

North Yorkshire County Council

Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2012 at 10.00 am at County Hall, Northallerton.

Present:- Cllr Keith Barnes in the Chair

County Councillors:- Andrew Backhouse Vice Chair, Janet Jefferson, Executive Member Tony Hall, Executive Member Arthur Barker, David Blades, Jim Clark, Janet Sanderson, Tim Swales, Caroline Seymour, Joe Plant, Cliff Trotter, John Batt, Herbert Tindall (substitute for David Jeffels), Ms Helena McGourran, Roman Catholic Church representative, Mr Chris Head Secondary School representative, Bjorn Risis Voluntary Sector representative.

Officers:- Cynthia Welbourn, Corporate Director Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) Andrew Terry Assistant Director CYPS, Anton Hodge Assistant Director CYPS, Jenny Morgan CYPS, Anne Shaw Head of Fostering & Adoption Service CYPS, Nic Haughton Service Manager for Adoption CYPS, James Parkes Youth Support Service CYPS, Julie Bolus NHS North Yorkshire & York (NY&Y PCT), Helen Bilsden NY&Y PCT, Jo Johnston Harrogate & District NHS Foundation Trust, Stephanie Bratcher Corporate Development Officer (Scrutiny Support).

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor David Jeffels, Graham Richards Church of England representative, Judith Bromfield Voluntary Sector representative

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

115. Minutes

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2012 having been printed and circulated be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

116. Public Questions

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

117. Executive Members Oral Briefing

The Chairman asked Executive Member Arthur Barker to respond briefly to a number of pre-determined questions regarding:

- **Maintenance of tenanted properties on school sites** -This question arose from the discovery of the need for major repairs to a tenanted property at one school.

Executive Member Arthur Barker informed the Committee that most schools are covered by the Maintenance and Service Scheme (MASS), those schools

that have chosen not to be part of the MASS scheme cover the maintenance requirements themselves. A review of the condition of all such properties is underway.

- **Review of Pupil Referral Services**

County Councillor Arthur Barker explained that the directorate's review had been completed but no report has been published as yet and suggested that once he receives a copy of the report he updates the Committee then.

- **Sale of playing fields**

County Councillor Arthur Barker explained to the Committee the background to the sale of playing fields at Ingleton, and a consequential reference to the Secretary of State

- **Protocol for changes to Children's Centre management**

County Councillor Arthur Barker advised the Members that in the event of any objections to proposed changes the Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee would probably be consulted but the matter would then be decided by Exec.

- **Effect of GCSE grade boundary changes in North Yorkshire**

The Corporate Director informed the meeting that some results had not been what was anticipated, and she referred to the effect this will have had on some young people. There will be an analysis of the results across the County to gather facts and then a considered response put forward.

Executive Member Tony Hall briefly contributed by updating the Committee on his continuing progress to learn about the Children and Young People's Service and the role of Lead Member. He welcomed the Committee's interest in the Action Plan for Adoption and was pleased to see the final draft of the Task Group's report on Youth Participation.

The Chairman thanked the Executive Members and Corporate Director for their updates.

Resolved –

That the Committee would await an update from the Executive Member regarding the Review of Pupil Referral Services

118. Action Plan for Adoption: Tackling Delay

The Chairman advised the Committee that he had received correspondence from County Councillor Caroline Patmore regarding her concerns about the government's changes to the adoption process. She asked that the Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee request a briefing from the Corporate Director of the Children & Young People's Service (CYPS) regarding the Action Plan for Adoption which was published in March 2012.

Considered –

The report of the Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service on the Action Plan for Adoption: Tackling Delay.

Anne Shaw, Head of Adoption and Fostering introduced the report by explaining the changes the Government will be making to speed up the adoption system in England - adoption being one of the Government's top priorities. The aim is to create a more

effective and user-friendly adoption system and to ensure that adoption is available for children where this is in their best interests. The Government published an Action Plan for Adoption to overhaul the system for prospective adopters and strengthen the performance regime for local authorities. This action plan sets out a range of proposals to speed up the process for children; to overhaul the service for prospective adopters and to strengthen local accountability for the timeliness of adoption services.

