

North Yorkshire County Council

Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2015 at 10.30 am at County Hall, Northallerton.

Present: - County Councillor Elizabeth Shields in the chair

County Councillors: Val Arnold, Derek Bastiman, David Jeffels, Janet Jefferson, Cliff Lunn, Joe Plant, John Ritchie, Janet Sanderson, Tim Swales and Cliff Trotter.

Co-opted Members: Mr Paul Bircumshaw (Secondary Teacher representative), Pam Crabtree (Roman Catholic Church representative), Graham Richards (Church of England representative), Jon Carling (Voluntary Sector representative) and Louise Alder (Primary Teacher representative).

In attendance: Executive Member County Councillor Arthur Barker

Officers: Pete Dwyer (Corporate Director (Children and Young People's Services)), Jill Hodges (Assistant Director, Education and Skills), Julie Firth (Head of Prevention), Andrew Terry (Assistant Director, Access and Inclusion (Children and Young People's Services)), Michelle Allison (Head of SEN, Access and Inclusion (Children and Young People's Services)), Louise Dunn (Principal Officer CYPS/Public Health), Bryon Hunter (Scrutiny Team Leader (Central Services)), Neil White (Corporate Development Officer (Central Services)).

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Anne Jones, Jeremy Noott (Parent Governor), David Sharp (Voluntary Sector representative).

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

68. Minutes

The Corporate Director (Children and Young People's Services) advised that in respect of Minute 58, in 2014 there had been 17 primary schools and 2 secondary schools out of the 380 schools in North Yorkshire who had fallen below the benchmark for Key Stage Outcomes.

In response to a question regarding the number of schools who were aiming to come out of the state system and become private academies, the Corporate Director (Children and Young People's Services) commented that North Yorkshire was moving faster than the national average towards making all of its schools good or outstanding. There were 15 academies in North Yorkshire which may rise to 25 or 30 but set against the context of 380 schools in North Yorkshire it was a less significant average than nationally. Meetings with academies heads had shown that they still wanted to be part of the North Yorkshire School Community.

The Corporate Director (Children and Young People's Services) advised that in respect of Minute 64 which made reference to an anticipated 120 redundancies as a result of the change to the service. The latest position has been updated to confirm reduced figures

Compulsory redundancies: 69 headcount = 19.25 fte
Voluntary redundancies: 28 headcount = 23.96 fte

Total 97 Headcount = 43.21 fte

Resolved – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2015 having been printed and circulated be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

69. Public Questions

The Committee was advised that no notice had been received of any public questions or statements to be made at the meeting. However, the Chairman agreed that a public question that had been received after the deadline in respect of the Strategy for Meeting the Social Care Needs of Disabled Children and Young People and their Families 2015-2018 (Minute 73 below) could be asked.

70. Oral Briefing from the Executive Member and Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service

County Councillor Arthur Baker highlighted that the work of the Schools Commission goes on to help assist schools to become good or outstanding and he would continue to report to full council on the progress to reaching the Council's objective of making every school good or outstanding.

Part of this work had involved a Scarborough summit with a wide range of partners to consider how to raise achievement within the schools in Scarborough. The feedback from the summit would help to focus attention of the planned improvements to the service.

71. Update on the North Yorkshire Commission for School Improvement

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service updating Members on the Commission for School Improvement, the recommendations and their implementation, including an update on the restructure of the School Improvement Service.

The Assistant Director, Education and Skills advised that in respect of the update to recommendation 3, the proposal to have five Primary Improvement Partnerships was being reconsidered, and could mean that the number of primary improvement partnerships would be reduced to one that would cover the whole county. This would build on the current networks, skills, capacity and strengths of the Teaching School Alliances and would mean less bureaucracy. This would release additional funding that would be used for school improvement initiatives.

In response to a question, the Corporate Director (Children and Young People's Services) advised that the proposed £1.7m savings would come from the restructure of the School Improvement Service (SIS) about which consultation is now complete and we are currently assimilating and filling posts in the new structure. The new approach was being phased in over a 3 years reflective of the feedback received. It would still mean that North Yorkshire had a significant service but as well as making savings more resources will be released for commissioning more school to school support..

It would also mean with increased collaboration between the schools that more external challenge for the schools could be provided locally.

The Assistant Director, Education and Skills advised that meetings had been and were going on around the county with governors and head teachers with the aim of letting all schools know about the improvement partnerships and how they were going to be involved. There were also consultation papers on the council's website. A very successful set of mini-conferences had been held in January / February which Headteachers and Chairs attended together.

In respect of who was going to Chair the Primary Improvement Partnerships there was some consideration being given to having an independent Chair who was not an existing head teacher but had an educational background. It was currently proposed that there would be one meeting every half term for the partnerships but this could change as the partnerships evolved.

Resolved - that the progress made as summarised in the report, in reshaping the approach to school improvement be noted.

72. Prevention Service Review

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service updating Members on the implementation of the new Prevention Services and providing an overview of some of the changes to operational delivery.

The Head of Prevention commented in response to a question that the success of the change in service would be measured against a range of defined outcomes which will include the key outcomes from the national Troubled Families Programme.

These were:

- Parents and children involved in crime or antisocial behaviour
- Children who have not been attending school regularly
- Children of all ages, who need help, are identified as in need or are subject to a Child Protection Plan
- Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion or young people at risk of worklessness.
- Families affected by domestic violence and abuse.
- Parents and children with a range of health problems.

The Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service advised that 90% of the families in the Developing Stronger Families programme had been "turned round" in North Yorkshire and the council had been able to claim the reward funding from the government. Lessons from this programme have strongly influenced its the shape and approach of the new prevention teams..

In response to a question, the Head of Prevention advised that where the line was drawn between parental and local authority role the local authority was there to add capacity. The Corporate Director added that there where there was a significant safeguarding need the local authority would continue to intervene to protect and where necessary to bring children into the care system.

Resolved - that the report be noted.

73. Strategy for Meeting the Social Care Needs of Disabled Children and Young People and their Families 2015-2018

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service asking Members to consider the responses to consultation on a draft strategy to meet the social care needs of disabled children and young people and their families and seeking Members' views for inclusion in the report of the meeting of the Executive on 26 May 2015.

The Committee considered a further submission from the Save North Yorkshire Disabled Children's Services to the Director's report which queried how the County Council calculated the number of high needs children. It stated that the County Council's method had underestimated this figure and in doing so meant that there were approximately 1500 children who could be eligible for short breaks provision.

The Assistant Director, Access and Inclusion commented that in 2003 the Council following consultation with schools and advice from the Schools Forum had delegated some £4 million of SEN funding to individual schools to enable them to provide support without the recourse to as many statements of special educational needs (SEN). This was designed to encourage inclusive education.

In 2014 the Department for Education (DfE) introduced national changes to the system of funding for High Needs SEN which would have meant writing many more statements of SEN in North Yorkshire (estimated at 1500) and adding to the bureaucratic burden on schools. This was because in North Yorkshire, following the delegation in 2003/04, statements of SEN were made for pupils requiring in excess of approximately £10,000 of additional support, expressed as hours of teaching assistant time, whereas the new national level was set at £6,000. The DfE agreed to a different approach being taken in North Yorkshire at that time, which involved no less funding being made available to schools to enable them to meet needs. This followed discussions at the Schools Forum.

It was now clear where the figure of 3300 had come from but the fact that more children are funded from the High Needs block than have statements of SEN or Education, Health and Care Plans does not imply that the local authority is not providing care services to meet need.

The Assistant Director, Access and Inclusion added that in respect of the Short Breaks provision there was going to be public consultation later on in the year on the Short Breaks Statement which sets out what support is available to families of disabled children. The consultation would run alongside work to further develop the single register of disabled children and to take account of the extended responsibilities relating to the identification of parent carers of disabled children who have needs for support.

The Committee agreed that the Chairman of the Committee should be involved in this consultation process. Furthermore, the consultation should include the relevant local groups.

The Committee received a question from Kerry Fox, Co-Chair of the North Yorkshire Parent and Carers Forum (NYPACT) that noted that the County Council was intending to open and maintain a register of disabled children. However, there was some concern at how this register would be put together and whether it would be complete as information would be added to the register on a voluntary basis by parents or a school.

The Assistant Director, Access and Inclusion commented that a single register was being created, initially of those disabled children known to the local authority. There was a good knowledge of the population of disabled children across the county and the work to bring together established but currently separate data sets was advanced. It would be useful to involve partners such as NYPACT to help and

maintain the register, which might be developed to include other children so that it was as comprehensive and up to date as possible. Guidance would be sought on issues such as data sharing to ensure that the register was correctly maintained. The single register, which would be completed before the report was submitted to the Council's Executive on 26 May 2015, would be compiled from existing data sets.

In response to a question about what the service would look like following the reduction in overall budget, the Assistant Director stated that there was some work to be done before that was entirely clear. This would involve the consultation on the Short Breaks Statement, which would take account of changes to the prevention service, the creation of a single register and how it was decided to allocate remaining discretionary funding. That was why it was the intention to recommend to the Executive that the discretionary elements of the funding for disabled children, young people and their families should be retained in 2015/16.

Resolved that -

- (a) the responses to the public consultation on the draft strategy for meeting the social care needs of disabled children, young people and their families be noted, and
- (b) the Chairman of the Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee be involved in the consultation process later on in the year on the Short Breaks Statement.

74. Children and Young People's Mental Health Strategy

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Service providing the Committee with information about the Children and Young People's emotional and Mental Health Strategy 2014-2017, updating the Committee about progress against some of the priorities set out in the Strategy and identifying how the increased national interest in children's emotional wellbeing and mental health might influence the future development of the Strategy.

The Principal Officer CYPS/Public Health provided the committee with a North Yorkshire Children's Trust document on the Pathway of support for children and young people who deliberately self-harm which is also available at <http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=30322>. This document had been developed by the partners who provided the service as a guide to members of the public. It was planned to provide similar documents for eating disorders and then anxiety in the near future.

The Principal Officer added that following the publication of a cross parliamentary task force report that looked at promoting, protecting and improving children and young people mental health and wellbeing there could be additional funding amounts or the geographical footprints (CCG or Local Authority) that will be used to allocate funding are yet to be confirmed. Any funding will be reliant on the production of a transformation plan produced by a lead commissioner in collaboration with the relevant local authority partners.

In response to a question, the Principal Officer confirmed that voluntary groups who worked with and provided training for children with mental health problems were involved in the Emotional and Mental Health Strategy implementation plan and the production of the pathway documents.

Resolved that -

- (a) The production of the Children and Young People's Emotional and Mental Health Strategy be noted,
- (b) The progress that has been made against some of the actions within the implementation plan be noted, and
- (c) The increased national interest in this topic and the drivers from government to improve mental health services for children and young people be noted.

75. Work Programme

The Committee considered the report of the Scrutiny Team Leader inviting comments from Members on the content of the Committee's programme of work scheduled for future meetings.

The Committee agreed with the proposal that the next meeting of the Committee on 26 June 2015 should be replaced by a workshop to explore potential agenda items for its future committee meetings. There were suggestions that the agenda items should include looking at obesity/healthy eating and how to understand what the Young People Council would want from the Council and vice versa.

The Committee noted that this would be the last meeting chaired by Councillor Elizabeth Shields and expressed its thanks to Councillor Shields for her stewardship of the Committee.

Resolved - that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee on 26 June 2015 be replaced by a workshop to explore potential agenda items for future committee meetings.

The meeting concluded at 1230