

North Yorkshire County Council

Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 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, Anne Jones, Cliff Lunn, Joe Plant, John Ritchie, Janet Sanderson, Tim Swales, David Blades (as substitute for Cliff Trotter).

Co-opted Members: Mr Paul Bircumshaw (Secondary Teacher representative), Mr Tom Cavell-Taylor (Parent Governor), Pam Crabtree (Roman Catholic Church representative), Mr Jeremy Noott (Parent Governor), David Sharp (Voluntary Sector representative), Graham Richards (Church of England representative), Jon Carling (Voluntary Sector representative),

In attendance: Executive Member County Councillor Tony Hall

Officers: Pete Dwyer (Corporate Director (Children and Young People's Services)), Katharine Bruce (Lead Adviser - Wellbeing, Quality and Improvement (Children and Young People's Services)), Clare Barrowman (Education Development Adviser, Quality and Improvement (Children and Young People's Services)), Dr Lincoln Sargeant (Director of Public Health (Health and Adult Services)), Claire Robinson (Health Improvement Manager (Health and Adult Services)), Carolyn Bird (Assistant Director - Prevention and Commissioning (Children and Young People's Services)), 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)), Bryon Hunter (Scrutiny Team Leader (Central Services)), Diane Parsons (Corporate Development Officer (Central Services)), Neil White (Corporate Development Officer (Central Services)).

Apologies for absence were received from: County Councillor Cliff Trotter, Louise Alder (Primary Teacher representative).

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

58. Minutes

Paul Bircumshaw highlighted that he had asked a question regarding Key Stage outcomes at the Committee meeting of 24 October 2014 but that neither this nor the response had been minuted. Mr Bircumshaw clarified that he wished to ascertain whether NYCC knows how many and which of its schools fall below the benchmark for Key Stage outcomes. It was agreed that the Corporate Director would provide a response on this ahead of the next Committee meeting.

In relation to item 49 of the minutes, County Councillor John Ritchie informed the Committee that the NYCC Executive will be meeting on 3rd February 2015 to discuss future funding of the North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF). The Committee had previously discussed this issue in detail and recommended to the Executive that funding should be maintained at current levels. Councillor Ritchie

highlighted to Members that the report going to the Executive meeting is recommending a 25% reduction in funding to the NYLAF.

Resolved –

That pending the response to be provided by the Corporate Director regarding Key Stage outcomes, the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2014 having been printed and circulated be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

59. Public Questions

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

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

County Councillor Tony Hall highlighted that Ofsted have produced a report following their recent inspection of local authority responses to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) entitled "The sexual exploitation of children: it couldn't happen here, could it?" The key topics highlighted by the report have been reviewed through the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and they have provided a response on the issues. The Local Government Association (LGA) has also published a resource pack on tackling CSE. A summary of the LGA guidance was circulated for Members at the meeting. Linked in to the CSE agenda, Councillor Hall indicated that a briefing note was available regarding protocols for dealing with missing Looked After Children locally. This will be circulated to Members of the Committee for their information.

Councillor Hall also highlighted that the all-age Autism Strategy is now well on its journey to completion, seeing an amalgamation of the Children's and Adults Autism Strategies. This will be available in October this year.

Additionally, Councillor Hall made reference to the work of the Supporting Families agenda under the 2020 North Yorkshire programme and how this would help to reduce the care population. Councillor Hall also referred to the agenda item on the draft strategy for meeting the social care needs of disabled children, young people and their families and emphasised to Members that this strategy is principally about service improvement and finding different ways of delivering services.

Pete Dwyer highlighted several issues for Members. The budget reports will be considered the Executive on 3rd February 2015 and will include the savings programme for Children and Young People's Services. He also referred to the Report of the North Yorkshire Commission for School Improvement from January 2014, the associated consultation and plans for the new LA school improvement service to be in place by September 2015.

