

**DIRECTORATE OF LEARNING AND SKILLS**

**Admissions Forum**

**29 November 2019**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ATTENDEES:** | Cllr Lis Burnett, Clare Kynaston, Ann Robertson, Mike Matthews, Lisa Lewis, Jane Werrett, Rhian Andrew, Andrew Hennesy |
| **APOLOGIES:** | Fiona Greville, Sian Lewis |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ITEM** | **ISSUE** | **ACTION REQUIRED** | **Member** |
|  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Minutes of Previous Meeting | The minutes were checked for accuracy and agreed as a true record. |  |
| 3 | Matters arising | None |  |
| 4 | Terms of reference and membership | MM outlined the terms of reference of the group, no changes were proposed. Rhian Andrew and Sian Lewis were re-elected onto the group for a further term. |  |
| 5 | Approval/ Amendment of the draft Annual Report of the Admissions Forum | MM went through the report. The report is a statutory document that must be completed annually and sent off to the Welsh Government. Provides a report on the effectiveness of school admission arrangements. The report was approved. |  |
| 6 | Consultation on admission arrangements for 2021/2022 | MM outlined the process for consultation on admission arrangements for 2021/22 to commence in December 2019. No major changes in terms of the admissions policy apart from a minor amendment to the primary school oversubscription criteria to ensure that those living in a school catchment area will be a high priority for admission to a school in the event of oversubscription. The proposed change relates to the distance criteria used within the catchment area criteria when there are more applications than places available. Current arrangements prioritise those living furthest away from an alternative school with a place, the proposed change will prioritise those living closest to a primary school where the number of applications within catchment exceeds places available and support attendance at a local school. A secondary school catchment area review is also being undertaken as part of the consultation to balance demand for places to be discussed at next agenda item. LL Stressed the importance of a fair admissions system for all pupils, the changes will ensure this. |  |
| 7 | School Catchment Review | Secondary catchment area review is considered necessary as the Council is facing increasing pressure for secondary school places at the year 6 transfer stage. This is particularly pertinent to the Llantwit and Barry areas whereby some children cannot gain a place at their catchment area school and are being bussed to other schools outside the area. Large scale housing development and the establishment of mixed sex education in Barry has had an impact on demand for school places. Need to balance pupil numbers in catchment areas to the school capacity. Scope for Cowbridge and St Cyres to take in additional areas of the Vale as numbers within catchment area are low albeit the schools are well subscribed from pupils attending outside of the catchment and Council area. AH queried why Rhoose would no longer serve Barry and the distance for pupils to travel to Cowbridge from Rhoose. MM Demand at the newly established mixed sex schools in Barry has risen significantly with numbers a little down at St Richard Gwyn, the number of pupils attending Barry schools from Rhoose is small. Travel distance is a little longer with a number of pupils already attending Cowbridge from Rhoose. LB This change in the Barry area has risen more rapidly than expected and indicates that this was the right approach. LL There are enough secondary school places overall in the Vale to meet demand but catchment areas need revising to ensure secondary schools demand in a catchment area is able to match the capacity of a school albeit parental preference will play an important part. RA query with regard to Welsh medium catchment areas. MM The catchment area for the secondary school covers the whole of the Vale of Glamorgan area. The catchment area for primary are not changing but are subject to review as other schools. The Ysgol St Baruc catchment area is not changing but the move of the school to the Waterfront area will provide a better balance for the school. Consultation to commence 11 December 2019 and available on the Councils website. Consultation closes on the 3 February 2020 for comments. Further comments to MM. |  |
| 7 | Managed moves update | JW provide the forum with an update. Schools are fully engaged with the process but the Council is seeing more referrals that are sometimes outside the scope of the policy. More referrals from schools and requests from parents. A new panel has recently been established, the Social Emotional Mental Health Panel (SEMPH) to consider placements of pupils with specific needs and referrals made such as managed move requests. An update on the managed move protocol is being considered. |  |
| 8 | Update on annual admissions round | MM provided update on secondary application figures for September 2020 for each Secondary school. Parents can two preferences. Admissions team have been reminding parents regularly to apply and to also include their catchment area school if applying for an out of catchment school. Heavy demand for places at all schools.  MM discussed the application process for Reception 2020 that opened on the 7 Number 2019 and discussed the joint effort by the authority and schools to ensure applications are completed by parents. A large number of applications already received with the usual hotspot schools in Penarth and Cowbridge being requested. The nursery admissions process opens on the 24 January 2020 |  |
| 11 | Date for next meeting | 6 June 2020. |  |
|  | Any Other Business | No other business |  |