

**LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM
THURSDAY, 3RD JULY, 2014**

Present:- Mrs. I. Hartley (in the Chair); Councillor Beaumont, Mr. P. Robbins, Mr. G. Lancashire, Mr. C. E. Kelsey and Mr. B. Sampson.

Apologies for absence were received from:- Councillor Rushforth, Mrs. Gambles, Mrs. H. McLaughlin, Mrs. P. Powell and Mrs. C. Cockayne.

90. ANNUAL APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN 2014/15.

Agreed: - (1) That Mrs. I. Hartley, be the Chairperson of the Rotherham Local Admissions Forum for this meeting.

(2) That the annual appointment of a Chairperson be made at the annual meeting of the Rotherham Local Admissions Forum on 6th November, 2014.

91. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 13TH MARCH, 2014.

Agreed: - That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Local Admissions Forum held on 13th March, 2014, be approved as a correct record.

92. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

All items of matters arising were covered in this meeting's agenda.

93. MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM.

Consideration was given to the report that outlined the membership of the Local Admissions Forum as at June, 2014.

There were a number of vacancies to be filled: -

- Voluntary aided schools – one vacancy;
- Academy schools – one vacancy;
- The Sheffield Diocese – one vacancy;
- Parent representative: - one vacancy;
- Community representatives: -
 - One Elected Member to be confirmed following Education Portfolio change;
 - Early Years Nursery (voluntary) sector – one vacancy.

Agreed: - (1) That work continue to fill the membership vacancies on Rotherham's Local Admission Forum.

(2) That Mr. C. E. Kelsey transfer from his membership of the community

schools group to the Academy School group with effect from 1st September, 2014, as Bramley Grange Primary School would transfer to Academy status on that day. This would then create a primary school vacancy on the community schools group to be filled.

94. TERMS, CONDITIONS AND CONSTITUTION.

There was nothing to raise under this item.

95. THE LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORT TO THE SCHOOL ADJUDICATOR.

Consideration was given to Rotherham's Local Authority Report to the Schools Adjudicator, 30th June, 2014, which was tabled by the Principal School Admission, Organisation and Special Educational Needs Assessment Services Officer (Schools and Lifelong Learning, Children and Young People's Services Directorate). Completion and return of the report annually was a statutory requirement on admissions authorities.

Discussion and questions to the Rotherham Admissions Authority ensued. Matters discussed included: -

- Different local authorities were doing different things in relation to sending out allocation letters. Rotherham posted its letters on the National Offer Day, whereas other local authorities posted their letters to be received by parents/carers on the National Offer Day. This was causing problems.
 - The Principal Officer confirmed he was aware of this and had raised this with the Schools Adjudicator to provide a consistent message that offer letters should be posted on the National Offer Day.

Agreed: - That the item be noted.

96. ADMISSIONS CONSULTATIONS 2014/15.

The Principal School Admissions, Organisation and Special Educational Assessment Services Officer confirmed that admissions consultation would begin in respect of the ??? school year in September, 2014, and would end in December, 2014.

Agreed: - That that information shared be noted.

97. ACADEMIES UPDATE.

The Principal School Admissions, Organisation and Special Educational Assessment Services Officer referred to the report that showed the existing and intended academy schools in Rotherham as at June, 2014.

He explained how this picture was continually developing and a school

was only added to the table when the Secretary of State had confirmed their support for the academisation.

It was estimated that by the end of the Autumn Term, 2014, approximately 50 Rotherham schools would be academies, representing 45% of the sector.

Discussion ensued and the following points were raised: -

- Some schools were going into partnership with other schools / organisations that were geographically a long way off;
- This position had been reported to the Schools Adjudicator.

Agreed: - That the information shared be noted.

98. SCHOOL ADMISSION APPEALS UPDATE.

The Principal School Admissions, Organisation and Special Educational Assessment Officer referred to the report that demonstrated the number of school admission appeals that had been lodged, refused and allowed for LEA Primary Schools, LEA Secondary Schools, Primary Church Schools and Secondary Church Schools for entry in the 2014/2015 school year. It was noted that this is part-way through the appeals hearing process for September starters; the numbers of appeals lodged, refused and allowed would increase at the end of this term.

