

## **NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

#### **YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHAMPION ANNUAL REPORT (ending May 2024)**

**Councillor Alyson Baker, Hillside & Raskelf Division, North Yorkshire Council**

Over the last 12 months I have had the pleasure of attending a range of meetings and events:

#### **Healthy Schools Event, Harlow Carr**

This was a brilliant event aimed at Key Stage 2 pupils. There were hands on workshops based around the themes of:

- Oral Health
- Cooking with Phunky Foods
- Gardening for Wellbeing with the RHS.

Certificates were presented to schools.



#### **Eid Celebration**

This great event to celebrate Eid was held at Tadcaster Barn. It was lovely to meet our Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and hear about the work they have done at the Barn. There will be another Eid celebration on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2024 at Northallerton.

#### **Care Leavers Event at York University**

This celebrated our fabulous Care Leavers. It was lovely to have the opportunity to chat about their aspirations and goals. One care leaver was now a policeman and because of his care experience, he had been given a role involved with children in care in his force. It was lovely to see the joy when care leavers chose their Patchwork Quilt which Cllr Goodrick had helped organise with Quilts for Care Leavers.

### **Children's Remembrance Service**

This was held in Ripon and was a lovely service with over 730 young people. Cllr Foster gave a moving address about his personal experience being a service child. The Cathedral's altar was decorated with more than 300 poppy mandalas created by students during 16 workshops at schools in the months leading up to the festival. For the second year, the service was livestreamed, to enable as many as possible of the county's 3,560 service children to view it.

### **Healthy Schools Event, East Barnby**

Fifty pupils from schools from the coast of North Yorkshire gathered at a special celebratory event at East Barnby outdoor centre to mark the success of the Council's Healthy Schools award scheme. Pupils took part in hands-on workshops. They enjoyed the outdoors with a campfire and activities with the East Barnby education team, learning about healthy eating with the NYES catering school meals team. Children explored how to reduce food waste by pedalling the smoothie bike and making mini wormeries with the North Yorkshire Rotters. Pupils also discovered how to be 'Wellbeing Warriors' with Compass Phoenix and how to care for their teeth with Harrogate & District NHS Oral Health Team. They took a free toothbrushing pack to put their skills to good use.

### **Holocaust Memorial**

I attended this event in Harrogate. It was a very moving service, and I was honoured and humbled to meet a Holocaust survivor.

### **Girls Group Back Woods at Carlton Lodge**

I joined the group for a morning of building shelters and cooking over an open fire. Luckily it was a dry day! The first challenge for the girls was to light the fire with steel and flint in one strike. We would still be waiting if it was left to them as although some got close it didn't happen! Once the fire was lit the girls made pizzas and campfire bread. It was a lovely event, with some of the girls making huge personal achievements by getting to the venue independently by train.

### **Virtual School Residential, Windermere**

I went to Windermere to meet the group for lunch on their Cycling Day. Although it was a mixed day weather wise (both sunshine and heavy showers), all the group enjoyed the experience.

### **Judging Panel on the Service Children Awards 2024**

I met to select the winners of the Service Childrens Awards. We have 3,653 Service Children in 223 schools across county (there are nearly 11,000 military personal). We had the hard task of whittling down 92 nominees to 9 winners. They all displayed a range of talents: musical, sporting, contribution to the community, advocacy.

### **Service Children Awards 2024 Event**

This was a very moving inaugural event held in Leyburn which I hope becomes a fixture in the calendar display. There was a beautiful piece of artwork inspired by local artist Lucy Pittaway. Angela Campbell, the Service Childrens Champion had visited 10 schools across the county to deliver art workshops. 100 children had been given a piece of canvas and one small section of "Starting Again" by Lucy to

recreate. She had added Dandelions the symbol of Service Children. The children were from military families with ages from 6 to 16.



**As the Young People's Champion, I continue to attend the following meetings on a regular basis:**

#### **North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus Conference**

It was agreed that the Agreed Syllabus Conference recommend to the Local Authority that, in respect of the Agreed Syllabus for 2024-2029, Option A be chosen – namely, renew the licence with RE Today, which includes updating the 2019-2024 folder.

#### **Corporate Parenting Members' Group**

I continue to attend these meetings with fellow Councillors and officers from a range of children and young people's services. Key areas of discussion include hearing about how NYC support Out of Area Looked After Children, and how the local authority work hard to make sure they are notified of placements in plenty of time so that they can accommodate children and young people as well as possible, especially those experiencing complex situations. It was good to see the re-launch of the NYC notification form, which ensures other agencies are aware of what information is being requested and helps to escalate concerns with other Local Authorities where there has been a significant delay in information sharing. I am looking forward to attending the This is Me Festival in June on behalf of the CPG.

#### **Multi Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP)**

As Lead Member for Corporate Parenting Principle 5: To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people - it has been very encouraging to hear about the partnership working that is taking place and all the work that the Virtual School is doing to enable all children in care to achieve,

including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children. It is encouraging to see that North Yorkshire remains among the best performing Councils nationally regarding support for care leavers. The Living Lives App is available in different languages and has a dyslexia friendly setting. It contains a range of useful information and advice (finances, relationships, independent living skills, links to training information etc) and will continue to be developed to make it as effective and useful as possible to those leaving care.

### **Children in Care Health Professionals Group Meeting**

I have had the opportunity to speak to some Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children at Bewerly Park and listened to their stories and what it's like to live here. We have also engaged with the young men at Bewley Park, asking them how we can improve their experience of living there. I am concerned around the age assessments for UAS Children after hearing from a GP practice in Harrogate about young people being given the wrong age assessment and consequently being housed in adult hotels and their needs not being met. I am hoping to investigate this issue further with the appropriate services and officers.

### **Safeguarding Children's Health Professional Network (SCHPN)**

Whilst these meetings are very interesting, they can also be very harrowing, and I was particularly concerned to hear about the number of calls that are being made to Crisis Teams and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) for support and advice. It was good to hear that Harrogate Foundation Trust have produced a new safeguarding booklet for use in Emergency Departments.

### **Hambleton Rural Transport**

I heard an amazing presentation by Debbie North, the founder of the Access the Dales charity and disability ambassador for the countryside (motto is "Making the Inaccessible Accessible"). The charity enables service users to borrow all-terrain wheelchairs and scooters and has a children's all terrain wheelchair based at Raveuseat, as well as a range of all-terrain chairs in various locations across the Yorkshire Dales.

### **Youth Justice Management Board**

#### **Virtual School Management**

#### **Youth Justice**

It has been a joy and honour to meet and chat with so many children and young people over the last year. I'd like to point out that there have been many other occasions where I have supported parents and attended meetings, but I have not gone into detail about these due to their sensitivity and safeguarding issues.

It is clear that North Yorkshire Council officers and Members are extremely passionate and dedicated, who genuinely care about providing the best quality of life and future for all children, young people and their families. Their work with young people to raise aspirations, increase confidence, improve health outcomes and provide safety is unfailing. I would like to thank everyone who has supported and

continue to support them. I would also like to thank those who have welcomed and supported our young people arriving from other countries.

**Councillor Alyson Baker**  
**Hillside & Raskelf Division**