

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

26 FEBRUARY 2025

STATEMENT OF CHAIR

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Since the last Full Council, there have been 2 committee meetings, held on 6 December 2024 and 29 January 2025.

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 6 December 2024

<https://edemocracy.northyorks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1241&MIId=7820&Ver=4m>

Public Statements

There were no public questions or statements.

Feedback from the Executive on 19 November 2024

I informed Committee Members of the matters that I had raised at the Executive meeting and the responses to these from the Executive Members.

Feedback from the Care Experience Task and Finish Group on 25 November 2024

I provided a summary of the first Care Experience Task and Finish Group meeting which I attended. This is cross-directorate and will help to inform the recommendations relating to the Motion for the Council to formally recognise Care Experience as a protected characteristic. A report from the Task and Finish Group was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at a special meeting on 29 January 2025.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Provision in the Scarborough and Whitby Area Update

This was an update on the recommendations made in a report by the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Provision in the Scarborough and Whitby Area Task and Finish Group in December 2023. We considered a presentation by Chris Reynolds, Head of SEND Strategic Planning and Resource, which made reference to each recommendation. The Committee also heard about the Council's aim to introduce Targeted Mainstream Provision (TMPs) in every locality area, so that more children will be able to stay in education within their local community.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Employment Forum

We received a presentation from Chris Reynolds, Head of SEND Strategic Planning and Resource. Members heard how the Council is working to engage with employers and business forums to increase the number of Supported Internship places for young people with SEND. There are currently 53 learners across 5 localities – 67% are in employment and 77% in employment/volunteering. The Employment Forum engages with a diverse group of employers and learning providers and have developed a network of local businesses. Young people develop their own individual profile which details their interests so that the best match can be made.

North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2023/2024

The Committee received an annual update from Heather Pearson, Chair of North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. One of the concerns Members raised was around the safeguarding of children being elected home educated (EHE). They heard that the Council has a register of EHE children, and the new Health and Wellbeing Bill for Children will give local authorities more power to insist that children with a child protection plan or children in

need attend school. It was also noted that a campaign in partnership with the voluntary, social and community enterprise sector has produced key safeguarding messages.

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 29 January 2025

<https://edemocracy.northyorks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1241&MId=19623&Ver=4>

This was an additional committee meeting that was arranged to consider the Care Experience Task and Finish Group recommendations regarding the Motion to consider Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic. The Committee was asked to make a recommendation to Full Council meeting on 26 February 2025.

Public Statements

There were no public questions or statements.

Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic Task and Finish Group Report

The Committee received a report from Maggie Allen, Jonny Hoyle and Nicki Watkinson from Children and Young People's Service. The Council supports 527 Care Leavers, but many more young people will meet the definition of "Care Experienced" (those who have not spent enough time in care to be deemed as a Care Leaver). Whilst the Children and Young People's Service already provide a very strong local offer to Care Leavers, the report explained that adopting Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic would have more implications for other directorates. Members discussed in detail the recommendations in the report and unanimously agreed to recommend to Full Council that the Motion to formally recognise Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic should be supported.

COUNCILLOR BARBARA BRODIGAN

6 February 2025