

Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 21 April 2021.

Present: Cllr Carol Clark (Chairman), Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Clare Gamble, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Lauriane Povey, Cllr Maurice Perry (sub for Cllr Andrew Sherris), Cllr Sally Ann Watson

Officers: Martin Gray, David Willingham, Lesley Harrison, Craig Piggott, Joanne Mills (CS); John Devine, Rachel Harrison, Michael Henderson, Rebecca Saunders- Thompson, Judy Trainer (DS)

Also in attendance: Cllr Lisa Evans (Cabinet Member), Joanna Roberts (1625 Independent People); Nicki Watkinson (North Yorkshire County Council)

Apologies: Cllr Andrew Sherris

1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2 Minutes of meeting held on 17 March 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 17 March 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 Scrutiny Review of Care Leavers EET

The Select Committee received a presentation from Joanna Roberts, from 1625 Independent People, on the voluntary organisation's 'Reboot West' programme.

The presentation covered the following topics:

- 1625 Independent People – role, vision and mission
- Reboot West 1 and Reboot 2 Project Summaries
- Reboot approach – 3 core elements:
 - Expert and tailored EET coaching
 - Holistic – using DNVA-V
 - Responding to crisis/ setbacks
- Using DNA-V (youth version of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) model)
- Review assessments and outcomes:
 - Education
 - Volunteering
 - Employment
 - Stability
- Working with partners
- Onward journey post Reboot

The key issues were highlighted as follows:

- Members were informed that Stockton Borough Council no longer had access to all of the funding that had been available to 1625 Independent People to run a similar programme

- The therapeutic (DNA-V) approach has proved effective because many of the young people had mental health problems and difficulties establishing relationships due to their backgrounds
- 1625 employees used the DNA-V approach to understand their own working relationships as a team and this allowed them to provide greater support to young people
- 1625's work with local employers in Bristol had been affected by the Covid pandemic, meaning that jobs in the hospitality and retail sector were not as readily available. Opportunities were sought from employers in sectors such as care and construction, however, these opportunities also had to be appropriate for the young person
- 1625 worked with employers to help them to relate to the young people under their care
- Bristol City Council had created six apprenticeships for care leavers and care leavers also had access to work experience opportunities
- 1625 worked with small, medium, and large employers. Some work opportunities were created on an ad hoc basis. For example, meetings between a coach and a young person may be held in a café that the young person wanted to work in so that a relationship with the café owner could be established and the coach could then request a trial placement for that young person
- A young person would have a personal advisor until the age of 21 then EET coaches would continue to work with that young person. An EET coach was not in a supportive role in the same way as a personal advisor's role but coaches had assisted with young people's personal issues at times
- Sometimes, a young person could look more favourably on an external organisation, such as 1625, because they were able to separate a coach's role from their social worker who was based within a Local Authority

The Select Committee received a presentation from Nicki Watkinson, North Yorkshire County Council on the role of Opportunity Brokers.

The presentation on Opportunity Brokers covered the following topics:

- A Brief History
- What They Do – Creating Opportunities for Young People
- How They Do It
- NYCC Support
- External Support
- Case Studies

The key issues were highlighted as follows:

- Opportunity Brokers might have a caseload of around 20 young people at one time, but the main focus of their work was on education, training and employment opportunities. When an opportunity for a young person arose, they would work with that young person for a short period of time, then step back once this work had been completed
- Opportunity Brokers were based in the same offices of the two North Yorkshire County Council Leaving Care Teams and there were roughly equal numbers of people in each team

- Cases could be re-opened for a young person over the age of 21 but this person would not necessarily have a Personal Advisor and would only work with a Broker on education and employment opportunities
- The benefit of this approach was, as this was a focused role than that of a Personal Adviser, Brokers had the capacity and experience to engage with employers to identify opportunities for the young person

The Select Committee received a presentation from Lesley Harrison and Craig Piggott from SBC Children's Services on SBC's EET Clinic and NEET cohort.

The presentation covered the following topics:

- EET Clinic
- EET and NEET Figures
- NEET Data and Percentages

The key issues were highlighted as follows:

- Out of the full NEET cohort, a much smaller number of young people were work ready
- Other factors such as mental or physical health issues, homelessness, pregnancy etc. made it difficult for them to enter employment or training but the team were still working to prepare them to enter employment
- Members praised the work of SBC in assisting young people who are NEET and commented that figures in Stockton-on-Tees were some of the lowest in the North East region. Members looked forward to the seeing the outcomes of this scrutiny review and uncovering where services could be improved further in the future

AGREED That the information be noted.

4 Progress Update – Scrutiny Review of Inclusion in Schools

The Select Committee were presented with a Progress Update on the Scrutiny Review of Inclusion in Schools.

Members thanked officers for their hard work in achieving all the review's recommendations and acknowledged the progress that has been made in respect of this issue.

AGREED That the Progress Update be noted and the Action Plan be signed off as complete.

5 Work Programme and Chair's Update

The next meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee would be an informal meeting to review the summary of evidence for the Scrutiny Review of Care Leavers EET. The meeting would be held remotely on Wednesday 19 May 2021.

AGREED That the Work Programme be noted.