

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2011 at 10.30 am at County Hall, Northallerton.

PRESENT:-

County Councillor Keith Barnes in the Chair.

County Councillors:- Andrew Backhouse, David Blades, Liz Casling, Janet Jefferson, David Jeffels, Patrick Mulligan, Joe Plant, Chris Pearson (substitute for Cliff Trotter), Caroline Seymour.

Co-opted Members:- Graham Richards Church of England Representative

Officers:- Cynthia Welbourn, Chris McGee, Louise Dunn, Carly Walker, Judith Hay, Alan Tucker, Stephanie Bratcher (Scrutiny Support).

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors John Batt, Jim Clark, Tim Swales, Cliff Trotter, Parent Governors Mrs Suzanne Morris and Dr Patricia Stowell, Jos Huddleston (Non-Conformist Church), Chris Head (Secondary Teacher Representative), and Bjorn Risi (Voluntary Sector)

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

At the beginning of the meeting the Chairman welcomed the new Lead Member for Children & Young Peoples Service County Councillor Carl Les and noted the apologies of Executive Member County Councillor Arthur Barker. He also welcomed Cllr David Jeffels and the newly appointed Church of England Representative Mr Graham Richards.

The Chairman then asked that the Committee's thanks were formerly recorded for the two outgoing elected members County Councillor Paul Richardson and County Councillor Heather Moorhouse in appreciation of their contribution and involvement. He went on to add that Paul Richardson in his capacity as the previous Chairman of the Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee had been a good advocate for young people in general and championed matters on safeguarding at every opportunity.

71. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2011 having been printed and circulated be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

72. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

73. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS UPDATE INCLUDING PROGRESS ON THE CYPS SAVINGS AND TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY

CONSIDERED –

The tabled report of County Councillors Carl Les and Arthur Barker

The Chairman explained to Members of the Committee that prior to the meeting he had submitted the following three questions to the Executive Members for their comment and clarification.

The Transport Grant and Early Intervention Grant - both of these grants were mentioned in the papers for County Council as being higher than expected. Executive Members clarified the matter by stating that although the final grant settlements create a net additional resource they are relatively small sums which will go into the savings required of the service.

The second question sought the views of the Executive Members on the newly published Department for Education draft Codes for School Admissions and School Admission Appeals. In response the Executive Member and Corporate Director explained that there are three months in which to respond to the consultation but it is very important that in evaluating the documents Executive Members and Officers from North Yorkshire will consider whether they will give sufficient protection to the statutory rights of parents and children in relation to School Admissions, or whether the balance might be shifted too far in the interests of individual schools carrying out their own admissions responsibilities.

Finally to what extent is NYCC involved in the Self Improvement role in Children's Services? The Executive Member explained that the Children & Young Peoples Service Directorate (CYPS) is committed to a robust regime of self-improvement through clear priority setting, good performance review and learning from both best practice and external evaluation. Whilst they would be happy to contribute and participate in the scheme at some point in the future the current priority is to ensure that the service is successful in delivering the current period of major change.

The Chairman asked for a brief update on the progress being achieved towards the Savings & Transformation Strategy. The Corporate Director summarised the position by saying that the service in essence is on target to deliver their part of the Councils savings and that the combined measures from the identified project areas were a major part of the transformational work being undertaken.

RESOLVED –

That the information provided be noted

74. YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICE

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service on Project 4 of the Children and Young Peoples Savings and Transformation Strategy which also included a position statement on :-

- Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).
- Teenage Pregnancy Data and Young People's Substance Misuse.

The committee received a presentation from Officers of the Youth Support Service Chris McGee, Louise Dunn and Carly Walker.

The briefing and presentation outlined the background information on Project 4 - of the Children and Young Peoples Service Savings and Transformation Strategy which was to reduce management numbers and costs by a variety of measures, including the integration of the Youth Service and the Integrated Youth Support Service under

one management structure. Members were advised that the strategic management team is now established but it was felt that the delivery of services remained disjointed. To address this Senior Officers undertook a review and put forward proposals to develop and establish a more coherent and responsive Youth Support Service workforce and operational structure.

Members were advised that this integration had not solely been about cost savings and that a refresh of the operational structure to ensure that it was fit for purpose and responded to the expectations and/or needs of young people had been about to commence. The financial challenges facing the whole of Children and Young Peoples Service had meant that the review needed to get underway as soon as possible.

Members queried the need to change if it was not financial. Officers advised that there had been confusion over the two services (Integrated Youth Service and the Youth Service) who had worked closely together but the pattern of delivery now needed to change.

In relation to Young People not in education, employment or training (Neet) Officers explained that Neet figures in North Yorkshire have been relatively low and that there are several policy changes that will impact on this area of work. Raising the participation age will require all young people to remain in learning until age 18 by 2015 which presents North Yorkshire with particular challenges.

