

North Yorkshire County Council

Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 25th February 2022

Reflections and the future

Report by the Chair

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report outlines the work carried out by the Committee during the life of the current County Council.
- 1.2 It also suggests a “long list” of Items that those Members who form the Committee, following the County Council Elections in May 2022, may wish to consider for inclusion in its Work Programme.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 As Chair of the Committee, I felt it would be helpful to reflect on the work of the Committee during this Council administration - 2017 to 2022. Elections to the County Council would normally have been held in 2021, but they were put back one year due to Local Government Reorganisation.
- 2.2 A number of current Members may well continue to serve on this Committee following the County Council Elections, but it will be in a new administration. Therefore, I consider it appropriate for the current Committee to suggest areas that the “new” Committee may wish to consider as part of its Work Programme.

3.0 Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee - background

- 3.1 The main role of the Committee is to scrutinise the planning, commissioning and delivery of services for children, young people and their families, including education, care and protection and family support.
- 3.2 The Committee comprises thirteen elected Members and nine Co-opted Members, who represent a range of Sectors. The Committee greatly benefits from the expertise of its Co-opted Members.
- 3.3 The Committee has met four times each year.

4.0 Areas covered/topics considered

- 4.1 These can be grouped into Items that have been considered as one-off, discrete Items – periodically revisited because of their significance and importance – and matters considered on more of a recurring basis.
- 4.2 One-off/discrete Items have included:-
- Exclusion of Pupils from Schools (This included group sessions with young people excluded from School and the Pupil Referral Unit staff)
 - Alcohol Strategy
 - School Admissions
 - Pupil Premium
 - Careers Guidance update
 - North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area – Update

- Growing up as a Lesbian Gay, Bisexual or Trans Young Person in North Yorkshire
- North Yorkshire's Strategic Plan for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Provision: 0-25 year olds
- Looked After Children Strategy 2018-2021: Core Offer to Care Leavers
- Statutory Relationships, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education for all Schools
- Teacher Recruitment – the Rural Challenge
- Children and Families Covid Briefing/Update
- Covid Winter Grant Scheme - funding allocation for the County Council
- Outdoor Learning Service – Review of Provision
- Review of Traded Services in Education and Skills, due to Covid-19
- SEND Strategy: Update
- Medical Education Service – Update/Review of Implementation
- Annual Report of One Adoption Agency - North and Humber, 2020/2021

4.3 Matters that have been more recurring in nature have included:-

- School Place Planning – Shaping Future Education Provision
- Safeguarding – How do we keep children and young people safe? (This has included consideration of the Annual Report of the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership)
- School Attainment
- Early Years Provision
- Pressure on School Budgets
- Ofsted Inspection Reports
- Annual Update from the Young People's Champion
- The Impact of Covid-19 (on Early Years; Youth Organisations; etc)

4.4 In addition, the Committee has received updates from Portfolio Holders. County Councillor Janet Sanderson (Executive Member for Children's Services) and County Councillor Patrick Mulligan (Executive Member for Education and Skills) have appraised the Committee periodically of the main areas of their work.

5.0 Examples of the Committee's Scrutiny Role

5.1 Set out below are examples, from some of the matters considered, of how the Committee has exercised its Scrutiny role and a summary of the views of the Committee. NOTE: Agenda and Minutes from all of the Committee's deliberations over the last five years are available on the County Council's website, via the link below:-

[Browse meetings - Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee | North Yorkshire County Council](#)

Exclusion of Pupils from Schools

- Concluded that the Directorate had demonstrated that the issues raised were recognised and were being used effectively to improve pupils lives and direct service change and improvement.
- Felt it was appropriate, and reassuring for Members, that the reasons for exclusions, and their rise in number, was being properly unpicked and analysed.

NOTE: The Children and Young People's Service Directorate has developed *The Ladder of Intervention*, to support schools and settings in adopting early intervention for children with Social Emotional Mental Health and/or at risk of exclusion.

