



Agenda

Notice of a public meeting of

Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- To:** Councillors Janet Jefferson (Chair), Gillian Quinn (Deputy Chair), Val Arnold, Lindsay Burr, Stephanie Duckett, Mel Hobson, Cliff Lunn, Stuart Martin, John Mann, Zoe Metcalfe, Richard Musgrave, Joe Plant and Annabel Wilkinson, Co-opted Members: Tom Cavell-Taylor, Stephen Maltby, David Sharp, Ross Strachan and David Watson.
- Date:** Friday, 3rd September, 2021
- Time:** 10.00 am
- Venue:** Remote Meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Under his delegated decision making powers in the Officers' Delegation Scheme in the Council's Constitution, the Chief Executive Officer has power, in cases of emergency, to take any decision which could be taken by the Council, the Executive or a committee. Following on from the expiry of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, which allowed for committee meetings to be held remotely, the County Council resolved at its meeting on 5 May 2021 that, for the present time, in light of the continuing Covid-19 pandemic circumstances, remote live-broadcast committee meetings should continue (as informal meetings of the Committee Members), with any formal decisions required being taken by the Chief Executive Officer under his emergency decision making powers and after consultation with other Officers and Members as appropriate and after taking into account any views of the relevant Committee Members. This approach will be reviewed in September 2021.

The meeting will be available to view once the meeting commences, via the following link - www.northyorks.gov.uk/livemeetings. Recording of previous live broadcast meetings are also available there.

Business

1. Welcome and Apologies

2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 25th June 2021** (Pages 3 - 8)
3. **Any Declarations of Interest**
4. **Public Questions or Statements**
Members of the public may ask questions or make statements at this meeting if they have delivered notice (to include the text of the question/statement) to Patrick Duffy, Principal Democratic Services Scrutiny Officer (see *contact details*), no later than midday on Tuesday 31st August. Each speaker should limit themselves to 3 minutes on any item. Members of the public who have given notice will be invited to speak:-
- at this point in the meeting if their questions/statements relate to matters which are not otherwise on the Agenda (subject to an overall time limit of 30 minutes);
 - when the relevant Agenda item is being considered if they wish to speak on a matter which is on the Agenda for this meeting.
- If you are exercising your right to speak at this meeting, but do not wish to be recorded, please inform the Chairman who will instruct those taking a recording to cease while you speak.
5. **Chair's remarks**
Any correspondence, communication or other business brought forward by the direction of the Chair of the Committee.
6. **Portfolio Holder Statement and Update to Committee - County Councillor Janet Sanderson - Executive Member for Children's Services**
The Chair has invited the Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills to provide an update on issues within her remit
7. **North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NYSCP) DRAFT Annual Report 2020/2021** (Pages 9 - 28)
Report by Dr. Maggie Atkinson, Chair of the NYSCP Executive and Independent Scrutineer
8. **Medical Education Service: Review/Update on Implementation** (Pages 29 - 34)
Report of the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Service
9. **Focused Visit to North Yorkshire County Council Children's Services - Letter from Ofsted** (Pages 35 - 40)
10. **Work Programme** (Pages 41 - 44)
Report of the Scrutiny Team Leader
11. **Other business which the Chair agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances**

Barry Khan
Assistant Chief Executive
(Legal and Democratic Services)

County Hall
Northallerton

25 August 2021

North Yorkshire County Council

Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 25 June 2021 at 10am.

Present: County Councillor Janet Jefferson in the Chair.

County Councillors: Val Arnold, Stephanie Duckett, Cliff Lunn, Stuart Martin MBE, Joe Plant, Gillian Quinn and Annabel Wilkinson.

Co-opted Members: David Sharp (North Yorkshire Youth), and David Watson (North Yorkshire Sport) Tom Cavell-Taylor (Governor representative)

Portfolio Holder: Janet Sanderson.

Officers: Ray Busby (Principal Scrutiny Officer (Central Services)), Tracey Lambert, Project Manager, Technology & Change (CSD), Amanda Newbold, Assistant Director Education and Skills, Education and Skills, Chris Reynolds (Head of SEND Strategic Planning and Resources, Inclusion (CYPS)) and Jane le Sage (Assistant Director Inclusion, Inclusion (CYPS))

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lindsay Burr MBE, John Mann, Zoe Metcalfe and Richard Musgrave
Ross Strachan (Secondary Teacher Representative), Stephen Maltby (Primary Teacher Representative)

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Patrick Mulligan.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

216. Minutes

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2021 having been printed and circulated be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of a reference to the fact that the co-opted Member, David Sharp, declared an interest during consideration at the previous meeting of the item on Outdoor Learning provision.

217. Any Declarations of Interest

David Sharp declared an interest in relation to item 6 on the agenda relating to Outdoor Learning Provision.

218. Public Questions

There were no public questions or statements

219. Chairman's Remarks

The Chair advised that the Portfolio Holder was unable to attend. It was hoped that Cllr Mulligan's update on educational issues facing the local authority could be deferred to the next Mid Cycle Briefing and a decision taken then on whether an item to the next full committee meeting would be in order. The Chair had also invited Portfolio Holder, Cllr Janet Sanderson to give an update at the September in relation to her area of responsibility.

Resolved –

That the report be received.

220. Outdoor Learning Service: Review

Amanda Newbold, Assistant Director Education and Skills, Education and Skills, introduced the presentation. She was joined by Tracey Lambert, Project Manager, Technology & Change (CSD).

Cllr Sanderson declared an interest in relation to her involvement in North Yorkshire Youth.

Amanda explained that the Executive approved a strategic review being undertaken; one with the ambition of ensuring a long-term sustainable operating model is developed and established.

The presentation covered the first stages of the strategic review of the service since the report to the last meeting. The ambition is to ensure a long-term sustainable operating model is developed and established, subject to detailed consideration and approval of a business case by the Executive later in 2021.

Amanda explained that the project to ensure a long-term sustainable operating model inevitably started with a comprehensive assessment of those two key properties. Progress has also been made in consulting with young people, schools, users and staff local representatives. Many individual conversations and meetings have been held with staff groups, NY Sport, Head Teacher Network and School Governors.

Members agreed that there has been an effective data gathering exercise, assessing the customer base, use of the service, activities offered and costings.

Schools were the primary customers of both sites - 80% from North Yorkshire 20% outside the areas, comprising about 7000 children per year. Having ceased trading during 2020/21 due to COVID, the centres were able to start to accept some day trips during the summer term 2021, with the aim of continuing with these in September.

Cllr Plant asked that information be made available to members on the level of asbestos at the East Barnby site and how that might affect progress going forward.

In response to a question, Amanda confirmed that at the core of the review was the acknowledgment of the many benefits the service has in terms of levelling up, building confidence and resilience - all of those wider learning skills within the context of a residential experience.

Whilst the committee has not pressed for involvement in the next steps - Modelling of options and Preparation of the Outline Business Case, the Chair suggested that the committee formally reaffirm its commitment to scrutinise proposals as they emerge in September this year before the Executive decides the future of the service. This might require a special meeting in September.

Resolved –

That the information given be noted

221. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy: Update

Considered –

Presentation covering the trends in numbers and type of SEND, how the locality based infrastructure was settling in, and, more broadly, the means by which the SEND Strategic Plan was being implemented.

Jane le Sage (Assistant Director Inclusion, Inclusion (CYPS)) and Chris Reynolds (Head of SEND Strategic Planning and Resources, Inclusion (CYPS)) introduced the presentation.

The increase in numbers is dramatic. As of the end of March 2021, there were 3574 EHC plans funded by North Yorkshire. This is a 102% increase on the same point in 2015. Total EHC plans funded by North Yorkshire have increase two-fold between 2015 and 2021.

The percentage of children with EHC plans in schools in North Yorkshire has historically been lower than the national rate. In 2020, 1.5% of children in mainstream schools in North Yorkshire had an EHC plan, the rate nationally was 1.8% (1.7% in Yorkshire and Humber). The rate in North Yorkshire in 2021 is now 1.7%

The percentage of children recorded as SEN Support has also been historically lower, 11.2% in North Yorkshire mainstream schools in 2020 compared to 12.1% nationally (11.4% regionally, Yorkshire and Humber). The rate in North Yorkshire in 2021 is now 11.5%.

Fundamental to responding to this increase is the locality based approach. We supported the introduction of SEND hubs when originally proposed in the strategy; we can see now how effective these have been. The approach has resulted in increased support for families - alongside Early Help, Children and Families and NHS colleagues.

The system of locality boards is operating successfully, allowing local leaders to be involved in developments at local level and ensuring 'join up' across education leaders. They are providing the framework to enable dialogue and collective responsibility for performance at local level, sector led improvement and shaping provision and developments in the area on an ongoing basis. It was in this area, Jane believed, that voluntary sector involvement could enhance opportunities and awareness of what was happening in the individual localities.

Locality Inclusion Panels, which take responsibility for oversight of educational provision for vulnerable children at primary and secondary, are progressing well and, as intended, are addressing need directly.

The establishment of Parent Carer Voice in 2019 as the recognised SEND Parent Forum is ensuring a locality-based model of parent/carer groups in partnership with

the local authority. The level of user involvement in key reviews of services e.g. social care support for disabled children, development of the new SEND Local Area strategy, is especially welcome.

The investment in capacity for Specialist Provision will increase Special School places to over 1000 by Sept 2021, representing a 25% increase since 2017. Capital investment has been made creating Mowbray School at Ripon, with Selby Free School now at design phase, and £250k investment in Springwater on track for delivery Sept 21. Councillors local to the area, who were members of the committee, welcomed the development. Officers appreciated the support.

Resolved-

- a) That the report be received
- b) Overall, members were impressed at what has been achieved in developing the continuum of education provision across the county for now and the future.

222. 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.

The Chairman reported that a number of members of this committee serve on the North Yorkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education. At a recent SACRE meeting, its Annual Report for the School year 2019/20 was agreed for publication.

The SACRE Chair and supporting officers wanted to raise awareness of the work SACRE does. The Annual Report was an ideal starting point and was therefore taken to a members' briefing in May.

Members were in favour of arranging a similar exercise again next year – possibly at a full committee meeting. This would certainly raise awareness and the profile of SACRE, and it should allow for a more in-depth, informal discussion on matters relating to Religious Education. The overriding view was that the investment the council makes in supporting SACRE is good value, especially as RE has a key role to play in encouraging a broad and meaningful understanding of different faiths and views.

