

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

TUESDAY 26 MARCH 2002 AT 10.30 AM.

Agenda Item No.

8

**REVIEW OF ADMISSION RULES FOR COMMUNITY SECONDARY SCHOOLS
2003/04**

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. The informal consultation in November and December was based on separate Priority Areas for Harpenden (including Wheathampstead) and St Albans (including Sandridge) and Borehamwood. The results of the consultation indicated that there was concern about the appropriateness of including Borehamwood in the St Albans Priority Area and about the need to recognise traditional links between Wheathampstead and Sandringham school.
2. Statutory consultation in February and March was based on a model that included the parish of Sandridge (and therefore Sandringham school) in the same Priority Area as Harpenden and outlying villages. This has caused a great deal of concern in St Albans and with Sandringham school itself. This is because, whilst recognising the traditional links with Wheathampstead, Sandringham sees itself very much as a St Albans school serving the north of the City including the Marshalswick, Birchwood and New Greens areas.
3. Further modelling work has been undertaken in order to address concerns raised in the statutory consultation process. This suggests that the best fit with previous patterns of applications is obtained by:-
 - removing the 90% “cap” on the proposed rule 6. This would have the effect of freeing up more places for children living in villages at their nearest school.
 - creating a single Priority Area comprising St Albans , Harpenden, Wheathampstead and the villages.
4. This new model, based on a combined St Albans/Harpenden Priority Area, has been run using all the applications data for 2001/02 in combination with the proposed rules and other Priority Areas for both co-educational and single-sex schools. The table overleaf shows where the number of write-ins in a community has changed. It will be noted that the impact of removing the limit on allocation of places under Rule 6 has only a small impact across the county. The overall number of write-ins was 12 fewer than the model on which the statutory consultation was based.

Community	Decrease in Write-ins	Increase in Write-ins	Number in cohort
Anstey, Pelhams etc	1	-	206
Benington, Walkern etc	3	-	116
Berkhamsted and villages	3	-	385
Bushey	1	-	181
Cheshunt	2	-	510
Cuffley	11	-	58
Hemel Hempstead	-	7	1169
Hitchin	-	1	389
Kimpton and Whitwell	1	-	75
Letchworth	-	1	387
Redbourn	1	-	43
Rickmansworth	1	-	199
Shenley	1	-	46
St Albans	1	-	696
Stevenage	-	1	1190
Waltham Cross	1	-	171
Ware and villages	-	2	344
Watford	-	1	1244
Welwyn Garden City	-	2	569
TOTAL	27	15	7978

Note :-

This modelling is based upon a statistical analysis of actual applications for admission in September 2001. This data was the most up to date available at the start of the modelling process and has been used throughout to give consistency.

5. Comparing this new model to the original allocations in 2001, the overall satisfaction rate (% of parents securing a ranked school) moved from 91.7% to 91.6% using the proposed new rules on the original applications.
6. In view of the concerns raised in the statutory consultation, it is necessary to look in particular detail at the impact of the proposed changes on St Albans, Harpenden Wheathampstead and the villages. The new model provides a better chance than currently for those in Wheathampstead to secure a place at Sandringham, whilst avoiding the perceived split between Sandringham school and the other areas that it serves in St Albans.
7. The changes in rules and the introduction of clearly identified Priority Areas will inevitably have an impact upon the rankings that parents make in the future. The table overleaf shows :-
 - the original allocations in 2001;
 - the effect of the proposed rules using 2001 applications, and
 - the anticipated impact of changed patterns of application based on the proposed rules.

Community	No. of applications	Original allocations (2001 data)		Combined Harpenden, Sandridge, Wheathampstead and St Albans Priority Area (100% on Rule 6)		Combined Harpenden, Sandridge, Wheathampstead and St Albans Priority Area (Extrapolated)	
		No. of write ins	% of write ins	No. of write ins	% of write ins	No. of write ins	% of write ins
Harpenden	391	1	0.25	2	0.5	2	0.5
Kimpton & Whitwell	75	9	12	15	20	12	16.0
Markyate & Flamstead	56	30	53.6	12	21.4	12	21.4
Redbourn	43	16	37.2	10	23.3	7	16.2
St Albans	696	32	5.0	28	4	0	0
Wheathampstead	70	5	7.1	25	35.7	8	11.43

Please note that the extrapolated column assumes that :-

- (i) Revised information is available to enable parents to identify which schools they have the greatest chance of qualifying for.
 - (ii) Families in Wheathampstead apply for their nearest school and two other St Albans schools
 - (iii) There is an increase in applications to Verulam from Harpenden, Kimpton and Redbourn due to their inclusion in its Priority Area.
 - (iv) There is an increase in applications to St Albans Girls from Kimpton due to its inclusion in its Priority Area.
 - (v) Families in St Albans rank their nearest school as well as 2 other schools in St Albans.
8. There are a number of other factors, which could potentially improve the situation shown in the table above. These are :-
- (i) Further places in Harpenden schools through additional “basic need” places of 6 per year group.
 - (ii) A year on year decrease in the number of siblings attending schools in Harpenden and St Albans from outside the Priority Area as a result of the proposed rules.
 - (iii) A continuing decrease in the number of children in Harpenden schools from outside Hertfordshire as a result of the current rules in 2003 which will be carried forward by the new rules from 2004.
 - (iv) In 2001 there was an unusually high number of siblings admitted to both Sir John Lawes and Sandringham schools which reduced available places at both schools to children living in Wheathampstead.