

ADMISSIONS FORUM

Meeting: 9 October 2002

At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Paul Porgess (Chair) in the chair)
Councillor Paul Carter)
Councillor Jenny Humphries) (Representing Stockport MBC)
Councillor Mary Loftus)
Councillor Jim Siddelley)

Mrs M Regan (Representing Shrewsbury Diocese)
Mr W Montgomery (Representing Secondary Head Teachers' Consortium)
Mrs M Brown (Representing Primary Teachers' Consortium)
Helen Hewitt - Assistant Director for Education Services
Chris Keeble - Education Officer (Pupils)
Steve Worthington - Committee Manager

1. MINUTES

The minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 21 February 2002 were approved as a correct record.

2. NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

The Director for Education submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which detailed the implications of the new regulations contained within the Education Act 2002. The regulations were published in draft form on 16 September 2002 and were the subject of consultation which would end on 11 October 2002. The regulations would prescribe precisely how and when admission authorities must act, and major changes of immediate significance were detailed within the report. Specific consideration was given to the following key issues:

- The abolition of the Standard Number and its replacement by the indicated admission number; and
- Co-ordinated admission arrangements and the additional resource implications of this together with:-
 - (i) The repeal of Section 91 Agreements;
 - (ii) Voluntary aided schools' duty to consult;
 - (iii) The Admissions Forum - Statutory Arrangements;
 - (iv) Other matters (including children with special educational needs, children and young people in public care and interviews for admission to faith schools)

The Forum was requested to advise the Director for Education on the Authority's response.

Members asked a number of questions in respect of the above key issues contained within the report and expressed its opposition to the proposal for faith related interviews, stating that as this practice was not currently undertaken in Stockport, no disadvantages to prospective pupils had been experienced.

Concern was also expressed in respect of the both the tight deadline for the schedule consultations for capacity calculations and that the calculations had not been agreed with headteachers at this stage.

In respect of future membership of the Admissions Forum and in noting that representatives in the schools categories could be either a governor or a headteacher, the Forum recognised the value of the insights which the headteacher representatives had brought to discussions and hoped this would continue.

It was suggested that the Children's Strategic partnership could be approached and be requested to suggest appropriate representatives and members also commented on the need for a representative from the Salford Diocese. In addition, advice would be needed on how new members would be elected onto the Forum.

Further discussion also ensued in respect of Children in Public Care and Children with Special Educational Needs and members commented that it would be beneficial to co-opt a Social Services representative on to the Forum to provide expert comment in respect of Children in Public Care.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the future membership of the Admissions Forum should comprise of representatives from the following groups:-

<u>GROUP</u>	<u>STATUTORY NUMBER</u>	<u>PROPOSED NUMBER</u>
LEA	1-5	5
Schools - Community and Voluntary Controlled.	1-3	2
Schools - Foundation	1-3	N/A
Schools - Voluntary Aided	1-3	1
Diocesan Board - Church of England	1-3	1
Diocesan Board - Roman Catholic	1-3	1
Parent Governor	1-3	2
Local Community	Up to 3	2
Academies	1	N/A
CTC	1	N/A

(3) That the Local Community category should include 1 representative from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and 1 school governor representative from GOVAS.

(4) That approval be given in principle to the delay of the introduction of co-ordinated admission arrangements at primary level for one year.

(5) That the Forum's opposition to the suggested practice of faith related interviews for church schools be expressed for the reason stated above.

(6) That the Forum's concerns be expressed with regard to the higher pressure which would be placed on existing resources and the reduced staffing base in view of the probability of a reduced Standard Spending Assessment (SSA).

3. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forum would be held on Wednesday 12 March 2003 commencing at 6.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 7.26 pm.