Nic Haughton Service Manager for Adoption informed the Committee how the Adoption Service will respond to the Action Plan. He said that the challenge for the County Council will be to increase the speed with which decisions are made about whether a Looked After Child should be adopted and when such a decision has been made the speed with which they are placed with their adoptive parents. Many of the measures proposed in the Action Plan are to be welcomed and bring together aspiration and best practice in adoption services. Risks associated from the need to achieve greater speed without reducing the quality of the work will be addressed and carefully managed. The increase in numbers of children to be placed for adoption and the significantly faster process for the preparation and assessment of prospective adopters is likely to increase the levels of support following placement and at any point after the adoption order.

Members concerns focused around the radical change required to speed up the adoption process at the expense of quality and the risks associated with 'fast tracking'; the support available for adopter parents and the morale in the team. The Officer advised the meeting that North Yorkshire's Adoption Service is well placed to respond to many aspects of the Action Plan and the service will ensure they move as fast as they can whilst retaining quality of decision and assessment. He also remarked that the team is very aware of the big task ahead of them and are a very capable and committed workforce. And as there has been no indication of additional resources the likely increase for support in North Yorkshire will need to be quantified.

The Chairman thanked the Officers for their detailed briefing.

Resolved –

That the information provided at the meeting is noted

119. School Funding Arrangements for 2013/14

Considered –

The report of the Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) on the final decision taken by the Department for Education on School Funding Reform.

Anton Hodge, Assistant Director for Finance and Management Services CYPS introduced his report and reminded the Committee that over the last two years there have been a number of consultations on school funding issues and that the Committee has received several updates regarding the County Council's response to each of the consultations.

Members were provided with an overview of the final decision taken by the Department for Education and were advised that the government continues to state that it will work towards a "national funding formula" although this will not be before the next Spending Review period (i.e. after 2015).

The Committee learned that the underlying principle of the new regime will be “maximum delegation” – i.e. everything in the Schools Block unless the Schools Forum agrees otherwise. Anton Hodge explained that the County Council already supports high levels of delegation to schools and this is reflected in the low level of Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG). North Yorkshire’s formula for schools has been developed over many years with the Schools Forum to ensure that every school is funded at an appropriate level.

Members were also advised that in future all school formulae will only be able to include components from a list of 12 allowable factors. Whichever combination of factors the County Council decides to use there will be significant winners and losers among North Yorkshire schools, although there will be a time-limited transition/protection period. Members had particular concerns about the lump sum and the impact this will have in drawing resources away from pupil-led funding.

The Committee asked about Academy funding and were informed that the way Academies will be funded in the future places them back on a level of funding which is consistent with Local Authority maintained schools.

Members enquired about the consultation meetings planned during September and October and were advised that these are open to all schools and governing bodies, and members of the public.

Members asked for their concerns to be noted regarding the restrictions being placed on the formula and also on some of the issues for High Needs funding and the changes to the role of the Schools Forum.

The Chairman thanked Anton Hodge for his detailed briefing and for providing the Committee with a concise overview on what is a very complex area.

Resolved –

That the information provided at the meeting is noted.

120. Children’s Health Provision

Considered –

- (i)** The progress report of NHS North Yorkshire and York (NY and Y) Commissioners on Universal Services for 0-19 years and
- (ii)** The progress report of Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust on Delivery of the Healthy Children Programme and Health Visiting Implementation Plan

Before inviting NHS Officers to commence their briefings the Chairman explained that the request for these two updates followed on from previous briefings provided by the PCT and Harrogate & District Foundation Trust. The focus of today’s briefing was to explain the current position on Universal Services for children and young people and how the Health Visiting Implementation Plan impacts on current provision. It also provided an opportunity to follow up on the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review – Health Visitors and School Nursing Service.

(i) The Director of Nursing Julie Bolus NHS North Yorkshire & York began her briefing by stating that due to the significant financial pressure being experienced by the PCT a decision had been taken recently to withdraw the proposed increase in funding for the Health Visitor budget 2012/2013. She went on to say the Corporate Director is aware of this decision and discussions will be taking place to assess the impact and look for solutions on delivering the Healthy Child Programme.

