

HARROW ADMISSIONS FORUM

9 JULY 2008

Chairman:	* Reverend P Reece (Church of England Diocese representative)
Councillors:	* Mrs Anjana Patel * Dinesh Solanki * Bill Stephenson
Community School Representatives:	<u>Governor</u> <u>Primary</u> <u>Secondary</u> (Vacancy) Sue Jones † Janice Howkins
Jewish School Representative:	Mrs D Palman
Roman Catholic School Representative:	* Mike Murphy
Church of England School Representative:	* Mrs S Hinton
Catholic Schools Diocese Representative:	* Mr Billiet
Primary Elected Parent Governor Representative:	* Mrs D Speel
Secondary Elected Parent Governor Representative:	* Mr R Chauhan
Harrow Council for Racial Equality Representative:	Saeed Ahmad
Early Years Development Partnership Representative:	* Helena Tucker

* Denotes Member present
† Denotes apologies received

[Note: Also in attendance Councillor Husain Akhtar]

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**71. **Election of Chairman:**

RESOLVED: That Reverend Paul Reece be appointed Chairman of the Forum for a period of one year.

[Note: The Education (Admissions Forum) (England) Regulations 2002 state that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall hold office until the next meeting which falls after the date which is a year after the meeting at which the Chairman or Vice-Chairman was elected, and on ceasing to hold office shall be eligible for re-election].

72. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance.

73. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.

74. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present. It was agreed that a verbal report be received on the Office of Schools Adjudicator Review of Admission Arrangements and New Draft Code of Practice on Admission Arrangements as the information had been received after the despatch of the agenda.

75. **Election of Vice-Chairman:**

RESOLVED: That Councillor Anjana Patel be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Forum for a period of one year.

(See also note under Minute 71)

76. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2008, be taken as read and signed as a correct record, subject to it being noted that Mrs S Hinton had submitted her apologies.

77. **Matters Arising:**

There were no matters arising.

78. **Public Questions, Petitions, Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put, or petitions or deputations received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rules 16, 14 and 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

79. **Krishna-Avanti School - Admission Arrangements:**

Further to the concern expressed by the Admissions Forum, the Governors of the Krishna-Avanti School had reviewed and amended their admission arrangements. The revised arrangements and Supplementary Information Form, which were contained in the appendices to the report, were in line with the comments made by representative members of the Forum at a meeting with Nitesh Gor from the Krishna-Avanti School on 15 April 2008.

In response to a question, it was noted that informal minutes of the meeting had been taken and a copy sent to Mr Gor to ensure a correct understanding. The Krishna-Avanti School had since had a meeting of the Governing Body and formally agreed the arrangements. An officer had advised the school of the need to update its website. An officer would be assisting the school as required.

In response to a question, the Forum was advised that the five nominations from the Bhaktivedanta Manor until 2010 were to protect employees of the Temple whose children were already attending a small school there. The decision had been taken by the former Schools Organisation Committee.

A member suggested that a couple of places be made available for children who did not belong to that faith. Following discussion, it was considered that this was not appropriate for a single form entry school due to the small numbers involved but that it should be encouraged when the school moved to two forms of entry. The new Head Teacher was happy to encourage non-Hindus to apply for any vacancies.

It was noted that when the tie-breaker needed to be applied, the address on the application form was used, whereas it was normal practice to take the address where child benefit was paid.

An officer advised the Forum that its role was to ensure that the school met the Code of Practice. The actual arrangements were the responsibility of the Governing Body.

RESOLVED: That the Forum agree the revised admission arrangements for the Krishna-Avanti School.

80. **Strategic Reference Group - School Organisation Admissions Focus Group Update:**

The Forum received a report on the work of the Admissions Focus Group established by the Harrow Admissions Forum to review admission arrangements to reflect Harrow's change in the age of transfer from 12+ to 11+.

The Vice-Chairman and Portfolio Holder for Schools and Children's Development stated that the arrangements had been thoroughly discussed by the Focus Group and that comments were sought from the Forum. It was noted that representatives from the Forum were amongst the membership of the Focus Group.

The Roman Catholic School representative drew attention to a situation whereby children in Catholic Schools could be disadvantaged, should Harrow decide to continue

with linked schools. This was due to the possibility that a child from a Catholic Primary School who did not gain a place at the Catholic Senior School might not then gain a place at a local linked school. The Portfolio Holder for Schools and Children's Development undertook to take this into consideration.

The Chairman stated that the London Diocesan Board was concerned at the difficulty of achieving a balance so there was perceived fairness and equity across the borough when a system whereby some schools had dual links prevented children from a sole link school from a denomination gaining a place at the local school.

A member of the Forum stated that it had been agreed that St John's situation would be considered when reviewing the admission rules to try to achieve the correct balance. It was also pointed out that discussion on the possibility of a link for denominational schools should have regard to the effect on pupils attending the school from outside Harrow.

The officer stated that it was hoped that the Voluntary Aided Sector would raise their concerns during the early soundings exercise currently taking place. The outcomes of this would be used to develop a set of proposals for formal consultation during the autumn.

The Forum was informed that as a result of Harrow adopting the 11+ age of transfer, all schools would become part of the co-ordinated admission arrangements across London. The 11+ transfer application form would enable parents to list six schools. This would include schools from both within and outside Harrow. In the transitional year pupils entering year 8 would be able to choose eight schools. Members of the Forum were encouraged to alert the Place Planning and Admissions section of any issues as soon as possible and to disseminate information to their Groups in order to ensure that responses were submitted.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

81. **Office of Schools Adjudicator Review of Admission Arrangements:**
The Manager, Place Planning and Admissions, informed the Forum that the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families had instructed the Office of the Schools Adjudicator to examine admission arrangements throughout the country. As a result of the Adjudicator suggesting the inclusion of default definitions, Harrow would probably be making some minor adjustment to the definitions which were part of the admission arrangements and would include a default definition for any school where no definition had been given.

Attention was drawn to the proposed changes in definition which would be conveyed to schools.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

82. **New Draft Code of Practice on Admission Arrangements:**
The Forum was advised of the new Draft Code of Practice which would apply to admission arrangements from 2010. The new Code would introduce a statutory timetable for consultation of at least 8 weeks between 1 December to 1 March each year.

It was agreed that, in order for the consultation on admission arrangements not to impact on the consultation on the proposals for the reorganisation of schools which was taking place 8 September to 5 December 2008, consultation on admission arrangements would take place from 8 December 2008 to 13 February 2009.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

83. **Date of Next Meeting:**

RESOLVED: That the date of the next meeting be 6.00 pm on Monday 6 October 2008.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 8.05 pm)

(Signed) REVEREND P REECE
Chairman