The numbers for admission in September, 2014, had decreased slightly, but had been offset by the high number of in-year transfer requests that were being submitted.

As at the date of the meeting, the following number of appeal panels had been arranged: -

- 9 appeal panels during May, 2014;
- 16 appeal panels during June and July, 2014;
- 3 appeal dates already arranged for September, 2014.

Discussion ensued on the information presented.

Resolved: - That the information shared be noted.

99. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN STATISTICS.

The Principal School Admissions, Organisation and Special Educational Needs Assessment Services Officer informed the Local Admissions Forum that this items should be treated as a confidential item given the potential to identify vulnerable individuals from the information provided.

The report showed the Rotherham Schools that had a looked after child/ren on roll. This included both Rotherham Looked After Children

and Looked After Children from other local authorities. Only the schools with a looked after child/ren on roll appeared on the list, meaning that the list was changeable as children moved around.

The Principal Officer spoke about the role of Rotherham's Virtual Headteacher for Looked After Children and their role in tracking the progress and attainment of the cohort. The Virtual Headteacher was charged with ensuring the educational support packages were appropriate for each of Rotherham's Looked After Children and young people, placed both within the Borough and in out-of-authority placements, with the aim of helping to improve their outcomes and attainment.

Agreed: - (1) That the information shared be noted.

(2) That future meetings consider this item in an exempt section of the agenda due to the confidential nature of the item.

100. UPDATE ON SCHOOL ORGANISATION.

The Principal School Admissions, Organisation and Special Educational Needs Assessment Services Officer provided an update to the Local Admissions Forum on the Borough's school organisation picture: -

- The 2014/2015 profile compared to the 2013/2014 profile: -
 - School place planning – 98% of applicants for FS2 were allocated one of their preferences – 91.5% got their first preference, 4.93% got their second preference and 1.5% got their third;
 - One School was unable to accommodate catchment area children, 4 schools were unable to accommodate siblings and 40 schools had been unable to accommodate on the distance category;
 - School place planning – 100% of applicants for Year 7 were allocated one of their preferences;
 - The functioning of waiting lists.
- Rotherham's allocation of £1.45million from the Department for Education's Basic Need funding;
- Section 106 developer contributions for school place provision subject to trigger points;
- Rotherham's Local Plan included an additional 4,000 houses over its lifetime;
- 84% of Rotherham's new places had been delivered in Schools that were Good or Outstanding (the national average was 7%);
- The proportion of new places that had been delivered in Rotherham schools that were performing at below the average was 7% (compared to a national average of 22%) – based on Key Stage Two outcomes;
- Rotherham was coming in at 14% below the national average for new build costs;

- School expansions were continuing in 12 schools on a permanent basis, a number of temporary extensions were underway;
- Future school place expansions were also planned in four schools;
- Potential new schools were planned in areas of high-numbers of new builds – Waverley and Bassingthorpe;
- Planning permission had been granted for the new Central Primary School that was due to open in September, 2015. Initially the plans had been for the School to operate as a 1.5 form entry school until Year 2, but it had been re-considered and the School would operate as a one form entry up to Year 4 and would expand at a later date to accommodate a 1.5 form entry. The School's catchment was still out to consultation/consideration;
- A 'bulge' cohort had been identified for admission into the 2016/2017 school year and in the Rawmarsh learning community;
- The group appeal approach that had been taken for Wath: A Language College's school appeals, given the high number of appeals lodged, had been very successful. Both the Headteacher and the Admissions Authority Officer attended and this really benefitted the question and answer stage between the Independent Panel and parents/carers. One of the appellants from the group appeal had made a complaint to the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman's response was to dismiss the complaint as they did not find any faults in the process.

Agreed: - That the information shared be noted.

101. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

Agreed: - (1) That the next meeting of the Rotherham Local Admissions Forum take place on Thursday 6th November, 2014, to start at 10.00 a.m. in the Rotherham Town Hall.

(2) That future meetings take place on: -

- Thursday 19th March, 2015;
- Thursday 2nd July, 2015.