

Determined Admissions Arrangements for the 2023/2024 academic year

To: Children and Young People's Committee

Meeting Date: 18 January 2022

From: Executive Director: People and Communities

Electoral division(s): All, and in particular Alconbury and Kimbolton, Ely North and Newnham

Forward Plan ref: n/a

Key decision: No

Outcome: To seek approval to determine the qualifying co-ordinated scheme for admission to school and changes to the admissions arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools which would affect the admission of children in the 2023/24 academic year.

By agreeing to approve the admission arrangements for 2023/24, the Committee will be ensuring that the Council is meeting its legal obligations. In line with the requirements of the statutory Code of Admissions, the arrangements need to be determined and published by 28 February 2022, following the conclusion of consultation on the proposed changes.

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Determine the co-ordinated qualifying scheme and admission arrangements for all schools for whom the Council, as the Local Authority, is the admission authority as published in the consultation documents for admission to school in 2023/24.
- b) Support the proposal that a full and comprehensive review of the determined admission arrangements for all own admission authority schools is undertaken. This should include the published definitions of existing school catchment areas and admission policies for schools with a sixth form. Any issues, or concerns should be highlighted, recorded and shared with the respective admission authority for the school with a view to these being addressed immediately, where they are in breach of legislation, or as part of the annual consultation process for admission to school in 2024/25 which will commence in the autumn term of 2022.

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1. Background

- 1.1 The Local Authority (LA) is responsible for formulating, each academic year, a qualifying scheme in relation to the transition of children to each primary and secondary school in Cambridgeshire. The LA must consult in respect of the proposed scheme, where it is substantially different from the qualifying scheme adopted in the preceding academic year, or where the LA has not consulted on a qualifying scheme in the previous seven years.

In addition, the LA, as the admission authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools in Cambridgeshire, must determine the admission arrangements for these schools every year. Consultation of those arrangements is required when the following changes are proposed:

- A decrease in the Published Admission Number (PAN); and/or
- A change to the catchment area; and/or
- A change to over-subscription criteria.

There is no requirement on admission authorities to consult on any proposed increase to a school's PAN.

The statutory Admissions Code (2014) requires that the consultation period must be for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year.

- 1.2 All admission authorities must consult with:

- a) parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen;
- b) other persons in the relevant area who, in the opinion of the admission authority, have an interest in the proposed admissions;
- c) all other admission authorities within the relevant area (except that primary schools need not consult secondary schools);
- d) whichever of the governing body or the local authority is not the admission authority for the school; any adjoining neighbouring local authorities where the admission authority is the LA; and
- e) in the case of schools designated with a religious character, the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination.

- 1.3 Following the consultation period for admission to school in 2023/24, all admission authorities need to have determined their admission arrangements by 28 February 2022 and then notified all consultees of this within 14 days of that date. Once determined all admission authorities are required to publish a copy of the determined arrangements on their website as soon as possible, and no later than, 15 March in the determination year. All other admission authorities must send a copy of their full, determined arrangements to the LA by this date.

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 The consultation documents including the proposed co-ordinated qualifying scheme and admission arrangements for schools for whom the LA is the admission authority for 2023/24

were published on 1 November 2021. The six week consultation period concluded on 13 December 2021. Prior to this date all foundation, voluntary aided and academy schools in Cambridgeshire had been contacted to remind them of the need to follow the consultation and determination process as set out in the Code.

The LA's consultation was in respect of proposed PAN changes to two schools:

Spring Meadow Infants – PAN reduction from 120 to 60

There has been one objection to the PAN reduction for Spring Meadow from Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust (DEMAT), suggesting this could lead to Isle of Ely Primary expanding their entry to 3FE and suggest a middle ground of 90.

LA response: There is no evidence to suggest it is necessary to go to a PAN 90. Reception data forecasts remain below 60 for the next five years so the change does reflect reality. Although concern has been expressed by DEMAT that the LA will ask Isle of Ely to take a 3rd FE in preference to Spring Meadow Infants, when Place Planning and Admissions met with DEMAT and Ely St Mary's it was made clear this was not the case and would entirely depend on where the demand was.

Newnham Croft – PAN reduction from 34 to 30

There were no objections or comments received regarding the PAN reduction for Newnham Croft.

Catchment changes:

Alconbury Primary School consulted on a proposed change to the school's catchment area to include Upton.

There were no objections or comments received regarding the change to the catchment area for Alconbury Primary School during the consultation period.

- 2.2 The LA does not publish details of proposed admission arrangements for own admission authority schools.

3. Alignment with corporate priorities

- 3.1 A good quality of life for everyone

There are no significant implications for this priority.

- 3.2 Thriving places for people to live

There are no significant implications for this priority.

- 3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

There are no significant implications for this priority.

- 3.4 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

Once the Committee's approval has been secured, and the Admission Arrangements are 'Determined' the Council will be able to demonstrate it has met the requirements of the Code and education law.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

As stated above, the Council is able to demonstrate that it met the requirements under the Admissions Code with regard to consultation.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? No as not relevant

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement? No as not relevant

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law? Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact? No as not relevant

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications? Yes or No

Name of Officer:

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? No as not relevant

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health? No as not relevant

5. Source documents

5.1 [Annual consultation and determined admissions arrangements - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)