

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE CABINET MEMBER MEETING – 2 March 2009

Agenda Item 85 Addendum on school admission consultation responses

This purpose of this addendum is to report on responses received to the consultation documents for school admission arrangements in Brighton & Hove for the 2010/11 admission year. The closing date for school and parental responses was 1st March 2009.

Parental Responses

In accordance with the requirements of the Education and Skills Act 2008 a public notice was published in the Evening Argus and the Leader on Friday 19th December referring parents to the admissions consultation on the Council's website and to the availability of copies for inspection at King's House. One response was received to the website document supporting the secondary school catchment area system. The correspondent was concerned that the consultation did not herald any change to that system, having asked whether the consultation meant that changes might be proposed and if so what the alternatives would be.

School Responses

Only 4 responses were received from schools, two from primary schools and two from secondary schools.

Coombe Road Primary School confirmed its agreement with its proposed admission number and made no further comment on the proposed admission arrangements.

West Blatchington Primary School also agreed to the proposed admission number, and observed that there was a potential problem with Key Stage 2 accommodation if it were to operate at capacity as there were only 7 classrooms.

Longhill High School referred to the potential for an increase in its admission number for 2010/11 (subject to consultation and planning approval) and the likelihood of its accepting additional pupils in 2009 in order to satisfy demand from within the catchment area.

Patcham High School wrote to express its satisfaction with the decision that its catchment area would be extended westwards from 2010. It saw this as providing a sustainable pupil base and wished to assure parents in the Westdene area that it would provide all pupils with the education they need to fulfil their potential and enjoy their schooling.

Voluntary Aided Schools

All 16 Voluntary Aided schools in the city provided consultation copies of their proposed admission arrangements for 2010/11. The Council made one recommendation to a school for a change in its proposed arrangements in order for it to meet the requirements of the new Admission Code. This was to remove a reference to parents being required to tell the school the order of their school preferences, which is not allowed.

The Council was pleased to note that both diocesan authorities had provided their schools with clear guidance as to how best they should frame their admission arrangements in order to comply with the Admission Code. As a result it was expected that a number of schools would be slightly amending or augmenting their proposed arrangements before final publication. The majority of these changes were to ensure clarity in definitions used in the arrangements, to set out each school's position more clearly with regard to objective decision making or to correct minor errors in wording.