

ADMISSIONS FORUM

Meeting: 19 June, 2007
At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Shan Alexander
Councillor Stuart Bodsworth
Councillor Colin Foster
Councillor Jenny Humphreys
Renee Dickins - Community representative
Pat Morgan - Head of Service (Pupils, Parents & Schools)
Jan Morris - Children & Young People Officer
Evelyn Leslie - Secondary Heads Consortium
Liz Parkinson - GOVAS
Ian Roberts - Church of England representative
Richard Bates – Assistant Director CYP
Steve Worthington - Principal Democratic Services Officer

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2007/08

RESOLVED – That Councillor Jenny Humphreys be elected as Chair for the Municipal Year 2007/08.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2007/08

RESOLVED – That Councillor Shan Alexander be elected as Vice-Chair for the Municipal Year 2007/08.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 14 March 2007 were approved as a correct record.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillors, officers and Members of the Forum were invited to declare any interests which they had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

The following interest was declared:-

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Interest</u>
Stuart Bodsworth	Agenda Item No. 6 (ii) as an employee of Information Commissioner.

5. ADMISSIONS UPDATE

i. Admission consultation process 06/07 initial feedback

The Forum received an oral report from the Head of Service (Pupils, Parents & Schools) which gave the current position on the appeals process together with the following:-

- The publishing of the determination notice for 2008/09.
- The publishing of public notices and the process of consultation for the 2008 appeal arrangements and the appropriate documentation and schedules.

RESOLVED – That the position be noted

ii. Admission allocations – position to date

A report of the Corporate Director – Children and Young People was considered (copies of which had been circulated) detailing the Statement for Appeals panels and Parents which contained specific information in respect of the following:-

- Legal requirements
- Stockport's admission policy
- Forward planning and the efficient use of resources

Discussions ensued with regard to the loss of pupil numbers in certain areas of the borough to Manchester, Cheshire and Derbyshire although it was recognised that Stockport was also an importer of pupils from these areas.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

iii. Admission Appeals Update – Year 7 Secondary and Reception Sept '07

A report of the Corporate Director – Children and Young People was considered (copies of which had been circulated) which gave both an update on admission appeals with specific regard to Year 7 Secondary and Reception and detailed the role of the Admissions Forum in Admission Appeals.

The Forum was informed that a further report would be submitted to the meeting scheduled for October, 2007 which would contain information on the adherence of appeals panel to class size regulations.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

iv. Admission - Information for Parents/Carers

The Forum received draft information which was intended to be circulated to parents as part of the appeals process, which included a booklet in respect of secondary school. The Head of Service (Pupils, Parents & Schools) reported that good feedback had been received from parents and that the information provided would be further edited.

Members of the Forum expressed their dissatisfaction at the late circulation of the information and made a number of comments, with particular regard to the need to make it clear to parents that their children do not have an automatic right of access to join a particular school.

Members were requested to submit any further comments or observations on the documentation to the Head of Service (Pupils, Parents & Schools).

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

6. REPORTS / PRESENTATIONS

i. Transitional Support for Families in Stockport

A copy of a presentation entitled 'Families Helping Children to High School Successfully' presentation was circulated at the meeting.

It was reported that a significant number of staff had now been trained to give transition information to parents of year 6 children and that a number of sessions had been held at various schools at differing times in order to help provide information to parents.

Members commented on initiatives from a number of secondary schools which were in place to combat the potential bullying of new pupils.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

ii. Choice Advice to Parents

A report of the Corporate Director – Children and Young People was considered (copies of which had been circulated) which gave details of a separately funded project designed to support the creation of a network of 'Choice Advisers' across the country who would act independently of the local authority in accordance with the statutory guidelines in the school admissions code. Each local authority in England would receive £15,000 per year with an additional sum allocated according to deprivation.

It was further reported that Stockport had been awarded £50,000 over the two year period allocated for the project and that three advisers would be provided within Stockport.

Members commented on the need to give choice advisers a high profile in order to ensure a positive impact and expressed concern that the project would only receive two year funding and that further funding should be considered should the project prove to be successful.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. ROLE OF THE FORUM

Discussion ensued on the future direction of the Admissions Forum with particular regard to membership. It was reported that a report would be submitted to the next meeting detailing the Forum's responsibilities in respect of the admissions process

In addition, the Forum was informed of a two year project funded by the DfES to appoint a headteacher to a virtual school in respect of looked after children in the borough.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The Forum was given details of reports to be submitted to future meetings on the following:-

RESOLVED – That the next two meetings of the Admissions forum be held as follows:-

Tuesday, 9th October 2007 at 6.00pm in Committee Room 3.

Tuesday, 5 February 2008 at 6.00pm in Committee Room 3.

Meeting ended at 7.30pm