

## **The Vale of Glamorgan Council**

### **Cabinet Meeting: 3rd April 2017**

## **Report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education**

### **School Admission Arrangements 2018/2019**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To advise members of the outcome of the Council's statutory consultation exercise on school admission arrangements for community schools in accordance with the Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006.

#### **Recommendations**

1. To approve the Schools Admissions Policy for 2018/2019, attached at [Appendix A](#), to ensure that the statutory requirement to determine the policy by 15 April 2017 is met.
2. That Cabinet authorises the use of article 14.14 of the Council's Constitution (urgent decision procedure) in respect of recommendation 1 above.

#### **Reasons for the Recommendations**

1. The Council is required to review school admission arrangements annually and to determine the arrangements for 2018/19 following appropriate consultation by 15 April 2017.
2. To meet the 15th April 2017 deadline.

#### **Background**

2. The Council has a statutory duty to consult on school admission arrangements annually. The school admission arrangements must be determined by 15 April 2017 for implementation for the academic year 2018/ 2019.
3. The Council has a statutory duty to consult with all neighbouring local authorities, the admission authorities of those schools which have delegated admission powers and the governing bodies of all other maintained schools in the relevant area. The relevant area is the geographical area of the Vale of Glamorgan.
4. Councils are advised that they should consult with the Admissions Forum serving the relevant area and parents of children where a significant change is proposed.

5. The School Admissions Policy was issued for consultation on 16 January 2017 to headteachers and chairs of governors of all schools in the Vale of Glamorgan, neighbouring local authorities and diocesan directors of education. The consultation period concluded on 1 March 2017.
6. The Council is required to produce a draft School Admissions Policy each year for the subsequent school year's admission round detailing school admission arrangements for all maintained schools in its area. This policy is available within the Council's Parental Guide to School Admissions which is available on the Council's website, at local libraries and all schools in the Vale of Glamorgan. A hard copy is also available on request.

### **Relevant Issues and Options**

7. The Council has consulted on the proposed admission arrangements for establishing two new mixed sex 11-18 English medium secondary schools in Barry which was approved by Cabinet on 6 March 2017. The inclusion of draft admission arrangements for managing the transfer of pupils to the proposed two new schools was required as part of the consultation, in order to facilitate the process in the event that the proposals were agreed. The Council was clear that consultation on the draft arrangements should in no way be considered an indication or anticipation of outcome.
8. The proposed School Admissions Policy included the introduction of an equal preference system for secondary transfer applications. This system is already in place for community primary and nursery applications and will ensure that wherever possible pupils can access a place in their catchment school even if their first preference is a school which is out of the catchment area.
9. In addition, the deletion of the temporary arrangements for Welsh medium primary schools was proposed in order to ensure that following the amalgamation of Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Talwg and Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morganwg to a 3-18 all-through school, parents wishing to secure a place in Welsh medium education would have priority in their catchment school. The current temporary arrangement which prioritises siblings no longer meets the needs of the schools and parents concerned.
10. There are no other changes proposed to the oversubscription criteria currently in place.
11. Following the consultation, the Council received two written responses from the governing bodies of Ysgol Iolo Morganwg and Ysgol Dewi Sant. Both responses were in support of the withdrawal of the temporary Welsh medium oversubscription criteria. Neither response referenced the other changes proposed in the draft School Admissions Policy. No other responses were received.
12. If approved, the admission arrangements detailed in the draft School Admissions Policy will be operational for the 2018/19 academic year.

### **Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)**

13. There are no immediate resource implications.

### **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

14. The proposed admissions arrangements support attendance of pupils at their local school thereby reducing the need to transport pupils in public and private vehicles.

## **Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)**

15. Sections 88 and 89 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended by the Education Act 2002 and the Statutory School Admissions Code 2013 determines that the Admission Authorities shall, before the beginning of each school year, determine in accordance with the Act the admission arrangements which are to apply for that year.
16. The Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006 set out the procedure which the Admission Authorities should follow when determining their admission arrangements, including the consultation and notification process as well as timescales.

## **Crime and Disorder Implications**

17. There are no immediate implications.

## **Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)**

18. The Council has to satisfy its public sector duties under the Equalities Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). Pursuant to these legal duties Councils must in making decisions have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics.
19. Protected characteristics include:
  - Age
  - Gender reassignment
  - Sex
  - Race - including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
  - Disability
  - Sexual orientation
  - Religion or belief - including lack of belief
20. An equality impact assessment may have four possible outcomes, though more than one may apply to a single policy. These include:
21. No major change – the impact assessment demonstrated that the policy was robust; there was no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken.
22. Adjust the policy – the impact assessment identified potential problems or missed opportunities. The policy was adjusted to remove barriers or better promote equality.
23. Continue the policy – the impact assessment identified the potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality. The justification(s) for continuing with it have been clearly set out. (The justification must be included in the impact assessment and must be in line with the duty to have due regard. Compelling reasons will be needed for the most important relevant policies.)
24. Stop and remove the policy – the impact assessment identified actual or potential unlawful discrimination. The policy was stopped and removed, or changed.

25. An Equality Impact Assessment on changes to the School Admissions Arrangements 2018/19 has been conducted and included as [Appendix B](#).
26. The outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment did not identify any potential for adverse impacts as a result of implementing the proposal and as a result, no major change is necessary.

### **Corporate/Service Objectives**

27. The proposed School Admissions Policy ensures that all learners have opportunities to access their chosen school, or will be accommodated within their catchment school, contributing to the Council's wellbeing outcome: an aspirational and culturally vibrant Vale and to the corporate objective of raising overall standards of achievement. By ensuring that pupils are educated in a school close to their home address, the proposed policy also contributes to the Council's wellbeing outcome: environmentally responsible and prosperous Vale.

### **Policy Framework and Budget**

28. This report is a matter for Executive Decision by Cabinet.

### **Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)**

29. Consultation has taken place with statutory consultees as detailed in the main body of this report.
30. The views of consultees have been considered in the development of the proposed admission arrangements.

### **Relevant Scrutiny Committee**

31. Learning and Culture.

### **Background Papers**

None

### **Contact Officer**

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### **Officers Consulted**

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### **Responsible Officer:**

Paula Ham – Director of Learning & Skills.