Mr Dwyer also highlighted that there has been a lot of national coverage recently around Key Stage 4 and 5 results in terms of reduced performance. However, North Yorkshire is within the top 20% of local authorities across the country for performance in both Key Stage areas and we are performing above the national average. However, Mr Dwyer also advised that North Yorkshire's performance on free school meals remains below the national average so further work is needed to tackle this.

Mr Dwyer acknowledged the excellent contribution of staff within the Children and Young People's Service which has led to being shortlisted for two Local

Government Chronicle awards; namely Louise Dunn's team around the re-commissioning of the Healthy Child Programme and the children's social care team shortlisting for the Safeguarding Transformation Award.

County Councillor Elizabeth Shields asked if an update could be provided on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) within North Yorkshire. Mr Dwyer responded that there has been some comprehensive scoping work done on this issue within Children and Young People's Services which was presented to the LSCB in September 2014. Estimates based on Yorkshire and Humber figures would suggest that between 0.4% and 2.8% of children under 18 years of age are at risk of FGM within the county. It has been identified as a priority issue for the LSCB and they have set up a task and finish group to take some further work forward around this. This will include increasing awareness of FGM and improving guidance for professionals.

61. Update on the Growing Up in North Yorkshire Survey 2014

Considered –

The report of Katharine Bruce (Lead Adviser – Wellbeing, Quality and Improvement (Children and Young People's Service)) and Simon Moss (Performance and Change Manager, Prevention and Commissioning (Children and Young People's Service)) regarding the key findings of the recent Growing Up in North Yorkshire Survey 2014.

Katharine advised that Simon Moss was unable to attend due to ill health but wished to acknowledge his important contribution in pulling together and analysing the data from the survey.

North Yorkshire has a good participation rate from schools in the survey when compared with other shire counties, although it was acknowledged that capacity can be an issue for schools in completing and returning the survey. Katharine highlighted areas where the statistics are encouraging and indicated improvement from the last survey two years ago. These included the findings from Years 6, 8 and 10 pupils which indicate an increase in the number of pupils reporting that they never drink alcohol. Additionally, a high number of Year 2 children (72%) now report that they know how to stay safe online.

However, some areas highlighted less positive findings. These included a sharp increase in low-level negative behaviour (such as name calling and pushing) experienced at school by Year 6 pupils both in and out of the classroom.

Members were concerned that students in Years 8 and 10 do not feel they are given enough information and guidance to help them in their transition through to further or higher education or on to the world of work. Katharine advised that this is potentially as a consequence of careers advisory provision having been moved into schools during the last two years and there being insufficient focus on this provision. Members heard that further work will be done through the Children and Young People's Service to target this important area of provision.

Members commended the comprehensive nature of the report but felt that it will be important to keep some momentum and move forward as a result of the findings. This is particularly the case in areas such as e-safety, drug and alcohol-taking where the survey highlighted some worrying trends but where there is also much effective partnership underway to tackle such issues and where some improvements can be seen.

Dr Tom Cavell-Taylor highlighted that there is a considerable gender imbalance at play in schools whereby subjects such as Physics mostly attract male students and Arts subjects attract more females. He felt that pupils are not being served well in making decisions at 14 or 15 years old and that this is a health and wellbeing issue so wondered if it could be included in the survey. Katharine highlighted that a project has just been signed off within Children and Young People's Services to better promote science, technology, engineering and maths among all pupils.

Members requested sight of the district breakdown summaries. These were available in hard copy at the meeting but it was agreed they would be circulated electronically.

Resolved –

- a) That the information contained in the report be noted.
- b) That the district summaries of the Growing Up in North Yorkshire Survey 2014 data be circulated electronically to all Committee Members.

62. Growing Up as a Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgender Young Person in North Yorkshire

Considered -

The report of Clare Barrowman (Education Development Adviser, Quality and Improvement (Children and Young People's Services)), providing the Committee with information drawn from data in the Growing Up in North Yorkshire Survey 2014 regarding the particular experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people.

