

# REPORT FOR:

# CABINET

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	14 March 2013
<b>Subject:</b>	Determination of Community School Admission Arrangements – Academic Year 2014/15
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Catherine Doran, Corporate Director of Children and Families
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Mitzi Green, Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and Families
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Decision subject to Call-in:</b>	Yes
<b>Enclosures:</b>	Annexe 1: Draft admission arrangements for community schools for 2014/15 Annexe 2: Details of responses to consultation

## Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

In accordance with the School Admissions Code, as the admissions authority for community schools, Harrow Council is required to consult before determining their admission arrangements. Consultation took place between 5<sup>th</sup> December 2012 and 30<sup>th</sup> January 2013. This report outlines the consultation responses and proposes the admissions arrangements for September 2014.

### Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Consider the feedback from the consultation on admission arrangements for the 2014-15 academic year.
- 2 Determine the community school admission arrangements without any further changes to the proposed arrangements and schemes other than the following:
  - Change the medical pupil criterion in the community school admission arrangements to allow priority to children who have to attend a specific school due to his/her social needs. This would only be in wholly exceptional circumstances and where there is involvement with social services and a supporting letter from a divisional director
  - Change the sibling criteria for Whitmore High School to allow sibling priority to pupils on roll and attending the school up to year 11 at the time of application.

**Reason:**

There is a statutory requirement under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 for admission authorities to determine admission arrangements by 15 April in the determination year (i.e. by 15 April 2013).

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Introduction**

1. In accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Harrow Council is required to consult before determining its admission arrangements for community schools.
2. The draft admission arrangements for community schools are at Annexe 1. The arrangements are presented in Parts from Part A to Part G.

### **Options Considered**

3. The Department for Education's School Admission Code provides the legislative framework for admission arrangements. In developing proposals for the admission arrangements for community schools, consultation guidance from the new code was considered and revisions developed accordingly.

4. In November 2012, the Department for Education published guidance for admission authorities' Fair Access Protocols. Consideration was given to this guidance in considering Harrow's Fair Access Protocol.

## Consultation

### Consultation arrangements

5. Full details of the proposed schemes of co-ordination, the proposed admission arrangements for 2014/15, Harrow's relevant area and Fair Access Protocol were circulated to:
  - Governors and headteachers of all Harrow schools;
  - All other admission authorities in the relevant area;
  - Neighbouring Local Authorities as required under The Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2002, and;
  - Local community groups.
6. Notices / posters were provided for schools, nurseries, pre-school playgroups, libraries, medical centres, doctors' surgeries, supermarkets, etc. to display in order to inform parents about the consultation.
7. Schools were provided with A4 flyers and response pro-formas and were asked to use their normal channels of communication to consult with parents (e.g. school newsletters, parents' evenings, school notice boards, etc.).
8. Additionally, a notice advising of the consultation was placed in the December edition of the Harrow People magazine, which is delivered to all households in Harrow. The consultation documents and a survey were also posted on the Harrow website for parents to respond on-line.
9. The proposed admission arrangements was presented to the Education Strategy Consultative Forum as information report in December 2013 prior to the formal consultation and noted the report.

### Consultation Responses

#### Response from Schools and Governors

10. Responses from governors/headteachers were received from 4 schools:

Schemes of co-ordination	Admission Arrangements	Fair access protocol
In favour	4	4
Against	0	0

#### Any other comments

11. A letter from the Executive Headteacher of Heathland School was submitted requesting consideration be given to changing the admission arrangements to allow priority to children of staff members.

Response: The local authority has not considered including this criterion for any of its community schools. This was discussed at the Harrow Admissions Forum prior to it being disbanded after the School Admissions Code 2012 made this criterion permissible. The Admissions Forum members considered that this criterion was not something that the Local Authority should implement as they did not believe this was in the interest of the community as a whole.

12. Comments were received from the governors of Vaughan Primary School regarding concerns about funding for permanent expansion.

