

MINUTES

County Admissions Forum

Monday 12 March 2007
6.30 p.m., Committee Room B, County Hall

Admission Forum Members		Officers Attending:	
Mrs Pat Cherry	Present	Mr Lao Cooper	Apologies
Mrs Terrie Clifft	Present	Mrs Julia Findley	Apologies
Mr Brian Coulshed	Present	Mr John Harris	Present
Dr Steven Burton	Present	Mr Stephen Hozier	Present
Cllr Robert Gordon	Present	Ms Jayne Howard	Apologies
Cllr Tanis Kent	Present	Mrs Jill Jackson	Present
Cllr Aislinn Lee	Present	Mr Lindsay Martin	Apologies
Cllr David Lloyd	Present	Mrs Sarah Vize	Present
Mrs Maureen Roe	Present	Ms Alison Delyth	Present
Mr Alan Scouller	Present	Jim Dalton	Present
Cllr Richard Smith	Present	Justin Donovan	Present
Mrs Brenda Southorn	Present	Others Attending	
Cllr Richard Thake	Present	Dr Edgar Anderson (Governor, Rickmansworth School)	Present
Mr Rodney Tucker	Present		
Mrs Jane Winterbone	Present		

ITEM	
1.	<p>Apologies for Absence:</p> <p>Jayne Howard, Julia Findley, Lindsay Martin, Lao Cooper</p>
2.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 13th July 2006</p> <p>i) The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.</p> <p>ii) Matters arising – 2.20 of the new code provided with regard to siblings</p>

	<p>and partially selective schools. Admission Forum may want to monitor across the county and include this in the annual report, which it is required to publish.</p> <p>Attention was drawn to Appendix 1 – relevant subjects for aptitude testing arrangements. The paper finishes with recommendations, including the establishment of a working group to consider how greater commonality of tests could be achieved.</p> <p>Question regarding ‘area’ – is it the ‘relevant’ area regarding the ‘holiday’. It was confirmed that ‘area’ meant relevant area.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>School Place Planning – Verbal Report by Paul Wray</p> <p>Potters Bar & Hoddesdon/Wormley Reviews -</p> <p>Ryelands Primary has been placed in special measures and therefore the closure date has been brought forward to summer 2007.</p> <p>The proposed closure of Sunny Bank Primary was referred to the OSA who ruled in the county’s favour. The closure of the school has been delayed until summer 2008 to allow some building work to take place at Cranbourne School</p> <p>Ley Park Primary will be closed in August 2008 and Wormley School will move to the Ley Park site in September 2008.</p> <p>Hemel Hempstead Review –</p> <p>There are 4 proposals - Statutory notices were published in early February for the NE, NW and East areas of Hemel Hempstead and these proposals will be considered by the SOC on 29 March 2007. A further notice with regard to Pixies Hill Primary and Chaulden Infants and Junior schools was published in late February. This proposal will be considered by SOC in May 2007.</p> <p>Hatfield Review –</p> <p>Statutory notices have been issued. Proposals will be taken to the SOC on 29 March.</p> <p>Hitchin/Letchworth Review –</p> <p>Two stakeholder meetings have taken place and proposals are currently being formulated.</p> <p>BSF and Stevenage Secondary Review –</p> <p>BSF funding has been secured for 2008 onwards.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Admissions 2007 – Verbal Update Report</p> <p>Secondary Transfer</p> <p>Overall satisfaction is up with 93% of children allocated a ranked school, compared with 92.5% last year.</p> <p>NRAs have fallen to 5.7% across the county as a whole, although this figure varies area by area from a low of 1.3% to a high of 13%.</p>

	<p>It was reported that a software problem had occurred during the allocation of places to single sex schools but that the county was working with the schools involved to rectify the impact. A discussion followed on the difficulties faced by Children, Schools and Families in reaching allocation day.</p> <p>It was stated that an independent report was being prepared for John Harris to ensure that these software issues do not occur again.</p>
5.	<p>Admission Arrangements 2008 – Community and Voluntary-Controlled Schools</p> <p>This paper was provided for information and as an update. The arrangements will be determined by the County Council at its meeting on Tuesday 27 March</p> <p>Note 3.9 – The Forum noted the update since the last meeting concerning the proposed Published Admission Numbers</p> <p>The Forum recommended the sibling definition for secondary arrangements be adopted according to Option 2, and recommended revised wording, deleting the phrase referring to years 12 and 13.</p>
6.	<p>Admission Arrangements 2008 – Voluntary-Aided and Foundation Schools</p> <p>Appendix 1 which draws attention to the main points for consideration, and highlighted examples of good practice. Those statements with asterisks need addressing, and the Forum agreed to circulate to all schools before the determination deadline.</p> <p>As part of the plan of action to achieve compliant arrangements discussion followed during which it was agreed to involve the diocesan representatives. The diocesan representatives greatly welcomed the county’s co-operative working methods, particularly being copied into letters from area managers.</p> <p>It was recommended that a further meeting be organised shortly after the deadline date for determinations.</p> <p>Hockerill rules are included following an objection from a neighbouring school. The Forum was asked to provide feedback on Hockerill’s rules.</p> <p>It was agreed to give the greatest clarity around statemented children. Criteria should include the phrase ‘statement that names the school’</p> <p>Defintion of terms – faith schools do receive guidance from the diocese on the definition of categories and terms used within admissions criteria.</p> <p>2.71b – it was agreed that a working party will be set up to consider this section and therefore the Forum suggested that it did not challenge on this item during the current objection window.</p> <p>Gender issue in relation to SIFs was discussed. The Forum agreed to strike it from the list.</p> <p>Discussions followed regarding the character and ethos of faith schools and the issues that can arise for parents.</p> <p>After considering Appendix 4 regarding Hockerill Anglo-European College, it was agreed that the Secretary of the Forum would write formally to the school prior to the next meeting.</p>

	<p>It was stated that the Forum should be robust in its approach regarding LAC and boarding places.</p>
7.	<p>Co-ordination beyond National Offer Day</p> <p>Co-ordination beyond the 1st March is now a requirement for secondary transfer only.</p> <p>A letter has been sent to all schools asking for feedback on suggested ways of co-ordinating arrangements. Subject to any feedback received from schools this arrangement would be included in the Scheme of Co-ordination. Minutes of a meeting attended by the school representatives prior to the Forum meeting will be circulated with the full minutes.</p>
8.	<p>Appeals Figures - 2006</p> <p>The Forum requested reasons for the volume of exclusion appeals and why a significant number are being upheld. The Forum asked whether it could have some general information on the decision-making process behind the upheld appeals.</p>
9.	<p>Date of Next Meetings:</p> <p>Tuesday 8 May 2007 at 18.30 – Committee Room B Thursday 14th June 2007 at 18.30 – Committee Room B Wednesday 10 October 2007 at 18.30 – Committee Room B</p>