Julie Bolus continued her briefing by informing the meeting that the NHS North Yorkshire and York report explained the growth trajectory for the recruitment of additional health visitors in North Yorkshire & York as 17.4 wte by the end of March 2015. Year One 2011/12 was front loaded and translated into the investment in an additional 4.87 wte for Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT). Year Two (2012/13) planned growth was for an additional 3.0 wte health visitors but as the Committee heard earlier funding by NHS North Yorkshire & York has been withdrawn.

The Members attention was drawn to the information in the report on

- the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) licensed preventative programme for young first time mothers. Members were advised that an opportunity had arisen to work jointly with East Riding colleagues on the FNP initiative along the East Coast. The PCT and NYCC had already identified the East Coast as a priority for FNP and other early intervention services and as East Riding are also targeting their East Coast this became the joint driver to work together.
- the 2 – 2 ½ year check for all level 3 children; those who are eligible for the developmental check will be invited to attend a development review. This year check will be universally rolled out over subsequent years of the Healthy Children implementation plan.
- Multi-agency workshops to strengthen the interface between midwifery, health visitors and children's centres in delivering an integrated 0-5 Healthy Child Programme have taken place.

Public Health services for children aged 5 – 19 years.

Members were reminded that under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, local authorities will be responsible for commissioning public health services for 5-19 year olds from April 2013 when public health responsibilities transfer from Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to local government. The National Commissioning Board (NHS CB) will commission public health services for 0 - 5s until 2015 when responsibility will transfer to local authorities.

The recent publication of the School Nurse Development Programme sets out the new model for school nursing including delivery of the 5 -19 Healthy Child Programme. (Copy of the publication was circulated with the agenda papers). The expectation is that providers and commissioners of school nursing services promote a revitalised service to ensure that all children, young people and families are offered a core programme of evidence-based preventative health care with additional care and support for those who need it.

The Chairman thanked the Director of Nursing for her honest and detailed briefing and suggested that a report on the outcomes of any discussions concerning the withdrawal of the Health Visitor budget for 2012/13 could be brought to the next meeting of the Committee on the 16th November which was accepted by the Director of Nursing.

(ii) Report of Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust – Progress on Delivery of the Healthy Child Programme and Health Visiting Implementation Plan.

Jo Johnson from Harrogate & District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT) introduced her report saying that HDFT have worked with the PCT to agree the delivery of the Healthy Child Programme.

The Committee were advised that the commissioned model delivered by HDFT for North Yorkshire incorporates a 0-19 years model of care across health visiting and school nursing. The 2011/12 target to increase Health Visitor numbers increased the baseline from 83.59 to 88.46 wte. The increase in Health Visitor numbers for HDFT 2012/13 is 3.00 fte but in view of the PCT's announcement a decision is awaited.

Members were briefed on current progress which included the implementation of the 2 – 2 ½ year health check and the Building Community Capacity development of three pilot projects which began in May 2012 - the Alcohol Project Harrogate; Obesity Project in Easingwold; Make Do and Grow in Ryedale.

Members received an update on the IT system SystemOne which should be completed by the end of September 2012 and will support services in the delivery of care as well as providing validation and assurance of service delivery.

The Chairman thanked Jo Johnson from Harrogate District NHS Foundation Trust for her very helpful briefing.

Resolved –

That the information provided at the meeting is noted.

That a report from NHS North Yorkshire & York Commissioners covering the outcome of their discussions to deliver the Healthy Child Programme is received for the next meeting of the Committee on the 16th November.

121. Draft Strategy for Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People with Autism – Responses to Consultation

The Chairman reminded Members that following the completion of the 12 week consultation on the draft strategy for meeting the needs of children and young people with autism a report and digest of responses would be presented at this meeting. The Chairman invited Andrew Terry Assistant Director CYPS to introduce this report.

Andrew Terry advised the meeting that in line with national trends, increasing numbers of children are being diagnosed by health services as having autism. North Yorkshire has many examples of good and improving provision but it was agreed that a concerted drive is needed to achieve greater integration and consistency of approach. This had highlighted the need for an overarching joint strategy with Health to improve diagnostic pathways, advice and support, training and provision.

