

# MINUTES

## County Admissions Forum

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2005  
6.30 p.m., Committee Room B, County Hall

<b>Admission Forum Members</b>		<b>Others Attending:</b>	
Mr Ivor Ambrose		Jon Reynolds (substitute for member)	Present
Mrs Mary Calvert	Present	Mr Leonard Spencer (substitute for member)	Apologies received
Mrs Pat Cherry	Present		
Mrs Terrie Clift	Apologies received	<b>Officers</b>	
Mr Stephen Drake	Apologies received	Mr David Ayres	Present
Mrs Jane Furnival	Apologies received	Mr Lao Cooper	Present
Mrs Janet Goldsmith	Present	Mr Jim Dalton	Present
Mr Robert Gordon	Present	Mr Justin Donovan	Present
Mrs Helen Hyde	Present	Ms Jenny Duxbury	Present
Mrs Tanis Kent	Apologies received	Mr Daniel Hardy	Present
Mrs Aislinn Lee	Present	Mr John Harris	Present
Mr David Lloyd		Mrs Jill Jackson	Present
Mr Seamus Quilty		Mr Lindsay Martin	Present
Mr Richard Roberts	Present	Mr Alan Sapsford	Apologies received
Mrs Maureen Roe	Apologies received	Mrs Sarah Vize	Present
Mr Alan Scouller	Present		
Mrs Jeanette Shire	Apologies received		
Mr Richard Smith	Present		
Mrs Brenda Southorn	Apologies received		
Mr Rodney Tucker	Present		

	ITEM
1.	<p><b>Apologies for Absence:</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from Mrs Terrie Clifft, Mr Stephen Drake, Mrs Jane Furnival, Mrs Tanis Kent, Mrs Maureen Roe, Mrs Jeanette Shire, Mr Alan Sapsford, Mrs Brenda Southorn and Mr Leonard Spencer.</p> <p>Mr Jon Reynolds was a substitute for Mrs Brenda Southorn.</p>
2	<p><b>Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman</b></p> <p>Nominations for Chairman were received for Mr Robert Gordon.</p> <p>Robert Gordon was elected Chairman of the County Admissions Forum.</p> <p>Nominations for Vice Chairman were received for Mrs Pat Cherry.</p> <p>Pat Cherry was elected as Vice Chairman of the County Admissions Forum.</p>
3.	<p><b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2005</b></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.</p>
4.	<p><b>Update on Matching Future Demand for School Places with Provision (verbal update)</b></p> <p>The 2005 pupil forecast is currently being updated for secondary schools. The forecast will be sent to the Schools Organisation Committee (SOC) in July and is based on the January 2005 annual return. (PLASC)</p> <p>There is a general down turn in pupil numbers, in primary and also in some secondary schools.</p> <p>There are surplus primary and secondary places in some parts of the County.</p> <p>There is a current review of the school re-organisation process. The findings of this review will be reported to Cabinet in the near future.</p> <p>A written report will be available once the review process has been considered by Cabinet in the autumn.</p>
5.	<p><b>School Admission Numbers for Admission 2006 – 2007</b></p> <p>The County Council determined published admission numbers (PANs) on 24 March. There is a requirement to publish notices where the PAN is lower than the Indicated Admission Number (IAN). The County Council has published 39 notices.</p> <p>Full list at appendix 1 of the report.</p> <p>There were individual discussions with some schools where there may have been a scope to increase the PAN. 11 schools were in a position to increase their PAN. The Director of Children, Schools and Families was given permission to go to the Schools Adjudicator and request in year variations.</p> <p>Parents have the right to object to the notices within 6 weeks.</p>

