

ADMISSIONS FORUM – Meeting held on Thursday, 17th January, 2008.

Present:-

Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

Gill Bodman – Western House Primary School

Foundation Schools

Maureen Ball – Baylis Court Secondary School
Hilda Clarke – Langley Grammar School

Voluntary Aided Schools

John McAteer – St Bernard’s Grammar School

Parent Governor Representatives

Mohammed Din – Ryvers Primary School

Local Education Authority

Councillor David Maclsaac
Councillor Patrick Shine

Also present: Kevin Marsh (NUT), Ian Sandbrook (Interim Director of Education and Children’s Services), Tony Browne (Head of School Services) and Kevin Barrett (Democratic Services Manager).

PART I

1. Welcomes and Introductions

Ian Sandbrook, Interim Director of Education and Children’s Services, welcomed those present to what was the first meeting of the newly constituted Admissions Forum and explained the very important role that the Forum would perform in dealing with what were complex admission arrangements in the Borough. He advised that, as the newly appointed Director of Education and Children’s Services, Clair Pyper would shortly be starting work with the Council, this was likely to be the only meeting of the Forum which he would be attending. He outlined the role of the Forum and wished it well in its future deliberations.

Those present at the meeting introduced themselves.

2. Election of Chair

Resolved - That Councillor David Maclsaac act as Chair of the Forum for the remainder of the current municipal year.

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3. Election of Vice-Chair

Resolved - That Hilda Clarke act as Vice-Chair of the Forum for the remainder of the current municipal year.

4. Draft Terms of Reference

Mr Browne introduced the draft terms of reference to the Forum, advising that they had largely been lifted from the Code of Practice. However, the Forum had some discretion to regulate its own proceedings.

Particular reference was drawn to the issue of the quorum for Forum meetings. It was noted that a quorum of five was being recommended. However, Mr Cafolla, who hoped to join the meeting later, had advised that he considered five to be an insufficient number for a quorum, given that this was less than a quarter of the full core membership. There was general sympathy with this view and, following discussion, it was agreed that the quorum should be increased to six members, including at least one local authority appointed member and two school members.

A Member sought clarification of the definition of “the interests of children and parents within the Slough area”. It was pointed out that this should be a broad definition comprising all of those affected by school organisation in Slough, whether they lived within the Slough area itself or only attended a school in Slough. In this regard, it was suggested that the Forum may wish to consider appointing a representative from outside of the Slough area to discuss cross-boundary issues etc.

Clarification was also sought as to whether the Forum was happy for LEA Officers to attend the meeting in an advisory capacity and this was confirmed.

Resolved - That the draft terms of reference be approved as submitted, subject to the amendment of the quorum as agreed.

5. Future Work Programme

It was suggested and agreed that the Forum should receive a briefing at its next meeting on the current admission timetable and arrangements to put the process into context. The meeting should also receive information on the current admissions arrangements in the various Slough schools.

It was further noted that the consultation period on the admission arrangements for September, 2009 finished at the end of February, 2008 and it would be appropriate for the next meeting to consider a report on the outcomes of that consultation.

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6. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Forum take place on Wednesday, 12th March, 2008 at 4.00 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.00 p.m. and closed at 4.30 p.m.)