Members felt this to be a very illuminating but very stark report as it highlighted that the majority of LGBT young people are having a more negative experience growing up in the county than their peers. This relates to their time at school – a poorer resilience and ability to achieve – their engagement in risky behaviours and their emotional and mental health and wellbeing. For example, Members heard that 41% of LGBT young people in Year 10 have been bullied at or near school in the last year as against 17% of other young people in that age bracket. Additionally, 54% of Year 10 LGB girls have self-harmed in the last year as opposed to 16% of other Year 10 girls.

Clare Barrowman highlighted the importance of sustaining support groups for LGBT young people such as those currently operating in Harrogate and Scarborough. Carolyn Bird (Assistant Director - Prevention and Commissioning (Children and Young People's Services)) advised Members that this type of targeted youth provision will remain a key focus going forward, in partnership with the voluntary sector. David Sharp (Voluntary Sector representative) echoed this by stating that North Yorkshire Youth will continue to support such groups although the greatest difficulty faced is often finding volunteers to help run groups.

In relation to the issues raised in the report around self-harm, County Councillor Tony Hall highlighted that there is a piece of work underway through Children and Young People's Services around pathways for looking at self-harm and engaging with schools to ensure that appropriate support is provided through mental health services.

County Councillor John Ritchie proposed that a task and finish group be set up by a small number of Members from the Committee to look at the issues raised further

and to see if Members can add further value as community leaders. The proposal was seconded by County Councillor Joe Plant. Expressions of interest in joining the task group were sought and it was agreed that the following Members would be involved: County Councillors John Ritchie, David Jeffels, Joe Plant, Val Arnold and Derek Bastiman.

Resolved -

- a) That the report be noted.
- b) That a task and finish group is set up comprising Members from the Committee to progress work on this issue.

63. Final North Yorkshire Joint Alcohol Strategy 2014-2019

Considered -

The report of Dr Lincoln Sargeant (Director of Public Health (Health and Adult Services)) and Claire Robinson (Health Improvement Manager (Health and Adult Services)) regarding the finalised North Yorkshire Joint Alcohol Strategy 2014-19 and its implementation.

Dr Sargeant referred back to the agenda items regarding the Growing Up in North Yorkshire Survey 2014 and emphasised that the final Joint Alcohol Strategy needs to build on and maintain the encouraging indicators around alcohol use in young people. To ensure this is achieved, Dr Sargeant outlined three key actions that need to be undertaken and where further work will be progressed in partnership with other agencies:

- Addressing the stigma of alcohol abuse and understanding that those who are alcohol-dependant can be difficult to identify because they can remain highly functional.
- Ensuring that treatment is available to those who need it. The countywide North Yorkshire Horizons drug and alcohol treatment and recovery service is now up and running and there is also a shift towards focussing treatment around families.
- Reducing alcohol-related crime. Part of this is about dealing with licensing issues.

Resolved -

- a) That the information in the report and the final North Yorkshire Joint Alcohol Strategy 2014-19 be noted.

64. Prevention Service Review

Considered -

The oral report of Carolyn Bird (Assistant Director - Prevention and Commissioning (Children and Young People's Services)), updating the Committee on the progress of the review of preventative services taking place in Children and Young People's Services.

Members heard that the application and interview process has been underway to get staff in place for the new delivery model. There have, unfortunately, also been 120 redundancies as part of this process. Not all of these are full-time staff and the Committee heard that this has been a necessary part of coming out of direct

provision of universal youth services and bringing about a more targeted way of working.

Carolyn updated that several consultations have either already been underway or are yet to take place across the county around reducing or merging current Children's Centre services.

The Healthy Child Programme has been re-commissioned and we noted that Harrogate and District Foundation Trust has been awarded the main contract. Unfortunately a provider of appropriate quality has not been found for provision of the healthy lifestyle service so CYPS are developing a specialist in-house service to take this forward. NYCC is working closely with the Department of Health on the move of the 0 to 5-year Healthy Child Programme to NYCC in October 2017.

Paul Bircumshaw asked whether there are figures for the number of staff in education who are being made redundant. Pete Dwyer will obtain details and provide a summary about the impact on staffing for the next Committee meeting.

A further, detailed, report on the implementation of the prevention service review will be brought to the next Committee meeting when the service is fully operational.

