

North Yorkshire County Council

Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2018 at 10.30am at County Hall, Northallerton.

Present: County Councillor Janet Jefferson in the Chair.

Councillors: Lindsay Burr MBE Stephanie Duckett, Keane Duncan, Cliff Lunn, Stuart Martin MBE, Zoe Metcalfe, Joe Plant, Gill Quinn and Annabel Wilkinson.

Co-opted Members: Dr Tom Cavell-Taylor, David Watson (North Yorkshire Sport, and David Sharp (North Yorkshire Youth)

In attendance: Executive Member: County Councillor Patrick Mulligan and Janet Sanderson

Officers: Clare Barrowman (Health and Wellbeing Adviser, Education and Skills (CYPS)), Paul Brennan (Assistant Director, Education & Skills, Children and Young Peoples Services), Katharine Bruce (Lead Adviser - Vulnerable Learners, Education and Skills (CYPS)), Ray Busby (Corporate Development Officer (Central Services)), Tom Bryant (Strategy & Performance Team Leader, Policy and Partnerships (CSD), Stuart Carlton (Corporate Director Children and Young Peoples Services)

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors Val Arnold, Mel Hobson and John Mann and from Paul Bircumshaw (Non-voting member)

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

128. Minutes

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2017 having been printed and circulated be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

129. Any Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to note.

130. Public Questions

The Committee was advised that no notice had been received of any public questions or statements to be made at the meeting.

131. 2017 Attainment Results: Education as our Greatest Liberator

Considered –

Published Report of the Corporate Director for Childrens Services on the overall performance of North Yorkshire pupils in 2017.

Paul Brennan explained that the results showed overall performance of pupils in North Yorkshire schools is very high and in 2017 results improved at every Key Stage.

Performance at Key Stage 4 (GCSE) and Key Stage 5 (A level) is particularly strong. North Yorkshire is in the top 15% of local authorities nationally for all of the GCSE performance indicators and in the top 10% nationally for students achieving at least two A's and a B at A level. However, despite improvement, Key Stage 2 performance remains an on-going challenge and North Yorkshire is below national and statistical neighbour benchmarks.

There are challenges on the coast with the performance in Scarborough Borough significantly below the rest of the county. The North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area is bringing partners together to seek to address these issues.

As a lead in to the next item on the agenda, Paul highlighted the performance of disadvantaged pupils (eligible for free school meals in any of the last six years, looked after in care or adopted) continues to be a challenge and raising the achievement of these learners is a key priority.

Resolved –

- a) The Committee expressed great satisfaction with the results, complimenting all involved.
- b) In relation to the performance of Key Stage 2, and that of disadvantaged learners, the committee believed the results confirmed the decision that this was one of the most important areas to keep under scrutiny review

132. Pupil Premium Update

Considered –

Report providing an update on the use of the pupil premium and its impact on disadvantaged learners in North Yorkshire.

Katharine Bruce introduced this item explaining that, as the previous report showed, pupils in North Yorkshire generally attain well at school, with educational performance at levels above the national average. However, this masks an underlying pattern of low achievement and slow progress for pupils in many of the more vulnerable/disadvantaged groups, and there are some pupils for whom this general picture of good attainment is not true. The latest 2017 data indicates that at all key stages our outcomes for disadvantaged learners are improving, however not at the same rate as other learners. As a result the attainment gap between our disadvantaged learners and their peers continues to widen at all key stages.

Katharine highlighted the many examples of the work being promoted with the Pupil Premium to narrow the attainment gap between those eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils in North Yorkshire.

