

EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Monday, 25 March 2019 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 2.20 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Michael Waine – in the Chair
Councillor John Howson (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor
Councillor Jeannette Matelot
Councillor Gill Sanders
Councillor Emma Turnbull
Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles (In place of Councillor Ted Fenton)

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale

By Invitation: Mr Donald McEwan, Council of Oxfordshire Teachers' Organisation (COTO).

Mr Stan Terry (in place of Mrs Carole Thomson (am)) and Mrs Carole Thomson (pm) (Oxfordshire Governors' Association).

Officers:

Whole of meeting Diane Cameron and Deborah Miller (Resources).

Part of meeting George Eleftheriou (Environment & Economy) Deborah Bell and Allyson Milward (Children's Services).

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.

129/19 INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

(Agenda No. 1)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting and in particular Donald McEwan from the Council of Oxfordshire Teachers' Organisation (COTO) who had now officially taken over from Ian Jones and Mr Stan Terry from the Oxfordshire Governors' Association who was substituting for Carole Thomson.

The Committee paid tribute to Mr Jones and thanked him for his long-standing contribution to the Committee.

130/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda No. 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ted Fenton (Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles substituting) and Mrs Carole Thomson for the morning session (Mr Stan Terry substituting).

131/19 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 4)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 February 2019 were approved and signed subject to changing 'singed' for 'signed'.

Matters Arising

Minute 124/18 – The Chairman reported that he had received a disappointing response from the Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Education stating that it was the duty of parents to make themselves known. The Committee AGREED to write separately to Oxfordshire MP's asking them to lobby Government to do more around this issue.

132/19 POST-16 DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

(Agenda No. 6)

At a previous meeting, the Committee had identified an area for concern around pupils dropping off in Year 11, together with national concerns around the sustainability of Studio Schools. Accordingly, the Committee had before it a report (ESC6) which set out an analysis of destination for pupils in year 11 in Oxfordshire Schools and academies at the end of the 2018/19 academic year, together with a detailed breakdown of destinations for pupils in 14-19 establishments.

Allyson Milward, Head of Access to Learning attended the meeting to introduce the report and answer any questions the Committee may wish to ask. In introducing the report, Mrs Milward explained that in general studio schools were losing popularity and losing numbers and that the drop off at year 11 was not what was expected and that losing pupils in year 11 meant that the schools were becoming less sustainable.

The Banbury Space Studio numbers were very low and getting worse. The Bicester School and Bicester Technology Studio School was under the Activate Learning Trust who were considering the long-term future of the Studio School, with the possibility of merging the Management and Governance of the schools.

The Committee expressed concern over the number of pupils missing in year 11, especially as some of the children had been permanently excluded or off rolled and the significant numbers of children not being picked up in years 12 or 13. The Committee also questioned what work was being carried out in relation to moving children from NEET to participating.

In response, Mrs Milward confirmed that officers did track vulnerable learners, but that these schools were academies and therefore the oversight for funding and effective governance for these school rested with the Regional School Commissioner.

The Chairman raised concern that the initiative to introduce 14-19 schools was not working, particularly the Banbury and Bicester Space schools with the Bicester Space School losing 25% of year 11 pupils a year, when the school was designed to take students through to age 19, together with the very high costs in keeping the schools going.

Following debate, Councillor John Howson moved, and Councillor Jeannette Matelot seconded, and it was AGREED to ask the Heads of Studio Schools and UTC's (for balance) in Oxfordshire to attend a future meeting of the Committee to come and discuss their where they see their place in the post-14 Education scene.

133/19 PROJECT ATHENS (CARILLION) UPDATE: SCHOOL BUILDING MAINTENANCE (Agenda No. 7)

At a previous meeting, the Committee had requested to receive a presentation on how the Schools Structural Maintenance Programme (SSMP) was compiled and the methodology used, including the information that had been transferred from Carillion and how this information had been utilised to provide a robust programme of works based upon the most urgent priority rating.

Accordingly, George Eleftheriou, Assistant Director Community Facilities Management had been invited to the Meeting to present details on the progress against the 2018-19 programme of works, together with details of the proposed projects for 2019-20. Outlining the main issues/mitigations, opportunities and way forward.

Mr Eleftheriou explained that the County Council, as part of its strategic asset management plan, carried out a programme of condition surveys on all its buildings every 5 years. The County Council considered the conditions survey data they held, together with intelligence held by local managers of buildings and its own maintenance teams to prioritise the expenditure of funding received from central government under the Schools Structural Maintenance Grant. The last Asset Condition Survey had been undertaken by Carillion in 2016.