Resolved -

- a) That the update report be noted.
- b) That further information will be provided to Members about redundancies in education as a result of the changes to the service.
- c) That a further report be given at the next meeting of the Committee on how the service is operating once the review has been completed and changes implemented.

65. Draft Strategy for Meeting the Social Care Needs of Disabled Children, Young People and their Families

Considered -

The report of Andrew Terry (Assistant Director, Access and Inclusion (Children and Young People's Services)) regarding the consultation underway on a draft strategy to meet the care needs of disabled children, young people and their families.

The strategy is a response to the £887k target saving to be met within the 2020 North Yorkshire programme. Andrew Terry explained that the strategy is aimed at being ambitious and forward-looking for disabled children whilst still reducing costs and managing within reduced resources.

As part of the proposals outlined in the report for evolving services, Members discussed in some detail the proposal to reduce residential short breaks for families and increase family-based overnight accommodation through domiciliary care or with foster carers. Mr Terry acknowledged that there would be a need to increase the number of foster carers available to support the particular needs of disabled children. Pete Dwyer advised the Committee that the Children and Young People's Service have changed the spending profile for the Fostering Service to help respond to this need and to ensure that there are sufficient carers in place to deal with this increased provision.

County Councillor Janet Jefferson asked whether the reference on pages 35 and 37 of the report around ceasing the annual grant to the East Barnby outdoor education

centre was purely aimed at disabled children or whether this applied to all children using this facility. Mr Terry confirmed that this is a specific disability grant which will be removed. However, the service would like to ensure that specific needs can still be met, for example through parent funding such as direct payments.

Dr Tom Cavell-Taylor asked about the details in the report around the average cost of overnight accommodation. He suggested that the report should be looking at the marginal costs of reduction in these units when taking a view on the savings to be made. Mr Dwyer clarified that the proposals will ultimately mean the closure of residential provision.

The consultation will end on 11th March and Members agreed to receive a further report at the next Committee meeting to review the results.

Resolved -

- a) That the information within the report be noted.
- b) That the Committee will receive the results of the public consultation on the draft strategy at its next meeting on 17th April 2015.

66. Home to School and College Transport: Savings Proposals

Considered –

The report of Andrew Terry (Assistant Director, Access and Inclusion (Children and Young People's Services)) regarding the consultation underway to remove two areas of discretionary provision from the home to school and college transport policy.

Andrew Terry explained that this consultation is around meeting a further target saving (£325k) for the 2020 North Yorkshire programme, in addition to the £3.928m that has already been saved. Members heard that the proposals focus on limiting free transport for children aged 8 to 11 who live more than three miles from their normal or catchment school. Furthermore, that free transport will be removed for some pupils who are at a critical stage of their secondary education who move house but want to remain at the same school at which they started GCSE courses.

Members expressed concerns about the potential impact of the proposals, particularly on those families who had previously been able to rely on the free provision. Andrew Terry explained that there will be some arrangements made to assist families such as enabling monthly payments rather than requiring payment for an annual pass, for example.

County Councillor Janet Sanderson highlighted the high cost of dealing with the transport appeals process and asked whether on balance it would be better to focus resources in some instances on highways improvements so that there are suitable footpaths to enable children to walk to school more easily. Andrew Terry acknowledged that providing transport is costly but commented that providing footpaths would be more costly and in many cases would be impractical because of the distances involved.

The consultation closes on 11th March 2015. A full report with the consultation outcomes will be brought to the next Committee meeting.

Resolved –

- a) That the information in the report be noted.
- b) That a full report of the consultation outcomes will be brought to the next Committee meeting on 17th April 2015.

67. Work Programme

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.

It was highlighted that the mid-cycle briefing scheduled for 20th May 2015 will take place on the rising of the meeting of the full County Council, not at 10:30am as indicated in the appendix.

No further suggestions or additions were made to the forward work programme by Members.

Resolved - that the content of the work programme report and the work programme schedule are noted.

The meeting concluded at 12:50pm