The Chair raised the issue of Elective Home Education (EHE) - the term used by the Department for Education (DfE) to describe parents' decisions to provide education for their children at home instead of sending them to school. In 2019, the committee concluded that the directorate had a good understanding of the issues associated with EHE, and robust procedures and practices. Since then we have seen a significant rise in the numbers of parents opting for EHE. She has asked that the committee be enabled to review:

- the circumstances around these figures;
- the steps taken to strengthen our capacity to support and assist parents to make an informed choice; and

- known factors behind the notable increases in numbers of parents opting for EHE during the Covid 19 pandemic and the questions that poses for the authority.

The expectation was an initial report would be made to the upcoming Mid Cycle Briefing when group spokespersons would be in a position to determine the level of subsequent committee attention.

Resolved –

That subject to the above, Members again confirmed the content of the Work Programme.

The meeting concluded at 12:10pm
RB

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DRAFT - FINAL VERSION WITH NYCC DESIGN TEAM



NORTH YORKSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (NYSCP)

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

DR MAGGIE ATKINSON, CHAIR OF NYSCP EXECUTIVE AND INDEPENDENT SCRUTINEER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises, reflects on, and presents formal scrutineer's assurance regarding the work of the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NYSCP) between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2021. This covers the first full financial year of operation by the NYSCP, which succeeded the Local Safeguarding Children board (NYSCB) from September 2019, half way through the previous financial year. All details about the work of the Partnership and the materials it presents to professionals, children and young people, their parents carers and communities, and the comprehensive and complex network of services that work with them, are available on the NYSCP website at www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk

The Partnership is a statutory body, led by an Executive, which I chair in addition to being NYSCP's Independent Scrutineer. The Executive is led by the County Council, North Yorkshire's Clinical Commissioning Groups and North Yorkshire Police, each represented by staff sufficiently senior as to be able speak with authority for and approve decisions on behalf of their organisations. It is also contributed to by a small number of representatives: lead Officers from key services in all three Statutory Partners, the County's current Tier 2 Local Authorities, and the Voluntary Sector.

The NYSCP carries coordination and accountability responsibilities which were previously covered by both the NYSCB and the now-closed Children's Trust. This report however focuses largely on the work previously covered by NYSCB, with plans to expand the agenda in coming years to cover more of the ground covered by the former Children's Trust. NYSCP is becoming the accountable and report-receiving and approving body for work under all 4 Priorities in Being Young in North Yorkshire

The report summarises my activity, in chairing and attending the Executive and in covering, as a participant observer, the Partnership's subgroups. These cover the following:

- Multi-Agency Criminal Exploitation Groups, at both strategic (countywide) and operational (one in each of the seven Districts) levels
- Local Safeguarding Practice Review Group, which reviews are undertaken where there are concerns about safeguarding, and that the Partnership and each agency in it respond
- Learning and Development Group, which draws on what the two strands above find and steers the learning and professional development offered to ensure that professionals continue to learn, across boundaries between them as well as within each one
- Practice Development Group, which works to ensure deeper whole-system learning takes place and is sustained.
- Shared with City of York LSCP: Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) which contributes to what is to be learned when a child dies whether expectedly or unexpectedly, and Child Death Review Panel which ensures professionals, especially in medical disciplines, reflect on and can give assurance regarding what was or could have been done in the circumstances around a child's death

The report presents my observations of, and any recommendations regarding, how well the work entailed in safeguarding children and young people has been undertaken and assured in 2020-2021, an unprecedentedly challenging year in terms of challenges to all services caused by the Pandemic that has taken up the entire year under review.

It looks ahead to the 2021-2022 year which is part-way through as this report is published; recommends that the agenda of NYSCP expands to cover universal as well as targeted and specialist services and issues; looks forward to a county with one unitary Council from 2023 onwards; casts forward to post-pandemic practice and partnership working.

The report concludes with my confirmation, as Working Together 2018 statutory guidance requires, that NYSCP is ensuring that as far as possible, all of North Yorkshire's children and young people are kept safe: the majority in their families, schools and communities, and experiencing success in all four areas of Being Young in North Yorkshire. I give formal assurance that where children or young people require additional support, or where more formal interventions and statutory provision are required, North Yorkshire's services at both tiers of local government and in partner bodies largely do well for the county's young citizens. I am also clear that when things go wrong for a child or young person, agencies are quick to respond and consistently open to rigorously challenging both themselves and each other, so that matters improve and services develop, having learned the required lessons.

INTRODUCTION

This report covers what I have observed as both Chair of the Executive and Independent Scrutineer of the NYSCP in the financial year 2020-2021. Inevitably the report is influenced by work done by all partners to ensure children's and young people's safety and wellbeing during the continuing Covid 19 pandemic. It reflects on work by partners who, since March 2020, have largely worked remotely rather than face to face. It also reflects on a range of non-Covid-19 issues, given much work with children and young people has continued uninterrupted, albeit adapted to circumstances.

As Executive Chair and Independent Scrutineer I present assurance that the County Council, District Councils, CCGs, Police, OFPCC, other partners and relevant agencies, have done far more than simply stand by children and young people in challenging times since Spring 2020. They have sustained the development of the Partnership at subgroup and Executive levels, to keep children and young people as safe as possible. In many services this has been seen in staff working longer hours than normal. There was no travel between appointments for much of 2020-2021, the corollary being that whilst this is an efficient way of working, staff moved between meetings in unbroken strings, in long working days. This presents challenges to stamina and work-life balance that will go on being addressed post-pandemic.

Staff and leaders are aware that as well as challenges, gains have arisen during the pandemic. They are determined to maintain a good deal of remote working and the efficiencies it brings, and to work on a longer-term programme that accepts ways of working will need to go on using “hybrid” meeting models that mix remote working with meetings face to face. Covid 19 may be with us for a long time in endemic form. What services do with each other, children and young people, goes on regardless across North Yorkshire.

The NYSCP’s model, terms of reference for and meeting schedules of the Executive and subgroups, along with a great deal of material that guides and supports professionals, parents or carers, and children and young people themselves, are all available on the Partnership’s website at www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk

In 2020, government asked Sir Alan Wood to review Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships, notwithstanding that the review was launched less than a year after most MASAs were launched and was published in the midst of a pandemic that had inevitably influenced practice and partnerships. It sets out some lessons that have emerged, which should be considered alongside this Annual Scrutineer’s Report. In the same way, so should the Annual Report from the National Children Safeguarding Review Panel at the Department for Education.

North Yorkshire’s developments and partnership practice are well within the range of what both Sir Alan Wood and the National Panel consider good practice.

MY COMBINED INDEPENDENT EXECUTIVE CHAIR AND SCRUTINY ROLE

I open this section with a note exercising Scrutineer powers, rather than as Chair of the Executive.

As NYSCB closed and NYSCP launched, the county stood down its Children’s Trust which had been created, as in every top tier Local Authority area, after the 2004 Children Act and 2003’s *Every Child Matters* Green Paper. The Children’s Trust covered all elements of childhood and services from Universal (maternity, early years, schools, GP and 0-19 health, youth services, faith, community and voluntary bodies and more) through targeted services providing early interventions, to statutory services in SEN/D, social care and health.

LSCBs replaced, and expanded the remits of, Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs.) LSCBs ran from 2005 to September 2019 and focused on safeguarding issues, largely driven by social care and child protection concerns and trends, but with a requirement to oversee universal and targeted services’ and settings’ work on safeguarding.

The NYSCP took up the Children’s Trust’s remit as well the NYSCB’s. NYSCP Executive agendas are gradually expanding to ensure a focus on what the Children’s Trust steered, across all five

national Outcomes set out in the Children Act 2004 (Stay Safe, Be Healthy, Enjoy and Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution, Achieve Economic Wellbeing.) The first NYSCP Annual Report (2019-2020) was entirely focused on the safeguarding agenda that NYSCP inherited from NYSCB, given there was a closing annual report from the Children’s Trust. As a result NYSCP’s 2019-2020 report contained text from me alone, as Scrutineer.

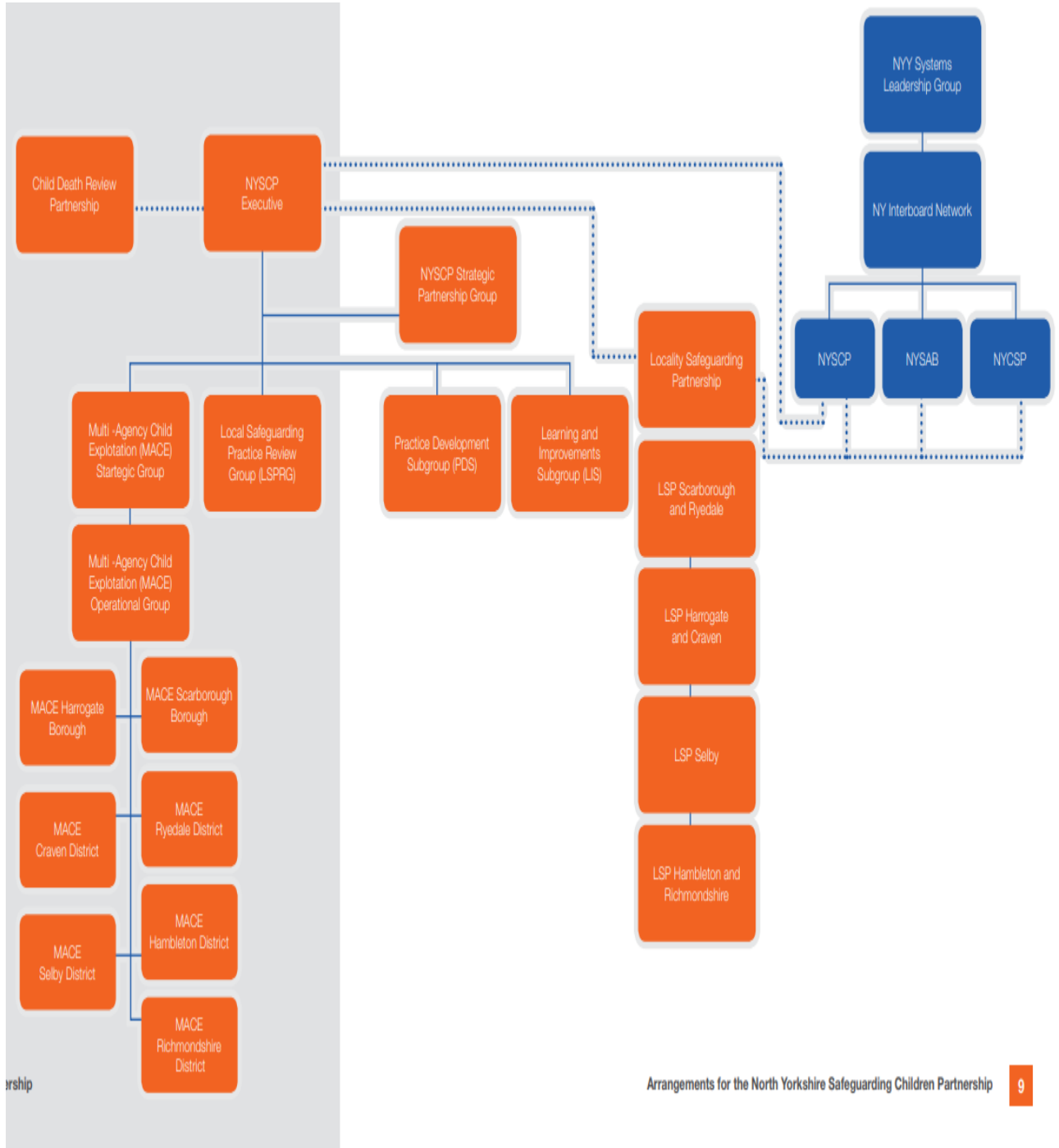
This Report is the first that covers a financial year in which both the Children’s Trust and the NYSCB’s previous agendas are covered by NYSCP. However, my scrutiny in 2020-2021 has covered only the Executive and the subgroups of the NYSCP as per its structure diagram on page 4 (CHECK PAGE ONCE DESIGNED). These do not include steering and reference bodies which cover education for all North Yorkshire children and young people; 0-19 health provision; youth and community, or other universal services.