The School Structural Maintenance Programme (SSMP) was primarily based on the County Councils PUF rating (Performance, User, Fabric) and the intent was to deal with the highest priority repairs and maintenance needs. Those needs were considered against:

- a) The condition survey data,
- b) Existing repairs and maintenance programmes,
- c) Basic need programme,
- e) Programme and compliance pressures because of the devolution of DSG funding to maintained schools

The 2018-19 programme of works was identified using the above criteria following the collapse of the Carillion contract. Unfortunately, limited information was transferred to the County Council when the Carillion contract ceased, however the condition data for the majority of maintained schools that was collected under the Carillion contract was available. This high-level condition data identified major repair/life cycle replacement items.

This information was used to draft an initial programme. To ensure that the data used was robust, a programme of inspections were undertaken by County Council Building Surveyors and Engineers, of the highest priority items. This inspection detailed the urgency, scope and budget cost of the works initially identified.

This collected information was then re-assessed from a PUF rating perspective to identify the most urgent items to be delivered within the budget allocated.

The 2019-20 programme of works had been identified and was awaiting approval in April. Once the programme was ratified the schools would be contacted to notify them of their inclusion in the programme and relevant timings.

The agreed programme for 2018-19 consisted of 14 major projects, some of which had been carried forward from the Carillion contract. Seven operationally critical projects had been successfully completed by the County Councils project delivery team.

- Blewbury School – Heating pipework and boiler replacement.
- Bloxham School – Structural repairs to roof.
- Crowmarsh Gifford School - Pitched roof replacement due to structural failure.
- Fir Tree School – Pitched roof replacement due to structural failure.
- St Francis School – Hot and cold-water pipework replacement.
- St Swithuns School – Replacement lintels.
- Windmill School– Boiler replacement.

The remaining projects from the 2018/19 programme had been carried over and scheduled to be delivered within the 2019-20 programme. This rescheduling of works would have minimal impact on the school's operation as the projects were predominantly condition based and re-profiling would not cause any major inconvenience.

The main issue faced following the Carillion collapse was to establish stability and at the same time carry on with the set programme of works minimising any service disruption. This included various resource issues, permanent delivery model applied and overall long-term strategy. The team had done a fantastic job carrying on delivering as per the programme under the circumstances i.e. moving on from an outsourced delivery model to now re-establishing an in-house long-term delivery team.

This situation had presented an opportunity for the County Council to re-evaluate the way services were being delivered, including the current on-going development of an in-house FM and Construction unit.

In answer to questions from Members, Mr Eleftheriou confirmed that he was satisfied that the condition data from Carillion was reliable and that he was confident that the 2019/20 programme could be delivered on time.

Following discussion, the Committee made the following points:

The Committee expressed the importance of communicating with schools (particularly those that were not prioritised under the 2018/19 programme but were moved to the 2019/20 programme) about when their works were to be undertaken so that they could have a reasonable view of when they could expect works to be carried out. Feedback from Schools was that there had been no dialogue from OCC leaving schools frustrated.

The Committee established that the 7 school projects that had been carried over to the 2019/20 programme had not been business critical. The more urgent of the 7 (Tier 2) had been prioritised for this year and were being progressed.

The Committee welcomed the service coming back in-house and the opportunity this presented to maintain the schools building to an appropriate standard.

The Committee expressed the importance of schools understanding what maintenance fell within their budgets and what fell with OCC budget.

Following debate, the Committee AGREED to:

- (a) receive the presentation;
- (b) ask officers to provide members with an update in relation to St. Andrews School Chinnor;
- (c) email members with the report references which point to the overall cost of the collapse of Carillion to the Council;
- (d) receive a report back on progress in six months' time.

134/19 SCHOOL ABSENCE AND ATTENDANCE DEEP DIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Agenda No. 8)

A working group had been set up by the Education Scrutiny Committee to understand why secondary school absence figures in Oxfordshire were higher than the national average and to establish what work was being undertaken to address this. The working group had met with officers to consider government guidance, performance information and had visited schools.

The Education Scrutiny Committee received a report about school attendance figures and identified that secondary school absence was above the local and national average. The Committee established a working group to investigate the reasons for this. The working group sought to understand the trends associated with secondary school absences in the county; highlight areas of good practice and identify barriers that exist to improving attendance including how the local authority was working with schools to overcome this.