Response: In June 2012 Harrow Cabinet determined statutory proposals to permanently expand nine schools on seven sites. The Council's Capital Programme includes an estimated cost of permanently expanding the nine schools. These schools will fill incrementally over a number of years. Pinner Park Junior School and Stanburn Junior School will expand from September 2014 when the additional pupils admitted to the Infant/First schools in previous years progress through to the Junior schools. It is planned that building works to accommodate the additional children in the permanently expanded schools will be undertaken to ensure sufficient space in the schools in advance of the pupils being admitted. Planning consents will be required for a number of these building projects which may impact on the building arrangements that are put in place.

#### Response from Parents

11. Parents can comment on any area of the admission arrangements. However, responses received concentrated mainly on the change to allow priority to children who have to attend a specific school due to his/her social needs and the change for Whitmore High School to allow sibling priority to children on roll and attending the school up to Year 11 at the time of application.

Response: The extension of the medical priority to include priority for pupils with social needs will be applied only when evidence from a senior officer of Children's Services social care department is received to ensure that this criterion is applied fairly and only used in truly exceptional circumstances.

Response: The sibling priority will not be extended to pupils who are attending sixth form.

A parent and a school commented on why children have to reapply if they have been attending the school nursery.

Response: Although not prevented by the School Admissions Code, this would disadvantage parents who choose not to send their children to a nursery, as there is no legal obligation for a child to attend school until Reception. Also this could disadvantage parents who need full day childcare and cannot accommodate the half days provided by the majority of school nurseries.

12. 91 individual responses were received from parents (including 8 website responses). A summary of the responses is as follows;

Harrow Council is proposing to change medical pupil criterion in the community school admission arrangements to allow priority to children who have to attend a specific school due to his/her social needs. This would only be in wholly exceptional circumstances and where there is involvement with social services and a supporting letter from a divisional director.	Harrow Council is proposing to change the sibling criteria for Whitmore High School to allow sibling priority to children on roll and attending the school up to year 11 at the time of application.
In favour                    81	In favour                    83
Against                      9	Against                      5
No Answer                  1 Given by Respondent	No Answer                  3 Given by Respondent

13. No specific themes emerged from the consultation. Details of all responses and comments received are attached at Annexe 2.

### **Responses from other local authorities and admission authorities**

14. A copy of the consultation report and schemes of co-ordination were sent to neighbouring Local Authorities. No responses were received.

### **Performance Issues**

15. Harrow is a high performing Local Authority and the large majority of local services are judged to be good or better by Ofsted. Schools in Harrow perform well in comparison to national and statistically similar local authorities. Most primary schools and all secondary schools are judged good or outstanding.
16. The proposed changes are not expected to have any impact on the performance indicators for education in Harrow.

### **Financial Implications**

17. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **Environmental Impact**

18. There are no environmental impact implications arising from this report.

### **Risk Management Implications**

19. Risk included on Directorate risk register? No  
20. Separate risk register in place? No

## Equalities implications

21. The equality impact assessment indicates that the equalities impact of Cabinet's decision will be effectively neutral. The Equalities Impact Assessment is available as background papers.

## Corporate Priorities

22. These considerations will support the Council's Corporate Priorities:
- United and involved communities: A Council that listens and leads.
  - Supporting and protecting people who are most in need.

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 18 February 2013		
Name: Sarah Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 18 February 2013		

## Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: David Harrington	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Divisional Director Strategic Commissioning
Date: 18 February 2013		

## Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: Andrew Baker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Divisional Director (Environmental Services)
Date: 15 February 2013		

## Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

**Contact:** Johanna Morgan, Education Professional Lead, Education Strategy and School Organisation, 020 8736 6841.

**Background Papers:**  
School Admissions Code 2012.  
Equalities Impact Assessment.

**Call-In Waived by the  
Chairman of Overview  
and Scrutiny  
Committee**

**NOT APPLICABLE**

*[Call-in applies]*