As this report is presented, partners are in discussion on ensuring all themes in “Being Young in North Yorkshire” are part of a published annual report for 2021-2022 and subsequent years.

DRAFT

MY WORK FOR NORTH YORKSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (NYSCP)

NYSCP’s published structure is in the diagram below. The Executive meets for half a day per meeting six times a year. Throughout 2020-2021, all meetings of both the Executive and subgroups were held online.



Arrangements for the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership 9

Executive meetings follow a standard pattern. On an annual rota, leaders from both commissioning and delivery bodies are required to attend the Executive to present and be questioned on their activity reports. They consider what they need to draw to the Executive’s attention as both successes and challenges, and look both back on what has happened since their

last report, and forward to what they expect in the period to come. The Executive is expected to have read all reports and considered questions or comments members may have. Discussions cover these, and reach agreed conclusions, which are duly recorded. If further information is required or matters need to come back to the next Executive, this occurs. On a similarly rota, we receive detailed reports from the Chairs of each NYSCP subgroup (see structure below), and the shared North Yorkshire and City of York Child Death Review Partnership (CDRP.) The Executive discusses reports, notes the contents, and decides on any actions requested or required.

In the diagram above there are missing themes, regarding elements of childhood or youth not directly connected to safeguarding, but featuring in “Being Young in North Yorkshire.” These would have been covered by the Children’s Trust. For example, the Assistant Director at NYCC whose remit covers education learning and skills interacts with schools and other services covered by her remit. Some themes come to the Executive, such as Elective Home Education or school attendance and exclusions. However these matters are not represented in NYSCP’s published structure, and I have not yet attended any subgroups covering her remit. There is now no other countywide Partnership body than NYSCP that takes as its core business issues such as attainment and achievement. Any review of the diagram above, which represents what NYSCP looked like in September 2019, should consider creating a new visual representation showing all elements of work on childhood, so that the whole childhood agenda is covered by an accountability and partnership framework under NYSCP.

On an agreed annual rota, the Executive discusses activity and assurance, risk assessment and management reports from providers in the Health economy, youth bodies including those run by the voluntary and community sector, and other organisations working with children and young people. These groups present to the Executive because they cover issues that the Executive needs to decide on or direct; or because there are issues which have arisen that need a problem-solving discussion to resolve matters.

At every Executive, if there are issues concerning cases of concern where a child or young person has not been kept as safe as they should have been, or safeguarding problems serious enough to require a Local or Rapid, or externally commissioned Local Safeguarding Practice Review, the agenda includes a discussion of progress, where the Executive notes or agrees either emerging or final lessons learned. Guided by the Local Safeguarding Practice Review Group that does this challenging work in detail and effectively, the Executive approves contacts with the National Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, signs off reviews of which there have been a number in 2020-2021, and keeps critical track of what the proof is that lessons are being learned when something goes wrong for a child. These reviews have all been conducted with great partnership commitment, thoroughness and diligence, and the Partnership’s judgement on whether a Rapid Review or Local Learning Review should move on to be a Local Safeguarding Practice Review has always been accepted by the National Panel. Where an individual agency identifies a need to investigate its, the Executive is also kept aware of the progress in and lessons learned from single agency Serious Incident Notifications, investigations and reports

The Executive also takes a considered view on and makes shared decisions about all matters likely to affect children and young people either for good or ill, and seeks examples of good practice to be foregrounded and made public, including via social media and the Partnership’s website. It also assures the content of the website so that it is both kept up to date, and reflects what agencies and the Partnership wishes either to highlight, or to ensure lessons are learned across all practice.

Increasingly, Executive agendas are configured so that all sections are closely matched to the agreed key themes in the refreshed “Being Young in North Yorkshire 2021-2024,” work to complete which has been completed in 2020-2021. The themes are based on the county’s and the Partnership’s agreed ambitions for all children in North Yorkshire. The themes agreed as key for the work to be done with and for children and young people between 2021 and 2024 are shown below:



These four linked themes refer to, and in delivering the strategy partners seek to enhance the life chances of, every child and young person. Executive agendas are now moving to all business being themed to steer work done on these four themes. NYSCP subgroups’ terms of reference, as they are reviewed over time, will also be linked to the four themes to ensure fulfilment of “Being Young in North Yorkshire” is assured between now and 2024.

The Executive's agenda also covers concerns that require agreed effort across a number of organisations, or that are being discussed at national scale with relevance for the County. Examples include Government's or inspection bodies' requirements that could shape service responses; the difficult and challenging effects of funding settlements and their effects on programmes of work; issues raised when a sector undergoes change or reform, such as is now happening in the National Health Service under the 2021 Health White Paper which will lead to change for both commissioning and provision of health services.

Executive standing items include quarterly reviews of data that shows trends in how well children and young people are faring in health, education including SEN/D, Elective Home Education and related issues, social care, family law, policing and criminal justice. NYSCP subgroups each deal with this data in far greater detail than does the Executive, but the latter notes and questions trends in what data tells us about the need for deep dives or reviews of practice, or reasons for a trend that is unusual. A small number of Standing Items also allow consideration and decision making on challenges in any institution or service, whether publicly funded or otherwise. The position of all such bodies as Relevant Agencies means the Executive has the duty to hold them all to account.

INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY

Independent scrutiny provides assurance by reflecting and reporting on the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, including arrangements to identify and review serious safeguarding cases. It is part of a wider system which includes inspectorates' single assessments and Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAs.) Safeguarding partners ensure scrutiny is objective and a constructive critical friend, and promotes reflection to drive continuous improvement. My role is to consider how effectively arrangements work for children, families and practitioners, and how well partners provide strong leadership.

NYSCP partners acknowledge that the independent scrutineer is never the sole provider of feedback or reflection. Working Together 2018 is clear mutual holding to account, support and challenge are part of how statutory partners and relevant agencies ensure impacts are clear, understood, co-owned, and contribute to progressively improving children and young people's lives. I provide constructively critical appraisal, challenge and ongoing appraisal of the partnership's work.

I was appointed to:

- Assess how well organisations work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to hold each other to account for effective safeguarding
- Write this annual report on the effectiveness of arrangements, performance and effectiveness of services
- Assess the effectiveness of help provided to children and families, including through universal and early help services
- Assess whether the three statutory safeguarding partners fulfil their statutory obligations
- Scrutinise quality assurance activity including reviewing statutory and local reviews, findings from audits, and processes for identifying lessons to be learned from tragedy and crises in children's lives
- Scrutinise the effectiveness of training whose aim is to equip staff to safeguard and promote the wellbeing and welfare of children
- Provide evidence based and transparent assessment of the extent to which partners

- and relevant agencies fulfil their duties to keep children safe
- Evaluate the operation of the safeguarding partnership and attend meetings and activities including visits to partners and relevant agencies
- Support implementation of findings and outcomes from safeguarding reviews
- Assess what effective performance management, audit and quality assurance mechanisms are in place to support the three safeguarding partners in fulfilling their statutory objectives, enabling the partnership to identify and measure impact
- Ensure voices of children, young people and families are appropriately represented and heard by the partnership.

I attend and feedback on the work of NYSCP's subgroups at meetings over a given year, and seek to spend time with vital groups including representatives of children and young people when circumstances allow. I also chair and help facilitate bi-annual all-partners development days, parts of which include my feedback on progress. At present, because of Covid 19, all this work is done through virtual means.

I have attended all NYSCP subgroups seen on page 4 as a participant observer including the shared CDOP and CDRP, having been furnished with all papers ahead of each meeting. I have not yet attended locality-based Local Safeguarding Partnerships (LSPs) which combine work in each locality across the Safeguarding Children, Vulnerable Adults and Community Safety Partnerships running strategically at County level. NYSCP Executive considers reports back from these. The business they cover feeds into work in partner agencies of NYSCP.