The Committee decided to focus on secondary school attendance rates as it found that primary school absence rates in Oxfordshire had historically been in line with or below the national average, yet rates for Oxfordshire secondary schools have been consistently above the regional and national average since 2013-14. In 2016-17, 5.7 half days were lost to absences at Oxfordshire secondary schools compared to 5.2 in the South East and nationally. 13.5% of these absences were classed as 'persistent absences. Whilst the figure has been decreasing since 2013-14, it was still one of the higher rates in England with the national average being 13.1%.

The overall aim of the deep dive was to gain a greater understanding of trends associated with absence and attendance at secondary schools across Oxfordshire; identifying the pathways that exist to tackle unauthorised and persistent absence and to develop recommendations that enable the sharing of good practice to reduce absence rates across Oxfordshire.

In introducing the Report, The Chairman, Councillor Michael Waine explained that the key outcome identified through the deep dive was the importance of embedding a culture in schools that promoted inclusion and good attendance practices across staff, pupils and parents. The working group had been able to highlight a number of examples of this good practice in secondary schools across Oxfordshire.

The working group had also identified common themes around access to alternative provision, In Year Fair Access Panels and access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as areas which could assist in improving school attendance figures. The working group were recommending that the Committee endorsed the work that was underway to develop an Alternative Provision Commissioning Strategy and a revised IYFAP Protocol with involvement from schools.

The Chairman, Councillor Michael Waine thanked Councillor John Howson, together with other members of the Working Group for their support and thanked Deborah Bell, who had been appointed half way through the review and had already made a very positive impact. He further thanked the schools involved for their time and input. Deborah Bell, Head of Learner Engagement, welcomed the report. The Council had been successful in a bid for over £5m to provide a one-year pilot of 16 new Mental Health Workers. The posts would be based in schools in the City – Oxford East and it was the hope that the pilot will be so successful that it will be rolled out across the County. It was regretful that some other towns across the County would not be getting the provision straight away, but this would hopefully be off-set by a reduction in waiting times for the rest of the County.

She welcomed the fact that March 2019 figures showed that persistent absentees reducing, although primary still remained a concern. She noted that the local picture reflected the national picture which helped focusing attention where needed.

The Committee noted that persistent absenteeism was very different to children sometimes missing school for family holidays or one-off occasions. Councillor Matelot moved, Councillor Sanders seconded, and it was AGREED that children should lawfully be allowed up to two weeks off a year in term time.

135/19 FORWARD PLAN AND COMMITTEE BUSINESS

(Agenda No. 9)

Members considered the forward programme of items and agreed items for the June and September Meetings as shown below (Changes shown in bold italics and strikethrough):

19 June 2019		
Regional Schools Commissioner	A question and answer session with the Regional Schools Commissioner Chairman	Chairman
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy	To receive a report about the implementation of Council's SEND strategy	Deputy Director for Education (David Clarke / Head of SEND (Jayne Howarth)
Looked After Children educational attainment	A review of attainment for this vulnerable group	Deputy Director for Education (David Clarke / Head of School Improvement & Learning (Kim James)
Annual Academies in Oxfordshire Report	An update on academies' status, issues and trends across Oxfordshire	Head of Access to Learning (Allyson Milward)
Post-16 results and EET data	A comprehensive report on post-16 results and destinations in Education Employment and Training	Head of School Improvement & Learning (Kim James)
Home to School Transport Policy	Discussion around forming a working group to input into the formulation of the policy for mainstream schools.	Cllr John Howson
4 September 2019		
Home to School Transport Policy	Discussion around forming a working group to input into the formulation of the policy for mainstream schools.	Cllr John Howson
<i>Post-Carillion Update on Schools Repair & Maintenance</i>	<i>A 6-month update following the one made in March 2019 to the Committee on prioritisation and delivery of repair and maintenance in schools following the collapse of Carillion.</i>	<i>Assistant Community Management (George Eleftheriou) Director Facilities (George Eleftheriou)</i>
To be scheduled		