Katharine explained that NYCC officers and some teaching professionals have spent time understanding why some areas, and some schools in particular, are recognised as best practice locations. Values that emerged from these visits are now underpinning approaches and activity to improve outcomes for disadvantaged learners in schools. Of the list of values mentioned in the report, Members recognised in particular the importance of:

- Strong visionary leadership, culture and values

- High Expectations for ALL pupils irrespective of background
- High focus on literacy, language and vocabulary
- Trust and Investment in all staff
- Having the right staff in place
- A focus on the importance of good adult – pupil relationships

Mrs Alison Goodwin, the Head of Applegarth Primary School described how her experience of finding out how some high performing schools were approaching use of the pupil premium and teaching strategies towards disadvantaged, had caused her to re-think her expectation that high performance could, in the main, be attributed to increased resources. Rather it was down to the clear vision and high expectations of the headteachers and their ability to surround themselves with the right staff."

Members agreed that the visits to schools in London/Essex and Suffolk to see what and why they are doing well was time very well spent.

Members commented upon the strong commitment shown to ensure that the pupil premium grant is being used so that pupils are being supported with high quality teaching and learning strategies.

Members supported officers' proposition that there is, though, still too much inconsistency in the attainment and progress of disadvantaged learners across North Yorkshire schools. Disadvantaged learners are still over represented in absence and exclusions.

A comment was made that there are differing groups of vulnerable children whose attainment needs similar scrutiny and challenge: for example, those from 'working poor backgrounds', summer-born children, children from service families and those living in isolated or coastal communities. Thinking about the latter group, the committee learned more about the Opportunity Area programme, which will invest at least £6M in Scarborough, Whitby and Filey to support social mobility of children and young people. It was agreed that this would be the major item at the next meeting.

Resolved –

From the evidence before it, the committee concluded that that one of the last grants still available for schools was being made best use of, and, more widely, the directorate had a clear vision for improving outcomes for Disadvantaged Learners in North Yorkshire.

133. Careers Guidance Update

Considered –

Report of the Corporate Director for Childrens Services providing an update on update on Careers Guidance.

Katharine Bruce and Amanda Lumb. Senior Leader Careers Guidance at Selby High School, introduced this item explaining the outcomes of the North Yorkshire Careers Guidance Project (Drawn from the Final Project Formal Evaluation).

Members noted that an independent formal evaluation has now found impressive outcomes resulting from the project and commented in particular upon:

- More staff receiving training to deliver effective careers education and guidance
- Schools demonstrating quality in their provision

- Stakeholders recognising the important role that they play in supporting schools;
- Young people enjoying and using their experience of career development to make career decisions.

Resolved –

That the success and impressive outcomes from the project be noted.

134. Growing up as a Lesbian Gay, Bisexual or Trans (LGBT) young person in North Yorkshire

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Director for Children’s Services providing an update on the experiences of LGBT young people growing up in North Yorkshire and to report back on the recommendations that were made by the task group of Councillors who wrote the report, ‘Raising awareness and understanding of the experiences and issues faced by young people in North Yorkshire who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Trans’.

Claire Barrowman highlighted activity and progress since a task group from this committee had considered the matter. She explained that the Education and Skills Service has been the lead for the past four years on the Stonewall Education Equality Index. Completing the index enables local authorities to assess their performance and benchmark their own progress year–on-year on the work being done to celebrate difference, support LGBT young people and prevent and tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying. The good news is that North Yorkshire’s score on the index has risen from 52% in 2011 to 98% in 2017 when we came 2nd out of 39 local authorities.

Resolved -

Members agreed that progress against the recommendations of that review have been impressive and the investment of time and resources, and the commitment shown, has clearly lead to a favourable outcome.

135. Work Programme

Considered -

The report of the Scrutiny Team Leader inviting comments from Members on the content of the Committee’s Programme of Work scheduled for future meetings.

Members were reminded of the extra meeting to be held on 15 May 2018 at 11am to consider the SEND Strategic Plan consultation proposals.

- Members suggested that proposals come forward as to the value of the committee reviewing:
- School Preparedness – how pupils and parents are supported when they start school
- Elective Home Education - where parents or carers of a child decide to educate their child at home instead of sending them to a school.

Resolved -

That the content of the Work Programme report and the Work Programme schedule are noted.

The meeting concluded at 12.30pm

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