The common features of all of the subgroups shown in the diagram on page 3 are as follows:

- They reflect the maturity of partnership working. They are well chaired, run efficiently and in a professional, mutually respectful manner which ensures all partners have the opportunity, and are expected, to contribute to, and where possible to chair or lead.
- They are diligent in attention paid to themes NYSCP has asked them to focus on, and there is a great deal of in-depth knowledge shown in their meetings by professionals who know only their own briefs, and the issues others at the table are dealing with.
- They are well attended, with a high level of consistency in who, and from what levels of decision making and responsibility, attends and ensures input.
- They are efficiently serviced by the small Business Unit that ensures the smooth running of NYSCP's business and discussions at the Executive.
- Subgroups' work visibly feeds into training and development for all agencies; to 7-minute and Coffee Break briefing materials, also furnished through NYSCP's website and social media accounts; to "lessons learned" presentations; and to the Safeguarding Week event which happens every two years.
- Where a subgroup or activity is shared, for example in audits of practice across NYCC and City of York, and in the Child Death Review Process (CDRP) and Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) covering the same footprint, the thoroughness of work done and the agreement of co-owned practice are to be applauded.
- Subgroups' agendas and reports to NYSCP Executive contribute to policies, protocols and procedures, including in contested territory such as ongoing work on differing medical opinions on Non-Accidental Injuries (NAIs) in non-mobile babies. This has

become a high-profile national issue during the pandemic, and NYSCP's work on it is a strong reflection of what is being done in Partnerships nationwide.

- Discussions on difficult subjects are well-led led by subgroup Chairs and members. Such difficult discussions are not avoided by the Executive, but are undertaken with professional care and mutual respect until conclusions are reached, including when compromises must be made.
- As scrutineer I can give assurance that executive and scrutiny bodies in each represented agency are kept informed of NYSCP's key business as it applies to all parts of the partnership; and that where there is a particular subject for their agency, they are briefed in detail

In both elements of my role, I seek to enable NYSCP to comply with the requirement both to work concertedly and successfully in partnership, and from the resultant position of confidence, to publish an Annual Report on activities, successes, and continued or new challenges. The report reflects on the following broad themes.

- How the partnership has developed: NYSCP took over from an effective, developing LSCB and absorbed the work of the Children's Trust. NYSCB reached a strong consensus during 2018-2019 that "blank sheet of paper" thinking was not necessary in creating the NYSCP. The former NYSCB, and now NYSCP, provide a strong foundation for agencies' future practice, not least because many people central to good work by NYSCB have continued in role, meaning the NYSCP is progressing well.
- The 3 statutory partners have created, and agencies' governance and scrutiny bodies and staff have agreed, a model that serves the county, its many communities, and the organisations that work for and with children and young people. A Partnership structural model shown on page 4 operates well, reflecting a strong shared commitment to partnership. NYSCP is also looking at how well connectivity between universal services such as education, and more specialist services at higher levels of intervention, work together in the interests of all children and young people, including those with additional and special educational needs (SEN), with or without a disability (SEN/D.) The move to examine a wider range work fulfilling "Being Young in North Yorkshire" could usefully be accompanied by a review of the NYSCP 2019 structure as it reaches the end of its second year of operation, so that any missing elements of what the Children's Trust oversaw can be included.
- The configuration, terms of reference, membership and attendance of NYSCP subgroups is a reflection of the fact that without a Board like the NYSCB, ownership of and work on safeguarding has moved closer to services' front lines. Making the Partnership the single statutory accountability body for children and young people means work is now "held," and to a high degree driven, by the subgroups. That Executive members also account to each other, and hold themselves to account, is central to NYSCP's success.
- The pledges to enhance children's life chances, regularly renewed by professionals who have contributed to several partnership development sessions during 2020-2021, reflect well on what has happened in the year and will help to shape both strategic and operational plans for future of work across the Partnership. This Annual Scrutineer's

Report seeks to reflect on what has been achieved, and what remains to be done. It confirms the three Statutory Partners' assurance of their compliance with the requirements of "Working Together (2018.)

- The NYSCP's work through strong subgroups which have "buy-in" and leadership from staff across agencies promotes cross-partnership ownership of safeguarding at every level. The work of the NYSCP covers a year of purposeful activity from 2020-2021 that has been positive and productive. Scrutiny of Agency and subgroup Assurance reports, regularly reflected on by the Executive and its subgroups, show the NYSCP's strengths, and the accuracy of its identification of areas for continued development.
- This Report is inevitably influenced by the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic on services and communities. The potential for threats to stability, work done to ameliorate those threats, and the potential for positive developments in partnership working when the pandemic passes, have all rightly been on the minds of all involved. Given the success of the vaccination programme and the likelihood that the virus will become an endemic presence for future years, all services are now turning their thinking towards what Recovery looks like, notwithstanding the current uncertainty about further waves or variants. The "new normal" will involve some working from home for many staff, alongside as much face to face work as possible with children and young people.

WHAT FOLLOWS: ISSUES FOR NYSCP IN 2021-2022 AND BEYOND.

North Yorkshire County Council and its District Council second tier bodies are now aware of a Unitary future for local government in the County. It is vital that NYSCP's relentless focus on high quality, partnership based and secure, self-aware and self-critical work for children and young people is maintained, as there is a period of continued change and development to come before the start of this structural change in 2023, and then in the years to follow. There must be no detriment to any child or family, given planning for successful and secure continuity and change will take up time and energies, needing to be factored into how services are planned for and delivered.

Staff across many agencies are largely working from home, use of office accommodation being reserved for those who either cannot do so or who need occasional office time. Staff of all agencies and the small team working in the Safeguarding Unit already ensure regular KiT meetings. NYSCP members contribute to countywide discussions regarding how both responses to the pandemic and plans for the future can be assured.

Some agencies (police, emergency services, Children's Social Care, many health bodies, many schools and colleges, for example) throughout the pandemic have been engaged in work as near "business as usual" as possible, with virus protection measures as part of their work. Meeting in the virtual environment since March 2020, at both Executive and subgroup levels, has not seen a break in stride in work for NYSCP. Many members, and all agencies, are now pondering how best to strike a balance between the continued efficiency of meeting virtually and not spending a great deal of their working days driving across a large county to meet; versus the human and professional need both to connect face to face across the Partnership, and to pick up on the "incidental five-minute catch-ups" on the fringes of a working session that do not happen online as people move, back to back, from meeting to meeting online.

A great deal of work is being done to good effect. The Executive has, however, also reflected on and accepts that there is a great deal of tiredness among staff, and a feeling of relentlessness in the working day that is not healthy in the long term. The Executive also recognises that throughout the pandemic, some services have worked as they did before Covid 19. Emergency services, police in community and response roles, many educators, social care staff, senior leaders who provide strategic leadership and “backstop” functions in life-and-limb services, those planning for changes in the NHS despite also being pressed to deliver solutions to Covid 19, are all examples. The section of this report on what comes next will pick up these threads.

The NYSCP Business Manager and his small team continue to keep me, and all partner bodies, apprised of developments and issues for discussion or concern, and facilitate my contributions to and presence at Executive and NYSCP subgroups so that assurance can be given, as both parts of my role require. The Executive meets six times a year, enabling it both to hold all others to account and to direct the Partnership’s work so safeguarding maintains its strengths and does not lose pace or focus. The Executive calls in senior staff across agencies and partners, taking Assurance, individual agency and Activity reports so NYSCP can drive forward what is required of services and agencies across the county.

Whole-partnership Development Days have been online during the pandemic, giving all concerned the opportunity to reflect on progress and discuss the challenges Covid 19 has presented, non-Covid challenges, how they should all be dealt with, what support children and young people continue to need, and what might happen next in NYSCP’s ongoing development. Whilst the virtual environment and technology create challenges, attendance is good and colleagues value the opportunity to maintain connections with and support for each other, and thereby children, young people, families and communities.

Subgroup attendance, actions lists and the minutes of each group illustrate that partners remain committed, attending virtually and finding work arounds for technology challenges. Chairs and the business support team construct agendas, ensure meetings are recorded appropriately, send out actions for completion, and ensure the Executive is kept closely informed. Subgroups’ business continues, and the Partnership goes on developing its ability to steer the work done with children and young people, using both the subgroups and the Executive to hold all concerned to account.

The Partnership continues both its audit and learning and development activity, albeit again all online. Section 11 multi-agency and Section 175 schools’ safeguarding audit cycles are agreed annually, some in partnership with the neighbouring City of York partnership. Such audits provide assurance on the quality of practice, and draw out lessons to be learned. The business support team sends out CPD briefings, updates and newsletters on Covid 19 issues and safeguarding more generally. Partners and relevant agencies value these. Examples are on the NYSCP website, where there is a wealth of other information, guidance and professional support materials, along with materials for children families and parents or carers. NYSCP also makes effective use of social media including Twitter and Facebook.

NYSCP remains keen to ensure support on safeguarding is given to schools, and that where necessary challenges and suggestions for improvement are provided. Throughout the pandemic an adequate number of schools remained open, at the very least to provide “hub” services, particularly for vulnerable children and children of keyworkers. When fuller opening took place, and despite some “stop-start” effects on hard pressed and tired staff children and families, North

Yorkshire services have supported schools to ensure changes have been handled in as seamless a way as possible. Every school has been supported in their safeguarding work, despite the additional workload inherent in creating “blended” learning, and since Christmas 2020 the return of some anxious children.

Support has been valued by schools, which have, like schools across the country, been less well and less clearly supported by central government’s many changes and last minute guidance and support. Schools will go on needing this. Their issues are regularly discussed by NYSCP Executive, including in key areas such as a growth in numbers of children educated at home, and the challenges of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEN/D) where, as in most of England’s localities, rising demand cannot be met by levels of resources. NYSCP’s wider remit captured in “Being Young in North Yorkshire” means the partnership is already planning to discuss schooling across many themes at future meetings.

Face-to-face safeguarding training ceased after the pandemic began. CPD, guidance and professional information have all continued virtually, both at Partnership level and within individual agencies, and been well received. The Partnership’s “lessons learned” briefings, master class sessions and 7-minute briefings continue to be added to, as do other offers to ensure as many of the workforce as possible can access up to date safeguarding training. The continued content-refreshes on the NYSCP website are valued for the high quality of support and advice provided, and for the ease of access to vital information for professionals, parents, children and young people alike. The newly developed and still growing “Be Aware” section of the site is of particular quality and value.

