

Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Public Questions

The role of Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee is to scrutinise proposed decisions which have been called in by one or more Members of that Committee. Under the provisions of the Constitution, the Chairman of the Committee is required to give the responses to public questions. As the below question relate to the Delegated Powers Report (1663 - Increase in Places Offered Under the Free Education for Less Advantaged Two Year Olds Scheme) the answer, although delivered by the Chairman of the Committee, have been provided by the relevant Cabinet Member.

| Ms Jenny Borst & Ms Tricia Young | |
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| "Why is there a budget reallocation of funds away from the childcare facilities of Barnet's Children's centres on the grounds of better allocating funds to the disadvantaged when Barnet is currently failing to provide its quota of childcare places to the same disadvantaged individuals?" | <p>Unfortunately, this question shows a misunderstanding of the current situation. Barnet's published review of childcare places across the borough shows that there is generally a sufficiency. Barnet does not have a 'quota' for childcare places.</p> <p>a. Currently we fund a network of 13 Children's Centres and 8 outreach linked venues with a budget of £4,300,000. This budget will remain the same for the financial year 2012/13. We are proposing to redistribute the monies more effectively to meet the needs of vulnerable families accessing Children's Centre community activities. The proposal, which is currently out for consultation and ends on the 15 June 2012, is to remove the current subsidy which is paid to children's centres with childcare and which contributes to their staffing costs and all the day to day overheads of the childcare provision. It is proposed to redistribute this funding back into the Children's</p> |

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| | <p>Centres to support the delivery of community activities. These activities are a mixture of universal and targeted services for families with children under five.</p> <p>6 of the 7 Children's Centre's with onsite childcare participate in the Two Year Old scheme which contributes to their income generation. This is expected to continue.</p> <p>b. The DfE have estimated that up to 800 2 year old children might be eligible for childcare in Barnet based on the proposed criteria for eligibility (the same criteria used for Free School Meals). This figure is subject to change. This entitlement is not yet statutory. We have chosen to initially grow to 500 childcare places based on:</p> <p>(1) The number of currently available 2 year old places, which we estimate as 400. This number can vary as providers can adjust the age bands between the ages of 2 -5.</p> <p>(2) The quality requirements that limit childcare provider participation in the 2 year old scheme. Only settings with an Ofsted grading of Good or Outstanding are eligible to participate. In addition we will be working with new registered settings (10 settings in the last 6 months) encouraging them to participate in the 2 year old scheme.</p> <p>(3) Non-participation of some providers in the 2 year old scheme as they are already at full capacity.</p> <p>(4) No grants being available to develop provision, such as to up skill the quality of childcare provisions or for capital investment, unlike previously.</p> |
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