

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

19 July 2017

YOUNG PEOPLES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

Establishing a strong work programme

Having decided to hold our first meeting on the 21 July – two days after this council meeting - I decided to get members together for an informal briefing and discussion session. In essence, the purpose of this first session was twofold:

1. For members to be fully acquainted with current children and young people's matters which should be of interest to scrutiny. Pete Dwyer and Paul Brennan therefore talked informally about the key challenges and noteworthy issues at a national and local level
2. Discuss ways of working and both the content and approach of the work programme.

In terms of National Leadership, we recognised the significance of (some omissions from) the Queens Speech, notably the apparent dropping of the most high profile proposed education reform - the expansion of selective education in England.

We commended the redraft of Young and Yorkshire 2 which is before this council meeting. To a large extent we have reflected its priorities in our work programme.

Our next formal meeting will be Pete Dwyer's last before he retires and Stuart Charlton takes over. It's clear from what we heard, outlined below, that Pete will leave the directorate in very good shape indeed.

As a "Partners in Practice" our track record of local improvement is strong, demonstrating excellent practice and commitment to innovation and continuous improvement, so much so that we offer tailored support to other authorities.

It was pleasing that the following aspects, identified by Pete and Paul as being potential areas of interest to scrutiny, feature in one form or another in our work:

- Reforming Youth Justice
- Delivering the SEND reforms
- Social Emotional and Mental Health – Joint commissioning

- The closing the gap agenda , especially the lack of social mobility and educational success for some groups of young people in some places
- Opportunity Area Delivery on the Coast
- School Funding Reform: National Funding formula
- The sustainability of some small schools
- Early Years Funding Reform
- Enhancing Skills: Adult Learning Service
- Ongoing Debate: The LA role in Education
- A Learning Trust for North Yorkshire

The "new" committee endorsed the previously agreed approach to scrutiny, with an increasingly in-depth focus on strategic level issues, helped out by advisors and people connected to the service and users to help us understand the issue from all sides. That was what we did for Careers and it's what is planned for Exclusion at the next meeting.

Exclusions from School

Permanent exclusion from school is a very critical event in a young person's life; it can also be a distressing experience for a parent. And the decision to exclude permanently is always a very serious one for a head teacher. Whilst the percentage of pupils excluded from North Yorkshire's schools represents a very small percentage of the county's school population, for many permanently excluded children, getting back into mainstream education will be a major challenge and some will stay in alternative provision for the remainder of their school years.

Schools are expected to try a range of strategies instead of exclusion, and exceptional work is being done by many teachers to maintain children with challenging behaviour in mainstream education.

The objective of this piece of scrutiny work is to better understand and then assess the significance of the prevalence and trend of Exclusions in North Yorkshire, what initiatives are currently delivered, what services are planned, and what the impact of these services has or will be upon outcomes.

Future Work

Looking ahead, in September we will focus on Safeguarding, asking the question "how do we keep North Yorkshire's children safe.

Other items later in the year include:

- Roles and Responsibilities of Parent Governors - The changing role of governors and their responsibilities for performance.
- Early Intervention in Schools on Smoking, Drugs, Alcohol - Preventing drug, alcohol and tobacco use in young people and interventions for those already experiencing harm.

- Mental health services support for young people, managing cases in the community. The contribution of inappropriate placements and/or insufficient community resources.
- Place planning. Shaping future education provision, our projections about need/demand and how the LEA shapes/influences provision. Working with the schools commissioner.
- School Admissions - Our admission procedures now and how we expect them, and schools and MAT's attitudes to them, to change.

It became clear to me after 5 minutes worth of introductions, that the knowledge, skills and experiences of members round the table puts us in a good place to deliver on what is an ambitious, scrutiny work programme.

JANET JEFFERSON

Chairman, Young Peoples Overview and Scrutiny Committee
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NORTHALLERTON

5 May 2017

Background Documents - Nil.