Early Help services are supported by a refreshed Early Help Strategy, and continue to respond to requests for appropriate interventions in line with it. Rates of referrals into different levels of service are closely monitored, especially where they may be concentrated in less affluent communities. Early Help reaches out, making it clear that even in the pandemic period, services remain available to help families to avoid crisis. The intention is that Early Help, early intervention and prevention, go on “keeping the heat out of the top of the system,” and the goal is to ensure families attract and receive support that keeps them together. Intervening early and appropriately will no doubt continue to be a theme of work for children and young people once the pandemic’s ongoing restrictions are lifted. That Early Help is not solely the province of social care teams but relies on schools, early years, youth, health and other services, is well understood and will remain a vital part of the offer.

The NYSCP team is also involved in work across the county and the city of York on Domestic Abuse and Violence, which includes agencies across voluntary, community, and survivor-led and focused bodies. Such a focus on a vital issue for some children and young people is a marker of partners’ insistence that vital work must go on no matter what, and it is hoped that its positive effects will be felt by children and their families who may be at risk. Given Royal Assent was given to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 in late April, those involved are now planning so as to ensure a way forward, especially as York will develop its own strategic steering body, but much of the work done will need to go on being done in partnership.

WHAT NEXT FOR THE PARTNERSHIP? ISSUES OF NOTE, AND RISKS TO BE DEALT WITH

New issues continue to surface as Covid 19 restrictions continue to be lifted as this report is issued. These may last for the longer term, even once post-pandemic future planning is

implemented. The Partnership is aware, and the Executive has discussed issues that focus around the fact that staff across all agencies have given a great deal since early 2020, often over and above pre-Covid 19 efforts and many are now tired and stressed. Post-pandemic there may be problems “in the wings” since March 2020 that will come to the fore. Everybody involved in NYSCP needs the energy, time and resources to think and plan as far ahead as possible.

Current circumstances are best characterised as those of continued change. NYSCP members are aware the extraordinary circumstances of the past 17 months have taught services a great deal about working together, facing contingencies they could not have planned for. These challenges, and the responses to them, should be used to embed what have become new ways of working.

Partners are also aware that post-pandemic times are likely to give rise to different demands, needs, challenges and opportunities, not least if the economy struggles to revive sustainably and takes a long time to recover – a situation which could place some families’ lives under severe challenge. The issues discussed below will undoubtedly present challenges to every agency. Once the pandemic subsides and especially in light of the success of the vaccination programme, the period of “Afterwards” is likely to present circumstances that will not be what we remember as “normal” pre-Covid 19. Deciding as a Partnership what to do then is accepted by members as unlikely to be simple, quick, or cheap. Some of the issues identified as this report is completed include the following:

- Schools returned to as near “normal” as possible from the Spring of 2021, but educational professionals are aware circumstances across much of their practice are still not as they were prior to March 2020. Exam and testing regimes are under continued critical scrutiny, leaving pupils and teachers in extended uncertainty and stress. Schools are acutely aware children from some vulnerable families have been slow to return or may not do so, and that sporadic attendance and elective home education are on the rise. This is an ongoing issue that partners are aware need to be addressed, potentially over the long haul. These issues are national as well as local. The same is true of the “stop-start” and poorly funded nature of what government continues to call “catch-up” activities which school leaders prefer to think of in more rounded and social terms than simply offering more formal lessons over longer school days.
- There are children and young people with special educational needs, with or without disabilities, who need support beyond the resources available, whose situation may have been exacerbated by restrictions during the pandemic. There are some whose planned appointments with medical staff were stood down whilst health services dealt with the pandemic, who will not recover as they might had services continued as they were. It will take time for the picture to clarify, and resources are hard to increase to deal with the challenges, but these matters are already on the agenda of schools and the county’s services. The potential for expenditure to outstrip even carefully managed resources is a real and ongoing risk, as is the continued pressure on health and social care services as well as educational ones to work with children and families at the centre of their practice in SEN/D.

Rates of referrals into some higher-level children’s services were initially lower during 2020 than in pre-pandemic times across all agencies. This manifested in lower levels of children caught up in County Lines and other Criminal Exploitation, lower referral and self-referral in mental health services, and lower reported cases of domestic abuse and violence. All of these indicators of extreme vulnerability have resurfaced and are rising in frequency and complexity. Partners are

experiencing this increase, and noting that in many cases there is a greater than usual prevalence of higher end, crisis level safeguarding, criminal justice, and mental health services activity, for all of which there is little or no corresponding rise in resources. There has also been a rise in the need for intervention in a minority of families which either struggled behind their own closed doors and did not ask for help during lockdown periods, or turned help away using Covid 19 in the home as an excuse for doing so.

Reductions in some areas of work are now being matched by rises in others, including a clear trend of some families needing help or intervention when they were not “on the radar” pre-pandemic. These include families where a child has developed an eating disorder which has worsened beyond the reach of earlier or lower-level support and requires serious clinical intervention; and a noted rise, echoed nationally, in very young children who are pre-mobile being affected by non-accidental injuries, inflicted by adults responsible for their care.

The increase in family poverty caused by adults’ job uncertainty and leading to a need for more access to free school meals or other practical support, added to some families dealing with state benefit difficulties or housing problems and in worsening poverty, all affect some children’s lives far more than others. Partners are all acutely aware that these issues require an all-agency response, and the Executive and its subgroups are furnished with data analysis and trends that help their discussions about developing the appropriate responses countywide.

If referrals discussed in previous sections continue to rise but financial resources stay at pre-pandemic levels, there will be ever harder decisions to make in localities, and potentially a growth in children’s and young people’s unmet needs – itself a predictor of safeguarding difficulties in some families. Decision makers, policy and service shapers, and the Partnership’s many agencies, will need to remain aware both of these externally driven but locally felt circumstances, and the need to shape services so multi-disciplinary learning is built on. This will require sustained commitment, and may not be easy to maintain once the post-pandemic period is properly underway.

Resources to deal with new challenges are likely to have been depleted during 2020-2021. This includes in voluntary sector bodies, whose losses in funding may mean their ability to be delivery partners is severely curtailed, as NYSCP Executive has already discussed in some detail.

What will need to happen to address these many issues could be complex, and will require the input of leaders, staff, children and young people, and the county’s adult citizens. It is clear detailed planning, and a readiness to act as swiftly and in as close a partnership as has become the hallmark of Covid 19’s ways of working, will be needed.

There is an additional layer of risk of which all partners are aware, broadly categorised as continued organisational change that could destabilise progress, the key ones of which are summed up below. Together and taken cumulatively they must be recorded as presenting present considerable challenges to an already-busy and sometimes stretched system in all public services and their partner bodies. All of them should therefore be noted as potential risks to the smooth, efficient and effective operation of safeguarding and other services for children and young people, though the will to get them all right and keep things safe and on track is impressive and determined across North Yorkshire.

The Assistant Chief Constable who was a fundamental part of and determined leader in the Police Service's contributions to NYSCP, retired as this report was finalised. The interim replacement senior officer is known to partners and warmly welcomed, but there will be period of continued uncertainty regarding the likely arrival of a substantive post holder. This could be at least a year away from publication of this report, or perhaps even longer.

A new PFCC was elected in May 2021 and needs both to learn the intricacies, requirements and boundaries of the role, and what partnership working will require of him and his team going forward into 2021-2022 and beyond. The OFPCC is a significant commissioner of a range of services, some of which directly impact on the lives and life chances of groups of vulnerable children and young people, and NYSCP will need to ensure communication is effective and clear so that the work of services across the county is enhanced by what the OFPCC's commissioning budget can fund.

The potential for a now-confirmed local government reorganisation creating periods of adjustment, changes to and reviews of services, and attendant potential uncertainty cannot be underestimated, however carefully managed the changes will undoubtedly be. Such change again will not happen at speed and planning will take into account what it will mean once all concerned are clearer about what will happen between now and 2022-2023. With a "go-live" change in 2023.

What might broadly be termed the Health economy is undergoing a great deal of what some experts in it are calling seismic change as CCGs are stood down, far bigger sub-regional Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) take their place at commissioning levels, and locality-based or place-shaping health alliances and providers' collaboratives step in to configure and deliver services, tailored to evidenced community and locality needs rather than heavily centrally driven. The current situation in the midst of this change process remains at least in part unknown, both because NHS England is saying less than localities need to know and act on about relationships between the centre and localities, and because all partners will need to step in alongside Health service professionals and governance bodies to make the new health landscape work. The change on the ground is being handled, managed, led and delivered by senior professionals already more than fully occupied with the jobs they were already doing, who are also still leading on the ongoing response to Covid 19. The pace of required planning and readiness is fast, but relatively unsupported from the centre. These factors taken together mean, as health economy leaders have been clear, that risks abound in trying to land what North Yorkshire needs in physical and mental health services for people of all ages and for NYSCP, particularly children and young people.

MY WORK IN 2021-2022

A pattern of meetings was established in diaries beginning in September 2019 and has worked well to date. In 2021-2022 I will continue to chair the Executive and to attend, observe at, and note the contents of and decisions made at meetings of every subgroup, on a cycle matched to busy diaries.

It is important, given my earlier remarks on the "missing pieces of the jigsaw" at present, that we ensure my scrutiny encompasses more than the current NYSCP subgroups if the picture I then present on 2021-2022 is as full as it can be in the first year of "Being Young in North Yorkshire 2021-2024." This may mean adjustments to diaries and potentially an increase in days per year assigned

to my work. Given savings are currently made by my not having to travel or add other out of pocket expenses, this should not be beyond possibilities but will need to be agreed.

For as long as NYSCP's work goes on largely on a virtual basis, there are limits on what else can be done with the remainder of days of my time on which the Executive or subgroups meet. Were my visits and scrutineer days once again to be done face to face, there would be greater potential to undertake additional meetings in the other halves of days. Such meetings could usefully take place with:

- Those at Chief Executive or equivalent decision-making levels in Statutory Partner bodies, as envisaged in Sir Alan Wood's Spring 2021 review of the new Partnership arrangements and as Working Together 2018 also envisages. *To note; I already meet on a regular Keeping in Touch basis with the DCS and the County Council's CEO. 2021-2022 should expand these KiT arrangements to embrace the CCGs and the OFPCC.*
- Relevant Agencies' leaders, governance, and managerial staff: principals and head teachers, governors, leaders in community or faith organisations, those working in programme, service or team manager roles in services, and so on.
- Representatives of children and young people, particularly when they are involved in decision making
- Others as partners and agencies deem fit

I will continue to facilitate full NYSCP Partnership Days. These will be virtual events for the duration of Covid 19 regulations, and for however long afterwards partners see fit, given returns to face to face event-based or large group meetings will take time. The Partnership days will, as they do now, consist of all-participant co-appraisals of progress, and Partnership members' reflections on it, plus opportunities for all attendees to be part of learning and information exchanges. There is also a planned Safeguarding Week, reaching across the County, the City of York, and their widest possible LSCPs' footprints, in late June 2021. This will include my participation and contributions.

