

## Minutes

### Scrutiny Committee

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Venue: Committee Room - Civic Centre, Doncaster Road, Selby, YO8 9FT

Date: Thursday, 13 February 2020

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors Shaw-Wright (Chair), N Reader, M Topping and P Welburn

Also present was Councillor S Duckett

Officers present: Victoria Foreman, Democratic Services Officer

Others present: Tim Moat, Director of Communications, Ebor Academy Trust, Dave Barber, Executive Headteacher, Ebor Academy Trust, Judith Kirk, Assistant Director for Education and Skills, North Yorkshire County Council, Jane le Sage, Assistant Director for Inclusion, North Yorkshire County Council, Andrew Dixon, Strategic Planning Manager, North Yorkshire County Council, Phil Sayles, Principal, Selby College, Nick Probert, Principal, York College

Public: 0

Press: 0

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#### **43 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors W Nichols and R Sweeting.

Also in attendance was Councillor M Jordan.

#### **44 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of interest.

#### **45 CHAIR'S ADDRESS TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

There was no Chair's address to the Committee.

#### **46 WORK PROGRAMME**

There were no comments on the work programme.

#### **47 EDUCATION IN SELBY DISTRICT**

The Chair welcomed the following representatives to the meeting:

- Tim Moat, Director of Communications, Ebor Academy Trust
- Dave Barber, Executive Headteacher, Ebor Academy Trust
- Judith Kirk, Assistant Director for Education and Skills, North Yorkshire County Council
- Jane le Sage, Assistant Director for Inclusion, North Yorkshire County Council
- Andrew Dixon, Strategic Planning Manager, North Yorkshire County Council
- Phil Sayles, Principal, Selby College
- Nick Probert, Principal, York College

The Chair explained that they had been invited to explore the Council's relationship with local providers, and to find out how they could work together to improve and develop education and skills in the District. The Committee received short presentations from each of the attendees and asked several questions.

##### **Phil Sayles, Principal, Selby College**

- Mr Sayles, who had been Principal at the college for 18 months, gave an overview of the mission and values of the college, the curriculum strategy and strategic goals.
- Members were pleased to note that the college had over 3,000 students and over 250 members of staff, worked with 150 employers, had won a TEF (Teaching Excellence Framework) Silver Award and a number of other accolades.
- The Committee asked a number of questions relating to the college's work with Drax Power. Mr Sayles confirmed that the college did have some apprenticeship positions at Drax but not in engineering at present, and acknowledged the important partnership between the college and Drax Power.
- Members asked if there was anything the Council could do to help the college in its work; Mr Sayles emphasised the importance of a business development and skills strategy for the Selby District, and how this would help the college and other education providers to

offer the right courses. Through the development of such a strategy, events for recruiting talent could be offered and prove to be invaluable.

- Mr Sayles also explained that the college received funding to attract students from areas of deprivation to further education courses, but acknowledged that there was always more that could be done on this. It was suggested that should the previously discussed skills strategy be developed by the Council, this element could be included and potentially benefit from joint working between the local authority and the college.

**Judith Kirk, Assistant Director for Education and Skills, North Yorkshire County Council**

The Committee received an overview from the Assistant Director on a variety of issues, including:

- The attainment, performance and achievement of schools in the North Yorkshire and Selby area, including OFSTED judgements for primary and secondary schools, early years education and development tests and key stage 2 and 4 performance and progress.
- Members were informed that there was a great deal of data available on the performance of schools. The main message was that performance was progressing in the right direction, with a pleasing overall picture in the district, despite there always being room for improvement.
- It was noted that the level of young people not in education, employment or training in Selby District was around 13%, which was in line with the county's average.

**Jane le Sage, Assistant Director for Inclusion, North Yorkshire County Council**

- Members were given an overview of the SEN (Special Educational Needs) arrangements in the district. Around 12% of the school age population in Selby required SEN assistance, which was slightly higher than the rest of North Yorkshire.
- The Committee noted the SEN performance in relation to Key Stages 2 and 4, as well as information on exclusions at both primary and secondary level, and the work undertaken with head teachers to reduce exclusions.
- Persistent absence had not increased across the district, and Members were interested to note that Selby District had the second highest increase in home schooling rates in the county.