Educational Attainment	Recommendations from the committee working group on improving educational performance	John Howson / Head of School Improvement and Learning (Kim James)
Disparity in educational outcomes across Localities and closing the gap (vulnerable learners)	Profile of educational outcomes across Oxfordshire – sharing learning across the county and forming pathways to raising the attainment of vulnerable pupils (best practice), current provision of support, an overview of the profile of vulnerable learners.	
Demographic trends	Planning for school places and supporting families with English as an additional language	
Schools funding formula	Potentially a task group reporting back to ESC	
Children and Family Centres and Locality Community Support Services	To present the findings of the monitoring investigations undertaken by members of the Committee following on from the presentation in July 2018	Cllr Michael Waine/Area Social Care Manager
Update on the impact of work on reducing exclusions	To present the impact / results of implementing the recommendations on exclusions from the committee working group.	Assistant Director for Education (David Clarke) / Head of Learner Engagement (Deborah Bell)
Learner Engagement Strategy	To present to the committee the new OCC strategy for learner engagement.	Assistant Director for Education (David Clarke) / Head of Learner Engagement (Deborah Bell)
Post 16 Home to School Transport (mainstream)	To discuss how the Committee might add value in looking into the issue of cost of post-16 transport to school.	Chairman

136/19 OFSTED REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR THE SOUTH EAST QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

(Agenda No. 10)

The Ofsted Regional Director for the South East, Mr Chris Russell, attended the Meeting for a question and answer session following the publication of a new Education inspection framework by Ofsted which went out to consultation in January 2019 with a view to being implemented from September 2019 onward.

The Questions had been planned by the Committee and communicated to Mr. Russell ahead of the Meeting. Mr. Russell thanked the Committee for the notice of the questions and for the opportunity to come and speak to the Committee. Set out below are the questions and answers given during the session:

“In view of Ofsted's focus on the progress made by disadvantaged pupils, are you able to signpost us to a comparable county LA not necessarily in the South East where there have been good gains in this area since 2016?”

“It is very difficult to point you to a comparable authority as the issues around disadvantaged pupils are different in different areas and each authority has its own unique set of problems. In terms of authorities where they have tackled this issue and had gains, whilst some authorities had had gains, those had not always been sustainable, so the best way forward was to identify specific problems and focus on tackling those. Ofsted would be happy to support where they can on any conferences on this issue. HMI Sarah Hubbard has very close links with Oxfordshire and would be happy to support you.

The Local Authority interactive tool is a free tool which allows you to analyse data and look at authorities that have closed the gap and that you believe are similar to yours.

“We've seen the changes in Framework in terms of time frame from the first call announcing an inspection, and we're concerned about the impact of this on schools. Can you explain what evidence Ofsted's rational for the change, especially in terms of the initial contact with a school.”

We are consulting on the new framework currently, but these proposals are draft, and we are very much looking and listening to the responses we are receiving. It is not however, really a change in the notice period. The difference is that we are proposing on-site planning, instead of being at home ringing the school, we will be in the school, able to ask questions, but we will not be going around the school collecting evidence. However, I can totally understand how the school would feel like the new proposals feel like there is no notice and issues such as Head teachers being away from the school or teaching are real issues. This proposal has been universally unpopular, and we will be listening to the responses.

“Schools have commented that they have not had much opportunity to produce the in-house, cohort specific data during the inspection and with some of our small schools where we have cohort specific swings this has been a concern.”

The proposals we are consulting on at the moment suggest that we don't look at school's internal data but gather evidence from elsewhere. This has received a mixed response; our concern is that if we focus on internal data it creates more and we try to do our bit to reduce teacher's workload.

“In the PowerPoint on the consultation (Slide 34) it states that Ofsted aims to reduce workload, looking at how leaders engage with and manage staff, taking account of the main pressures on them, including workload. Can you explain what evidence will look for to see that workload will reduce?”

The honest answer to that is we don't know yet as we are piloting and trying structures out, so I think the methodology around that will evolve, but certainly not looking at the data should take some of the pressure off. If we did look at that data, it would be in terms of how you are doing whether it was too onerous etc. There will be more discussions with schools to make sure it is not overloading staff and that schools are coping with the different priorities and to check that schools are tackling the issue of balance of workload. The last thing we want to do is to contribute to the large workload of teachers.

"We're aware that Ofsted have inspected a number of Outstanding schools in Oxfordshire. We still have some that haven't been inspected for some time. Can you talk to us about how those to be inspected are identified?"

Due to legislation, outstanding schools are exempt from routine inspection, and that means we can't just go in and inspect them as firstly, we would be breaking the law and secondly, we are not resourced to inspect every outstanding school. The previous and current chief inspector have both said quite robustly that they would like to see that changed and that outstanding schools should be inspected routinely. We need a change in the law and to be resourced properly to do that. At the moment we inspect 10%, so we need to get the risk assessment as proportionate as we can. The main thing that would take us into a school would be if the data showed a downwards trend in the data or complaints, but we have to have just cause to inspect.

