

<b>Children &amp; Young People Scrutiny Commission</b> <b>January 15th 2024</b> <b>Item 5 - Cabinet Q &amp; A</b>	Item No <b>5</b>
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### Outline

Cabinet members who have responsibility for children and young people's services are invited to the Commission annually, to enable members to scrutinise services within their portfolio. The Commission may identify up to three service or policy areas on which to focus its questioning which must be notified to the Cabinet member 6 weeks in advance of the meeting. The Cabinet member is required to give a verbal response at the meeting.

For this session, the Commission requested that the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care respond to questions on 2 policy areas:

(To note re section 2 questions on School Estates Strategy. Whilst the decision to close and or merge 6 primary schools was agreed at [Cabinet on 11th December 2024](#), this decision has been called-in for review by the [Scrutiny Panel on 9th January 2024](#). Some questions here in section 2 will therefore be dependent on the outcomes of that Call-in and where possible, the Commission will seek to avoid a duplication of those discussions).

## **1. Childhood Food Poverty in Schools**

- a) Can the Cabinet member update the Commission on the Local Authority's work to address childhood food poverty and support the extension of FSM in schools (as set out in the recommendations of the [Tackling Food Poverty in Education](#) report), in particular:
- The development of a *local action plan* to support the strategy and how this is being overseen and implemented by the Cost of Living Board;
  - Setting up of School Food Trust to support schools to carry on FSM provision after cessation of Mayor of London's FSM programme (7/24);
  - Plans to establish a local FSM auto-enrollment procedure for local parents and schools;
  - How local voluntary sector organisations are being supported to work with local schools to provide healthy, nutritious and cost effective school meals;
  - Changes to Capital Programme to facilitate maintained schools to update and or extend school kitchen facilities;
  - How the £300k of additional investment announced in August has been used to support the delivery of the above plans;

- Progress in developing planning restrictions which prevent new fast food outlets within 250 metres of schools and education settings.

## **2. School Estates Update**

a). Can the Cabinet member update the Commission on the **School Estates Strategy** and proposals to close / merge 6 primary schools in Hackney in response to falling school rolls? In particular, members would welcome further information on the following:

- Data on the number of reception school *places* and *vacancies* in Hackney from September 2023 entry;
- Transitional support available for children and families at schools confirmed for closure and / or merger (especially those children with an EHCP or on SEND support);
- Details of any transitional support available for *staff* at schools proposed for closure / or merger;
- Ongoing engagement and involvement of local *primary schools* that continue to be impacted by falling school rolls and local strategies to address this;
- Engagement with local *secondary schools* to assist future planning to prepare them for falling school rolls;
- Strategic planning for deciding how school sites which may become vacant will continue to be used for educational or community purposes?
- Upcoming timetable for *key decisions* to support the future implementation of the School Estates Strategy.

### **Attending:**

- Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care.