

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9th April 2008.

PRESENT – Councillor Hughes (in the Chair); Councillors Armstrong, Davies, Francis, Galletley, Lawton, Richmond and Walker. (8)

STATUTORY CO-OPTEES – Canon S. Bamber and Mr. M. Frank. (2)

NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTEES – Mr. R. Egan. (1)

APOLOGIES – Councillors Lister, Long and A. J. Scott, Mrs. V. Mitchell, Mr. T. Fisher and Mr. D. Moyes. (6)

ABSENT – Ms. S. Robinson and Mr. N. Rees. (2)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – George McQueen, Assistant Director – Planning and Resources, Children’s Services, Rachel Jones, Head of School Place Planning and Assets Team, and Melanie Stainthorpe, Admissions Manager.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillor Chris McEwan, Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Children and Young People, Councillor I. Haszeldine, Chair of the Monitoring and Co-ordination Group, Councillor L. Haszeldine and Councillor Johnson.

CYP55. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – Councillors Armstrong, Francis, Hughes, Lawton and Walker, Canon Sheila Bamber and Mr. M. Frank each declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in Minute CYP56 below, as School Governors.

CYP56. SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2009/10 – CALL IN – Consideration was given to a ‘call in’ from the Cabinet meeting held on 18th March 2008 (Minute C192(2)/Mar/08 refers) requesting further information from the Officers to enable Members to understand how the selection criteria is applied and verified, to understand the mechanisms for record keeping, and to review the Associated Transport Costs.

The Assistant Director – Planning and Resources, Children’s Services, informed Members of the application of the equal preference system adopted by this Council in relation to school admissions, the consultation undertaken with the Local Admissions Forum, the verification mechanisms in place to ensure accurate information is provided by parents and that the criteria is applied appropriately, the methodology employed for recording information provided, and the School Admissions Appeals process.

Discussion ensued on the guidance available to parents in providing accurate information, the sanctions open to the Council in cases when false information is provided, the number of cases when false information has been provided by parents, the hierarchy used as the selection criteria in the equal preference system, the placing of Looked After Children, the selection information provided by the Council to

Voluntary Aided schools and Roman Catholic schools in relation to school placement applications, the consideration of specialisms in the selection process, the affect parental choice has on qualifying for associated transport, the implication of parental perceptions in relation to school performance and the selection process, the potential requirement for a greater number of Primary School places, and the recent changes in relation to Appeals Panels and the new Code of Practice.

RESOLVED – (a) That this Scrutiny Committee is satisfied with the information provided by the Assistant Director – Planning and Resources, Children’s Services, in relation to how the selection criteria is applied and verified, and the mechanisms for record keeping.

(b) That the issue of Associated Transport Costs be referred to the Monitoring and Co-ordination Group for further consideration.