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## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Minutes of a Meeting of the Admission Forum held at Civic Offices on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2015

#### **LA Representatives**

Mr R Davies	Group Manager, Business, Strategy & Performance
Cllr Huw David	Cabinet Member, Children and Young People
Mrs M Treharne	School Support Officer, Support for Learners and Children
Mrs D Davies	Principal Officer, Knowledge Management and Learners
Mrs F Jones	Team Manager, Access and Inclusion Service

#### **School Representatives**

Mr J Tarran	Headteacher, Archdeacon John Lewis C in W Primary
Mrs A Keller	Headteacher, Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School
Mrs S Davies	Headteacher, Llangewydd Junior School

#### **Governor Representatives**

Mr W Bond	Héronsbridge School
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#### **Secretary to the Forum**

Ms M Jones

- 1. Welcome**  
The Chair welcomed Mrs A Keller and Mrs S Davies to their first meeting
- 2. Apologies**  
Apologies were received from Mrs R Dixon, Mr D Jenkins, Mrs G James, Mrs P Richards and Mrs D Burton
- 3 Election of Chairperson**  
Resolved: that Mr R Davies be appointed Chairperson
- 4 Election of Vice Chairperson**  
Resolved: that Mr J Tarran be appointed Vice Chairperson
- 5 Minutes**  
The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015 were confirmed as a true record.
- 6 Access to Admissions Literature/Minutes and Agendas/Annual Performance Report**  
DD informed members of the forum that the Admission Forum Agenda and Minutes have now been made available to the public on the BCBC website. The Annual Report for 14-15 is currently being translated into Welsh and will be made available on the website soon as soon as the translated copy has been received. RD informed the forum that there is a corporate project reviewing the current content on the website which is commencing soon.
- 7 Promotion of effective admission arrangements for Vulnerable Learners.  
(Terms of Reference for 'Fair Access Panel' to follow)**  
Michelle Hatcher, Group Manager, Access and Inclusion Service is chairing the 'Fair Access Panel' and is in the process of drafting the 'Terms of Reference' the members of which will be made up of Headteachers and all their representatives.

MT confirmed that there were 24 pupils discussed in the panel in April and this had reduced to 12 pupils being discussed at the last meeting in September.

RD suggested inviting Owen Shephard to the next meeting to discuss VAP early intervention in primary schools.

Cllr David confirmed that the Council need to make cuts of 50 million over the next 3 years and stated that schools cannot be immune from these cuts. He also expressed concerns about where the savings could come from and asked Forum Members to encourage staff/parents and pupils to undertake the online survey regarding MTFS savings.

The Forum was also informed as part of the Task Group that DM has put a report to Cabinet to approve the taking forward of a strategic review into the development and rationalisation of the curriculum and school estate in Bridgend.

RD confirmed he would share further information on the review once a strategic partner had been appointed and work has commenced.

MT to provide 'Minutes and Terms of Reference' from the last 'Fair Access' panel.

Cllr David congratulated the 'Fair Access' panel for their hard work in relation to securing places for the difficult to place pupils.

## **8 Review of 'Starting School' booklet 2016-17**

RD stated that the 'Admission Policy' was put on the BCBC website on the 1<sup>st</sup> October for the start of the statutory admissions round for 2016-17. The LA are in the process of putting catchment maps on the website but RD stated that there could be a financial cost to the LA regarding the postcode checking and is looking at alternative mechanisms to enable the public to search their catchment school. There is a contact number on the website and in the 'Starting School' booklet if any member of the public needs guidance or information in relation to the admissions process.

RD also stated that the Council has to be more efficient with its resources and no hard copies of the 'Starting School' booklet for 2017-18 will be printed to reduce cost. A hard copy of the booklet/admissions policy will only be printed on demand. All the Forum Members agreed that the booklet be only printed on request.

## **9 To consider the LA's draft Admission Policy 2017-18**

The forum considered the draft 'Admission Policy for 2017-18 and were all in agreement for the following paragraphs to be removed or amended in the policy:-

- Amended Admissions Timetable dates for 2017-18
- In the 'Oversubscription' criteria 'Social Reasons i.e. young carers, has been included.
- When it can be demonstrated that a child is attending an out of catchment school and has done so due to lack of places at their catchment school, all applications from siblings will be treated as in-catchment. Further applications from siblings will be treated as incatchment.
- In relation to the Welsh Pre-Nursery stating that preference would be given to pupils who are already attending a nursery would continue into full time nursery was agreed to be removed, as we were advised by legal that this could not be implemented from full time nursery into Reception.
- 'Chronological date of birth' has been removed from the nursery admission criteria as the 'Code of Practice' states that this criteria must not be used in the allocation of admission places.

**.10. To consider common dates for the 2017-18 admission panel**  
The proposed admission dates for 2017-18 to be circulated to VA schools

**11. Update on 'Learner Travel Policy' consultation.**

Cabinet Members have approved the 'Learner Travel Policy' and RD informed the Forum that the changes to the new 'Learner Travel Policy' will come into effect from September 2016. A summary of changes are as follows:-

- Primary school pupils will be provided with free transport if they attend their catchment school and live 2 miles or more from the school (was previously 1.5 miles);
- Secondary school pupils (including post-16 pupils) will be provided with free transport if they attend their catchment school and live 3 miles or more from the school (was previously 2 miles);
- Post 16 pupils living 3 miles or more from Bridgend College will also receive free transport via public transport service pass (was previously 2 miles).

RD also stated that when the policy comes into effect from September 2016 pupils who are below the new threshold for free transport and are already in receipt of free transport prior to September 2016 will maintain the free transport until they transition to the next stage of education or leave the school. Pupils starting either primary or secondary school in September 2016, who are below the new threshold for free transport already but have a sibling in that school in receipt of free transport, will also receive free transport until they transition/leave that school.

**12 Update on the current 'Admissions Database'.**

RD explained to members of the Forum that as a result of staff cuts within our I.C.T. department we are no longer able to consider an in-house database. At this present time the LA is currently liaising with RCT regarding the possibility of investing into Capita 1. JT enquired if there would still be a paper option available as some parents will not have access to a computer. RD stated that a paper option will always be available to parents.

Cllr David referred to the possibility of refugees moving into Bridgend County Borough and the potential impact this may have on 'Faith' schools which are currently experiencing high pupil numbers. MT to take back to ADEW.

**13. Future dates for the 'Admission Forum' meetings**

Future dates to be set with Forum Members

**14. Any other business**

MJ to circulate the next admission forum date to neighbouring LA's.

**Meeting closed at 10.30am**