
SCHOOL ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS 2023/24

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with the opportunity to carry out pre-decision scrutiny of the report to Cabinet, attached at **Appendix A**, prior to its consideration by the Cabinet at its meeting on the 10 March 2022.

Background

2. In order to comply with the Section 89 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006, School Admission arrangements for implementation in the 2023/2024 academic year (i.e., from September 2023) must be determined on or before 15th April 2022.
3. The Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006 and the School Admissions Code set out the procedure which admission authorities should follow when determining their admission arrangements, including that proper consultation must be carried out and that the arrangements should be determined by 15th April in the school year beginning two years before the school year which the arrangements will be for.
4. Prior to the annual consultation, the Council works closely with the Cardiff Admissions Forum to consider how well existing and proposed admission arrangements serve the interests of children and parents city-wide. The

Cardiff Admissions Forum includes Diocesan representatives, representatives of community and voluntary controlled, foundation and voluntary aided schools, parent governors and local community representatives.

Structure of Papers

5. The draft Cabinet report (**Appendix A**) sets out the following issues:
 - Draft School Admission Arrangements 2023/24 – *Appendix 1 to the Cabinet report*
 - Summary of the Council's School Admission Arrangements 2023/2024 Consultation - *points 6-10 of the Cabinet report*
 - Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements – *points 11 – 24 of the Cabinet report; plus Appendix 2*
 - Responses received in respect of the draft policy during the consultation period – *points 25/26 of the Cabinet report*
 - Formal responses, including an appraisal of these responses – *points 27/28 of the Cabinet report; plus Appendix 3*
 - Responses received from online survey, including an appraisal of these responses – *points 30 – 34 of the Cabinet report; plus Appendices 4 and 5*
 - Responses regarding the implementation of co-ordinated primary school admissions, including an appraisal of these responses – *points 35 – 55 of the Cabinet report*
 - Responses regarding the inclusion of The Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School within the co-ordinated secondary school admissions process, including an appraisal of these responses – *points 56 – 66 of the Cabinet report*
 - Responses regarding whether co-ordinated admissions should be extended to other schools, including an appraisal of these responses – *points 67 – 71 of the Cabinet report.*
 - Other responses received (offer day date; demand for school places; sibling criteria), including an appraisal of these responses – *points 72 – 84 of the Cabinet report*
 - Local Member consultation - *point 89 of the Cabinet report*

- Scrutiny Consideration – *point 90 of the Cabinet report*
6. The draft cabinet report also provides details on the following areas:
- Financial Implications – *point 92 of the Cabinet report*
 - Legal Implications – *points 93 – 100 of the Cabinet report*
 - HR Implications – *point 101 of the Cabinet report*
 - Transport Implications – *points 102 - 103 of the Cabinet report*
 - Property Implications – *point 104 of the Cabinet report*
 - Impact on the Welsh Language – *points 105 - 109 of the Cabinet report*
 - Well-being of Future Generations – *point 110 of the Cabinet report*
 - Equality Impact Assessment – *point 111 of the Cabinet report, plus Appendix 6*
7. The Cabinet report is also supported by the following Appendices:
- **Appendix 1** – Draft School Admissions Policy 2023/24
 - **Appendix 2** – Coordinated Admission Arrangements consultation document
 - **Appendix 3** – Formal response
 - **Appendix 4** – Notes of points raised at online drop-in sessions
 - **Appendix 5** – Summary analysis of consultation responses
 - **Appendix 6** – Equality Impact Assessment

Issues highlighted in the report to Cabinet

Changes proposed compared to 2022/23

8. The proposed changes to the arrangements for 2023/2024 compared to the arrangements for 2022/2023, relate to the following (*point 7 in the Cabinet report*):
- Reference to the 'Fresh Start' panel in place of the 'Hard to Place' panel.
 - Clarification of the Childcare Offer.
 - Expansion of co-ordinated arrangements.

- Increased Published Admission Numbers for Pentyrch Primary School, Ysgol Y Wern, Cantonian High School and Radyr Comprehensive School.

Consultation and Methodology

9. The Council's draft School Admission Arrangements 2023/2024 were issued for consultation on 22 November 2021 to all those the Council are required to consult with as set out in the Welsh Government's School Admissions Code (Headteachers, Governing Bodies, Diocesan Directors, neighbouring Local Education Authorities). As a significant change was proposed to the application process for entry to primary education, the Council also consulted directly with those parents whose children would enter primary education in 2023/2024.
10. The policy was published on the Council website with details of how responses could be submitted which provided an opportunity for any interested parties to comment. Responses were requested to be returned by the consultation closing date of 17 January 2022.
11. Details of the consultation were promoted via social media and schools.
12. A total of 58 responses were received during the consultation period. Of the 58 responses received to the consultation, there were 47 respondents who identified that they were responding as parents/guardians or grandparents, three who identified that they were responding as governors, two who identified that they were responding as a local residents, one who identified that they were responding both as a parent/guardian and a governor, one who identified that they were responding as both a parent/guardian and local resident, one who identified that they were responding as both a local resident and a member of staff and one who did not specify who they were responding as.

13. As part of the consultation on the School Admission Arrangements 2023/24, responses were sought on the proposals to:
- Implement a co-ordinated primary school admissions process for the Reception age group intake from September 2023.
 - Include The Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School within the co-ordinated secondary school admissions process for the Year 7 age group intake from September 2023.

Summary

14. Arising from the consultation, the following conclusions were reached (*points 85 – 88 of the Cabinet report*):
- It is recommended that primary school co-ordinated admissions are implemented. The inclusion of other Admission Authorities will be subject to their own consultations on admission arrangements and approval of the arrangements by their Governing Bodies by 15 April 2022 in accordance with the determination period set in the Welsh Government Admissions Code.
 - It is recommended that The Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School be included in the secondary school co-ordinated admission arrangements from September 2023 subject to the approval of the admission arrangements by the Governing Body of the school.
 - Should any Governing Bodies elect to remain outside of the coordinated process, the process for applying to these schools will remain unchanged and information regarding admissions to these schools will continue to be included in the Council's Admissions to Schools booklet available to view on the Council's website.

- The other changes are for clarification or to reflect changes to published numbers and received no comments. These are also recommended for implementation.

Reason for Recommendations

15. The Council is required to review its school admission arrangements annually and to agree the arrangements following appropriate consultation.
16. The Cabinet is recommended to:
 - Determine the attached Council's draft School Admission Arrangements 2023/2024 as set out in the Admission Policy 2023/2024. (*Appendix 1 to the Cabinet Report*).

Scope of Scrutiny

17. The scope of this scrutiny is for Members to consider and provide comments on the draft report to Cabinet, prior to its consideration of the report on 10 March 2022.

Way Forward

18. Councillor Sarah Merry (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education Employment, Skills), Melanie Godfrey (Director of Education and Lifelong learning), Richard Portas (Programme Director for the School Organisation Programme) and Brett Andrewartha (SOP Programme Manager) will be available to answer any questions Members may have.
19. This report will also enable Members to provide any comments, concerns or recommendations to the Cabinet Member prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

Legal Implications

20. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

21. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Review and assess the information contained in the draft Cabinet Report, attached at **Appendix A**, together with any information provided at the meeting;

- 2) Provide any recommendations, comments or advice to the Cabinet Member and / or Director of Education and Lifelong Learning prior to the report's consideration by Cabinet.

Davina Fiore

Director of Governance and Legal Services

03 March 2022