

## Determined Admissions Arrangements for the 2020/2021 academic year

To:	Children and Young People's Committee
Meeting Date:	6 October 2020
From:	Executive Director Children and Young People's Services: Wendi Ogle-Welbourn
Electoral division(s):	All
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Forward Plan ref:	N/A
Key decision:	No
Outcome:	<p>To seek retrospective 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 2021/22 academic year.</p> <p>By agreeing to approve the admission arrangements for 2021/22, 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 should have been determined by 28 February 2020, following the conclusion of consultation of the proposed changes.</p>
Recommendation:	<p>a) The Committee is asked to retrospectively 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 2021/22.</p> <p>b) The Committee give its support to 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 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 2022/23 which will commence in the autumn term.</p>

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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 school 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 and the local authority who are not the admission authority; 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 2021/22, all admission authorities should have determined their admission arrangements by 28 February 2020 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.

## 2.0 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 2021/22 were published on 18 November 2019 until 13 January 2020. 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 limited to one proposed change, a reduction from 80 to 60 in the Published Admission Number (PAN) of Eastfield Infant School in St Ives. The school, which is a community school maintained by the LA, requested the change. No objections or comments were received to this proposal during the consultation period.

- 2.2 In addition, the LA published details of proposed admission arrangements for own admission authority schools who had requested the LA do this on their behalf. The full annual consultation documentation can be viewed on the Council's webpages using the link below:

[Annual consultation documentation](#)

- 2.3 Regrettably, due to an oversight by officers, the Committee's approval to the proposed change to the admission arrangements for 2021/22 was not sought following the conclusion of the consultation and prior to their publication on the Council's website. The Office of the Schools Adjudicator's judgement is that the Council is currently in breach of the Admissions Code. This needs to be rectified as quickly as possible to ensure that the Council is compliant with education law.

### 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

As stated in Section 2.3, until the Committee has given its approval to the proposed admission arrangements for 2021/22, the Council is operating in breach of the statutory Admissions Code. Once the Committee's approval has been secured, the Council will be able to demonstrate to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator that it has met the requirements of the Code and education law.

Officers will ensure that the proposed changes to admission arrangements for 2022/23 and beyond are scheduled for consideration and approval by the Committee as part of its forward agenda plan.

#### 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 Source documents

[Annual consultation documentation](#)