

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

22 February 2023

STATEMENT OF CHAIR

YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Report 2021/2022

The Committee received a presentation by Stuart Carlton, Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Service. The presentation and Annual Report, can be viewed [here](#)

Being Young in North Yorkshire is the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NYSCP) Strategy for Children and Young People. The Corporate Director pulled out some of the headline performance from its four themes.

The Corporate Director also drew Members attention to other key highlights. These included relaunching the Self Harm and Suicide Ideation Pathway and a Child Exploitation Awareness Campaign.

The work of the various Sub-Groups was also outlined, together with the Multi-Agency Training and Learning that occurs. Masterclasses are a popular feature among professionals. Holding these virtually, makes it easier for people to attend.

Professor Maggie Atkinson, Independent Scrutineer and Chair of the NYSCP Executive, informed Members that the NYSCP is strong because of the enormous commitment of partner bodies.

She also stated that people are doing a fine job despite how tired they are and the workload they face.

I thanked Maggie her for all the work that she had undertaken as this was her last meeting.

Officers responded to a number of questions from Members, including:-

- How the Partnership is keeping on top of elective home education.
- The issue of drugs.
- The number of care leavers in, employment, education, or training.
- How we avoid a *cliff edge* effect when young people are no longer the responsibility of the Directorate.

Children and Young People's Service: Financial Position

We considered a joint report by the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Service and the Assistant Director, Strategic Resources, which highlighted the areas presenting with the most significant financial pressures facing the Directorate as at Quarter 2, 2022 and the management action that has been taken in response to the pressures.

The report also provided an update on school funding pressures.

The Assistant Director, Strategic Resources, advised that the Directorate is projecting an overspend of £5.2 million in 2022/2023. This is due to several sustained financial pressures.

He further advised that the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities budget, within the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant, represents the most significant pressure.

The outlook remains challenging. In part, this is because the Directorate receives one of the lowest funding per head settlements for high needs.

The Assistant Director responded to questions from Members. These included:-

- The process when a *Notice of Financial Concern* is issued by the Local Authority.
- How the Directorate work with Schools to both support and challenge them.

Adoptions in North Yorkshire 2021/2022

Judith Russ, Head of Placement Support, provided us with a detailed summary of North Yorkshire's performance and where it sits within the Regional Adoption Agency – One Adoption Agency, Yorkshire and Humber. You can view the presentation and the report [here](#)

Among the points highlighted were:-

- North Yorkshire's performance is generally strong in term of the timeliness of placing children in need of adoption with a family. For example, in North Yorkshire the average number of days between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family is 269, compared to averages of 398 across the Regional Adoption Agency and 412 nationally.
- It has taken the number of new applications to adopt a while to recover from the Pandemic – new applications have reduced.
- A wide range of adoption support is offered, ranging from assessment of need; annual events and bespoke training courses. A rise in adoption support needs is being seen, especially for children aged 8 to 14.

The Head of Placement Support responded to questions from Members including:-

- How the rights of the children and parents are reconciled with those of the adoptive parents.
- What the main benefits are of being part of the Regional Adoption Agency.
- The effect on a child when a plan for adoption is reversed.

Hovingham Primary School

It was agreed that this matter be considered as a matter of urgency.

Councillor George Jabbour advised the Committee that many residents had contacted him about the School.

There are no pupils currently. It has been announced that the School may become part of the Ryedale Learning Trust. There would be an open meeting so that people can hear from the School and the Trust Management.

The Corporate Director advised that the Local Authority is consulting with the School and the public and that no decisions have been taken. The School has no pupils and so will not be funded from the Department for Education, moving forward. It is encouraging that the Trust is working with the School. However, it should be noted that they are not the decision makers. The Local Authority is open to consultation, but a School that does not have any pupils cannot receive funding.

The Corporate Director also confirmed that if parents put Hovingham as their first choice School and the School was subsequently closed, this would not be prejudicial to them i.e. it would not impact on their child attending the School that is their second choice.

Looking ahead

The Committee considered its Work Programme. Items currently scheduled for our next meeting in March 2023 are:-

- Exclusions
- Schools Update
- Consideration of the Work Programme for 2023/2024

COUNTY COUNCILLOR BARBARA BRODIGAN

7 FEBRUARY 2023