

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting12th March 2015

1. Title of Item/Report

Procedure for Admission of Pupils to Primary & Secondary Schools in September 2016

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report on the procedure for admission of pupils to primary & secondary schools in September 2016.

The report outlined the admission arrangements the Local Authority (LA) was proposing for primary and secondary schools in September 2016. In order to comply with legislation for admissions in 2016, the report included the full Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements and Admission numbers for Primary and Secondary Schools for that year.

The report included reference to the Children and Young People Select Committee - Scrutiny Review of School Organisation and Admission Arrangements (Phase 1), including the recommendations arising from the following two proposals. Both of which were approved to go out to public consultation by Cabinet on 4th December 2014:-

- (i) The proposed admission zone changes to primary schools in Ingleby Barwick
- (ii) The proposed changes to admission zone arrangements for secondary schools in the South of the Borough

The new School Admissions Code (SAC) which came into force on the 19 December 2014 outlined the overall principles behind setting admission arrangements. It stated that:-

'Admission Authorities must ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear and objective. Parents should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated.'

To ensure equity and fair access, the Admissions Code 2014 stated that in drawing up admission arrangements, admission authorities must ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide on the allocation

of school places are:

- clear in the sense of being free from doubt and easily understood;
- objective and based on known facts. Admission authorities and Governing Bodies must not make subjective decisions or use subjective criteria;
- procedurally fair and are also equitable for all groups of children and actively promote equity across all social groups and communities;
- enable parents' preferences for the schools of their choice to be met to the maximum extent possible;
- provide parents or carers with easy access to helpful admissions information;
- comply with relevant legislation, including infant class sizes and equal opportunities, which have been determined in accordance with the statutory requirements.

When changes were proposed to admission arrangements, admission authorities must consult on these changes by 1 March in the preceding year. Where the admission arrangements had not changed from the previous year there was no requirement to consult, subject to the requirement that admission authorities must consult on their admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there had been no changes during that period.

As changes were proposed for 2016, the LA consulted a range of key partners and stakeholders including Schools, Governing Bodies, neighbouring authorities, Diocesan representatives, parents / carers and the general public. In addition a number of consultation events were held across the south of the borough to brief the public on the proposals. The full consultation document was displayed on the Stockton-On-Tees website inviting comments on the proposed changes to the Admissions Policy and School Admissions arrangements for entry in September 2016. Full details of the consultation process were available within the report of the Children and Young People Select Committee – Scrutiny review of School organisation and admission arrangements (Phase 1).

Attached to the report was a copy of the Stockton on Tees Co-ordinated Admission Scheme for admissions in 2016/17 which included the timetable.

Also attached to the report were the details of the proposed Admission Numbers for September 2016 in Community, VA, Academies and Free School and showed the proposed increase in school admission numbers across the Borough.

The proposed Admission Policy for 2016/17 would give priority to

applications for admission to a Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary or Secondary school if that school was oversubscribed. Details were attached to the report.

Members approved the following recommendations relating to the agreed proposals which had been subject to public consultation between the 15th December 2014 and the 28th February 2015.

Members wished their thanks be put on record to the officers that had carried out the consultation process.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The proposed changes to the School Admissions Code be agreed.
2. The proposed Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Primary, Secondary, Voluntary Aided (VA) schools, Academies and Free School be agreed (point 1 and Appendix 1);
3. The proposed admission numbers for Primary and Secondary schools for September 2016 be agreed (point 2 and Appendix 2).
4. The proposed Admission Policy for September 2016 be agreed (point 3 and Appendix 3);
5. The existing primary admission zones for Ingleby Barwick be retained.
6. The existing admission zone arrangements for Egglecliffe School be retained.

3. Reasons for the Decision

Legislation requires the LA to publish information to be available for parents when they apply for a place at primary and secondary school. The information has to comply with the published 2014 School Admissions Code. The LA is required to set admission arrangements accordingly and lodge a copy of the Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements with the Secretary of State by the 15 April 2015 for admission to Primary and Secondary schools in September 2016.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Harrington declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 5 – Procedure for Admission of Pupils to Primary & Secondary in September 2016 as his goddaughter would be attending one of the schools named within the report.

Councillor Cook declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 5 – Procedure for Admission of Pupils to Primary & Secondary in September 2016 as he was a governor of one of the schools named within the report.

Councillor Faulks declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 5 – Procedure for Admission of Pupils to Primary & Secondary in September 2016 as he had objected to the proposed admission zone changes.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight on Friday, 20th March 2015

Proper Officer
16 March 2015