

# North Yorkshire Council

## Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee

25 March 2026

### Performance Report for Quarter 3 2025/26

#### Report of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services

##### **1.0 Purpose of report**

- 1.1 For the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review a summary of the relevant thematic performance data that forms part of the quarterly reports to the Executive.
- 1.2 For the Committee to consider whether there are any lines of enquiry arising from the information provided to follow up on, for example issues to request further information on or to be put forward for the future work programme.

##### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 North Yorkshire Council is ambitious to provide the best possible services to residents, communities and businesses. Understanding how we are performing is a critical step in identifying how we can continue to improve and achieve the best outcomes. As noted in the North Yorkshire Council Performance Management Framework 2025-26: "As an organisation going through a huge amount of change, monitoring performance, understanding it and learning from that insight is crucial to keep us on track."
- 2.2 A key part of the corporate performance management arrangements is the 'Quarterly Performance and Budget Monitoring Report', considered by the Executive to show progress against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) identified against the Council Plan. The report is organised under the five Council Plan themes: Place and Environment, Economy, Health and Wellbeing, People and Organisation, to aid in the monitoring of the overall Council Plan.
- 2.3 As part of the consideration of this report at the quarterly Performance Monitoring Executive meetings, members of the Scrutiny Board, made up of the Chairs of each of the six Overview and Scrutiny committees, are invited to ask questions to hold Executive members to account, based on the data, trends and narrative presented in the report of any performance challenges or opportunities.
- 2.4 A way of ensuring that this Overview and Scrutiny Committee plays its role in analysing the performance of the relevant directorate within the Council, a summary of the performance information is presented as an appendix to this report for consideration at this meeting. It is intended that performance information is presented to the committee on a bi-annual basis.
- 2.5 The appendix provides all committee members an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments, as well as to identify and interrogate trends in the data presented and identify key lines of enquiry. This scrutiny process of performance could lead to further actions from the committee, such as requests for follow-up reports at a future meeting, informal briefings on particular areas of interest and/or requests for further information to be collated from the

directorate to develop the knowledge and understanding of the committee. It can also help to plan future work programmes.

### **3.0 Performance report**

3.1 The Executive Performance Report for Q3 2025-26 is presented at Appendix A and B. It sets out a summary of the KPIs and narrative that details the directorate performance and forms part of the overall quarterly reports considered by the Executive.

3.2 At the latest Performance Monitoring meeting of the Executive on 17 February, the Chair of Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Young People's Member Champion sought responses from the Executive Member for Children and Families and the Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills around the following points:

- Number of children looked after.
- Stability of short-term placements.
- Obesity rates in 4/5 year olds.
- Timeliness of Education Health Care (EHC) Plans.
- Permanent exclusions.
- Elective home education

3.3 In response, the Executive Members and the Director of Children and Families advised that:

- Number of children looked after - referrals had fallen by 12% compared with the same period in the previous year owing to strengthened practice in the Multi-Agency Screening Team (MAST). Many children entering care in Q3 were part of sibling groups and plans were in place to ensure help was offered at the lowest appropriate level. Child protection plans are beginning to come down and North Yorkshire has a rate of 52 children per 10,000 population, against a national average of 74.
- Stability of short-term placements - although short-term placement stability had improved to 13% in Q3, any repeat moves are concerning. Moves could occur while assessments were being completed to identify the most suitable long-term family. Foster care capacity had at times reached 99–100%, limiting flexibility, and confirmed that foster carer recruitment continued to be a priority.
- Obesity rates in 4/5 year olds - public health funding was increasingly directed towards prevention programmes. While it was difficult to attribute specific causes for rising obesity rates or to quantify the precise impact of national measures such as sugar reduction initiatives, focusing on targeted programmes with clear end points is the most reliable way of assessing success.
- Timeliness of EHC Plans - performance had risen from 8% of plans issued on time in January 2025 to over 80% in January 2026. This improvement had been achieved through a more structured approach to casework, increased availability and input from educational psychologists, timelier information, and robust monitoring at each stage of the EHC process to identify and resolve delays early.
- Permanent exclusions - preventative support is available through commissioned places in Pupil Referral Units (PRU) and schools can also access alternative provision. Excluded children must receive education by the sixth day and consultation has taken place on extending PRU age ranges to respond to rising exclusions among younger pupils. SEND hubs continue to provide school-led support, with a developing focus on strengthening inclusion in mainstream schools and ensuring responses were tailored to each child's individual circumstances.
- Elective home education – the Council works actively with schools and families to avoid unnecessary withdrawal. A suite of early help services, delivered in

partnership with health colleagues supports children and families and helps maintain school placements wherever possible.

3.4 The committee will note that the data for Q3 2025-26 highlights a continuing pattern in the following areas:

- Steady rise in the number of looked after children.
- More children continue to be admitted to care than discharged from care.
- Increase in children being home educated.
- Increase in number of primary school permanent exclusions.

There has been a welcome trend towards:

- Reduction in referrals to Children's Social Care (CSC).
- Increase in the number of young people being discharged from care.
- Decrease in looked-after children who experienced three or more placements.
- Timeliness of Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs).
- Decrease in Child Protection Plans (CPP).
- Increase in GCSE 9-5 pass in English and Maths (Basics) at KS4

#### **4.0 Financial and climate change implications**

4.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

#### **5.0 Legal implications**

5.1 All local authorities have a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which their functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

#### **6.0 Equalities implications**

6.1 As a wider strategic document, the Council Plan 2025-2029 provides an opportunity to improve our understanding of outcomes in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion across protected characteristic and socio-economic groups, and target action to eliminate discrimination, advance equality (reduce inequalities) and foster good relations in line with our Public Sector Equality Duties.

#### **7.0 Performance implications**

7.1 This report sets out the thematic performance data that forms part of the quarterly reports to the Executive. By presenting directorate-specific KPIs and narrative information for the Overview and Scrutiny committee to review, this will help to improve corporate grip, control and delivery in our drive to improve as an organisation.

#### **8.0 Reasons for recommendations**

8.1 To give committee members an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments on the directorate performance set out in Appendix A and B and identify key lines of enquiry that could form part of future reports and feed into the work programme.

## **9.0 Recommendations**

That the Committee:

- i) Note the performance information detailed in Appendix A and B.
- ii) Feed back on the performance data and narrative contained within Appendix A and B, with a view to considering any future lines of enquiry for the committee to explore.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – Q3 2025-26 Executive Performance Report

Appendix B – Q3 2025-26 Executive Performance Report Appendix

Barry Khan  
Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services  
County Hall  
Northallerton  
17 March 2026

Report Author – Alice Fox, Senior Scrutiny Officer

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.