Review arose as a result of concerns around health visiting and school nurse capacity in North Yorkshire. Members' attention was drawn to the variety of settings in which health visitors and school nurses were currently based. County Councillor Andrew Backhouse said that feedback to date suggested that service users preferred the more relaxed setting of a children's centre as opposed to GP surgeries. Members commented that it was important for their future sustainability that children's centres were able to offer a multi-agency first point of contact.

Members expressed concern at the continued use of paper records by health professionals on the grounds of efficiency.

Members welcomed the interim report and supported the approach adopted by the Task Group in hosting consultation meetings with commissioners, providers and service users.

The Executive Member recommended that the findings of the final report when available were brought to the attention of GP consortia in North Yorkshire in their capacity as the new commissioners of the Service as well as the County Council's Executive, North Yorkshire Children's Trust and NHS North Yorkshire and York Primary Care Trust.

RESOLVED –

That the content of the Task Group's Interim Report and comments recorded in the Minutes be noted.

63. WORK PROGRAMME

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Corporate Development Officer inviting comments from Members on the content of the Committee's programme of work scheduled for future meetings.

The Chairman sought suggestions from Members for the topic of the next in-depth scrutiny review to be undertaken by the Committee. The following topics were proposed:-

- Early Intervention – "Securing Good Outcomes For All Children & Young People" – impact of funding cuts.
- Attainment gap: young people in receipt of free school meals – Ofsted Annual Children's Services Assessment 2010

The Chairman thanked Members for their suggestions and said he would give the matter further thought.

RESOLVED –

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

JW/ALJ