- Members were informed about the pupil referral service at The Rubicon Centre in Selby and how it would be changing its focus for it to be accessed before a child was permanently excluded from school; prevention was key.
- The Committee noted that a new enhanced main stream model of school was also being developed, with additional local authority funding to enable the school to enhance its SEN offer. There would be a three year rollout programme across the county with a small number of schools becoming the new model. Schools that would be included in the changes were Selby High and the Holy Family Catholic School in Carlton. Officers confirmed that extra support would be available for these schools that were to be part of the new programme.
- Members acknowledged that each enhanced school would be able to provide for an extra eight children who had SEN plans but were able to learn in a mainstream environment, but still needed extra support. This would give more choice across the district for parents and carers.
- Officers went on to explain that a SEN hub would be established in Selby in April, and would be fully staffed by September 2020. It would include specialist teachers, support practitioners, therapists and psychologists.
- A bid had also been submitted to the Department for Education for funding for a free school in Selby which would provide for children with autism and special needs; a decision was imminent on which educational trust would be running it.
- In response to a question, the Principal of Selby College explained that around seven out of ten students that came to study at the college were there to study at A-Level or BTEC but could also do GCSEs if required. Some students did drop out of their studies, but rates for this were not particularly high or a cause for concern.
- Members thanked Officers for the information and agreed that The Rubicon Centre would be a major plus point for Selby, as it could make a big difference to children's lives, and asked questions relating to comparable performance with national targets and Section 106 contributions for school building as part of the planning process.

**Andrew Dixon, Strategic Planning Manager, North Yorkshire County Council**

- Officers explained that links between education and housing growth and the local authority's duty to make appropriate provision. There had been significant areas of growth in places such as Barlby Bridge, where the school was scheduled for a much-needed expansion.

There would also be a focus on expanding Staynor Hall, Athelstan and Hungate Schools in Sherburn and Kirk Fenton School.

- In terms of assistance that could be useful from Selby District Council, the approach to the development of the Local Plan and plan making in general, especially planned versus unplanned growth, was key. This also included the five-year land supply and use of Section 106 monies. Department for Education guidance had recently been reviewed to introduce the need for local authorities to demonstrate that pupil yield for developments would increase.
- Some schools in the district could benefit from growth in their areas, but there were also schools that were 'landlocked' and couldn't expand further.
- Members asked if CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) monies could be used instead of Section 106. Officers explained that there was a balance to be struck between area demand and need, as they were not the same thing.
- Some Members felt strongly that Sherburn needed a new primary school as the popular Athelstan School would become oversubscribed; the school run across Sherburn to the school was also causing traffic problems in the area. Officers acknowledged that some areas had experienced more housing growth than others, some of which was higher than expected, and as such the quantum of housing coming forward was affecting the number of school places needed. This was why it was so important for the Council to develop a new Local Plan with deliverable development.

**Tim Moat, Director of Communications, Ebor Academy Trust and Dave Barber, Executive Headteacher, Ebor Academy Trust**

- The attendees from Ebor Academy Trust gave an overview of the size, makeup and values of the trust, as well as its goals and performance.
- It was explained to the Committee that each school within the Trust was able to be independent and different, but still needed to have the Ebor ethos running through what it did. The wellbeing of staff and children was very important, with several different programmes such as 'early excellence' running to encourage this.
- There was a great deal of collaborative working to encourage a self-improving school system; a number of schools had been supported by the Trust to improve their OFSTED rating through a dedicated school improvement team. There was also a focus on professional development and the support of staff.
- Staynor Hall Community Primary Academy was proving to be a very

popular school and was particularly responsive and receptive to parental need. The Trust also supported Cambesforth School. The Committee noted that by academizing, schools were able to access further funds from the Department for Education to improve.

- Members were pleased to note that the key stage results for the Trust were above the national average.
- The attendees from the Trust explained how they would like to see further expansion of their schools in the Selby District and were on a shortlist to be the provider at the new SEN school in Selby; the decision on this would be taken by the Secretary of State. The Trust were keen to keep communicating with the Council on ways they could work together in the district.

### **Nick Probert, Principal, York College**

- The Principal explained that the college had around 6,500 students, 3,800 of which were aged 16 to 18. 1,200 were undertaking apprenticeships, and around 1,100 were adults in education. There were numerous students from the Selby district at the college. Two thirds of students at the college went on to university, the rest on to vocational courses. A broad range of subjects at A-Level were offered at the college, some of which overlapped with what was offered at Selby College.
- Members noted that a coherent view of skills that were needed in the area, developed by the Council, would be very useful to the college and its students. Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were not currently able to offer such information, so it would be needed from elsewhere, such as local authorities.
- The college was working with a number of partners from across the region on the development of an Institute for Technology, as it specialised in engineering, advanced manufacturing, milling, machining, the digital economy and cyber security.
- Members asked if there was much investment available for research and development at the college and were pleased to hear that £600k of investment would be available in the summer.

The Chair thanked the guests for attending the meeting and suggested that they return to talk to the Committee in a year's time. Members agreed that the connections between the Council and educational establishments in the district were crucial.

The meeting closed at 6.25 pm.