

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
SCHOOL ADMISSIONS FORUM
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2011 FROM 7.00PM TO 9.15PM**

Present:-

Local Education Authority Representatives:

Beth Rowland

Diocesan Representatives

David Babb

Representatives from the Local Community

Major Rick Henderson - *Arborfield Garrison*

Parent Representative

Phiala Mehring

Schools Representatives

Peter Lewis – *The Bulmershe School*

Hilary Winter – *The Piggott CE Aided Secondary School*

Jean Bateman – *Grazeley CE Aided Primary School*

Elaine Stewart – *Aldryngton School*

Also present:-

Rachael Wardell – Head of Early Intervention and Community Support

David Armstrong - Policy and Schools Access Officer

Piers Brunning - Service Manager Children's Services Infrastructure Development

Sue Riddick - Lead Admissions Officer

Charles Yankiah – Senior Democratic Services Officer

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That David Babb be elected as Chairman of the School Admissions Forum for the remainder of the 2011/12 academic year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Hilary Winter be appointed as Vice Chairman of the School Admissions Forum for the remainder of the 2011/12 academic year.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 14 June 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillor Pauline Helliard Symons and Patricia Cuss, Early Years Forum.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a) Beth Rowland declared a personal interest in Minute No.7 – Consultation on Local Authority Proposed Admission Schemes and Arrangements for 2013/14 as a Governor of Highwood and Southlake Primary Schools.

- b) Rachael Wardell declared a personal interest in Minute No. 6 as the parent of a child due to start in a local Borough School in the June 2012 school term intake.
- c) Phiala Mehring declared a personal interest in Minute No. 6 as a Governor of The Forest School.

6. SEPTEMBER 2011 ADMISSIONS UPDATE

Sue Riddick provided the following update on the September 2011 admissions and allocations -

- Extra places were created at 3 Schools – Hawkedon Primary, Winnersh Primary and Shinfield Infant Schools.
- There are currently 55 primary school places left in the Borough, 32 of which are in Woodley. There have been 109 late applications, most of which were as a result of families moving.
- There are 136 Year 7 Secondary places available at The Bulmershe, The Emmbrook, The Forest and St Crispin's Schools.

In-year information as follows:

	Type of application	Number 1/6/11 to 23/11/11 to start 2011/12 academic year	Total number for academic year 2010/11
Primary	Moves to Borough	243	486
	Transfers	200	452
	Moves out of Borough	43	44
	Applications from other LAs	90	146
	Junior transfer – primary preferences	21	
	Totals	597	1128
Secondary	Moves to Borough	89	179
	Transfers	77	171
	Applications from other LAs	86	107
	Moves out of Borough	12	14
	13+	6	
	Totals	270	471

Phiala Mehring enquired if the increase in numbers was an ongoing trend.

Sue Riddick informed the Forum that the team has noticed the increase in numbers year on year and would be monitoring the trend in the future.

Peter Lewis commented that it is not only an increase in numbers that the schools are having to deal with but also the challenges and pressures that comes with those numbers including the students whose first language is not English and it is left for the schools to provide the support and attention for those students.

Rachael Wardell informed the Forum that whilst it is appreciated that the increase in numbers comes with some challenges for schools, that consideration of English as an additional language is not relevant in terms of the allocation of a school place.

Piers Brunning informed the Forum that with regard to the adjudication made for The Bulmershe and Maiden Erlegh Schools, the admission arrangements were largely unchanged with the exception of the tie-breaker which the Secretary of State has changed to radial distance. He also stated that the view of the Adjudicator was that all the children would be within walking distance of both schools. The Authority could have challenged this decision through Judicial Review. This would have been time consuming and expensive and there was no guarantee that the Authority would have been successful. It was also considered that this would also create uncertainty for those parents applying for secondary schools.

Peter Lewis commented that families living south of the designated area would be unlikely to get into Maiden Erlegh School and that there were issues with transport, bus routes and length of journeys. He also stated that there may be an impact on numbers for September 2012 as a result of these issues.

Rachael Wardell informed the Forum that regarding the objections received in relation to the consultation that the Adjudicator's response in relation to all those objections was that the process and consultation exercise was carried out properly and was communicated well to residents.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted by the Forum.

