

MINUTES of a MEETING of the PEMBROKESHIRE ADMISSION FORUM held via a VIRTUAL MEETING on THURSDAY, 10 JUNE 2021 at 8.30a.m.

Present:

Councillors Alison Tudor and Guy Woodham

Debbie Davies (Chair) - Head Teacher, Prendergast CP School
Paul Edwards (Vice-Chair) - Head Teacher, Ysgol Bro Gwaun
Heather Cale - Head Teacher, St Mark's VA School
Rev John Cecil - Church in Wales Representative
Paul Harris - Head Teacher, Stepaside CP School
Ven. Paul Mackness - Church in Wales Representative
Steven Richards-Downes - Director of Education
Erica Davies - Admissions Officer

Also in Attendance:

Huw Jones – Resources & Governance Manager
David Thompson - Policy & Improvement Programme Manager
Matthew Johns - Statutory Transport Officer
Lydia Evans - Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Davies and Alison Kavanagh (PGR)

1. Admission Forum Membership

The Policy & Improvement Programme Manager advised that the Chair, Debbie Davies, Head Teacher of Prendergast CP School would be taking early retirement therefore this meeting would be her last meeting as a Member of the Forum. It was stated that the core membership currently consisted of 13 Members and 1 vacancy and the following updates were given:

New Appointments:

- It was stated that Teleri Williams resigned from her post as Admissions Officer on 30 April 2021 and following a successful recruitment process to replace Teleri, Erica Davies was appointed as Admissions Officer. Members welcomed to Erica to the forum.
- It was noted that Mrs Alison Kavanagh was appointment as Parent Governor Representative.
- Following a request at the last meeting for a Transport Officer to attend the meetings, Matthew Johns agreed to attend as an additional Officer and it was stated that if Matthew was unavailable at any time then Owen Roberts would take his place.
- It was stated that Yasmin Todd had been appointed by the Local Authority as the Regional Military Services co-ordinator. Due to schools having a service family presence the Forum were asked to consider whether they wished to appoint Yasmin as a 'Representative of the Local Community' (representing Military Service Families).

Vacancies:

- The one vacancy was highlighted to be the position of Roman Catholic Church representative and it was stated that although nominations had been requested nothing had been received from Mr Paul White. Rev John Cecil advised that he would prompt Mr Paul White on the matter when they were next in contact.

Terms of Office due to end:

- Councillor John Davies' Term of Office ended on 1 June 2021 but confirmation of re-appointment for a further 4 years had been received from the Leader, Councillor David Simpson.
- Councillor Alison Tudor's Term of Office ended on 8 June 2021 but confirmation of re-appointment for a further 4 years had been received from the Leader, Councillor David Simpson.
- Steven Richards-Downes, Term of Office was due to end on 1 August 2021.
- Paul Edwards, Headteacher nominated by Community/VC's Term of Office was due to end on 4 October 2021.
- Paul Harris, Headteacher nominated by Community/VC's Term of Office was due to end on 4 October 2021.

The Vice-Chairman advised that PASH were currently looking at the allocation of Headteachers to Forums and Committees so changes may be made in the upcoming weeks as to the representative attending the Forum but an update would be provided when decisions had been made. It was noted that a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman would need to be appointed at the start of the next meeting.

Moved by Ven. Paul Mackness; Seconded by Rev John Cecil

DECISION:

That Yasmin Todd be invited to join the Forum membership as a representative of the Local Community, representing Military Service Families.

ACTION	Responsible Officer
That Yasmin Todd be invited to join the Forum membership as a representative of the Local Community, representing Military Service Families.	For the Policy & Improvement Programme Manager to write to Yasmin Todd to invite her to join the Membership.
That the appointment of a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman be added to the next forum agenda.	Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

DECISION

The group agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2020 were an accurate record.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

The Policy & Improvement Programme Manager made reference to page 6 of the Minutes and provided the following updates:

- It was stated that in regards to the appeal booklet and form, following feedback received from the Chairman of the Appeals Panel a number of minor changes were made to the appeals form which was now available online and it was stated that work was ongoing with the I.T. department to create a digital appeals form.
- Reference was then made to the Schools Admissions and Transport page on the website and it was stated that the landing page had been developed to simplify information and to include a school transport entitlement checker with a pop-up prompt.

