

MINUTES of the meeting of Local Admissions Forum held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Thursday, 28th February, 2008 at 7.00 p.m.

Present:	Local Education Authority	JW Hope (Chairman), PD Price and AM Toon
	Church Representative	Anne Robertson (Roman Catholic Church)
	Headteachers	Sara Catlow-Hawkins, C. Barker (Community High School) and Julie Powell (Community and VC Primary)
	School Governors	Mr Ross (Primary Schools)
	Parent Governors	R Stevenson and A Wood
	Local Community Rep	(none)

In attendance: (none)

16. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor JW Hope was nominated and seconded for the Chairmanship for the remainder of the ensuing year.

Resolved: that Councillor JW Hope be elected Chairman of the Local Admissions Forum for the remainder of the ensuing year.

17. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Resolved: that the appointment of Vice-Chairman be considered at the next meeting of the Forum.

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the Reverend I Terry and Councillor K Swinburne.

19. NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Councillor PD Price substituted for Councillor K Swinburne.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

21. MINUTES

Councillor AM Toon requested that it be noted that she was not in attendance at the last meeting as she was not informed until July 2007 that she was a Member of the Forum.

Resolved: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st June 2007 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

22. LATE ITEMS/ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr A. McLaughlin, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, suggested that the Forum could consider at its next meeting a forward or work plan for the Forum. It was also suggested that it would also be useful for members to attend a training session prior to the next meeting to consider matters such as the Constitution of the Forum and how a forward or work plan could be achieved.

Resolved: that a workplan be submitted to the next meeting of the Forum for consideration.

23. AMENDMENTS TO SCHOOL PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBERS FOR SEPTEMBER 2008 ONLY

Consideration was given to a report regarding changes to the Planned Admission Numbers at Staunton-on-Wye, Bosbury and Mordiford Primary Schools for 2008 admission only.

The Director of Childrens Services raised concerns about considering any schools Published Admission Numbers (PAN) in isolation and that it would be insensitive prior to the completion of the external review of data. Any school which currently have a slight increase in first preference applications over PAN then it would be appropriate that these could be considered through the appeals process.

The Forum was informed that offer letters for school places would be sent to parents on 29 February 2008. Parents did have the right of appeal or could choose an alternative school.

The Forum was also informed that any reference in the report to PAN referred to Planned Admission Numbers. Also, that the second paragraph in paragraph 2 of the report should commence with 'All five* '.

Resolved: that consideration of the changes to the Planned Admission Numbers at Staunton-on-Wye, Bosbury and Mordiford Schools be deferred until the external review of data has been completed.

24. POLICY ON SURPLUS PLACES - CHANGES TO PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBERS FOR SEPTEMBER 2009 AND BEYOND

The Director of Childrens Services was of the view that this item should not be considered in the light of the current situation with regard to the external review of data and would be insensitive at this time. She informed Members that a meeting had also been arranged with Jim Knight, Minister of State for Schools and Learners to discuss Primary School Strategy and the feedback to the Forum as a consequence would therefore be appropriate prior to consideration of this item.

Resolved: that in view of the current external review of data and the impending meeting with Jim Knight, consideration of the report on Policy on Surplus Places and Changes to Planned Admission Numbers for September and Beyond be deferred.

25. NEW CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2008 - 2011

Consideration was given to a report which advised the Forum on the current consultation on the new Children and Young People's Plan (a copy of the draft plan was circulated with the report), the Local Admissions Forum being one of the Statutory bodies that must be consulted in producing the new Plan.

The Director of Children and Young People's Services presented the report. She emphasised that the Plan sets out over the next three years the key priorities for young people and how the partnership working can accomplish those priorities. In referring to a point made by a member, the Director stated that there were light references to preparing children for the workplace in the report but that these references would be emphasised.

A member expressed the view that the priority areas identified in the Table in paragraph 9 in the Plan should be more positive rather than giving a negative emphasis. The Director stated that the Member's comment would be taken into account when finalising the plan.

The Director acknowledged that when the Plan reaches an action plan stage it would be appropriate for the Forum to consider cost implications and how these could be funded.

A Member was of the view that gifted children had been omitted from paragraph 9 in the Plan. Also that there was no mention about parental preference and choice in the Plan. The Director stated that these points would be picked up.

With regard to paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2 of the Needs Analysis, a member took the view that the conclusions emphasised in the paragraphs were questionable and that it might be appropriate to incorporate an independent review in so far as the conclusions were concerned.

A Member referred to the commissioning of schools in the Plan and was of the view that, for example, if a Church school was closed then a Church school should be commissioned thus achieving a balance and would also safeguard parental choices of Schools.

The Director stated that there was a need to know where the 'hotspots' in Herefordshire were but acknowledged the member's point regarding the independent review to identify hotspots. The point about safeguarding the balance of closures and the commissioning of schools together with parental choices would be noted.

Resolved: that member's views and comments as set out in the preamble to this Minute be incorporated in the New Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011.

The meeting ended at 8.35 p.m.
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CHAIRMAN