7. CONSULTATION ON LOCAL AUTHORITY PROPOSED ADMISSION SCHEMES AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2013/14

Sue Riddick presented the proposed consultation on the 2013/14 admission arrangements for voluntary controlled and community schools and the co-ordinated admissions schemes set out on Agenda pages 6 to 74 and informed the Forum that it would welcome the Forum's views prior to consultation being extended to schools, admission authorities within the relevant area, adjoining local authorities, the Diocesan authorities, parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen and any other persons within the relevant area who in the opinion of the admissions authority have an interest in the proposed arrangements. The local authority's consultation on the proposed admission arrangements for 2013/14 must take place for a minimum eight week period which will be concluded by 01 March 2012. She then invited the views of the Forum in relation to the following sections –

SECTION 1 – ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS

1.1 – Admission Numbers

It is proposed to obtain views on the Published Admission Numbers (PAN) for all community and voluntary controlled schools including any proposals to increase admission numbers where it is known at this stage. It is also proposed to make changes to the following PANs:

- Bearwood Primary School decrease from 41 to 40*
- The Colleton Primary School increase from 35 to 60**
- Winnersh Primary School increase from 60 to 90**
- Hawkedon Primary School increase from 70 to 90**

*This decrease in number is proposed to regularise the admission number for this school to enable the school to meet infant class size legislation. There are proposals to move and increase to a two form entry school, should the development of Hatch Farm Dairy proceed.

****In consulting on an increase in admission numbers for these schools, it should be clear that the proposals are associated with schemes for school expansion which require separate statutory determination. These expansions are subject to separate consultation in parallel with the admissions consultation. If the school expansions are not approved prior to the determination of the local authority's admission arrangements; the original admission number will be determined, on condition that this may be amended at a later stage (as a permitted variation) to implement the school expansion proposals, if approved.**

The Chairman commented that in the admission numbers the net capacity is mentioned, however, in the Draft Code it isn't.

Sue Riddick informed the Forum that that there was no requirement in the Draft Code to consult in relation to any increases in admission numbers, only if there was a proposal to reduce admission numbers.

There were no objections from the Forum in relation to 1.1 admission numbers.

1.2 Oversubscription Criteria

Criterion A

The following is the proposed supplementary information required to support applications made under this criterion.

Applications received under Criterion A must be made by the person with parental responsibility for the child (e.g. the child's social worker, acting on behalf of the local authority for a looked after child) and will need to be supported by the following official documentation, as applicable:

- confirmation by the home local authority that the child is looked after or
- confirmation by the local authority that last looked after the child confirming that the child was looked after immediately prior to the issuing of one of the following orders:
 - (i) adoption order
 - (ii) residence order
 - (iii) special guardianship order

The Chairman commented that it would be helpful to parents for this information to be clearly worded for parents to understand what was required.

Rachael Wardell commented that it is for the parents of an adopted child to decide whether they wish to apply under this criterion and to provide evidence to support.

There were no objections from the Forum in relation to 1.2 Oversubscription Criteria, Criterion A.

Criterion B

The following is the proposed wording -

When submitting applications under category B (serious medical, physical or psychological grounds for admission) the application cannot be considered if the parents do not declare that they are applying under this criterion and they do not provide written independent professional evidence. All supporting documentation must be received by 15 January for consideration prior to the main allocation of places. An admissions panel will consider the supporting evidence provided and will advise the applicant of its decision; the panel's decision is final. Any evidence received by the school admissions team after 15 January, will if agreed by panel, affect the position on the waiting list.

The Chairman commented that in a lot of admission cases it is often the parents who have the physical conditions and it is not the child and they use the reasons that it restricts them from either taking the children to school or are looking for a closer school. The Chairman enquired if this will also be taken into account.

Sue Riddick informed the Forum that the family needs and the physical condition of the parent is not included in the Draft Code and has been removed from the local authority's wording but could, if the Forum wished to be included. There was no clear indication that this was to be included.

There were no objections from the Forum in relation to 1.2 Oversubscription Criteria, Criterion B.

Criterion C

The amended clause would read:

'Where a parent previously expressed a preference for their designated area school for an older child but the local authority, unable to meet this preference, allocated a place at a lower ranked (non-designated area) preferred school or the closest available school with places; the parent may have a preference for the child's younger sibling to attend the same school. In such cases, the allocated school may be regarded as if it were the designated area school for subsequent siblings and would be treated as meeting criterion C (sibling resident within designated area). Parents must notify the school admissions team at the time of application that they consider this exception applies. Where there is an application for the actual designated area school(s), designated area status would still be applied.'

