

**LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM
THURSDAY, 7TH JULY, 2011**

Present:- Councillors Barron and Beaumont, Mrs. C. Cockayne, Mr. G. Lancashire, Mrs. P. Powell and Mr. P. Robins (Community Representative), Mr. C. E. Kelsey (Community Schools) and Mrs. G. Atkin (Voluntary Aided Schools).

Apologies for absence were received from:- Councillor Havenhand, Mr. B. N. Sampson (Community Representative), Mrs. I. G. Hartley (Community Schools), Father A. Hayne (Diocese of Hallam), Ms. C. Thorpe (Diocese of Hallam), Mrs. H. Morris (Sheffield Diocese) and Mrs. H. McLaughlin (Voluntary Aided Schools).

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Agreed:- That Mr. G. Lancashire be appointed Chair of this meeting.

(Mr. G. Lancashire in the Chair)

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Consideration of this appointment was deferred.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 17TH MARCH, 2011

Agreed:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Local Admissions Forum, held on 17th March, 2011, be approved as a correct record.

4. ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SCHOOLS ADJUDICATOR

The School Organisation Planning and Development Manager presented the submitted Local Authority Report to the Schools Adjudicator, highlighting, clarifying and elaborating on the responses provided to the questions posed section by section.

The report covered the following issues:-

- Section 1 For the Academic Year in which the report was made 2010/2011

- Fair Access Protocol
- Whether primary schools were complying with infant class size legislation
- Number of admission appeals held for each and every school in the area, and the number of appeals upheld
- extent to which the local authority and appeal panels in the area complied with the requirements of the Appeals Code regarding timeliness, transparency, effective communications with parents and other relevant matters

- Section 2 For the Academic Year which starts after the report is made 2010/2011

- extent to which admission arrangements for Schools in the Authority's area serve the interests of children in care, children with disabilities, children with special educational needs and service children
 - effectiveness of co-ordination
- Section 3. For admission arrangements that have been determined in the April immediately before the date of the report is made [determined by 15th April, 2011 for admission in September, 2012]
- statement of whether or not admission arrangements for maintained schools in the area complied with the mandatory requirements of this Code and admissions law
- Section 4 Other Matters
- details about the current membership of the Local Admissions Forum for the area
 - proportion of children currently on free school meals at each school in the area
 - other matters which affect the fairness of admission arrangements for schools in the area
- Section 5 Other issues requested this year by the Secretary of State for Education
- Choice advice
 - Transport
- Section 6 Other issues requested this year by the Department for Education

During discussion, the following issues were covered:-

- infant class size legislation
- numbers of applications for school places from elsewhere in the European Community
- school building - capital programme
- school admission appeals

Agreed:- (1) That the contents of the Local Authority Report to the Schools Adjudicator 2010/2011, now submitted, be approved.

(2) That the Local Admissions Forum does not wish to make a report to the Schools Adjudicator over and above the submitted Local Authority report.

5. **NEW SCHOOL ADMISSIONS CODE AND SCHOOL ADMISSIONS APPEALS CODE - CONSULTATION**

Consideration was given to the consultation document, issued by the Department for Education on 27 May 2011, on changes to the school admissions framework.

In the White Paper 'The Importance of Teaching', the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Education, announced a review of the school admissions system to make it simpler, fairer and more transparent, building on the principle of placing trust back in schools and head teachers.

The Department for Education welcomes views on the draft School Admissions Code and draft School Admission Appeals Code, which are at the centre of proposed changes to the admissions system.

Agreed:- (1) That the consultation document be noted and the views of the Local Admissions Forum be included in the Local Authority's response.

(2) That it is the view of the Rotherham Local Admissions Forum that the requirement for local authorities and communities to appoint Local Admissions Forums, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 2002, ought to continue.

6. FREE SCHOOLS - PROPOSALS FOR THE ROTHERHAM BOROUGH AREA - UPDATE

Discussion took place on:-

- school organisation in Rotherham and its growing diversity, which reflects the trends nationally;
- the establishment of the three Academies, from existing secondary schools : Brinsworth, Maltby and Wales;
- other schools considering Academy status;
- the proposal to establish a Trust School (Winterhill secondary school);
- proposals for free schools to be established in the Rotherham Borough area.

Agreed:- That the Local Admissions Forum continue to be informed of issues concerning the establishment of Academies and Trust Schools in the Rotherham Borough area.

7. TRAVELLERS' CHILDREN - ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

Discussion took place on the legal requirement for local authorities to provide education for all pupils of statutory school age resident in their areas. The pressure on places at schools in the South area of the Borough was noted, in the light of the possible development of a site for

travellers in that location.

8. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS - ANNUAL CONSULTATION

It was noted that this matter would be deferred until the next meeting, in view of the current HM Government consultation about possible changes to the school admissions code.

9. SCHOOL ADMISSION APPEALS - UPDATE

The Local Admissions Forum discussed details of the current round of school admission appeals, noting the pressure on places at several secondary schools and the Borough-wide pressure upon primary school places, especially at Key Stage 1.

10. ADMISSION TO SECONDARY SCHOOL 2012/2013 - DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKLET

Members of the Local Admissions Forum will be provided with copies of the booklet for admission to secondary school 2012/2013, which is also available to parents upon request.

11. RETIREMENT OF MRS. GAIL ATKIN

The Local Admissions Forum thanked Mrs. Gail Atkin for her excellent services to the Forum. Mrs. Atkin was retiring in July 2011 from her position as head teacher of Wickersley St. Alban C of E Primary School.