4. Reception September 2021

The Admissions Officer provided an update on the current status of reception places for September 2021 as follows:

- It was stated that 1048 applications had been received in total with 9 schools receiving more applications than places available. It was stated that 6 out of the 9 schools had confirmed that they could accommodate the additional pupils and waiting lists were created for the schools with no additional space which were stated to be changing daily.
- It was stated that applications had not been received from 13 pupils although reminder letters had been sent to the parents advising them that they needed to apply.
- A breakdown was provided for each school outlining the current allocated places.

5. Secondary transfer for September 2021

[Paul Harris, Head Teacher, Stepaside CP School left the meeting at this juncture]

The Admissions Officer outlined the current status of secondary transfers for September 2021 as stated within the agenda pack although advised that since the agenda was published some numbers may have altered slightly due to late applications.

The Vice-Chairman raised concerns specifically regarding intake at Ysgol Bro Gwaun, stating that children who were not within the catchment area were being allocated places before those living within the catchment area due to applications being received late from catchment area pupils which had resulted in a shortage of places and the school having to put on 5 teaching groups for the ensuing school year which would not be sustainable for future years. It was recognised that the problem was not a process issue but suggestions were requested as to how the Authority/School could stop this from happening again in future.

On considering the request it was acknowledged that there wasn't anything official that could be put in place to stop that from happening but a suggestion was made by the Resources & Governance Manager for the school to ensure that good relationships were established with feeder schools so reminders could be given to catchment area parents encouraging and supporting them to apply early to ensure their child secures a place and by also keeping a running record of who may require a place. All suggestions were taken on board.

6. Sixth Form admission arrangements

The Policy & Improvement Programme Manager outlined the sixth form appeal details as included within the agenda pack and stated that most actions outlined within the Compliance Exercise were now complete or were being dealt with by the relevant Headteachers/Heads of Sixth Form.

The Policy & Improvement Programme Manager advised that he had been in contact with the relevant Headteachers/Heads of Sixth Form and reassured the Forum that most arrangements had now been received and would be published to the website imminently therefore there was nothing further the Forum needed to do at this stage.

7. Report on admission appeals

The Policy & Improvement Programme Manager outlined the current admission appeal position as follows:

Since the last meeting of the Forum on 5 November 2020, **42** individual appeals were received.

Of the **42** appeals, **24** were subsequently cancelled due to a change of circumstances or due to places being offered at a later date.

Of the remaining appeals, **17** were heard with **11** being upheld and **6** refused as follows:

- 5 – Ysgol Caer Elen - upheld
- 3 – Milford Haven Comprehensive - upheld
- 1 – Haverfordwest High VC - upheld
- 1 – Ysgol Bro Gwaun - upheld
- 1 – Pennar – upheld
- 2 – Fenton - refused
- 2 – Tavernspite - refused
- 1 – Lamphey - refused

- 1 – Ysgol Caer Elen - refused

The remaining 1 (Ysgol Bro Gwaun) was due to be heard in the next 30 days:

The Resources & Governance Manager advised the Forum that an increasing trend was being seen in relation to the numbers of appeals being submitted although it was stated that once the complex process is explained to the parents many withdraw the appeal. It was hoped that the appeals form would assist with the matter and highlight to parents the information that would be required to submit a formal appeal.

8. Suggestions for future items for consideration by the Forum

No suggestions for future items were received.

9. Any Other Business

Both the Chair and Policy & Improvement Programme Manager expressed their sincere thanks on behalf of the Forum to Teleri Williams for her many years of dedicated service to schools admissions and wished her the very best in her new role.

The Director of Education, on behalf of the Forum, mentioned the impending retirement of the Forums Chair, Debbie Davies - Head Teacher of Prendergast CP School and thanked her for her service to the Education community within Pembrokeshire in both her professional and personal roles as a leader and Headteacher and wisher her well for the future.

ACTION	Responsible Officer
That a letter be sent to Teleri Williams on behalf of the Forum expressing their sincere thanks for her many years of dedicated service to schools admissions.	Policy & Improvement Programme Manager

10. Date of next meeting

The group agreed the dates of future meetings as follows:

- 4 November 2021 - 08:30am
- 9 June 2022 – 08:30am

The meeting ended at 9.14a.m.