

North Yorkshire County Council

Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2017 at 10.30am at County Hall, Northallerton.

Present: County Councillor Janet Jefferson in the Chair.

Councillors: Val Arnold, Stephanie Duckett, Keane Duncan, Mel Hobson, Cliff Lunn, Stuart Martin MBE, Joe Plant, Gill Quinn, Angus Thompson and Annabel Wilkinson.

Co-opted Members: David Sharp (North Yorkshire Youth) and David Watson (North Yorkshire Sport).

In attendance: Executive Member: County Councillor Janet Sanderson, Nick Frost Chair of the North Yorkshire Childrens Safeguarding Board)

Officers: Ray Busby (Corporate Development Officer (Central Services)), Stuart Carlton, Corporate Director of CYPS) Judith Hay (Assistant Director (CYPS)), Claire Robinson (Health Improvement Manager, Health and Adult Services).

Apologies for absence were received from: Louise Alder, Paul Bircumshaw, Lindsay Burr MBE, Pam Crabtree, Zoe Metcalfe and Dr Tom Cavell-Taylor.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

116. Minutes

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2017 having been printed and circulated be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

117. Any Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to note.

118. Public Questions

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

119. Safeguarding: How do we keep Children and Young People Safe in North Yorkshire

Considered –

- a) Report of the Scrutiny Team leader providing Members with an introduction to the topic of Safeguarding Children and Young People in North Yorkshire.

- b) A presentation by Nick Frost, Independent Chair of the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board.
- c) NYCC perspective - Presentation, Report and Information Briefing by Judith Hay (Assistant Director CYPS)

Nick Frost, Chairman of the Children's Safeguarding Board, talked through the high level, high profile cases currently under consideration by the board. He explained how local safeguarding arrangements were working work effectively to protect children and young people, and how well local agencies are working together to identify and meet the needs of the most vulnerable children and young people.

The Board's Annual report had not been fully completed although it is to be signed off very soon. Nick offered to come back to present it.

Judith Hay, Assistant Director Children and Families, responded to specific enquiries around Child Protection measures with a thorough and data rich presentation, highlighting some key, strategic factors such as:

- We are a high performing authority.
- Unlike many others we engage no agency staff.
- Our sickness rate is low.
- Budget control is robust: nationally there is a 75% budget overspend, but not in North Yorkshire.
- Procedures are clear.
- Caseloads in three crucial areas: Looked After Children; Child Protection; and Children in need, are all at sensible levels. This is then bolstered by effective workload management and good human resources practices for training and supervision.

The development of a high quality and effective workforce is essential to good safeguarding. A recognised method of assessing this is to conduct staff surveys covering satisfaction levels and engagement. Locally, the results speak for themselves:

- 93% of respondents would recommend North Yorkshire as a good place to be a social worker.
- 94.3% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that North Yorkshire is learning organisation and has a positive learning culture.

Members were presented with evidence that showed good quality assurance practices such as effective monitoring and checking of performance levels with live, relevant data, and timely, meaningful supervision audits.

Further (independent) evidence that North Yorkshire's position on child protection is sound can be seen by the positive findings arrived at, and the supportive comments made, by OFSTED in recent inspections.

After reviewing all this information, members reached the following main conclusions:

- Child protection assessments and plans are well thought through and delivered.
- Services show a thorough awareness of the potential risks that children face both at home and in the local community.

- There is a manifest determination to achieve the best outcomes for children who experience abuse or neglect is securing strong performance levels.
- This is an organisation that reflects honestly on what it does; it identifies and learns from experience and from reviews such as Serious Case Reviews and other forms of monitoring; and it implements wisely.
- North Yorkshire's practices enable it to identify the most vulnerable children in the local area. Good use is put to data and information to help assess how and whether needs are being met.
- Services are geared towards ensuring local children and their families receive early help to reduce the need for child protection interventions.
- We support frontline social workers and other practitioners to make sure they have the skills, resources and support to offer effective early help.

Resolved –

The Committee return to the topic of Safeguarding when the Board's Annual Report is published when the focus will be on the level of challenge in local safeguarding arrangements, how those in leadership roles for local safeguarding arrangements are held to account by the wider system, and how aware are different organisations and practitioners about their roles in the local safeguarding process.

120. Alcohol Strategy

Considered –

A presentation and report by Claire Robinson regarding the second annual report of the North Yorkshire Joint Alcohol Strategy 2014–2019.

The report described the three priority areas underpinning the alcohol strategy. It includes the main developments against these outcome areas, and the impact of increased investment in the alcohol strategy including new investment in Identification and Brief Advice (IBA) to assess changes in people's behaviours and contribute to reducing alcohol related harms.

In January 2015 North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) published a joint alcohol strategy, the aim being to galvanise partners to collectively reduce the harms from alcohol. The key achievements included:

- Commissioning by the Public Health Team to deliver free Identification and Brief Intervention (IBA) training to target professional (but non-alcohol specialist) groups across North Yorkshire. To date over 900 people have been trained.
- The increased provision of IBA in GP settings and pharmacies.
- As a response to the change in licensing legislation Public Health has been working with colleagues to influence reviews of districts Statement of Licensing Policy and also developing local profiles which include health and police data to support the licensing process and provide alcohol related data for districts.
- The successful work by Trading Standards to combat the sales of alcohol to under age young people.

Resolved –

From what members saw of the published annual report and the presentations at the meeting, they agreed that experience appears to bear out the decision to identify three outcome areas: establish responsible and sensible drinking as the norm;

identify and support those who need help into treatment through recovery and to reduce alcohol related crime and disorder. By selecting these, the strategy strikes a realistic and prudent balance between promotion, awareness raising, and intervention and treatment.

121. 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.

Resolved -

- d) That the content of the Work Programme report and the Work Programme schedule are noted.
- e) That the proposal that Nick Frost, Chair of the Safeguarding Children Board, attend a future meeting to present the Board's Annual Report be agreed.

The meeting concluded at 12.30pm

RB