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## **REPORT TO LEEDS ADMISSION FORUM**

Date 1 March 2011

Venue: Civic Hall

Time: 4.00pm

Subject: Update on Annual Consultation on Admission Arrangements for September 2012

### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update members of the Admission Forum on the responses to the consultation on admissions arrangements for September 2012.

### **2. Background Information**

- 2.1 The consultation on the proposed admission arrangements included refreshed coordinated schemes for primary, secondary and in year admissions, along with some admission number changes. The consultation also sought views on the possibility of holding in year waiting lists and asked stakeholders to comment on whether it would be fairer to offer a higher a priority to children who have a school as their nearest over siblings who live further away. The question was asked separately for primary and secondary admissions.

### **3 Main Issues**

- 3.1 The consultation is seeking views on:

- **Coordinated scheme – primary and secondary.** The coordinated scheme primarily affects the sharing of information with other local authorities and own admission authority schools. Much of it is guided by national closing dates and the national offer day for secondary. Of the 105 responses received by the deadline, 31 responded to the question on the coordinated scheme. Of these 29 were in agreement and two against. The two who were not in favour were not own admission authority schools or local authorities.

- 3.2
- **Coordinated scheme – in year.** From January 2010 each local authority has had to have in place a published coordinated scheme for in year transfers. The coordinated schemes specifies how we will deal with applications and the timeframes for own admission authority schools to respond to us. There were 34 responses of which one was 'ambivalent', 27 were in favour, four against and two did not specify but made comments about needing to ensure the applications were dealt with swiftly.

- 3.3
- **In-year Waiting Lists.** There were 52 responses to the question of whether to

hold in year waiting lists. Of these 43 were in favour and nine against. Six of those in favour and two of those against were from own admission authority schools who can choose for themselves whether or not they wish to operate a waiting list. 23 responses were from parents; one was against and 22 in favour, however 11 of those were parents from one particular school. The school in question had sent the consultation response form home for parents with a letter guiding their view on responding.

- 3.4** • **Changes to the sibling priority at secondary school.** There were 58 responses to the question of whether priority should be for 'nearest siblings', 'nearest', other siblings, then other children by distance. Last year no children would have been affected by this change in policy. Again this year there would not have any affect as all children applying for secondary school have been able to be offered their nearest school if they asked for it. As birth rates rise this situation will change and the issue becomes one of fairness.
- 3.5** There were 22 respondents in favour of changing and 36 who were opposed. Parents accounted for 33 of the responses. Ten parents were in favour and 24 were against. Again it should be noted that 11 of the parents who were against were from the same school where they had been sent a letter drafted by the school but not the consultation document.
- 3.6** Of the comments received those in favour felt the change would be fairer to everyone and stated that children are more independent, are inclined to travel to on their own, and the issue of having children at more than one school has to be overcome when the oldest child moves to secondary school anyway. Those against were concerned about building a relationship with the school, and felt it would be unfair if they had to consider sending their children to different schools if they moved house.
- 3.7** • **Changing the sibling priority at primary level.** This item attracted the greatest level of response with 98 submissions. Of these 14 were in favour and 84 were against. Parents accounted for 68 of the responses with five in favour, and 63 against, of which 12 were from one school. Many of the responses from parents were received following the raising awareness of the admissions consultation during the public consultation on the expansion of primary schools.
- 3.8** Of the parents who were against the proposal 13 did state that if the proposal were phased in, so that it did not affect those families already in primary school, then they would consider the change to be fair. The main reasons raised in objection to the change were the inconvenience that would be caused by dropping off at more than one school and the childcare arrangements.
- 3.9** It is not unexpected that the overwhelming majority of responses are against a change to the sibling priority. Care was taken in the consultation to approach the question 'neutrally' as Forum had requested, so no attempt was made to promote any possible change. It is perhaps more surprising that 27% were either in favour or would not be opposed if the changed was phased in to ensure that families with children already in primary school would not be affected.
- 3.10** It should be noted that analysis shows that such a change would have affected only 36 children last year, out of 2700 siblings. Of the 2403 that have already

applied this year 31 have not asked for the same school as their older sibling as the first preference. This is the typical proportion each year.

### 3.11 • Changes to school admission numbers:

Primary	Current A/L	Proposed A/L	
Middleton St Mary's	50	60	1 objection from a local resident
Middleton St Phillips	25	30	
Micklefield CE Primary	30	20	
Corpus Christi Primary	50	45	
Oulton Primary	50	60	
*Richmond Hill Primary	60	90	
Wykebeck Primary	45	60	
Bracken Edge	45	60	
Cottingley Primary	40	45	
<b>Secondary</b>			
Allerton High	180	185	
Rodillian	210	240	1 objection from a local school about affects on others

## 4 Responses received

- 4.1** We have received 105 responses, compared to 11 last year. These comprise 70 from parents, 20 from governing bodies or head teachers, seven from own admission authority schools, three from appeal panel members, two from elected members, and one each from a Diocese, a member of school staff and a local resident. Comments have been detailed above. With regard to admission number changes there were only two comments opposed to any of the changes.
- 4.2** A local resident has objected to the expansion of Middleton St Mary's, and has also objected to the planning department regarding some building work at the school. There is both need for and demand for the additional places the school are looking to offer. It is proposed that we proceed with the increase and allow the planning process to appropriately deal with the objections raised regarding transport and residential issues
- 4.3** There has been one objection to the increase at Rodillian from a local school. It is reasonable to say that we do not demographically require any increase in secondary places in the area in 2012, and the request to increase has come from the school. We have had issues with staff parking in bus bays at the school and have received a written assurance from the headteacher that this will be resolved. However the issue may require planning permission for additional parking, and it is too early to know whether this would be likely to be granted. On balance it would be prudent to turn down the request for an increase until such time as the issue with parking is resolved and the need for places arises. It would be possible for the school to request additional pupils in September 2012 without an increase in their admission number, should such demand exist and should the issue with the bus bays be resolved. They could then

formally request a permanent increase for September 2013.

**5** Recommendation

**5.1** That Admissions Forum offer any further views they may wish to on the outcome of the consultation.