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Meeting	Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	3 May 2022
Present	Councillors Daubeney (Chair), Fenton, Heaton, Waudby (Substitute for Cllr Barker) and Webb (Vice-Chair)
Apologies	Councillors Baker, Barker and Fitzpatrick

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### **36. Declarations of Interest**

Members were 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 they may have in respect of business on the agenda.

In relation to item 5, Cllrs Fenton and Webb reported that they were trustees of Foxwood and Tang Hall Community Centres respectively, and both centres were bases for Community Hubs.

### **37. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 03 May 2022 be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

### **38. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

### **39. Children and Young People's Mental Well Being In York Scrutiny Review**

Cllr Webb outlined the background to the report on Children's Mental Health and highlighted the recommendations that were to be taken to Executive. He thanked Cllr Baker, the previous Chair of the Committee, for her work in producing the

background report. He also thanked the other members of the task group and supporting officers.

Following questions from Members he responded that:

- System bottlenecks were partly due to a lack of co-ordination between agencies, there was a lack of alternatives to joining long waiting lists. Children should have a unique reference number to assist with tracking between agencies.
- The new Integrated Care Board (ICB) would have oversight of all services within York. There was an opportunity for the Executive to raise questions to the ICB and champion the importance of children's mental health.

Following a discussion of the report recommendations it was:

Resolved: That the 'Children's Mental Health – Review of Referral System' report proceeds to the Executive Committee by September 2022.

Reason: To support the mental health and well-being of children and young people in York and to conclude this scrutiny review in line with CYC (City of York) scrutiny procedures and protocols.

#### **40. Community Hubs Scrutiny Review**

Cllr Webb introduced the report from the Community Hubs Review Group. He stated that the Hubs had become increasingly important during the Covid-19 pandemic and emphasised that their sustainability was key.

He thanked Officers for their assistance with the research and highlighted the findings in the report.

The Assistant Director (Customer and Communities) noted that Community Hubs were a key part of ward work and confirmed that the recommendations within the report provided a helpful framework for future development. It was reported that commissioning funds had been kept in order to focus on outcomes of the review.

Following a discussion of the report, it was:

Resolved: That the 'Community Hubs Review Group' report should go forward to the Executive Committee on 19 May 2022.

Reason: So that the Executive can make good and informed decisions regarding community provision in York and to conclude this scrutiny review in line with CYC (City of York) scrutiny procedures and protocols.

#### **41. School Holiday Food Scrutiny Review**

Cllr Daubeney introduced the report from the School Holiday Food Task Group. He highlighted the full year cost to the Council of funding school meal vouchers would be close to £750,000. He also noted that the current financial pressures on families were expected to continue to rise.

The Director of Customer and Communities addressed the Committee and explained that the number of families claiming free school meals (FSM) had increased by 30% and this was rising. The increase is understood to be the financial impact of Covid and a better understanding among families of what they were entitled to claim. The council was seeking a wraparound solution that included all partners in a strategy to support families to come out of poverty.

Following discussion, Officers clarified the following:

- The cost of providing food vouchers was approaching £60,000 per week. The financial implications of providing vouchers one week and Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) the following week were to be costed and included in the final report to Executive.
- The £200,000 mentioned in recommendation 3 was a one off Covid government grant.
- Community Involvement Officers (CIO), Local Area Coordinators (LAC) used the Charis voucher system to provide fuel vouchers. This system could also be used to provide food vouchers and could replace FSM vouchers. LACs also have access to another scheme that could provide cash rather than vouchers.

- The York Financial Assistance Scheme (YFAS) budget for this year was £259,000. This had been fully spent for the last few years;
- There was some flexibility in awarding food vouchers, to those who are not entitled to FSM.

The Vice Chair suggested an amendment to the wording of recommendation 3 and amendments were also suggested for recommendations 1, 2 and 6. The specific wording of these were to be agreed with the Chair and Vice-Chair following the meeting.

Resolved: That the School Holiday Food report should go forward to the Executive Committee on 19 May 2022.

Reason: So that the Executive can make good and informed decisions regarding School Holiday Food provision in York and to conclude this scrutiny review in line with CYC (City of York) scrutiny procedures and protocols.

#### **42. Work Plan**

Members considered the Work Plan and requested that Officers reporting on the Public Health School Survey be invited to the forum on 23 June 2022.

Resolved: That the Work Plan be noted.

Reason: To keep the Work Plan updated.

Cllr S Daubeney, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.31 pm and finished at 7.25 pm].