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND INDEPENDENT SCRUTINEER'S ASSURANCE STATEMENT

As both Executive Chair and Independent Scrutineer, I present this end of year report as a snapshot in time, not as a definitive document. I have attended, virtually through Microsoft Teams, both the Executive and every subgroup as an active participant observer. All are running well, and the commitment to ensure they continue to do so has not broken stride, despite the pressures under which every service and staff team are working. I have also kept track of the NYSCP's website materials and its offers of support and guidance to all who may need it.

I conclude that the Partnership and the agencies and services which belong and account to it are compliant with Working Together 2018. All concerned are aware that communications both within and between partner bodies need to go on being a focus for concentration and continuous improvement, to avoid duplication and to ensure that all the key safeguarding themes with which NYSCP engages are in the consciousness, and influence the work, of all services and agencies in the county.

I conclude by being able to give assurance that the Partnership is running as it should, and that people across all agencies remain committed to making it work successfully. I look forward to continuing to work with, chair the Executive of and independently scrutinise the Partnership, and I express my hope that at some point in 2021-2022, on whatever limited a basis, at least some of the work can take place face to face given the limitations of the virtual environment. Partnership members have expressed a similar wish, given that although online working is proving efficient and productive, there is a great deal missing when the human factor of being in the same space to tackle the same issues is lost.



Professor Maggie Atkinson
Chair of the Executive and Independent Scrutineer,
North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NYSCP)

DRAFT

APPENDIX 1

MY WORK, SET AGAINST NATIONAL REQUIREMENTS ON THE NYSCP

Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASAs) such as NYSCP are bound by statutory guidance in “Working Together the Safeguard Children” (2018, updated but not radically changed in 2020.) This is clear the MASA does not work in isolation but is part of any locality’s broader, all-agency means of ensuring citizens’ wellbeing. The central tenets are below.

“Working Together” 2018, Chapter 3 states:

The purpose of local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- children are safeguarded and their welfare is promoted
- partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
- organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
- there is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
- learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

In order to work together effectively, the safeguarding statutory partners, with other local organisations and agencies, should develop processes that:

- facilitate and drive action beyond usual institutional and agency constraints and boundaries
- ensure the effective protection of children is founded on practitioners developing lasting and trusting relationships with children and their families

Effective arrangements link to other strategic partnership work locally that supports children and families, including other public boards: Health and Wellbeing Boards, PFCCs’ boards and panels, Adult Safeguarding Boards, Channel Panels, Improvement Boards, Community Safety Partnerships, the Local Family Justice Board and MAPPAs. (This list is not exhaustive.)

Strong leadership is critical for arrangements to be effective in bringing together organisations and agencies. It is important that the lead representative from each of the three safeguarding partners plays an active role. The lead representatives for safeguarding partners are: the local authority chief executive, the accountable officer of a clinical commissioning group, and a chief officer of police.¹

All three safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements. In situations that require a clear, single point of leadership, all three safeguarding partners should decide who would take the lead on issues that arise.

Should the lead representatives delegate their functions they remain accountable for any actions or decisions taken on behalf of their agency. If delegated, it is the responsibility of the lead

¹ Sir Alan Wood in his recently published report remains of the opinion that Chief Executives of LAs, Chief Constables and Accountable Officers of CCGs should sit on Partnership Executives in person. It is my view that this is untenable, given the breadth, depth and coverage of their respective roles; and that the levels of delegation to very senior Officers who lead the actual work is appropriate, so long as they can assure each other and me that their Chief Executive level post-holders are regularly and clearly informed of the NYSCP’s work.

representative to identify and nominate a senior officer in their agency to have responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation with these arrangements.

The representatives, or those they delegate authority to, should be able to:

- speak with authority for the safeguarding partner they represent
- take decisions on behalf of their organisation or agency and commit them on policy, resourcing and practice matters
- hold their own organisation or agency to account on how effectively they participate and implement the local arrangements

DRAFT

YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 September 2021

Medical Education Service (MES) briefing

Report of the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Service

This report

Requires a decision		Seeks views	
Provides a briefing	/	Reports on performance	
Is presented in advance of an Executive Member decision			

The following implications are associated with this report:

Financial Resources		Staff/HR	
Performance		Community	
Legal			

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide a briefing on the progress of the MES

2.0 BACKGROUND

In December 2019 Executive approval was given to implement a revised model for the Medical Education Service (MES). The local authority has a statutory duty to provide education for children and young people that are unable to attend school due to their medical needs which could be physical or mental health needs.

The new MES proposed to continue an appropriate level of education a pupil is provided with whilst absent from school and provide a range of educational options. Through working closer with Health, the aim is to ensure the provision is in pupils' best interests and does not inhibit their re-integration back into school.

It was proposed that an increased range of options for medical tuition, including digital solutions, personal home tuition and group education would enable the delivery of a bespoke package for each child. Regular review meetings led by the School would be held with the local Medical Education Service (MES) co-ordinator as well as the pupils, their families and health professionals to ensure a flexible, pupil and family-centred joined-up approach that reflects pupils' needs by delivering the right amount of education, at the right time and through the right choice of educational provision.

The new model proposed a greater involvement of the pupil's home school, which would enable relationships to continue and ensure the school maintains accountability for their pupils. There will be earlier professional intervention through multi-disciplinary meetings, greater Health and school involvement and a more bespoke range of options dependent on the need of the child or young person. It was proposed that this will be achieved with an improved holistic collaborative approach to meeting the needs of individual children involving key professionals as appropriate. The new model seeks to minimise duplication of meetings, assessments and reviews. It was anticipated that this joined up, bespoke provision would facilitate an earlier return to school for many pupils.

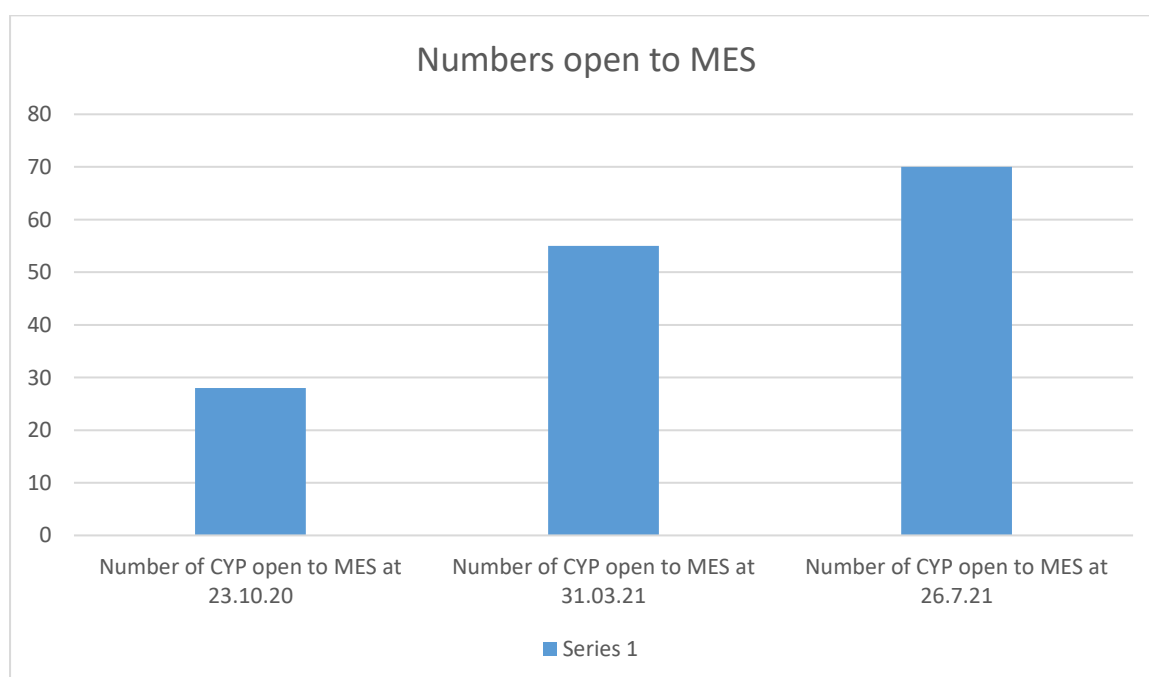
3.0 OBJECTIVES

- Ensuring the Local Authority is compliant with its statutory responsibilities for children with medical needs;
- Greater clarity of responsibilities of key stakeholders including Schools and Health;
- LA having strengthened oversight of the population of children with medical needs who are unable to attend school to ensure children are able to access an education programme that is appropriate to their needs;
- To increase the profile of children out of school for medical needs across the localities via the Locality Boards which are made up of Head Teachers and to ensure more accountability for those children in the area.
- Improved range of education provision, scope and curriculum offer for young people requiring medical tuition;
- Increased education outcomes for pupils by increasing the number of education hours;
- Reduction of time missed due to absence from school with a better and swifter reintegration offer