School Place Planning – Shaping Future Education Provision

- Felt assured that there are clear, well thought through, proposed solutions for meeting demand.
- Considered systems for forecasting pupil numbers to be robust and effective.

Pupil Premium

- Concluded that the grant is being made best use of.
- Considered that the Directorate has a clear vision for improving outcomes for disadvantaged learners in North Yorkshire.

North Yorkshire's Strategic Plan for SEND Provision: 0-25 year olds

- Considered that feedback from informal consultation has wisely informed the shape and detail of the proposals.
- Felt that the timescales and process for the consultation appear to be right.

Covid Winter Grant Scheme - funding allocation for North Yorkshire County Council

- Satisfied that the eligibility framework presented would ensure North Yorkshire County Council's allocation was deployed wisely and effectively.

Medical Education Service – Review/Update on implementation

- Sought reasons for the relatively high number of referrals for Scarborough, Ryedale and Whitby, together with a breakdown for each area.
- Clarification sought as to the position where a child is being seen by the Service, who also has an Education Health Care Plan and how that is delivered to them.

Early Years Briefing

- Enquired how the work undertaken by the Rt Hon. Andrea Leadsom, MP, around family hubs - *The best start for life: a vision for the 1001 critical days* - fits in with the Early Years Programme.
- Asked the Directorate how we access people who may not be in Early Years provision and ensure that they receive the support that they may require.

Elective Home Education (This was the subject of a specific briefing for Members)

- Sought to understand the underlying reasons for the growth in the number of children being home educated.
- Sought reassurance that the Authority is meeting all of its obligations.

NOTE: The Elective Home Education Policy and Procedures were revised in 2021, replacing those previously approved in 2016, in order to reflect the new pathway and statutory requirements.

6.0 Areas that the Committee may wish to consider from June 2022

6.1 The Committee that is constituted following the County Council's Annual General meeting in May 2022 will, naturally, have its own thoughts as to areas to be considered and it would not be appropriate to make recommendations to it. However, based on the work of the current Committee, the long list (set out alphabetically, for ease of reference) in the Appendices to this report, is suggested as one that the Committee may find helpful in developing its Work Programme for 2022/2023.

6.2 There are two Appendices:-

Appendix A:

Potential areas that the Committee may wish to consider on a one-off or periodic basis.

Appendix B:

Potential areas that the Committee may want to consider, which occur annually, or lend themselves to annual reporting.

6.3 The first meeting of the Committee in 2022/2023 is scheduled for Friday 24th June 2022.

7.0 A matter that needs to be addressed – Co-opted Member Vacancies

7.1 The Committee has operated below its full complement of Co-opted Members for some time. Given the important role played by Co-opted Members and the experience that they bring to the work of the Committee, this is something that should be addressed. I know that officers in Democratic Services are working to fill the vacancies.

8.0 Engagement

8.1 All of our meetings are open to the public. Every Agenda contains an Item on Public Questions or Statements. During the last five years only two public questions have been raised. I do not have the answer to how this might be achieved, but it could enhance the deliberations of the Committee still further if there was greater engagement from the public.

8.2. Having said the above, the Children and Young People's Service Directorate, as a public-facing Department, is in regular contact with the people who use its services, regularly seeking their feedback and using this to inform service provision.

9.0. Closing Comments

9.1 It has been a privilege to have chaired this Committee since 2015, as ensuring that we are providing the best possible services to children, young people and their families is something that I am passionate about.

9.2 This report is not intended to be congratulatory in any way; the Committee's job is to scrutinise areas of work and that is what it has done.

9.3 It is clear, however, from Section 4, above, that a wide range of areas have been considered.

9.4 Uppermost in the thoughts of Members has been the interests of children, young people and their families. The Committee has not operated on a party political basis.

9.5 I am grateful to all Members and Officers of the Council and its Partners, past and present, for their support and contribution to the work of the Committee. Particular thanks to my Vice-Chair, County Councillor Gillian Quinn; the Political Group Spokespersons – County Councillors Stephanie Duckett and Annabel Wilkinson – and the Portfolio Holders, County Councillors Janet Sanderson and Patrick Mulligan, for having given their time to update the Committee on key developments in their respective areas.