The statutory framework for inspecting schools is 5 years, but in general schools that are inadequate are inspected every 30 months or before, good schools every 3 or 4 years on a reduced inspection.

"Are the cuts to your budget affecting Ofsted's ability to carry out timely and thorough inspections of Oxfordshire's schools, and can parents be confident in the rating of their child's school?"

The difficult issue with outstanding schools is we can't inspect them and speaking to heads of those schools, they wish they could be inspected as well. The government would have to agree to a change in legislation, we understand the arguments, but it is not within our control.

We do feel confident that we are providing reasonable assurance where we are inspecting. However, part of the proposals out to consultation is to spend 2 days inspecting good schools which should help with that assurance.

"Does the Framework reflect that Ofsted is going into a Good school, still expecting it to be Good and can you comment on the question of 'off-rolling'?"

I can give an assurance that when we go into a good school our starting point is that it is still a good school. It is a stance for the start of the inspection, rather than any indication of where the inspection might end. Although we are looking at making changes in the new framework, we still want to be proportionate and start off with the view that it is a good school and that is how the methodology is working.

In relation to off-rolling, we have done some inspections because we have risk assessed and the data has suggested that there might be off-rolling going on. The data and insight team look at school patterns of pupil movements together with other data to identify schools and we have then inspected the school. In some cases, the schools have not been off-rolling, there have been other reasons for that mobility.

“Inadequate schools are often told by Ofsted that they can't employ NQTs. What happens if inspection report comes out in June and they've already employed NQTs? If a school must become an academy (and hence a new legal entity) it then doesn't have an inspection record, so then there is no bar to employing NQTs. What is Ofsted's view on that?”

If a school is inspected and it has already employed NQTs then those NQTs can continue to work there, all we would ask is for the school to ensure that they are adequately supported given that the school is struggling. The legislation that underpins this has been around for a long time and pre-dates academisation and therefore does sit a bit awkwardly. Before, inadequate schools were monitored by us and when we inspected we generally said that they could not employ NQT's at that moment, then after the seconded or third visit if improvement was shown they would be able to appoint them. We now have a mix of maintained and academy and we can tell maintained that you can't employ NQTs, but we can only advise academies not to do so. This can be difficult if the school has improved, but not due an inspection or is waiting to be academized.

What tends to happen though, is that schools tend to write to us and we allow them to employ NQT's if they are supported on the proviso that if we do inspect we will look at how well they are supported.

“Could you confirm whether this is for the benefit of the NQT or whether it is for the benefit of the children?”

It is mainly for the benefit of the NQTs so that they are not being sent into a school that was struggling. We have had discussion with the DoE around the issue of monitoring and the employment of NQTs.

“How will MATs be treated in the future? For example, will all schools continue to be treated separately within a MAT/MAC in terms of inspection outcomes?”

At the moment the unit of inspection is the school and that is not due to change under the new Framework. Parents are interested in the rating of their school not of the MAT. What we are doing though, is reviewing MATs by collecting school data over one or two terms, to see what that shows us and go into the back office of the MAT and write a review.

“If a school's safeguarding is Inadequate and it becomes an academy, the LA is still the body responsible for safeguarding advice. How can that be right?”

We don't make those rules, the rules are set down by the DoE, so unfortunately, we don't have any say over it. The academy still has its responsibilities under the regulations, but the Local Authority does maintain its broader role in safeguarding

and for the overall standards of education in the area. However, although this does create some tensions, in my experience as Regional Director over the past few years, those tensions are much less now than they were. Our training around Safeguarding is focusing at looking at the bigger picture.

“When you inspect an academy, do you look at how they exchange data and how they work in partnership and whether or not they have a good working relationship with the local authority?”

That is not really something we would look at as part of a normal school inspection, unless we have heard of any tensions or have picked up issues during inspection and this could include a high excluding school. Local authorities can talk to us at any time, including at the point of inspection or before. We now have very good annual conversations with local authorities where we talk about social care and educational issues for an extended period and we can pick up those kinds of issues there, but we are being told that those issues are becoming quite a rarity.

“Are you picking up any tensions across the South East Region in relation to cuts and the authorities’ resources to meet their obligations in relation to safeguarding?”

There is no doubt that the sectors we are inspecting are feeling the pressures of funding right across the Region in MATs and children’s social care, so there is no doubt about the effect of the funding pressures. It is what we hear about most.

“What role does Ofsted have in terms of re-brokering academies? In Oxfordshire there are examples where this has been slow.”

