

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Education and Skills held at
10.00 am on Monday, 1 February 2021

Present:

Members: Councillor K Maton (Cabinet Member)
 Councillor J Blundell (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Directorate):

Education and Skills: S Heawood

Law and Governance: M Rose, C Sinclair

Public Business

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable interests.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 February, 2020 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

3. Community and Voluntary Controlled School Admission Policies for 2022/23 and Co-ordinated School Admission Schemes for 2022/23

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills considered a report of the Director of Education and Skills which indicated that the local authority is the admission authority for all community and voluntary controlled primary, infant and junior schools in Coventry and is responsible for setting the admission arrangements for these schools. It is proposed to reduce the published admission numbers (PAN) at Coundon primary school and therefore in line with the requirements for the School Admissions Code 2014, consultation has taken place on the admission arrangements for 2022.

The co-ordinated schemes for admissions into all primary and secondary schools have to be adopted by 28 February each year and published. As there has been no significant change to the schemes since the consultation in November 2018, there is no requirement to consult on these co-ordination scheme arrangements.

After several years of expanding primary schools across the City, recently birth rates have been reducing and there has been a lower demand for places in reception at primary school. This trend is forecast to continue. Where schools have high numbers of spare places this creates financial difficulties for the schools. In order to meet these challenges as a local authority, the Council need to be able to offer a sustainable level of school places to offer parental choice whilst supporting schools to manage their financial position.

All primary schools were notified in 2019/20 academic year of the general picture of falling demand. Figures were updated in Autumn 2020 which show forecasts of 14% available spaces across the city which is considerably above the Department for Education recommended levels of 4 – 8% spare capacity. Schools were asked to consider whether their governing bodies would wish to consult on reducing their published admission numbers (PAN). Meetings were held with schools in local planning areas where forecasts showed particularly high levels of surplus places. Two academies have consulted on reducing their 2022 PAN as a result of this work, and one community school requested a reduction.

Coundon primary school requested a reduction in their PAN from 2021 and so a separate in year variation application was made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator to reduce the admission number from 90 to 60. Whilst awaiting the result of this application, consultation was started for a reduction from 2022 to 60. The consultation was open from 25 November 2020 to 6 January 2021. On 8 December 2020 the Office of the Schools Adjudicator published their decision to agree to the reduction of the PAN at Coundon primary school for 2021 to 60. In this decision they noted the importance of the school undertaking a public consultation on having a PAN of 60 from 2022.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills:-

- 1) Determines the Admissions Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary, Infant and Junior Schools for 2022/23 (As detailed in Appendix 1 to the report).**
- 2) Determines the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Primary, Infant and Junior Schools in Coventry for 2022/23 (As detailed in Appendix 2 to the report)**
- 3) Determines the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Secondary Schools in Coventry for 2022/23 (As detailed in Appendix 3 to the report).**

4. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

5. Any Other Items of Urgent Public Business

There were no other items of urgent public business.

(The meeting closed at 10.20am)