

## DEVON LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM

27 March 2009

### Present

#### Devon County Council

Councillors Way (Chairman) and Spence

#### Devon Schools Group

#### Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

Ms Boote, Mr Haigh, and Mrs Nield

#### Foundation Schools

Mr Evans

#### Church of England Diocesan Board of Education)

Mrs Mabin

#### Parent Governor Representative

Mrs Corrigan

#### Community Representatives

Mr Duttson

#### Early Years Childcare Development Partnership

Ms Butler

#### Devon Association of Governors

Mr I Rogers

#### CYPS

Ms Booth

#### Cornwall County Council

Mrs J Turner

#### Somerset County Council

Mr Pollock

#### Observer

Councillor Pennington

#### Apologies

Ms Penny Burnside (Voluntary Aided Schools)

Ms Olivia Denson (Service Families)

Ms J Inett (Torbay)

Mrs D Wallace (Plymouth Council)

91 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meetings held on 7 January 2009 and 20 November 2008 were signed as correct records

92 **Choice Adviser Service Annual Report**

The Forum considered the report of the Secretary ([CY/09/30](#)) on the staffing, role and work of the Choice Advisors during March 2008 -2009 and future development of the service. The complement (less than one full time employee ) had helped over 350 families through the primary and secondary admissions phases. The report also outlined proposed survey and monitoring arrangements. The Forum received presentations from Choice Advisers Melanie Henrywood, Ms K Octigan and Ms C Down on individual case studies (anonymised) and how they had supported the families involved.

The Forum also received the report of the Secretary ([CY/09/31](#)) on the actions taken by the Service arising from the LAF recommendations (listed in the Forum's Annual Report page 9). These related primarily to forming relationships and links with agencies (and within the CYPSs Directorate) and promoting their work particularly in relation to children in care and children from different ethnic and social backgrounds, extension of the services in respect of the Primary phase, and work and links with Parent Carer groups. Councillor Spence suggested that the Service should also contact Parent Carer Voice and Ms Booth also suggested further contact in respect of children in care, which she could facilitate.

**RESOLVED**

(a) that the proposal that the Devon Choice Adviser is continued to March 2011 be agreed;

(b) that the proposal that LAF commission a random follow-up survey to provide monitoring feedback for quality assurance on behalf of the Service be supported (further detail will be provided at the next meeting).

93 **Local Admissions Forum Constitution**

The Forum considered the report of the Secretary ([CX/09/33](#)) on a revised constitution following publication of the new School Admission code effective from 10 February 2009.

The Chairman also welcomed new members to their first meeting of the Forum Ms Boote, Ms Butler and Mrs Corrigan.

Members discussed the proposed quorum and asked that this be given further consideration and acknowledged the benefits of the participation of officers from neighbouring authorities.

## **RESOLVED**

- (a) that the revised Membership (as detailed in Appendix 11 of this report) be noted and that the constitution be amended accordingly;
- (b) that the Community Representatives as listed be appointed for a four year period;
- (c) that representatives from Neighbouring Authorities be invited to meetings of this Forum in a non voting, advisory capacity.

### **94 Determination of Admission Arrangements for 2010/11**

The Forum considered the report of the Secretary ([CY/09/28](#)) on the admissions arrangements proposed for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in the Devon Local Authority area following consultation to 1 March 2009. The report detailed the issues arising and representations from individual schools relating primarily to their proposed PANs. The report also detailed LA recommendations and the report to be submitted to the Council's Executive in the afternoon following this meeting covering proposed PANs and oversubscription criteria (for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools), the coordinated admission proposals in respect of all Devon schools, and a proposal to consult on new In-Year Fair Access arrangements in early 2010 for operation from September 2010.

The Policy and Strategy Officer (Education) also reported on DCSF advice suggesting that the LA must accept a written application as being on time so long as the parent can prove it was submitted by the closing date, by providing, for example, proof of posting.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted along with the representations and the recommended responses to the Executive, to include acceptance of application common applications forms subject to the parent proving posting by the closing date.

### **95 Response to LAF Annual Report 2008 Recommendations**

The Forum considered the report of the Secretary ([CY/09/29](#)) on measures proposed to address recommendations within the Forum's annual report 2008.

## **RESOLVED**

- (a) that the report be noted and that the measures intended to address the recommendations within the Forum's annual report 2008 be approved, and
- (b) that a further report be made to the next meeting on possible incentives for schools in respect of in-year admissions.

### **96 School Admissions Code of Practice - Revision 2009**

The Forum considered the report of the Secretary ([CY/09/24](#)) on the main changes to the Schools Admission Code of Practice and their expected impact on the Local Authority. Councillor Spence asked for a legal opinion in respect of local politicians

attending Admission Appeal hearings on behalf of parents and what constituted a prejudicial interest.

### **RESOLVED**

(a) that the changes to the School Admissions Code of Practice as at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/sacode/> and detailed in the appendix to this report and their potential impact on the Local authority be noted;

(b) that the proposals to consult schools on co-ordination of In-Year Admissions and fair access Protocol be supported; and

(c) that a legal opinion be sought as to what constitutes a prejudicial interest in respect of local politicians attending Admission Appeal hearings in support of parents.

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### **Executive Response on the Points of Entry Discussion**

The Committee received the report of the Secretary ([CY/09/26](#)) on the decision of the Executive to postpone formal consultation on points of entry to primary school pending the outcome of the Rose Review. In the interim steps would be taken by the LA to clarify with parents their entitlements in respect of when children start school, through for example Early Years setting and Local Learning Communities. Councillor Spence empathised that the acronym CAF should not be used and the full term Common Application Form should be referred to in information/publicity material.

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### **Dates of Next Meetings**

The dates for the regular meetings are as follows:

Friday 10 July 2009 (changed from 17 July)

Friday, 20 November 2009

Thursday, 18 March 2010

At 10.30 am at County Hall.

The meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 12.40 pm

The Minutes of the Forum are published on the County Council's Website at:-  
[http://www.devon.gov.uk/admissions\\_forum.htm](http://www.devon.gov.uk/admissions_forum.htm)