

North Yorkshire County Council

Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 29 June 2018 at 10am at County Hall, Northallerton.

Present: County Councillor Janet Jefferson in the Chair.

County Councillors: Lindsay Burr MBE, Stephanie Duckett, Keane Duncan, Cliff Lunn, John Mann, Stuart Martin MBE, Zoe Metcalfe, Gill Quinn and Annabel Wilkinson.

Co-opted Members: Paul Bircumshaw and Dr Tom Cavell-Taylor

In attendance: Professor Nick Frost, Retiring Chair. North Yorkshire Childrens Safeguarding Board. County Councillors Patrick Mulligan and Janet Sanderson (Executive Members)

Officers: Richard Benstead, Programme Director, North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area, Ray Busby (Scrutiny Officer (Central Services)), Stuart Carlton (Corporate Director Children and Young Peoples Services), Kevin Jeffrey (Participation Manager, Inclusion (CYPS)), Kathy Peacock (Participation Manager - East, Inclusion (CYPS)), Andrea Sedgwick, Head of Early Years, Education and Skills (CYPS),

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Joe Plant; David Sharp (North Yorkshire Youth)

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

141. Minutes

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2018 having been printed and circulated be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

142. Any Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to note.

143. Public Questions

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

144. Early Years Provision: Introduction

Considered –

Report and presentation by Presentation by Andrea Sedgwick, Head of Early Years, Education and Skills (CYPS)

Andrea Sedgwick, Head of Early Years, explained how early years policy, particularly relating to childcare, has continued to be a focus for all recent governments with twin policy objectives: to give all children the best start in life; and to enhance social mobility through support for working families. In addition to proven benefits of high quality early years provision in educational and overall lifetime outcomes, the provision of early education and childcare also links to government priorities for school readiness, economic growth, and tackling poverty.

NYCC strategies and the alignment of initiatives and complimentary work streams ensure that work to support, enrich and secure these elements are well-co-ordinated, and that efficient and best-value services are delivered.

Work is co-ordinated across CYPS with health partners and the NYCC Stronger Communities team to provide oversight of local needs and a clear role in shaping the lived experiences of children and families in all communities across the County.

The infrastructure support provided by central services teams ensure that frontline staff are equipped and supported to deliver the highest quality services to children and families.

Members discussed the delivery of the 30 hours of free childcare programme of funded childcare each week in term time or 1140 funded hours stretched over the year. Recently, the Secretary of State for Education has asked what more can be done to improve 30 hours provision for all families, including parents who have special educational needs and disabilities. The committee agreed to add this to the work programme.

Resolved –

The committee expressed its satisfaction with such a detailed and reassuring picture of local provision.

145. North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board

Considered –

Presentation by Professor Nick Frost, Retiring Board Chair.

The Chairman said that she considered the committee to be fortunate that Professor Nick Frost had agreed to talk to members again on what was his last day as Chair of the Local Safeguarding Board - he is retiring after serving as independent chair for four years. The presentation was also timely, the Chairman added, as the day of the meeting was also the end of National Safeguarding Week.

Professor Frost talked through the high level, high profile cases currently under consideration by the board: standards of safeguarding within private schools; recent events in relation to Ampleforth School; and the Army Foundation College in Harrogate.

Professor Frost was particularly complementary about the high standards practice and professionalism of staff working in this difficult and complex area.

One of the major challenges in this area for services, is sharing information and organisations; in this area, North Yorkshire has a record to be proud of.

North Yorkshire's new chair for overseeing children's safeguarding is the former Children's Commissioner for England, Professor Maggie Atkinson. Members asked

what advice Professor Frost would leave her in terms of the main challenges ahead. One of these, he said, is the new regulations for multi-agency safeguarding, which were included in the Children and Social Work Act 2017. These are to be put in place by May 2018, with councils required to have their new arrangements up and running by September 2019. Under the plan the requirement for local areas to have boards with set memberships will be removed. It seems much is unclear about how these new arrangements will work in practice.

Resolved –

The Committee was pleased to hear Professor Frost's positive responses to their questions about the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements, especially the following:

- Local safeguarding arrangements and information are effective in identifying and meeting the needs of the most vulnerable children.
- Local agencies and organisations are working together effectively.
- There is strong leadership of local safeguarding arrangements for the authority and all partners – police, district councils, and health.
- There has been great progress and improvements in the way the child is at the centre of local safeguarding arrangements.

146. North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area: Update

Considered –

Report of the Corporate Director (CYPS) on progress to date on the North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area (NYCOA) Programme.

Richard Benstead, Programme Director, North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area, explained that the North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area, covering the Scarborough, Whitby and Filey is making a real difference in improving outcomes for young people in education and in later life.

Members agreed that the achievements in each of the four priority areas of Early Years, Literacy, and Numeracy and improved Secondary Schools is impressive.

Members mentioned the impact of teacher redundancies in schools, some of which fall within the Opportunity Area. It was agreed that the wider aspects of this might be the subject of further discussion in committee at some point.

Resolved –

That the committee review the progress of the Coast Opportunity Area project in a years' time, taking a particular interest in:

- a) Secondary school improvement, the attendance and behaviour of some students and support to promote the importance of the home learning environment in outcomes for young people.
- b) Cross-service working within CYPS to develop coherent and effective support for young people, particularly vulnerable groups and those from more disadvantaged backgrounds.

147. Young Peoples Champion Annual Update: Youth Voice

Considered –

Background papers relating to Youth Voice, including the minutes of recent meetings of the Youth Voice Executive. County Councillor Keane Duncan reported on his year as Young Peoples Champion, highlighting in particular his contact with Youth Voice.

In recent Youth Voice meetings, young people had raised a number of concerns about council services and activities. Where those issues related to CYPS functions, staff present could pursue them with directorate colleagues. However, the responsibility for addressing many of the concerns raised could be traced to other directorates, for example access to transport. There appeared to be no definitive protocol for formally acknowledging registering these concerns and responding to them. Consequently, young people could be left with the impression that their voice was not being listened to.

It was suggested that the committee review this, perhaps by concentrating on how one particular area of concern is handled within the authority.

Resolved –

That discussions be held with Cllr Duncan and Youth Inclusion Staff to come forward with suggestions as to how this might be looked at by the committee.

148. 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 –

- a) Members again confirmed that:
 - LAC Strategy refresh be considered in September
 - School Preparedness – how pupils and parents are supported when they start school and Elective Home Education - where parents or carers of a child decide to educate their child at home instead of sending them to a school, be taken in December.
 - Supporting Underperforming Schools - especially those in Special Measures; and Governance - the extent to which schools are transparent and open about their decision making, focussing on (the changing) Roles and Responsibilities of Parent Governors, be taken in March 2019.
 - In respect of the 19 healthy child programme - the contract for which is due to come to an end in 19/20 - an informal engagement opportunity be held sometime in the autumn.
- b) That the content of the Work Programme report and the Work Programme schedule are noted.

The meeting concluded at 12.30pm
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