10.0 Recommendation

10.1 The Committee is asked to:-

- a) note the work carried out over the last five years: and
- b) provide its views on the suggested “long list” of potential areas in the Appendices, upon which a Work Programme from June 2022 could be developed.

County Councillor Janet Jefferson

Chair of the Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

County Hall, Northallerton
January 2022

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

APPENDIX A

POTENTIAL AREAS THAT THE COMMITTEE MAY WANT TO CONSIDER ON A ONE-OFF OR PERIODIC BASIS	
AREA	OUTLINE OF WHAT COULD BE CONSIDERED
Alcohol Strategy	Are the targets being achieved?
Being Young in North Yorkshire Strategy	Examination of progress against the outcomes and priorities in the Strategy.
Children's Mental Health	Arising from the presentation to be made to today's meeting (25 th February), there may be a wish to look at some aspects in further detail.
Early Years Sector	Update on the number and range of providers; identification of any issues/challenges.
Education Health Care Plans	Numbers and trends
Financial Pressures	To be appraised of any significant pressures and the Directorate's approach to managing these.
Glasses for classes	Progress on this recently introduced initiative – take up; any impediments?
Growing up in North Yorkshire Survey	Examination of the key issues and trends; how does the Directorate and its partners intend to deal with the findings?
Healthy Child Programme	Are the desired outcomes being achieved?
Locality Boards	How well are they functioning?
Over 16's Transport	A recommendation from the Rural Commission. Could, potentially, consider how things might be done differently after two years of Covid-19. There may be new possibilities and opportunities.
Referrals to Children's Social Care	Numbers/trends/reasons.
School Admissions	Are the processes still working well?
SEND Strategy	The Committee would look to play a supportive role in a Key Strategy.
Strengthening the Offer for Post-16 Education	The current offer and proposals for building on this. NOTE: This is one of the Rural Commission's recommendations. As part of this, it will be possible to build in another of its recommendations – Pioneering a two-stream education system post-GCSE in rural and remote areas – vocational and academic.
Transitions	How well is the interface working between the Directorate and Health and Adult Services?
Young Carers	Young carers who support adults with mental health issues; the practical and emotional support made available to them to ensure they enjoy and achieve; how the Council commissions and works in partnership with specialist Young Carers Services, Schools and GPs to identify young carers, raise awareness and offer the support they need, when they need it.

POTENTIAL AREAS THAT THE COMMITTEE MAY WANT TO CONSIDER, WHICH OCCUR ANNUALLY, OR LEND THEMSELVES TO ANNUAL REPORTING	
AREA	OUTLINE OF WHAT COULD BE CONSIDERED
Attainment Results	Comparison with previous years.
Child Death Overview Panel Annual Report	Has the significant rise in complex cases (identified in the current Annual Report, considered on 10 th December), such as Drug Related Deaths and Sudden and Unexpected Deaths in Infancy, continued? Are we any closer to understanding why the mortality rate is higher for males?
Medical Education Service	General update.
North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area	How well are the desired outcomes on social mobility across Scarborough, Whitby and Filey being met?
North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report	Assurance. How the Board intends to deal with the challenges identified. Plans for development.
North Yorkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Annual Report	Examination results in Religious Education. How has SACRE engaged with Schools? Progress against its Development Plan.
One Adoption Agency - Yorkshire and Humber - Annual Report	Have the positive trends identified in the current Annual Report in terms of, for example, the number of siblings placed together and the number of children placed under early permanence arrangements, continued?
School Attendance	Separately, or as part of the Item below, it could be helpful to look at the work the Directorate is undertaking to help ensure good attendance levels.
Schools Update	The current picture, in terms of figures for all North Yorkshire County Council Schools and Academies. Performance and standards. Funding. Strategic planning.
Substance Misuse Annual Update	How partners are working to address drug and alcohol misuse and the support available.
Young People's Champion Annual Update	Summary of the work of the Young People's Champion.