Members were informed that the latest data highlights the continued reduction in teenage pregnancies in North Yorkshire. However, there are still variations across the County and Scarborough teenage pregnancy rates remain higher than the national average.

The Committee were also advised that alcohol and cannabis remain the most popular drugs for young people and this is the case in all areas of North Yorkshire. Class A and opiate use is low in this area but the demand for services continues to be higher in the coast and resources where resources have been prioritised.

Members questions included how do the Youth Support Service engage with young people from the hardest to reach groups; the availability of Drop-In Centres across the County; the need for early intervention; the number of hotspot areas in North Yorkshire with high levels of teenage pregnancy; the percentage of looked after children who are sexually active and likely to become pregnant and the provision of universal youth work with partners, especially those in the voluntary and community sector.

In relation to young people Neet the Chairman of an earlier Scrutiny Task Group on *Supporting Young People into education, employment and training* enquired if a progress report against each of the recommendations listed in the report had been received yet.

The Chairman thanked the Officers for attending the meeting, for answering Members questions and putting the issues into context.

RESOLVED –

That in information provided at the meeting and in the report is noted.

That the committee receive a progress report against each of the recommendations listed in the scrutiny review ‘Supporting young people into education, employment and training’.

75. SAFEGUARDING

CONSIDERED –

The covering report of the Corporate Development Officer provided the committee with background information on the Post Inspection Improvement Plan which was developed to improve delivery of services and safeguard children in North Yorkshire.

The Committee received a presentation from the Assistant Director - Children's Social Care and Alan Tucker Performance & Planning Manager on Safeguarding which covered a number of areas. The timeliness of completed Initial and Core Assessments had been of concern to Members in the past but the performance information provided at the meeting reassured Members of the Committee that improvement was continuous and impressive despite the increasing demand on the service and the problems that had been associated with the ICS computer system.

The presentation went on to outline information on Child Protection Cases and compared the increased number of new Children Protection Plans with national trends.

In relation to performance monitoring the Assistant Director advised the committee of the outcome of the recent Unannounced Inspection; the Adoption Agency Inspection (May 2011) with an overall judgement of Outstanding (previously 'good') and Woodleigh Children's Home – winner of StrategicRISK European Award for the Best Risk Management Approach in the Public Sector (May 2011).

Finally, the Assistant Director advised the committee of the key recommendations of the Munro Review of Child Protection. In summing up she informed the members that a response from Government is awaited but would be happy to return with an update in due course.

Members of the Committee congratulated the Assistant Director and her team of officers on their performance and look forward to their next update in approximately six months time.

The Chairman thanked the Officers for their presentation and added his congratulations to the Children's Social Care team on their achievements.

RESOLVED –

That the information provided at the meeting and in the report is noted.

Those Officers from Children's Social Care bring a progress report back to the Committee on safeguarding matters in six months.

76. 0-19 UNIVERSAL SERVICES REVIEW

CONSIDERED –

The report of NHS North Yorkshire and York which provided a background and purpose to the 0-19 Review of Universal Services which is to develop a coherent pathway, focusing on public health priorities to support the health and well being of children and young people.

Members received a presentation and briefing from Assistant Director Tracey Dale and Helen Billson Senior Commissioning Manager of North Yorkshire and York PCT Commissioners on the progress and outcome of the 0-19 Universal Services Review.

The briefing summarised the processes and consultations undertaken which have formed the basis of this review. But the changing political and financial climates have

meant that regular validation against emerging government policy had been necessary to ensure the outcomes of the review were in line with national direction of travel.

The PCT Commissioners went on to expand upon the Governments plan to increase the number of Health Visitors by 2015 and the impact of the Health Visitor Implementation Plan – “A Call to Action” 2011-15 on the Review of 0-19 Universal Services and Commissioning Milestones.

Members were advised that the next steps were to agree funding with providers and to review the 0-5 proposed specification in line with “A call for action”.

Questions reflected some of the concerns that Members had around School Nursing capacity and whether there is likely to be a national development programme.

The Chairman thanked the PCT Commissioners for attending and clarifying the purpose and aims of the 0-19 Review of Universal Services and the areas still to be addressed.

RESOLVED –

That the information provided at the meeting and in the report is noted.

77. WORK PROGRAMME

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Corporate Development Officer outlined the agenda items covered at the last Mid Cycle Briefing held on the 13th May and invited comments from Members on any of the issues mentioned

The Chairman drew the Committee’s attention to the item in the Work Programme Report concerning the next in-depth scrutiny review. He reminded the meeting that it had been proposed that the committee agree their next in-depth scrutiny review at today’s meeting. However, he felt that there was one other suggestion worth mentioning and that was to do with the Participation of Young People. With the approval of the committee the Chairman requested that the Corporate Development Officer undertakes initial research into this area of interest and a brief report is brought back to the next meeting of the committee in September.

RESOLVED –

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

The meeting concluded at 13:00 hrs.

SB/ALJ