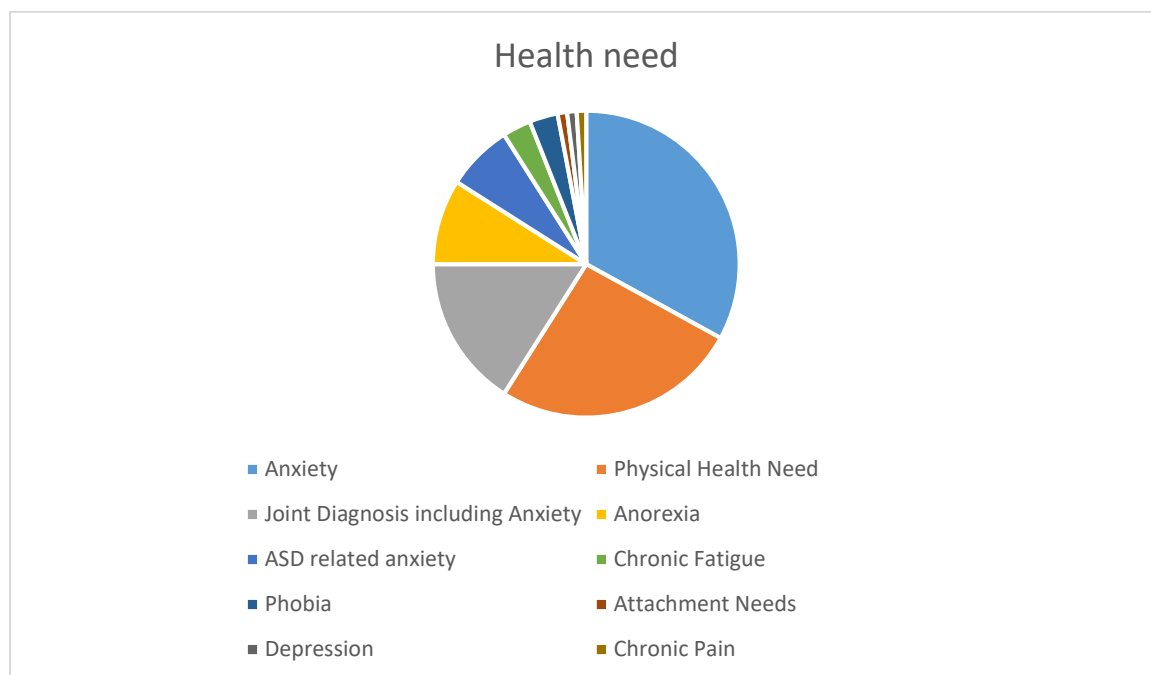
4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The MES launched as planned in September 2020. Prior to the launch the Lead of the MES presented at each SENCo Network in North Yorkshire to ensure all schools were aware of their statutory duties to support children with medical needs as well as the duties of the Local Authority and when and how to refer to the MES. Communications regarding the MES were circulated to all schools at the point of launch.

By October Half Term 28 Children and Young People (CYP) were open to the MES, this increased to 55 at the end of the Spring term and 70 at the end of the Summer Term. This rise in numbers was expected as the schools re-opened after the second and third national lockdowns.



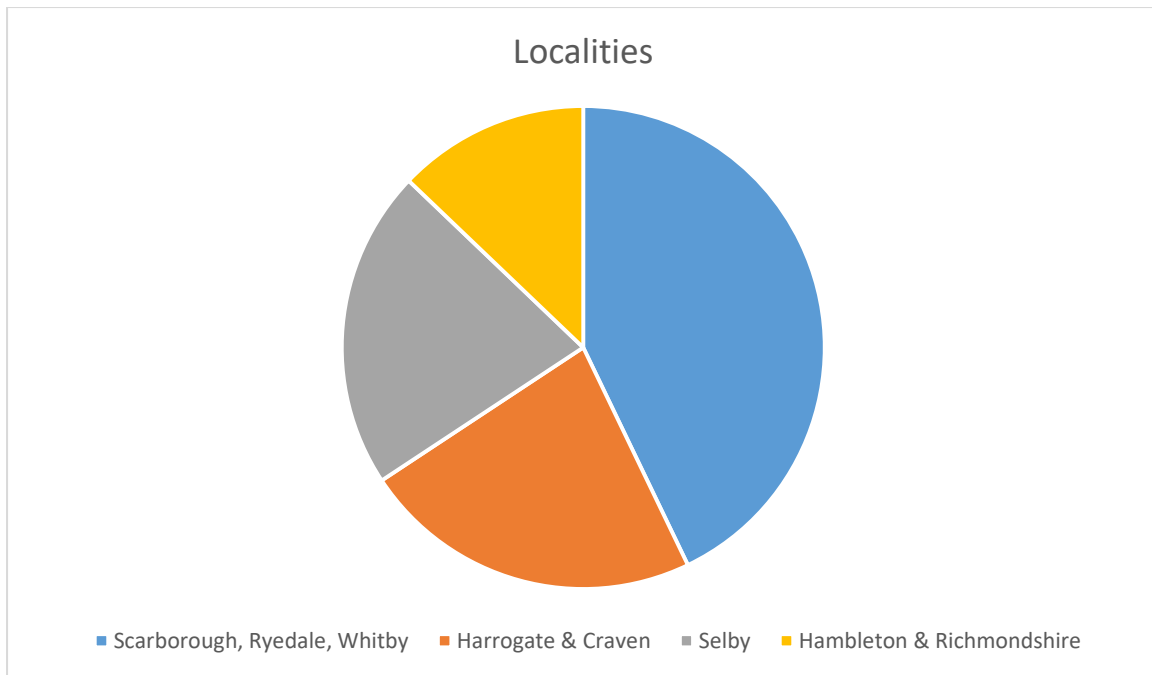
At the end of the Summer Term 33% of CYP open to the MES were referred due to anxiety, 26% due to a physical health need, 16% due to a joint diagnosis which included anxiety, 9% due to anorexia, 7% due to ASD related anxiety, 3% due to chronic fatigue, 3% due to a phobia, 1% due to attachment needs, 1% due to depression and 1% due to chronic pain.



The MES works closely alongside the schools the CYP are on roll at. The offer of education in place for each CYP open to the MES includes an offer from the school as well as the MES. An average of 5.9 hours of education are delivered by the MES each week to each CYP. The schools offer of education varies from using an AV1 to enable a CYP to watch a live streaming of their lessons from home to 1:1 lessons via Microsoft Teams to setting and marking work for the CYP to complete at home. The MES aims to ensure the CYP continues to feel a part of their home school and is working closely with the schools to ensure their part of the offer is appropriate for the CYPs needs and is supporting reintegration. In Autumn Term 2021 the MES is delivering a webinar for schools regarding the policy they need to have in place, as per their statutory duties, which sets out how they support children with medical needs as well when they should refer to the Local Authority.

The MES also work alongside the health professionals who are working with the CYP. In order to submit a request to the MES the health professional has to complete a section of the request form which asks for their professional opinion on what education the child is medically able to access. On average a health professional takes 9.6 days to complete the form. A Pupil Reintegration Education Plan (PREP) meeting takes place when a request is accepted and is then held at least half-termly whilst the CYP is open to the MES. 32% of the PREP meetings have been attended by a health professional. The Lead of the MES is addressing this low attendance through the CCG at the Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) strategic group.

Of the 70 CYP open to the MES, 42.86% are from Scarborough, Ryedale, Whitby, 22.85% from Harrogate and Craven, 21.42% from Selby and 12.86% from Hambleton & Richmondshire. It is anticipated that 42.86% of this cohort will close in September 2021 as the CYP return to school full-time however they remain open to the MES at present and this will be reviewed mid-late September 2021 using the attendance data.



In the Summer Term 48.5% of Key Stage 1,2 & 3 were below Age Related Expectations (ARE), 36.5% were at ARE and 15% were above. 51% of Key Stage 4 were below their predicted grades, 38% were on target and 11% were above.

In the Summer Term 12.86% of the MES cohort have an EHCP and 40% have progressed to statutory assessment whilst open to the MES.

5.0 CASE STUDY

Background and reason for Involvement

- YP is 16 year old female in year 11 in a mainstream secondary school in North Yorkshire. A request for involvement was made to the MES as she had a number of medical issues. She was diagnosed with extreme anxiety, depression and an eating disorder, which required hospitalisation last year.
- She had frequent panic attacks at school and also suffered with migraines brought on by the stress she was under.
- Despite this extreme level of anxiety, she wanted to return to school and has plans to attend college next year.
- Attendance on entry to MES 0%
- Below ARE due to missed learning

Actions, Impact and Outcome

- The Medical Education Service began teaching her both online and face to face. She responded well to the teachers and they were able to establish good relationships with her. She has worked hard in the sessions and has made very good progress. By attending the sessions, she has been able to fill gaps in learning which reduced her anxiety about attending school. Attendance at MES 100%.
- School staff have supported her with a gradual re-integration back to school and she is now able to attend some lessons. School have been able to create a flexible timetable that means she is able to make good academic progress whilst making sure that her anxiety doesn't become too high.
- She has attended CBT and family therapy sessions with mental health services and these have helped her to manage her anxiety, which has meant that she is more able to attend school on a part-time timetable.
- All of these factors mean that she is on track to achieve high grades at GCSE and has accepted a place at her local college for September to study A Levels. She is then hoping to go on to university. In Summer Term YP Above ARE.
- All teachers working with her, both in the MES and school have recognised that she has increased in confidence incredibly well and is now at a point where she is able to contribute to lessons in school. She is also able to manage if she makes a mistake and can correct herself and move on, both at school and during MES sessions.

Feedback and Parent/Carer & YP Voice

- The YP's Mum is extremely proud of her daughter and all she has achieved. She is very grateful to the MES teachers for their approach, professionalism and support and recognises that her daughter would not have achieved so much without their involvement. She is also very appreciative of how the school staff have managed to be flexible in their approach and supportive towards her.
- The YP has said that she enjoys her lessons with the MES teachers and is glad to be back at school more than she was.

Learning for the Service

- What the MES has learned from this case is that a co-ordinated, multi-agency approach works well to bring about positive outcomes for young people.

- This case has been successful is because the MES, the school, the family and the medical professionals have worked together to support this YP to achieve outcomes that she is capable of achieving.
- Moving forward, the MES will ensure that this coordinated approach will be adopted for all caseload. The MES is a new service and it has been challenging to ensure that schools, parents and medical professionals understand the core purpose of the service. However, we have begun to achieve this, through developing professional relationships and establishing good lines of communication, so that there are clear expectations of the role of each service involved with the young people and their families.

6.0 NEXT STEPS

- MES to deliver webinar to schools in Autumn Term to highlight a schools statutory duty to support children with medical needs
- Review MES criteria due to impact of Covid-19 on CYP's heightened anxiety regarding attending school
- Escalate low attendance of health professionals at review meetings via SEMH strategic group

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26 July 2021

Stuart Carlton
Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Service,
Education and Skills
Children and Young People's Service
North Yorkshire County Council
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Northallerton
DL7 8AE

Dear Mr Carlton

Focused visit to North Yorkshire County Council children's services

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

This letter summarises the findings of a focused visit to North Yorkshire children's services on 16 June 2021. Her Majesty's Inspectors for this visit were Lynn Radley and Matt Reed.