There were no objections from the Forum in relation to 1.2 Oversubscription Criteria, Criterion C.

Criterion F

It is proposed that the single sex criterion (Criterion G) is removed applicable to The Forest School.

This criterion has limited value in real terms. The increase in the size of the designated area means that more children will qualify for entry under higher criteria and inclusion of this criterion can disadvantage families who do not indicate that they prefer single sex education and are therefore considered in the lower criterion.

It would be fairer and more transparent to apply the final criterion (any other applicants) to those living outside the designated area or having siblings at the school and allocate on the basis of radial distance to the school.

Phiala Mehring commented that the figures and statistics should not matter in this case and that parents should be given the choice. It needs to be looked at from the parents' point of view in terms of making it simplistic for the parents to understand. She also stated that it will also be confusing again for parents seeing that the Council has only just recently made some changes to the admissions criteria and to change it again when the parents have not yet become accustomed to those recent changes does not seem like a prudent decision.

Hilary Winter commented that this considered last year, so why is it being re-visited again this year.

David Babb enquired as to how the Council considered single sex for applications out of authority as those authorities' application forms may not provide a tick box for this information.

David Armstrong informed the Forum that there is a lower demand nationally for single sex places for boys in comparison to single sex places for girls. Equality duties are not breached and discrimination does not occur where broadly similar provision is made for boys' and girls' single sex education. He also commented that the criterion does not affect parents' preference for single sex education, but the concern is more that it may disadvantage parents who don't understand the system very well.

Piers Brunning advised the Forum that the single sex places at the moment are more likely to be offered to Wokingham residents.

Sue Riddick informed the Forum that it is all about perception and that the Council do not want to be perceived as being unfair in its oversubscription criteria as this criterion is about the ability of a parent to understand and tick a box rather than have a preference for single sex education especially as higher preferences may be for co-educational schools. In order that the authority does not apply conditionality to the application, if the parent indicates single sex and no higher criterion applies; then that is the criterion applied to the application.

There were mixed views from the Forum in relation to 1.2 Oversubscription Criteria, Criterion F. The Forum suggested that they would leave it up to the Authority to decide based upon the views given by members of the Forum.

1.3 Designated Areas

The following specific changes are being put forward for consideration:

(a) Highwood and Beechwood Primary Schools

To create a shared designated area to accommodate any children living in the area identified in Annexe A (as submitted) which currently has no school designated area allocated to it. Both schools have been invited to comment on this proposal and are in agreement.

Peter Lewis enquired about how this would affect secondary schools and their feeder primary schools e.g. The Bulmershe and Waingels College.

Sue Riddick informed the Forum that the feeder schools criterion had been removed in the previous admissions consultation, so it would no longer apply. She also informed the Forum that the Headteachers and Chair of Governors for both schools had initially supported the proposed change.

Elaine Stewart enquired as to why this was being proposed.

Sue Riddick informed the Forum that the area identified does not have a designated area for school admissions.

(b) The Colleton Primary and Polehampton CE Infant and Junior Schools

Allied with the proposal to increase the PAN for The Colleton School subject to the proposed enlargement of the school; it is proposed to remove the shared designated area on the left-hand side of the Hurst Road as the school will be better able to accommodate

pupils living in this area. The Colleton Primary has agreed to this proposal. Polehampton CE Infant and Junior Schools are yet to comment.

(c) The Colleton Primary and St Nicholas CE Primary Schools

Allied with the proposal to increase the PAN for The Colleton Primary School subject to the proposed enlargement of the school; it is proposed to increase the school's designated area to the river boundary (no properties) and incorporate the few properties just outside of its current southern boundary.

Applicable to (b) and (c). In consulting on an amendment to the designated area of The Colleton Primary School, it should be clear that the proposals are associated with schemes for school expansion which require separate statutory determination. These expansions are subject to separate consultation in parallel with the admissions consultation. If the school expansions are not approved prior to the determination of the local authority's admission arrangements; the original designated area will be determined, on condition that this may be amended at a later stage (as a permitted variation) to implement the school expansion proposals, if approved.

The Colleton Primary School has agreed to this proposal. The governing body at St Nicholas CE Primary School would like more time to discuss this prior to taking a view due to the short time in receiving this proposal.

