

**CONSULTATION ON RELEVANT AREAS FOR 2008-2009**

Report of the Director of Children, Schools and Families

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**1. Purpose of the report**

- 1.1. To inform the Admissions Forum on the proposals for the consultation on the Relevant Areas in Hertfordshire for the 2008 admissions round.

**2. Summary**

- 2.1 Proposals for the Hertfordshire Relevant Areas for 2008-2009 will go out for consultation on 6 November 2006 with a response date by Friday 8 December 2006.
- 2.2 The proposal is to maintain the status quo of 20 Relevant Areas with one amendment being to remove Northwood and Pinner from Relevant Area 17 (Watford, Abbots Langley, Carpenders Park and South Oxhey including Bedmond), in order to reflect changes in the Priority Area.

**3. Conclusion**

- 3.1 The Admissions Forum is asked to note the information in this report.

#### **4. Background information**

- 4.1. The Education (Relevant Areas for Consultation on Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999 place a responsibility on Local Authorities (LA) to determine Relevant Areas, after due consultation. The purpose of these areas is to ensure that all admission authorities are properly consulted about the admission arrangements which affect them and the communities they serve.
- 4.2. There is a requirement on the LA to consult on and review Relevant Areas within two years of its most recent determination. The last consultation in Hertfordshire was in November 2005.
- 4.3. The Relevant Area may be less than the LA area if there are distinct areas for admissions and may include part of neighbouring LA areas, for example, if there is considerable cross-border traffic. Other important considerations in determining relevant areas are the pattern of parents' preferences and children's travel-to-school patterns.

#### **5. Current arrangements**

- 5.1 There are currently twenty Relevant Areas within Hertfordshire. These were developed in 2003 and updated in 2005 to reflect the patterns of allocation at secondary transfer. They were also designed to reflect the Priority Areas within the Hertfordshire County Council admission arrangements.
- 5.2 The principles guiding the establishment of the Relevant Areas were:
  1. they should reflect recent patterns of allocations from primary to secondary school,
  2. they should reflect travel to school patterns and geographical proximity,
  3. they should be as small as practical in order to reduce bureaucracy on schools.
  4. they should not cut across urban areas.
- 5.3 As a result of these principles, twenty one relevant areas were created in 2003. The Relevant Areas were reviewed and updated in 2005 to reflect changes since 2003 and resulted in combining the Bishops Stortford and Sawbridgeworth areas into one single area and adding some out of county parishes to Relevant Areas to reflect the Priority Areas in the Hertfordshire County Council admission arrangements, resulting in the current 20 Relevant Areas as detailed in 5.4.

#### 5.4 The current Relevant Areas for 2007/2008 are:

1. Ashwell, Baldock & Letchworth Garden City areas plus Edworth
2. Royston & surrounding areas
3. Hitchin & villages to the West & South West of Hitchin
4. Knebworth, Stevenage & surrounding areas including the villages of Walkern & Benington
5. Buntingford, Puckeridge & surrounding areas
6. Bishop's Stortford, Sawbridgeworth, Spellbrook & surrounding areas plus Elsenham, Great Hallingbury, Hatfield Heath, Little Hallingbury & Sheering
7. Harpenden, Redbourn, Wheathampstead & surrounding areas including Markyate, Flamstead & Kimpton
8. Welwyn Garden City & surrounding areas including Woolmer Green, Digswell, Lemsford & Codicote
9. Hertford, Ware & surrounding areas including Dane End, Hunsdon, Widford & Hertford Heath
10. Tring & surrounding areas including Wigginton, Long Marston & Aldbury
11. Berkhamsted
12. Hemel Hempstead, Kings Langley & surrounding areas including Bovingdon
13. St Albans, London Colney & surrounding areas including Shenley & Colney Heath
14. Hatfield & surrounding areas including Brookmans Park
15. Broxbourne, Cheshunt, Cuffley, Hoddesdon & Waltham Cross plus Nazeing
16. Chipperfield, Chorleywood, Croxley Green, Maple Cross, Rickmansworth, Sarratt & surrounding areas
17. Watford, Abbots Langley, Carpenders Park & South Oxhey including Bedmond plus Northwood & Pinner
18. Bushey & Radlett
19. Borehamwood & Elstree
20. Potters Bar & surrounding areas

## 6. Proposal for Consultation

- 6.1 The current Relevant Areas are well established, meet the set of principles established three years ago and serve the purpose of providing reasonable geographical areas upon which to consult.
- 6.2 The Relevant Areas are designed to link with the Priority Areas as far as possible. For 2007 admissions, Pinner and Northwood were removed from the Priority Area for Watford. It is therefore proposed that the parishes of Northwood and Pinner are also removed from the Watford Relevant Area.

6.3 With effect for the admissions year 2008/2009, it is proposed to:

a) Maintain the status quo of 20 Relevant Areas as set out in 5.4.

b) Remove the parishes of Northwood and Pinner from Relevant Area 17.

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1 This report has no financial implications.

*Background material referred to by the author while compiling this report.*

None