Inspectors looked at the local authority's arrangements for the front door, including contacts, referrals, decision-making and the application of thresholds for services and accommodation of children. They also looked at assessments and plans for children in need and those subject to child protection processes, which included the designated officer arrangements.

This visit was carried out in line with the inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS) framework. However, the delivery model was adapted to reflect the COVID-19 context. The lead inspector and the director of children's services agreed arrangements to deliver this visit effectively while working within national and local guidelines for responding to COVID-19. This visit was carried out partly by remote means. Both inspectors were on site and held face-to-face discussions with some local authority staff. However, inspectors also used video calls for discussions with local authority staff, managers and leaders.

Headline findings

Highly confident senior leaders and managers have ensured that children's services have continued to develop positively since the last inspection. Despite COVID-19 and the resultant increase in the number of children being referred to children's services,

partnership work has flourished, the practice model is now fully embedded, and vulnerable children receive effective services from skilled and compassionate professionals who protect, help and support them.

What needs to improve in this area of social work practice?

- The recording of how and when actions to progress children's plans are undertaken and completed.

Main findings

A stable senior leadership team has been able to respond confidently to the additional challenges brought by COVID-19. Well-established governance arrangements, management oversight and strong partnership arrangements have ensured that oversight of vulnerable children has been maintained. Workers have responded well to new working arrangements, and performance has continued to be strong.

All contacts are received and screened by the highly efficient and effective multi-agency safeguarding team (MAST). This well-staffed team includes managers and social workers from children's social care, the early help service, health and the police. Much work, time and resources have been invested in ensuring that MAST practice is delivered within the parameters of the authority's chosen practice model.

MAST practice is of a high standard, and skilled managers and staff screen contacts and referrals and make appropriate decisions about next steps within a 24-hour timeframe. Responsive managers review, update and reassess children's cases as new information emerges and referrals progress without delay. This includes scaling risks and strengths in line with their practice model. The early-help manager oversees the purposeful screening and assessment of cases referred to her service. Social workers and early-help workers undertake wide-ranging evaluations of each child's circumstances, and these underpin the rationale for cases being allocated to the right service to meet that child's needs. All referrals to children's social care are appropriately prioritised using a red, amber or green (RAG) rating system.

Managers provide clear direction to workers at all stages of the process, ensuring that the correct checks are completed without delay. Sufficient information is available and collated to inform and allow robust decision-making to take place.

Issues of parental consent are well understood, and when managers decide to dispense with consent this is clearly recorded on the referral record. The MAST effectively and promptly screens children's cases when a child's needs escalate or reduce (to step across to another statutory team or step down to early help), and a decision is made to move their case into another part of the service. Decisions made in the MAST are proportionate to the concerns raised, and the rationale for decisions

is clearly recorded. Good-quality management oversight in the team is a strength, and this is reinforced by detailed recording of the rationale for their decisions.

The MAST has embedded and routinely uses multi-agency live mapping to provide an extra and theoretically based structured consideration of the circumstances of individual children and their families. A wholly child-focused approach is used in order to identify what needs to happen to move to the best or a better way to progress a child's case and maximise the potential for a more positive outcome. This time- and resource-intensive process allows staff and managers to take time to stop, think collaboratively and use all resources available to them to plan a way forward.

When a child is thought to be at risk of significant harm, their circumstances are considered at prompt and highly effective child protection strategy meetings. These meetings are routinely attended by a wide range of relevant agencies that contribute and share information fully. All partner agencies are required to provide a risk scaling, so that a shared understanding of risk informs the assessment of risk and any subsequent child protection investigation. This means that next steps can be planned and put into action without delay. The recording of strategy meetings is of a high standard, is very clear and sets out the rationale and timescale for each agency's actions.

Child protection investigations are comprehensive, recorded to the highest standards and completed without any delay. The range of partner agencies that contribute is wide and diverse, demonstrating that social workers have a comprehensive understanding of a child's networks and circumstances to inform their recommendation for what should happen next. Management decisions to progress children's cases to an initial child protection case conference are appropriate and clearly recorded.

Children's views are included and well detailed in child and family assessments. Most children's case records evidenced individualised and regular direct work being undertaken with children. Social workers take the views of children seriously, and these views inform the recommendations of assessments and the provision of further services. Assessments are concise, presented in alignment with the authority's practice model and always include scaling and statements clarifying what is of concern and what strengths can be used to mitigate them. Assessments are completed at a pace that is in line with each child's particular circumstances. Management oversight is robust, and, in every case, the authorising manager sets out the rationale for their decision.

Assessments for court are well written, have the needs of the child as their prime focus and demonstrate the flexibility of social workers to adapt to a different assessment style. Examples seen included a wide consideration of historical factors, a detailed account of the child's views and an extensive analysis of concerns and strengths.

Most child in need and child protection plans would benefit from the addition of clear timescales for actions to be completed. Better plans are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound (SMART) and include dates for actions to be completed by rather than the use of 'ongoing', for example. Social workers are in no doubt about what a child's plan is and how much progress has been made or what the barriers to progress are. Children's case records also demonstrate that core groups, teams around the child and reviews all measure and record progress against the plan's objectives.

Numbers of children entering care are low as a result of the time, extensive support services and resources used to maintain children within their family networks whenever it is possible. In the last year, there have been only two incidences when emergency orders were used, and these were appropriate. When children need to be taken into care, senior managers and staff act decisively and make prompt applications to issue court proceedings where necessary. For example, when a child's case is already subject to the Public Law Outline and where extensive support services have not improved children's circumstances, managers act without delay to make successful application to the court. An established process of authorisation and scrutiny by senior managers is in place to ensure that the right children are accommodated.

When it is alleged that adults in positions of trust have harmed children, the designated officer service takes appropriate action to ensure that children are safeguarded and that the allegation is investigated and followed up by the designated officer.

Social workers are positive about working in North Yorkshire. They talked positively about the support provided to deliver the service in line with the practice model. Child-centred work is key to what they do. The majority we met like working from home and the increased use of virtual meetings and discussions. Others miss the 'buzz' of an office and having colleagues on hand for informal and spontaneous conversations. Supervision is routine, helpful and undertaken both in groups and individually.

Confident, skilled leaders and managers know their help and protection service very well and respond quickly and effectively to emerging issues, rise in demand or change in workforce patterns. They have created a service in which social workers are supported to develop their initiative, be imaginative and help families build safe networks to raise children. Cases demonstrate improvement in outcomes for most children, and only low numbers need to be accommodated. Since the last inspection, the practice model has become well embedded, not only at the heart of local authority children's services but in the practice of partners. Regular practice-led learning and assurance are undertaken within the structure of a comprehensive quality assurance framework. Performance against key indicators used to measure

the impact that services have on improving children's welfare is good or better, and robust management oversight is consistently evident in children's cases.

Ofsted will take the findings from this focused visit into account when planning your next inspection or visit.

Your sincerely

Lynn Radley
Her Majesty's Inspector

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North Yorkshire County Council

Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3 September 2021

Work Programme

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report invites Members to consider the Committee's Work Programme for 2021/22, taking into account the outcome of discussions on previous Agenda Items and any other developments taking place across the county.
- 1.2 The Work Programme schedule is attached at Appendix 1. It is subject to change

2.0 Scheduled Committee dates/Mid-Cycle Briefing dates

2.1 Committee Meetings

- Friday 10 December 2021 at 10.00 a.m.
- Friday 25 February 2022 at 10.00 a.m.

Mid Cycle Briefing Dates

- Friday 15 October 2021 at 10.00 a.m.
- Friday 28 January 2022 at 10.00 a.m.
- Friday 15 April 2022 at 10.00 a.m.

3.0 Recent developments that may need to be added to the Work Programme

- 3.1 The Quarter One Performance Report for the County Council highlighted that there was a 20% increase in referrals to Children's Social Care in Quarter 1, compared with the final quarter of 2020/2021.
- 3.2 At the Great Yorkshire Show in July, a report by the Rural Commission was launched - *Rural North Yorkshire: The way forward*.
- 3.3 The report is wide-ranging and contains 57 recommendations to 17 organisations, including the County Council.
- 3.4 Officers will establish which of the recommendations are likely be of particular relevance to this Committee.
- 3.5 It is suggested that an initial discussion as to what Items from the Performance Report and the Rural Commission Report could be added to the Work Programme be held at the October Mid Cycle Briefing.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to confirm, comment or add to the areas of work listed in the Work Programme schedule.

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SCRUTINY TEAM LEADER
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20th August 2021

Background papers relied upon in the preparation of this report – None

YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Scope

The interests of young people, including education, care and protection and family support.

Meeting Details

Committee Meetings	Friday 10 December 2021 at 10.00 a.m.
	Friday 25 February 2022 at 10.00 a.m.

Programme (Please note: Subject to change)

Friday 10 December 2021 - Committee Meeting at 10.00 a.m.			
TOPIC	CONTENT	METHOD AND PURPOSE	LEAD
Elective Home Education - Update	Context; an overview of current numbers; reasons stated for home education; impact	Presentation	Sarah Fawcett
Child Death Overview Panel Annual Report	Summary of the work that has been undertaken; lessons learned and actions taken to protect children and young people from harm and reduce future deaths wherever possible	Presentation	Dr. Maggie Atkinson
Young Carers	Especially those who support adults with mental health issues. The practical and emotional support made available to young people to ensure they enjoy and achieve, just like their peers. How NYCC works in partnership with schools, and GPs to identify young carers, raise much-needed awareness of their situation, and offer the support that they need, when they need it.	Consideration of Briefing Paper	
Early Years Sector	Understanding of the range of private providers supporting vulnerable children and families	Review	

Friday 25 February 2022 - Committee Meeting at 10.00 a.m.			
Education is our Greatest Liberator	Annual Attainment report	Review Published Report	Amanda Newbold
Children's Mental Health	How Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services are coping with increase in demand, the effectiveness of surge planning, and any lessons learned		

Mid Cycle Briefing Items at 10am

Date	Potential Item
Friday 15 October 2021	Healthy Child Programme - progress and situation report
	Elective Home Education - update
	Rural Commission Report – identification of the recommendations that relate to this Committee and when they should be scheduled for consideration
Friday 28 January 2022	To be determined
Friday 14 April 2022	To be determined