There were no objections from the Forum in relation to 1.3 Designated Areas, (a) Highwood and Beechwood Primary Schools, (b) The Colleton Primary and Polehampton CE Infant and Junior Schools and (c) The Colleton Primary and St Nicholas CE Primary Schools.

(d) Farley Hill Primary School

To re-designate the area shared with The Coombes CE Primary School as a second priority designated area. This means that the area which is currently Farley Hill's single designated area will be considered as the first priority designated area and places will be allocated to children living in the first designated area based on radial distance before allocating to those children living in the second designated area based on radial distance. This proposal is to address potential disadvantage to rural communities such as Swallowfield that live further away on radial distance than the shared area, which has access to another local school. A clause will be written into the oversubscription criteria D to alert parents that this arrangement would apply. Criteria C (sibling within designated area) would remain unaffected as a sibling living in either priority area would qualify as sibling living within designated area. The proposed clause will read:

'The designated area for Farley Hill Primary School has been revised to include a first priority designated area (currently the single designated area) and a second priority designated area (the shared designated area with The Coombes CE Primary School). Applicants from the first priority area will be allocated places before those living in the second priority area, the tiebreaker will be applied to each priority area to determine who is allocated a place should there be more applicants than places in either or both priority areas.'

Major Rick Henderson referred to a letter submitted to the Forum for this meeting by Col. D A McAvoy, Commander of the Arborfield Garrison objecting to the proposal. Major Rick Henderson highlighted that the views of the servicemen and women at the Garrison were that they would be directly affected and that servicemen and women have no choice as to

where they live and if what is being proposed is agreed their children would be disadvantaged. He also stated that the Government recently implemented the Armed Forces Community Covenant in recognition of the unswerving loyalty and commitment displayed by services personnel and their families and that the proposal did not appear to be in the spirit of such commitment. Major Henderson also informed the Forum that the future of the Garrison remained unclear, however, by 2016 the Garrison were of the view that the Army presence will cease to exist which would then qualify the admissions policy to allow Army families within the Garrison access to Farley Hill School via the current shared designated area boundaries whilst the Army retains a presence there.

Sue Riddick informed the Forum of the following allocation figures to the Farley Hill Primary School up to April 2011 –

- 30th child allocated lived in designated area 0.833 miles from the school
- This left 13 children living in the designated area on the waiting list (10 shared area ranging from 0.909 to 1.364 miles from the school and 3 living in Riseley and Swallowfield ranging from 1.482 to 2.211 miles from the school).
- Of the allocated children 14 children were considered DA/sibs, 9 of whom came from the shared area & 5 from the single area (last distance 2.958 miles)
- Of the 16 designated area applicants allocated – 9 came from the shared area & 7 came from the single area

Beth Rowland commented that she understood the principle behind the proposal, however, she thought that it would disadvantage the servicemen and women of the Garrison and to an extent would be considered discrimination.

Rachael Wardell informed the Forum that the proposal reduces the disadvantage for the servicemen and women of the Garrison when compared to other areas of the Borough and this was not discrimination but an opportunity to improve the fairness of the process. She also stated that the area which is currently Farley Hill's single designated area will be considered as the first priority designated area and places will be allocated to children living in the first designated area based on radial distance before allocating to those children living in the second designated area based on radial distance.

Phiala Mehring commented that she did not think it was a simple process for parents to understand and asked that the wording be looked at, if and when it goes out to consultation.

The Forum objected to 1.3 Designated Areas, (d) Farley Hill Primary School.

SECTION 2 - CO-ORDINATED SCHEMES FOR PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS 2013/2014

Sue Riddick drew the attention of the Forum to the "national offer day" on 2 March 2013 and also the fact that the Authority was implementing the new scheme a year ahead of when it is being proposed to be implemented in 2014.

The Forum noted the operational dates and draft timetable for Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes 2013/14

2.1 In-Year Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme

It is clear that co-ordination with other local authorities has been removed and that own admission authority schools can handle their own applications albeit with a statutory requirement to keep the local authority informed on the receipt of an application and its

outcome. A decision is required on how in-year admissions are to be treated within the Wokingham Borough, options include:

- a) co-ordinate in-year admissions for community and voluntary controlled schools together with own admission authority schools (where there is an agreement to do so). This would be a similar scheme to that which was in place before the changes were made to the previous Code.
- b) co-ordinate in-year admissions for community and voluntary controlled schools only and provide the over-seeing role required by the draft Code for own admission authority schools
- c) delegate in-year admissions to community and voluntary controlled schools together with waiting lists and responsibility to present the school's own appeals and provide the over-seeing role required by the draft Code for all schools in its area, providing model letters to ensure parents right to appeal and referral mechanism for parents who have not been successful in obtaining a place at any preferred school.