We rightly, have no role in this at all. Ofsted have to remain completely independent of that process. This is for the Regional School Commissioner. We do share your concerns around where re-brokering is taking a long time and the school feels like it’s in limbo. What we have done, to put us in the best position we can be, is to make sure that we have the most up to date intelligence possible, including our relationship with the RSC office to make sure we know where we are with each school, so if we have a school that has not been re-brokered within 9 months we will go in and undertake a monitoring visit. We do what we can under our current powers.

“Given the focus on governance, can you explain the training Ofsted inspectors have around identifying good governance? How does Ofsted define good governance in the new framework?”

We have had various types of training around Governance over the years. The most current training is around MAT Governance because it is a new complexity that people may not have come across before. We will be continually updating and reviewing our training and there will be training with the new framework, some of which has started already and some of which will be carried out next term in September.

We have rewritten the Framework in light of MAT Governance which was missing in the old Framework. We are in consultation, so if people have ideas on whether we

have got it right or whether we could be doing anything better we would be really happy to hear those.

“the main thing we are concerned about as a Committee is consistency and that each team going out to inspect schools should be looking at them in the same way, so that if you sent two teams out to the same school, you would get the same result. It is so important that schools have the assurance that they are treated the same as another school, we believe there has been some evidence in the past to the contrary.”

I accept that in the past we did not have enough training. In the past our contracted inspectors were not trained by us, but by an outside provider. We have moved a long way from that, all of those inspectors now contract to us and we train them and they all work within Regions, so answer to myself or a member of my senior team. We have upped the amount and quality of training. I agree with you about consistency, you are never going to get perfect consistency, as that would mean a tick list which is what we don't want as it has to be a professional judgement, which is more of an art than a science.

The way to ensure consistency is through training and quality assurance. As Regional Director for the last four years, I now hear a lot less about inconsistency. We will continue to train on this matter and are hoping to get HMI out with Ofsted inspectors to ensure consistency and will continue to work to improve this area.

“Given your experience inspecting schools across the country, how are Oxfordshire schools performing in terms of maintaining a broad curriculum, including the arts, humanities and sport, and offering enrichment activities outside of the school day?”

The honest answer is that I cannot do that very well under the current Framework. The curriculum has not been very strong in the framework as the focus has been around leadership, management and teaching. We want to focus much more on curriculum under the new framework. With the new framework, I will be in a much better position to talk to you about that, because it will be much more at the heart of the inspection process itself. We had look through some of Oxfordshire's recent reports, and what you can see is that it is more likely to be commented on in more recent reports. At the moment we are not good at reporting on curriculum, but it should be much better in the future.

“What is your view on What the difference is between a broad and a balanced curriculum?”

Within the new framework we will be looking at what the school's intent is around the curriculum in terms of what they are trying to achieve, what their curriculum is and what the rationale behind it was and then we would be looking at how it was implemented and the outcomes from that and how they are developing those curriculum subjects.

“Where has Ofsted, which is an evidence- based organisation, got it's evidence for moving toward Ebac as I can find no evidence in your research paper?”

It is part of Government policy, so it in the consultation, so please respond.

“Do you see a noticeable difference in terms of resources and challenges in Oxford City schools compared to rural county schools?”

I am not sure that I can really say that we pick that up within our inspection work. We know funding is not a level playing field in different areas, but it is not something we pick up within our framework as to what the level of resources are, so we are unable to make grand conclusions about this. We acknowledge that this can be an issue for small schools and that Oxfordshire has quite a few within the County.

“Can you tell us whether you think the new funding formula is going to make it better or worse for small pockets of deprivation within a large authority?”

No, I cannot comment on that. We will just go in and see whether it is working or not.

“In the autumn of 2017, Ofsted and Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group undertook a joint local area SEND inspection in Oxfordshire. The inspectors’ report identified significant weaknesses, including the quality and timeliness of Education Health and Care Plans. How confident are you that the statement of action is being implemented by Oxfordshire, and how is this being monitored? And could you recommend places to visit to learn how to improve?”

This reflects the challenges around implementing the new arrangements for local authorities. Quite a lot of authorities are having issues and we are having to give statements of action etc. When we were asked to give the inspections, there was no system for following them up at all and we now have a system where we go back in after about 18 months. Those returns visits have only just started we have only done a very small handful at the moment, so it is difficult to say much about what is coming out of those.

In terms of looking at provision generally, all of our reports have been published, but I am not sure that we have had any that will be of interest to you, such as where we there have been issues and we have gone back and said that they have sorted them out. When we can pool these issues together and advise around them we will.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing