

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****28 FEBRUARY 2020****TEACHER RECRUITMENT – THE RURAL CHALLENGE****1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To consider some of the factors which schools face in rural communities. Many of these challenges however can be reflected across the entire education sector irrespective of the demography of school.

2.0 School Planning

- 2.1 North Yorkshire has significant numbers of small schools. As of the latest census we had 21 primary Schools with under 30 pupils on roll, and 51 primary schools with under 50 on roll. Notably there are 126 primary schools with 100 or less on roll, constituting 56% of our remaining 222 maintained primary schools.
- 2.2 The majority of our smallest schools are in rural areas many of which are generally seeing a decline in pupil population, in stark contrast to our urban centres where growth is typically the norm largely as a result of new housing. Surplus capacity in rural areas is high at around 15% and 3500 places county-wide. This can lead to vulnerability for individual schools if they see their popularity with parents decline resulting in falling pupil rolls.

3.0 School Finances

- 3.1 Schools balances stood at £14m as at 31st March 2019 – a reduction of £4m on the previous year. Balances remained broadly robust for primary schools although aggregate secondary school balances halved. Of particular concern is the financial balances position for Special Schools which reduced significantly. Analysis of the outturn position suggest that governors and other school leaders are taking action to address budget deficit projections but the financial position for many schools remains challenging.
- 3.2 Changes in pupil numbers, particularly for small schools, can require schools to take action to remain financially sustainable although funding is lagged which provides some limited time to adjust. Early action is imperative to avoid building up a financial deficit which otherwise leads to a harder, longer recovery plan. In some small schools, the LAs experience over the last few years suggests that, in some cases, financial sustainability issues can quickly turn into viability issues, often linked to challenges in school improvement and leadership issues.

4.0 Recruitment

- 4.1 Recruitment within a wide range of sectors can be challenging for North Yorkshire; as areas such as the Coast and the North Yorkshire Moors have challenges around mobility i.e. people coming to the areas to retire and skilled graduates moving to bigger cities for tailored opportunities and lifestyles. This has a knock on effect; with house prices around the picturesque villages being above average housing is out of the price range for graduates and young people preventing them access to the property ladder. This together with small schools providing limited career development opportunities due to their size and the prospect of long challenging commutes to change roles increases longevity of teachers in role. Whilst retention is positive in terms of consistency it limits growth, progression, skill development and can slow the adoption of modern methods whilst limiting opportunities for newly qualified teachers. With long service and experience comes higher pay under teaching terms and conditions, in school budgets this inevitably means fewer staff. When a vacancy occurs the challenge is therefore greater, and the gap has significant impact. The challenges identified above are reflected in the diversity data of teachers in LA schools across North Yorkshire, see Appendix 1.
- 4.2 These challenges are most acute in the North Yorkshire Coastal Area, In response a workforce planning and teacher recruitment solution has been implemented. Schools HR colleagues complete a health check regarding staffing and develop a workforce plan for the school to aid them rise to the challenges together with a middle leader development programme. Alongside this a recruitment specialist from NYCC's Resourcing Solutions has directly recruited for the schools using a personalised, proactive and partnership approach resulting in over 125 education professionals being appointed to coastal schools, schools being fully staffed for the new term in September and the financial benefits of saving advertising spend (estimated £21k) and avoid of requiring supply teachers (estimated £560k per term). In addition to the specialist recruitment support the Opportunity Area has funded relocation and recruitment incentives package to attract teachers and their families to the area which reimburses for stamp duty, estate agency fees and moving costs for example. This is having a positive effect on school recruitment and allows people to look at buying not just renting a property in the area. As a result we have welcomed 27 education professionals to the coast.

Recommendations

5.0 That the report be noted.

**County Hall
NORTHALLERTON**

Author: Judith Kirk
Contact Details: Tel: 01609 532843
E-mail: Judith.kirk@northyorks.gov.uk

Presenter of Report: Judith Kirk
30 January 2020
Background Documents: None

Annexes: Appendix 1 – Diversity of teachers NYCC.

APPENDIX 1

Diversity of teachers NYCC: total number 2952