Consideration within any scheme should include:

- a mechanism for parents to be referred to the local authority should they be unsuccessful in gaining a school place
- how the Fair Access Protocol can be implemented
- recognition that a parent could hold more than one school place and how that can be mitigated against
- the requirement for a parent to make a formal application and not an informal expression of interest in order that a parent's right to appeal, if refused, is given

Hilary Winter indicated that The Piggott CE School is likely to handle its own in-year applications.

The Chairman, advised that the Diocese had advised its own admission authority schools to make the necessary changes to their admission policies to handle its own in-year applications.

Jean Bateman indicated that Grazeley Parochial CE Aided Primary School would be happy to consider being part of a locally agreed co-ordinated scheme as this was easier for parents and they were provided with consistent advice.

Elaine Stewart indicated that a co-ordinated scheme would be more beneficial to parents.

The Forum did not give a definitive view in relation to the preferred option on how in-year admissions are to be treated within the Wokingham Borough

2.2 Number of preferences

It is proposed to increase the maximum number of preferences for in-year applications to four to mirror those for the transfer groups subject to the views on in-year. Applicable to options (a) and (b) above (2.1).

There were no objections from the Forum in relation to number of preferences.

2.3 Junior Transfer

The draft Code states that composite prospectuses must be published online with hard copies available for those who do not have access to the internet. It is proposed not to

issue hard copies of the Parent's Guide to those parents whose children will be transferring to junior school. For the majority; parents will wish to apply to the linked junior school and may not require a full guide to assist them in the completion of their application forms.

It is proposed to issue parents with an application form; school information; the timetable and procedure map together with a letter explaining where the guide, which will include the oversubscription criteria, can be viewed or downloaded and contact details should parents require a hard copy. Consideration will be given in subsequent years to extending this to the other transfer groups.

There were no objections from the Forum in relation to junior transfer.

2.4 Residential requirements

It is proposed to amend the residential requirements to show that evidence of a move can be provided by 15 January (applicable to all co-ordinated admissions schemes) and to remove reference to child benefit payments which may no longer be applicable to a number of families.

Phiala Mehring commented that it would be difficult for some parents moving into the area if they have not yet "closed" on their properties or there is a delay with the "exchange" or even the development. She also stated that in light of proposed new developments in the Borough this may prove to be quite important. Phiala Mehring proposed that the word "and" be deleted in the highlighted sentence below to make it easier for parents and families moving into the area to produce the appropriate paperwork.

"It is important to declare if there is to be a change of address prior to the child starting school. If the applicant already own a property which is in the process of being sold, we are able to accept the address of the new property only on submission of the appropriate evidence in support e.g. **exchange of contracts letter on both the new property and disposal of their current property.** The latest date for submission of evidence to support a move is 15 January 2013. If the move takes place later or evidence is submitted later, the local authority will only be able to consider this information after the initial allocation of places has taken place and treat the new address for waiting list purposes."

The Forum supported the proposal by Phiala Mehring, however, there were no other objections to residential requirements.

2.5 Change of Preference

The draft code states 'any parent can apply for a place for their child at any time to any school'. The current section relating to changes of preference will be removed from the schemes subject to a further check which will be made of the draft regulations to see if there are any qualifications to this statement when they are issued.

The Forum noted this proposed change.

2.6 Multiple birth or children with birth dates in the same academic year in the family policy

The draft Code indicates that 'twins and children from multiple births when one of the siblings is the 30th child admitted' will be considered as an exception to infant class size legislation for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. It does not include children with birth dates in the same

academic year in the family; therefore subject to further checking of the draft regulations when issued, it is proposed to amend the wording.

The Forum noted this proposed change.

2.7 Waiting Lists

It is proposed not to hold waiting lists beyond 30 September for year 10. It is considered that encouragement to move schools during year 10 and 11 is not in a young person's best interest. Currently if a place can be allocated from the waiting list; there is no guarantee that courses can be offered or matched and where courses can be matched, schools complete modules at different times to one another.