Members of the Committee were already aware that during the summer term there had been widespread consultation on the draft strategy. The officer advised the meeting that this consultation had been welcomed by parents/carers of children and young people with autism. In total 174 people attended the public consultation meetings with a number of written submissions and correspondence having been received. Members were informed that these responses/comments will contribute to the strategy which will help to shape the local authority's local offer of services; target better use of resources; identify and meet need; improve and integrate services and broaden the skills base of the workforce.

Officers explained that they had engaged early with the North Yorkshire PACT (including Ryedale Special Families) who provide support for families of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Members asked if there was an actual increase in the number of children diagnosed with autism or was it better and earlier diagnosing. Julie Bolus, PCT Executive

Director of Nursing advised that there is better guidance available and a greater understanding by health professionals who recognise and identify autism at an early stage.

Members asked if there were clusters of young people in particular areas being diagnosed around the County and were advised that this has not been found to be the case.

The Committee raised their concerns that the increase in the number of children diagnosed with autism might require an increase in support to families and asked whether this was going to be available.

Members were advised that not all children diagnosed with autism require a specialist service; that there would be an emphasis on workforce development; that the strategy would encourage the targeting of specialist support and resources and improved integration. The growth in the number of pupils requiring an intervention would continue to be monitored but any additional resource would need to be found from the overall High Need block of resources for special educational needs and alternative provision.

Other concerns related to training in mainstream schools and ensuring schools' needs are also being met; the giving of medication in school environments and communicating with parents to ensure they are aware of what services are available.

The Members' final comments concerned the responses from parents and young people who identified the need for improved transition arrangements for young people with autism into adulthood, from school into continuing education. A number of Members spoke about their involvement with transitions issues that they had become involved with in their local divisions, in particular the perceived opportunities and provision for young people on their return to North Yorkshire from specialist residential colleges.

The Chairman said the Committee will watch with interest the progress being made by the joint CYPS and HAS senior officer group in Improving Transition to Adulthood and would welcome progress reports in due course.

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee thanked the officers for their detailed briefing and for the opportunity to add their comments to the consultation prior to consideration of the revised draft by Executive Members in October.

Resolved:

That the information provided at the meeting is noted.

That Members comments regarding the consultation on the draft Strategy for Meeting the needs of children and young people with Autism are forwarded to the Executive Members.

That the Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee request a progress report from the joint CYPS and HAS senior officer group on Improving Transition to Adulthood in six-nine months.

122. Scrutiny Review - Youth Participation – Recognising Young People for their positive contribution

Considered –

The covering report of the Corporate Development Officer and the final draft report of the Scrutiny Task Group

County Councillor John Batt introduced the report of the Task Group and spoke about the importance of meeting and listening to young people on youth participation. He said this has been an enjoyable and rewarding scrutiny review – it has put us in touch with young people and hopefully this is something that can be built on.

The report set out the Task Group's findings and put forward the views of young people and how important it is for their contributions to be recognised and for young people to be part of the decision making process. The draft report had been shared with the youth councils and positive feedback in support of this scrutiny review has been received from the young people.

Apologies were received from the Chairman of the North Yorkshire Youth Council – Tom Gudgeon who had asked James Parkes the Youth Engagement Officer to substitute for him.

James Parkes advised the meeting that the North Yorkshire Youth Council was very pleased to see that young people are on the County Council's agenda and enjoyed the opportunity to speak to elected Members and would like to enable other young people to have the same opportunity. The officer then mentioned that a positive outcome of the report had been that the three youth councils have already been in discussions about how they can work together to shape the future of Youth Voice in North Yorkshire.

County Councillor Batt advised the Committee that the Task Group's report will be considered by the Executive on the 16th October 2012.

Resolved –

That the information provided at the meeting is noted.

123. Work Programme

Considered –

The report of the Scrutiny Team Leader which summarised the items covered at the last Mid-Cycle Briefing.

The Chairman asked if there were any comments or questions on the matters covered by the Work Programme Report and if anyone required a copy of any of the Briefing Reports to contact the Corporate Development Officer.

Resolved –

That the information contained in the Work Programme Report and Work Programme Schedule attached at Annex A is noted.

The meeting concluded at 13:15

SB/ALJ