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Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
Date	7 February 2023
Present	Councillor Waller
In Attendance	Alison Edeson (Skills Team Manager) Martin Kelly (Corporate Director Children and Education) Danielle Johnson (Director of Safeguarding Children Services and Education) Nicola Sawyer (Early Years Entitlement and Sufficiency Manager) Maxine Squire (Assistant Director Education and Skills)

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## **27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [10.01]**

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that he might have had in respect of business on the agenda. He confirmed he had none and noted that he was a Governor at York High School and Westfield School.

## **28. MINUTES [10.02]**

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 10 January 2023 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

## **29. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION [10.02]**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the council's Public Participation Scheme. The Executive Member noted on the advice of the Monitoring Officer the item on school transport to Tadcaster Grammar School had been removed from the Forward Plan as the council would be largely unable to manage the consultation during the pre-election period before the Local Election. The consultation would take place following the new Council induction

period. The Assistant Director for education and skills confirmed that any changes to school transport would relate to the Year 7 intake to Tadcaster Grammar School in 2024.

### **30. ANNUAL CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY REPORT [10.04]**

The Executive Member considered a report that provided an update on how City of York Council is meeting its statutory duty to secure sufficient early years and childcare provision for children aged 0-14 (and up to 18 for disabled children) including the impact of covid on the childcare market.

The Early Years Sufficiency and Entitlements Manager outlined the report, detailing the challenges faced by the sector. The Executive Member thanked her for the report and asked a number of questions to which she and officers responded that:

- The move from automatic allocation to form filling for funded places for 2 year olds was potentially causing a barrier to access for families. The Executive Member undertook to raise the matter with the Minister for Education.
- SEND provision for early years was a complex issue and the council was looking at working with providers on the inclusion fund and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). They were also looking at attracting new providers into York and there would be an update on this in the next quarterly update.

The Executive Member thanked the seven new providers in York and acknowledged the work undertaken to retain experienced staff in the sector. A summary of the parent survey was given and it was noted that the cost of childcare was an issue. Officers were working with the council Family Information Service (FIS) and communications team on promoting tax free childcare and an update on this would be provided in the next quarterly update.

Regarding the drop in the number of 0-5 year olds, it was highlighted that birth rates were only one of a suite of factors which determined demand. It was confirmed that the requests for s106 funding/ capital infrastructure levy was factored into strategy council wide.

With reference to 28 providers needing support for rising energy costs, the Executive Member noted that he had written to the DfE about it and he undertook to follow this up.

The Executive Member thanked the Early Years Sufficiency and Entitlements Manager for her work in encouraging more people to join the childcare sector. He then;

Resolved: That;

- i. The Executive Member write to Education Minister concerning the move from automatic allocation to form filling for funded places for 2 year olds and the barrier to access this is causing families.
- ii. The content of the report be noted and agreed before it is shared with elected council members in line with statutory guidance.
- iii. The Executive Member notes the work done by officers to meet with DfE and Regional Organisations to raise York's concerns over funding and retention in the service, and, following on from the consideration of the issue in November, that the final report is briefed to the two local MPs.

Reason: In order to meet statutory guidance.

### **31. EARLY YEARS STRATEGY [10.22]**

The Executive Member considered a report that provided an update on the development of the Early Years Strategic Plan. The development of the plan had been facilitated by City of York Council through its co-ordination of the Early Years Partnership Board. The Assistant Director Education and Skills detailed the report. She highlighted the development of the Early Years Partnership Board Strategic Plan and operational functions under it. She noted that the board reported to the Children and Young People's sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Following the overview of the strategy the Executive Member then;

Resolved: That;

- i. The final wording of the Early Years Partnership Board Strategic Plan (Annex 1 of the published report) be delegated to the Assistant Director Education and Skills for completion.
- ii. The Early Years strategic plan and monitoring of the operational delivery of the strategic plan through the work of the Early Years Partnership Board be supported and endorsed by the Executive Member.

Reason: The strategic plan will contribute to the delivery of the council's objective to ensure a better start in life for children and young people.

### **32. APPRENTICESHIPS UPDATE [10.29]**

The Executive Member considered a report that provided an update on apprenticeships and the Apprenticeship Levy. The Skills Teams Manager gave an overview of the report including an update on the work of the apprenticeships hub and partnerships. She noted that there would be an update on the Levy Transfer Scheme in the next six monthly update.

The Executive Member thanked the Skills Teams Manager and her team for their work on apprenticeships and he highlighted their work with the Corporate Parenting Board, taster days and variety of events to raise awareness of apprenticeships. He then;

Resolved: That;

- i. The content of the report be noted.
- ii. The championing of apprenticeships to support skills development within the council's existing workforce and to recruit new employees be continued.
- iii. Support be given to the continued reporting of Apprenticeship Levy updates on a six-monthly basis.

Reason: To continue to encourage the creation of apprenticeship opportunities in York, by supporting local businesses to access available funding and to support routes to employment for residents.

### **33. QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN SERVICES AND EDUCATION [10.37]**

The Executive Member considered a report that provided an overview of progress against key activity in the service for the previous quarter. The Corporate Director of Children Services and Education noted that the update would be presented on a quarterly basis and would include an update on work being undertaken to improve the service.

The Director of Safeguarding Children Services and Education detailed the progress against the ILACS Ofsted Inspection and the Children Services priorities following the move from the Ofsted Action Plan to the Ambition Plan. She also gave an update on the children's home development, the youth justice inspection, workforce, the national safeguarding review on residential placements, the recruitment of foster carers, planned audit activity (including a front door health check, foster carer allowances, family hubs and finance.

The Assistant Director Education and Skills then gave an update on the SEND inspection revisit, SEND afterschool club sufficiency, admissions an update on finance.

The Executive Member noted the challenges nationally and acknowledged that the move from agency to permanent social workers was a success and he thanked officers for their work on it. He highlighted the work with the two universities in York and apprenticeships hub. The Director of Safeguarding Children Services and Education was asked and confirmed that the recruitment lead for foster carers was a member of staff. The Executive Member noted that the update on family hubs was positive and he thanked officers for the update on the financial position, noting the investment in early years. He also thanked officers for their work on taxi contracts. He then;

Resolved: That the Quarter 3 update on Children Services and Education.

Reason: In order to be kept up to date on service area priorities.

Cllr Waller, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 10.01 am and finished at 10.59 am].