

Cllr Helen Swiers Report to FTC July 2021

Covid-19:

You have Richard Flinton's weekly update therefore, as usual, I will not repeat.

One of the unknown issues around covid would be how the pandemic would affect ongoing workloads for the different teams within the council. It is reported we are seeing some quite significant pressures with referral rates in terms of older people and vulnerable adults who need support rising quite quickly. We are also seeing increased complexity in the issues that our children and young people's services are dealing with, which in many ways can also be put down to the consequences of the pandemic.

I am grateful to all staff working with these extra pressures and providing the level of support to the people of North Yorkshire in some difficult situations.

Local Government:

We have not, as yet, heard from the government on its consultation about the future of local government in North Yorkshire. We expect a decision from government within the next two weeks.

School summer holiday help for families:

The Covid Local Support Grant provides food voucher payments to parents and carers in receipt of free school meals, or other families impacted financially by the pandemic.

At the end of June the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) announced it would be extending the grant scheme to cover the forthcoming summer break.

NYCC received grant funding of £1,350,900 which has been allocated to schools and academes as well as early years providers. Care leavers are also eligible for food vouchers. North Yorkshire is very grateful to schools, nurseries, and childminders for their continued help in distributing the vouchers to families in need of this support.

A programme of healthy school activities will also be taking place in North Yorkshire over the school break. Organisations offering sessions in everything from sports coaching to creative and performing arts and cookery sessions have signed up to North Yorkshire's FEAST holiday activities programme.

NYCC has commissioned North Yorkshire Together, a partnership between Rural Arts, North Yorkshire Sport and North Yorkshire Youth to oversee the diverse programme. The holiday clubs will be available to all pupils in North Yorkshire but will be free of charge to families eligible for free school meals.

The funding for the programme has come from the Department of Education's Holiday Activities and Food Programme. The activities must be a mix of engaging activities and also teach children about health and nutrition, as well as provide them with healthy food; take part in activities which support resilience and wellbeing, along with their wider education attainment and prevent children from becoming socially isolated.

Educational Needs and Disabilities:

A wide-ranging engagement on children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) services is taking place this year which take a holistic look at services used by children and young people and their families, both inside and outside of school.

The feedback will be used to help develop an ambitious, joint SEND strategy for the county, which will cover how education, health and care services can work together now, and in the

future, to cater for the needs of children and young people who need specialist education to ensure the best possible outcomes for them.

It is being developed in partnership with the County Council, Parent Carer Voice and NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups covering North Yorkshire.

Work began with the launch of online engagement events. NYCC commissioned an independent organisation, the Council for Disabled Children, to host sessions. The sessions discuss individuals and organisations current experiences, what is working well in supporting children and young people with SEND, areas which require further development and key priorities for the future.