There were no objections from the Forum in relation to waiting lists.

SECTION 3 - NURSERY/FOUNDATION STAGE ADMISSION POLICY

Sue Riddick informed the Forum that a draft revised policy will be produced but discussions are still taking place with primary Headteachers of community or voluntary controlled nurseries or foundation stage units, primarily around the timing of applications and offers to reflect the impact of the single point of entry. The draft policy will be published alongside the policies for admission to statutory education.

The Forum noted the information.

SECTION 4 - FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOLS

Sue Riddick informed the Forum that Fair Access Protocols were originally agreed by the Forum in 2006. It is proposed that these are reviewed in consultation with schools, and brought back to the Forum for consideration.

The Forum noted the information.

SECTION 5 – SIXTH FORM ADMISSIONS MODEL POLICY

Sue Riddick informed the Forum that the current policy has been issued to community school secondary Headteachers for comment or amendment. No changes to the policy are proposed (other than those prescribed in the draft Code) but the policy will be reissued for consultation and publication alongside the admissions arrangements and schemes.

The Forum noted the information.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) the proposed changes and the objections of the Forum be noted; and
- 2) the Consultation on 2013/2014 Admission Arrangements for Voluntary controlled and Community Schools and Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes be noted by the Forum.

105. FREE SCHOOLS

Sue Riddick presented the Free Schools Report set out in the Agenda pages 75 to 79 and informed the Forum that the Secretary of State had given approval –

- following an assessment and interview by the West of Wokingham Parent Group in collaboration with CfBT to establish a 560 place Secondary School to serve the west of Wokingham. It was an independent application to open Oakbank School on the former Ryeish Green School site.

- to proceed to the next stage to establish Reading University Technical College (RUTC) on the basis that it should be a school for 14-19 year olds. However, representation is being made for the school to be open to younger Keystage 3 pupils aged 11 to 13, as well as to 14 to 19 year olds. The school will be situated on the Crescent Road site and the proposal was led by Oxford and Cherwell Valley College and co-sponsored by Reading BC and Wokingham BC to meet the need for additional places in Reading.

Rachel Wardell commended Sue Riddick for the collaborative work undertaken with the Oakbank School to assist them with the processes and relevant forms relating to School Admissions.

Peter Lewis commented that the RUTC would have an impact on Wokingham schools and that some joint planning between Reading and Wokingham should take place across the boundaries to ensure that something is done about the existing vacancies.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) the Forum thank Sue Riddick for working together with the Oakbank School in providing information and guidance relating to School Admissions; and
- 2) the Forum noted the Free Schools report.

106. FUTURE ROLE OF THE ADMISSIONS FORUM

David Armstrong presented the Future Role of the Admissions Forum Report set out in the Agenda pages 80 to 82 and informed the Forum that the Education Act, currently before Parliament, abolishes the statutory requirement to have an Admissions Forum, although it is unclear as to when this change will take effect. He also stated that there is no reference to Admission Forums within the draft School Admissions Code, which together with new admissions regulations is due to be laid before Parliament in December 2011. He requested that the the Forum consider and give its view on what future arrangements, if any, the Local Authority might make to deal with matters currently within the Forum's remit from the following options –

- a) To retain the Admissions Forum, on a non-statutory basis.
- b) To re-establish the Admissions Forum, but covering broader matters affecting access to school places.
- c) Not to replace the Forum, allocating residual purposes to alternative existing bodies.

Beth Rowland commented that the Admissions Forum is the only forum where a wider cross section of representation was present including School Governors, Parent Representatives, Headteachers, LA Representatives and Diocese Representatives. In comparison to the Headteachers Forum where there were only Headteachers and the Overview and Scrutiny Panels which again was limited in its membership. She also stated she preferred the Forum in its current format, but that those appointed to the Forum should attend and make the appropriate representation that is expected of them.

Phiala Mehring commented that she preferred the current Forum (option b) and the work and consultation that it engages in with its members and representatives.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) the Forum noted the future role of the Admissions Forum report;

- 2) the views of the Forum be noted and taken into account when the Local Authority makes its decision on the future of the Forum.

107. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting will be held on 22 February 2012 at 7.00pm in the Civic Offices, Shute End.

These are the Minutes of a meeting of the School Admissions Forum

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