

North Yorkshire County Council

Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2014 at 10.30 am at County Hall, Northallerton.

Present:- County Councillor Elizabeth Shields in the Chair

County Councillors Val Arnold, Derek Bastiman, John Ennis (as substitute for Cliff Trotter) David Jeffels, Janet Jefferson, Anne Jones, Cliff Lunn, Joe Plant, Janet Sanderson, Tim Swales

Co-opted members Graham Richards (Church of England representative), Mr Paul Bircumshaw (Secondary Teacher representative and substitute for Mr Chris Head), Mr Michael Clarkson (Primary Teacher representative)

In attendance: County Councillors Arthur Barker and Tony Hall (Executive Members)
County Councillor Bernard Bateman

Officers: Peter Dwyer (Corporate Director Children and Young Peoples Service (CYPS)), Anton Hodge (Assistant Director Strategic Resources, CYPS), Heather Newman (Adviser Quality & Improvement CYPS), Julie Firth (Head of Effective Practice and Quality Assurance, Children's Social Care), Lorraine Laverton (Corporate Development Officer)

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Cliff Trotter, John Ritchie and co-opted member Jon Carling (Voluntary Sector representative)

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

19. Minutes

Resolved –

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2013 having been printed and circulated were taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

20. Public Questions

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

21. Executive Members Oral Briefing

The Chairman invited the Executive Members and the Corporate Director to update the Committee on the implications of the budget proposals for the Children and Young People's Service.

The Committee were advised that:

- An increase in post 16 home to school / college transport fees would be considered by the Executive in February 2014
- The proposals of the North Yorkshire Commission for School Improvement were included on the agenda but it is good to see schools themselves being involved in school improvement
- Savings from children's social care would be as a result of improvements to services and joined up working whilst further preventative work would reduce the numbers of children and young people requiring residential care.
- Questions would be asked to ensure that buildings are used to capacity and for community benefit
- In looking ahead to the savings for 2015/16 it is difficult to be specific but everything possible would be done to protect frontline delivery of services however in order to achieve the savings required difficult decisions will have to be taken.
- Areas to be reviewed include children's centres, how short breaks are provided, how partner agencies, schools and the County Council might pool resources, invest to save opportunities through an integrated transition team and further work on preventative services.

Members' questions and comments included:

- Reassurance that the needs and concerns of families would be taken into account when reviewing short breaks
- That Members are kept informed about the review of any children's centre in their Division

22. 2013 Annual Report of the Looked After Children Members' Group

Considered -

The report of County Councillor Janet Sanderson, Chairman of the Looked After Children Members' Group updating Members and the wider Council on the work of the Looked after Children Members Group.

County Councillor Janet Sanderson gave a full statement to the Committee in which she outlined the work undertaken by the LAC MG over the previous year. The Committee was unanimous in its support of the work of the Group and thanked Cllr Sanderson for her commitment and the dedication in which she has approached her work with the County Council's looked after children. Cllr Sanderson reiterated the need for all County Councillors to remember their role as a corporate parent and think how they might help the young people in our care. The Committee was particularly pleased to hear that future meetings of the LAC MG will receive an anonymous 'pen portrait' of a young person in the care of the County Council to help develop understanding around the circumstances that can lead to children and young people being 'looked after' and to recognise that each child has his or her own story.

Members' questions and comments included:

- That all County Councillors have responsibilities as corporate parents.
- Support for Regulation 33 inspections of children's residential homes by County Councillors.
- Suggestion to encourage local businesses with regard to employment and apprentice opportunities for looked after young people.

- Recognition for the 23 young people who have gone on to further education.

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

23. Sports Funding to Support Primary School Aged Children

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service updating Members on the current funding arrangements to support primary aged children in Physical Education and Sport and outlining ways in which this funding can improve teaching and learning and extend sporting opportunities outside of the curriculum.

Ms Heather Newman informed Members about sports funding to support primary school children including that all schools with 17 or more primary pupils will receive a lump sum of £8000 plus a premium of £5 per pupil. Smaller schools will receive £500 per pupil for two years. In North Yorkshire this means that the smallest primary school will receive £7,500 and the largest £10,925 per annum. It represents over £5.5 million worth of funding across the County in the first two years.

Members' questions and comments included:

- In these austere times it is good to report on something positive for our young children. First of all it means that extra sport and physical education could in the long run help to reduce obesity in young people; secondly if this country is to achieve the highest rewards at not only at national, but also at international levels such as the Olympic Games and World Sports, then the training has to begin with the youngest.
- The possibility to broaden the scheme to include Parish Council and reassurance that links could be made.
- Recognition that each school is different and can use the funding appropriately to address their own needs.
- Clarification on how outcomes are monitored through the schools own website and OFSTED but that consideration is currently being given to the part the County Council plays in monitoring outcomes.

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

24. Proposals from the North Yorkshire Commission for School Improvement

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service updating Members on the information provided in the North Yorkshire Commission for School Improvement report and seeking their comments.

The report informed the Committee that the Commission was established to address the question: *'How can we develop a collaborative system for effective school improvement that ensures that every school in North Yorkshire is good or outstanding?'*

In addressing this question Members felt it was important that the right people were sitting around the table and so they were pleased to see that those involved included leaders from primary, secondary and special schools, academies and federations together with local authority teams. The Committee agreed that the collaborative spirit in which this piece of work has been approached bodes well for the future and the proposals that the Commission has developed. The proposals include the development of a small number of school-led commissioning groups across the County. The Committee looks forward to a follow up report once the consultation on the proposals is completed and the results analysed.

Resolved –

- a. That the report be noted.
- b. That on conclusion of the consultation a follow up report be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

25. Updating on Developing Stronger Families Programme

Considered -

Report of the Corporate Director - Children and Young People's providing Members with a general overview regarding the implementation and progress of the Troubled Families (locally known as 'Developing Stronger Families') initiative in North Yorkshire.

Ms Julie Firth advised the Committee about the work that continues to support those households who are defined by Central Government as 'troubled families'. The approach which the County Council has taken builds on the strengths of the family and the programme is therefore named 'Developing Stronger Families'. This ensures that they access the right support to address the needs for the whole family rather than responding to each problem, or person separately. Members continue to support the overarching aim of the programme to change the lives of these families for the better in the long term.

The Committee requested a further update on the programme in 12 months.

Resolved –

- a. That the report be noted.
- b. That the Committee receive a follow up report on the programme in twelve months.

26. 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 asked if Members had any additions, comments or changes to make on the Work Programme.

The Committee agreed to defer the final report of the Committee's Task Group looking at Online Safety for Children and Young People until the June 2014 meeting.

The Committee requested a report on the County Council's work on the prevention of child sexual exploitation and agreed that this should take place at the October 2014 meeting.

Resolved –

- a. That the content of the Work Programme report and the Work Programme Schedule are noted.
- b. That a report on the programme 'Developing Stronger Families' is scheduled in 12 months.
- c. That the report on Online Safety for Children and Young people is deferred to the June 2014 meeting.
- d. That a report on the County Council's work to prevent child sexual exploitation be presented to the October 2014 meeting of the Committee.

The meeting concluded at 12:45

LL/JR