	<p>There are no specific actions for the Admissions Forum to take forward.</p> <p>The report was noted by the Admissions Forum.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Update on Admissions 2005-2006</b></p> <p>An update on all admissions processes was given.</p> <p>In paragraph 2.4 of the report it was noted that the percentage of Hertfordshire parents/carers being offered one of their ranked schools on allocation day should read 93.18%</p> <p>For secondary admissions following five rounds of continuing interest the percentage of pupils being offered a place at one of their ranked schools has risen to 95.1%. It is expected that this will rise slightly as there are four more rounds of continuing interest to take place.</p> <p>The percentage of online applications has also increased.</p> <p>It was confirmed that late applications were included within the figures. It was asked whether it would be possible at some stage to exclude the late applications.</p> <p>The Admissions Forum noted the report.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Office of The Schools Adjudicator-Update on Determinations in respect of Admissions for 2005-2006</b></p> <p>The report was introduced to the Admissions Forum.</p> <p>Nationally, the majority of the 171 objections were upheld to a certain degree. Only 38 objections were not upheld.</p> <p>The message from the Schools Adjudicator with regard to Looked After Children (LAC), that LAC have top priority, is clear. There was only one objection about this not upheld.</p> <p>It is also possible to see other areas where the Schools Adjudicator has upheld the majority of objections, for example, relating to children of members of staff, and siblings past and present.</p> <p>The Admissions Forum noted the report</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Consultation on Admissions 2006-2007 Voluntary-Aided and Foundation Schools</b></p> <p>The report was introduced to the Admissions Forum.</p> <p>Consultation had to be completed by the end of February and determined by middle of April.</p> <p>A number of comments were made on the proposed admission arrangements. The secretary to the Admissions Forum wrote to over 100 of the 129 schools outlining where the schools were non-compliant with the Code of Practice.</p>

Strong advice was given to areas surrounding equal opportunities and LAC as these were significant non compliant areas.

There were 54 non compliant schools.

The County Council will not be objecting formally this year. It will seek to get agreement through discussion, contacting all non compliant schools, and arranging meetings to look at rules on a one to one basis.

We need to work with schools and need the support of the respective Diocese and will, where appropriate, approach schools in partnership with them.

A query was raised as to what happens when Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) is not prioritised in the admission arrangements.

If the child has a SEN statement naming the school, the child must be given the school regardless of the admission arrangements. Some therefore feel this does not need to be mentioned in the admission rules. It was suggested that the admissions rules need to be explicit and therefore that this should be included within them. However, a contradiction on advice was highlighted in appendix 3 – it is not appropriate to include SEN in the admission criteria, advice from an adjudicator. If it is in a note which is part of the published admissions arrangements, it is acceptable. If there is a note, it needs to be clear and unambiguous.

#### 9. **Working Together on Exclusions**

The Admissions Forum is required to provide advice to schools within Hertfordshire on local protocols of hard to place children. The DfES expect that the Forum would have done this by the end of the academic year 2005.

There is a lot of advice and examples of good practice in this area and, with Hertfordshire, one already exists in South West Hertfordshire.

There are different solutions to meeting different local circumstances, however such protocols would not have the effect of children being unrealistically placed in mainstream education. It is expected that local protocols are drawn up by local schools and partners.

The paper sets a framework for the development of local protocols and contains principles and best practice, to include in a high level framework. Local schools would work on the protocol together.

It was agreed that:

- the report would be revised to follow standard formatting.
- clear definitions would be given where appropriate, for example “alternative provision”.
- need to ensure all areas of Hertfordshire have local protocols, such as Watford/Three Rivers.
- there is currently no reference to colleges within the protocol. Sometimes can use colleges for hard to place pupils.

A query was raised as to what would happen if we are unable to get a protocol together. It was reported that we are confident this will not happen.

	<p>There are already protocols in place across Hertfordshire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DfES have said this should be in place and working by the next academic year – may legislate if protocols are not in place.</li> </ul> <p>A query was raised as to who is driving local protocols, schools or officers. Jointly officers and Headteachers are working together, led by officers working with Headteachers.</p> <p>Other comments received were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding arrangements need to be flexible to meet the cost. How can this be achieved? Further work needs to be undertaken. There may be the possibility of adopting a formal mechanism.</li> <li>• Parents/Carers should be involved at the first sign of concern.</li> <li>• Key senior officers are going to meet to look at this issue in more detail. With support of parents, most problems can be resolved.</li> <li>• Every admission forum must have a protocol. Do we need to agree one or be satisfied they exist? The admissions forum needs to give advice. The forum cannot approve something that has not been consulted upon.</li> </ul> <p>The protocol was approved for purposes of consultation subject to feedback received from the group of headteachers.</p>
11.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>It was agreed that further dates will not be arranged on Holy days, if at all possible</p>
12.	<p>Dates of Next Meetings:</p> <p>Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2005</p> <p>Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2006</p> <p>Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2006</p> <p>Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2006</p> <p>18.30 hrs – Committee Room B, County Hall</p>