



**Cabinet
Tuesday, 19 November 2019**

ADDENDA

4. Questions from County Councillors (Pages 1 - 2)

Attached.

5. Petitions and Public Address (Pages 3 - 4)

Attached.

9. Business Management & Monitoring Report - September 2019 (Pages 5 - 6)

Comments attached from the Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting on 7 November 2019.

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ITEM 4 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

1. Question from Councillor Richard Webber to Councillor Lindsay-Gale

“Some Service families moving into Oxfordshire mid-year are experiencing difficulties in finding school places. As all but one of the secondary schools in Oxfordshire are academies and control their own in-year admissions policies will the Cabinet Member agree to write to the Secretary of State for Education asking for control of in-year admissions.”

Answer

Oxfordshire is fully committed to supporting Service families and it is deeply concerning that some Service families have experienced difficulties in finding a school place for their children. However, problems associated with in-year admissions are not confined to Service families.

Currently all mainstream state funded schools are required to take part in the coordinated admissions system for the main entry points for primary and infant schools, junior schools and transfer from primary to secondary school. It would be sensible to require studio schools and university technical colleges to take part in a coordination of admissions scheme for the main point of entry. Local authorities are responsible for coordinating admissions and in Oxfordshire the scheme has worked well with a high proportion of children receiving first preference schools.

Most schools in Oxfordshire are part of the in-year admissions scheme but it would be helpful if all schools were required to take part in a coordinated admissions scheme for in-year applicants. In-year schemes should have timescales that apply to all local authorities and all admission authorities.

Therefore, I would be happy to write to the Secretary of State to ask for changes to the School Admissions Code 2014 to ensure that all admissions to mainstream schools are included in coordinated admissions arrangements for which local authorities are responsible. Primary legislation may be necessary to enable changes of this kind and I would support such a step to achieve a more efficient and fairer system.

There are arrangements in place to identify schools for hard to place children, but they can involve long delays due to the need to ask the Secretary of State to direct admission. This is against the interests of these vulnerable children and it would be helpful if local authorities responsible for coordination of admissions also had the legal right to direct admission when no school is willing to offer a child a school place. Therefore, I am also willing to write to the Secretary of State to request changes to primary legislation that would invest local authorities with the power to direct admission of hard to place children.

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ITEM 5 – PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

Public Address

The following requests to address the Committee have been agreed by the Chairman:

Item	Speaker
Item 6 – Delegation of Enforcement Powers to City/District Councils	Councillor Laura Price, Opposition Deputy Leader (5 mins)
Item 7 – Statutory Notice to Close Culham Parochial CE Primary School	Councillor Richard Webber, local councillor Sutton Courtenay & Marcham (5 mins)
Item 9 - Business Management & Monitoring Report - September 2019	Marc Thompson, local resident (3 mins) Councillor Susanna Pressel, local Councillor Jericho & Osney (5 mins) Councillor Glynis Phillips, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance (5 mins)
Item 11. Oxfordshire Local Aggregates Assessment 2019	Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment (5 mins)

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BUSINESS MANAGEMENT & MONITORING REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2019 – NOTES FOR CABINET FROM PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Performance Scrutiny Committee considered the September Business Monitoring and Management report at our meeting on 7th November 2019.

The Committee challenged the methodology and commentary provided in relation to a number of targets, including those that have remained 'amber' throughout the year so far or have been consistently green without more detailed information provided in the commentary about specific achievements including:

- Achievement of planned savings – we have asked for actual data to be provided in the commentary
- Percentage of children who receive a 12-month review has a target of 93% and a current measure of 90% - whilst we are significantly above the national average (76.7%) we should still be pushing to meet our own target
- Our target to reduce the number of permanent exclusions has been rated amber despite being over our target rate of less than 44 (currently 59). Whilst we acknowledge this is consistent with a national trend, we should still be trying to reduce this number as often the safest place for a child, particularly vulnerable learners, will be at school
- Progress with our One Public Estate programme has been consistently rated green, but the commentary has not provided any notable successes to date
- Under our 'Safe and Healthy Lives' outcome we identified that a number of the targets have been dramatically exceeded and queried whether our original targets were not stretching enough or were unrealistic

We queried the forecast overspend in Children's Services with the Director of Finance and understand that this is not related to service delivery but anticipated savings on third party spend not materialising. We are reassured that officers are providing external support to try to address this overspend and we will monitor the situation.

Finally, we touched on changes that we would like to see to the outcomes framework for next year. We are keen that we revise our measures in relation to air quality and Co2 emissions and link this more explicitly to the wider climate emergency agenda. We also questioned the number of measures where there is 'no target set' and therefore have no rating, an example being our measures around volunteering, and whether these targets need to be revised for next year so that they are measurable. We would like to see targets that are measurable and evidence based next year.

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