

**MINUTES of a MEETING of the PEMBROKESHIRE ADMISSION FORUM held via SKYPE FOR BUSINESS on THURSDAY, 18 JUNE 2020 at 10.00a.m.**

**Present:**

Councillors Alison Tudor and Guy Woodham

Debbie Davies (Chairman) - Head Teacher, Prendergast CP School  
Heather Cale - Head Teacher, St Mark's VA School  
Rev. John Cecil - Church in Wales Representative  
Ven. Paul Mackness - Church in Wales Representative  
Steven Richards-Downes - Acting Director for Children & Schools  
Teleri Williams - Admissions Officer

**Also in Attendance:**

Huw Jones - Resources & Governance Manager  
Hubert Mathias - Transport & Fleet Manager  
David Thompson - Policy & Improvement Programme Manager  
Susan Sanders - Democratic and Scrutiny Services Manager  
Lydia Evans - Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer

**Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Davies, Paul Edwards and Paul Harris

**1. Variation to the running order**

The Forum was advised that a number of variations to the running order would be made and the agenda would be taken in the following order:

1. Appointment of Chair
2. Appointment of Vice-Chair
3. Annual Report from Transport
4. Admission Forum Membership
5. Review of Constitution and Terms of Reference
6. Minutes of the previous meeting
7. Matters arising from the Minutes
8. Summary of admission arrangements during the Covid19 Lockdown
9. Update on Admission Policy for Language Centres
10. Update on Admission Procedure flowcharts for schools
11. Update on secondary transfer for September 2020
12. Report on admission appeals
13. Review of Parent Information Booklet for 2021-22
14. Suggestions for future items for consideration by the Forum
15. Date of next meeting

**2. Appointment of Chair**

Moved by Councillor Ven. Paul Mackness; Seconded by Heather Cale

**RESOLVED**

That Debbie Davies be elected as Chair for the ensuing biennial period.

### **3. Appointment of Vice-Chair**

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

#### **RESOLVED**

That Paul Edwards be elected as Vice-Chair for the ensuing biennial period.

### **4. Annual Report from Transport**

The Transport & Fleet Manager provided a verbal update stating that transport and admissions had worked successfully over the past 12 months although it was highlighted that issues had arisen with an increased number of admissions requiring transport to take them to and from a school some distance away from their home when there was a school within close proximity to their home address which was something transport and education were continually working on.

### **5. Admission Forum Membership**

The Policy & Improvement Programme Manager provided an update on the current Forum Membership with it being stated that the Forum was currently running at full membership capacity with 14 Members.

It was noted that the Terms of Office for the below three Members were due to expire and appointments would need to be arranged:

- Debbie Davies - Head Teacher at Prendergast CP School – Term of Office expiring on 13.10.2020. It was noted that nominations would need to be made via the Headteachers group
- Sue Roberts - Roman Catholic Church - Term of Office expiring on 20.10.2020. It was noted that a representative would need to be allocated by the Diocese.
- Phillip Williams - Parent Governor – Term of Office expiring on 03.11.2020. It was noted that nominations would need to be made via the Parent Governor Group.

### **6. Review of Constitution and Terms of Reference**

The Policy & Improvement Programme Manager stated that no guidance had been received in regards to the treatment of service children so it was still unclear as to whether the Forum needed to include a representative from that group. It was advised that the item of business be deferred to the next meeting.

#### **AGREED**

To defer this item of business to the next meeting.

## **7. Minutes of the previous meeting**

### **AGREED**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2019 be approved as a correct record.

## **8. Matters arising from the Minutes**

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the previous meeting with it being stated that the Annual Report from Transport had been provided earlier in this meeting.

## **9. Summary of admission arrangements during the Covid19 Lockdown**

The Policy & Improvement Programme Manager informed the Forum that the normal admission round for Nursery admissions for January, April and September 2021 were ongoing as per the timetable and parents had been informed on 11 June 2020.

It was stated that on 26 March 2020 legal had to postpone appeals hearings following changes to the admission appeal regulations following the Coronavirus outbreak. It was noted that no appeals had been heard since 16 March 2020 but would resume on 22 June 2020 with 14 appeals currently waiting to be heard.

The Admissions Officer provided an update on reception allocations stating that all reception allocation requests had been accepted except for 6 refusals at Ysgol Caer Elen of which some were going through the formal appeal process. It was noted that although Ysgol Caer Elens allocation number was 45 they were accepting up to 60 allocations per year group as they had the additional classroom capacity.

The Admissions Officer then proceeded to provide an update on nursery allocations for January, April and September 2021 with it being stated that all places had been allocated with the exception of 3 refusals for Wolfscastle and 26 refusals for Ysgol Caer Elen. It was highlighted that Nursery numbers had been slightly lower than previous years although additional late applications were being received.

Concerns were expressed with the high number of refusals for Ysgol Caer Elen and it was commented that additional provisions needed to be arranged due to increasing demand for Welsh Medium Provision.

A suggestion was made for a consultation to be arranged for Welsh Medium Provision within the Milford Haven area. It was stated that intelligence had already been received highlighting demand for Welsh Medium Provision within the Milford Haven area and would be looked at imminently.

## **10. Update on Admission Policy for Language Centres**

The Resources & Governance Manager stated that the Policy for Language Centres would now form part of the consultation for the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which will be planned over the next 12 months as it will be enforced from 2021.

The Acting Director for Children & Schools advised that the regulations for the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan have been relaxed down to six months.

#### **11. Update on Admission Procedure flowcharts for schools**

The Policy & Improvement Programme Manager provided an update stating that following the last Forum meeting a working group was created which assisted in the creation of the flow charts. The Forum was advised that the flow charts outlining the process for new admissions had been sent over to Headteachers for them to provide their feedback and once finalised would be included as part of the guidance for Headteachers documents.

##### **AGREED**

The forum agreed for the finalised flowcharts to be included in the guidance for Headteachers documents.

#### **12. Update on secondary transfer for September 2020**

The Admissions Officer advised that there had been some movements although there were still places available. It was stated that Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi managed their own admissions and had exceeded their 60 allocation status and had allocated 89 places over a three form entry system for secondary year groups, with each form having under 30 admissions and being located on the Dewi Campus.

Clarification was sought on how the campus would adapt itself to the stated pupil increases over five years. It was noted that a working group had been set up to look at potential expansion plans and funding sources for the school. It was noted that majority of the funding would come from Section 106 contributions for St Davids and from the Diocese applying for 21<sup>st</sup> Century School funding directly from Welsh Government.

It was highlighted that capital was not guaranteed and that Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi needed to be cautious when dealing with admissions challenges.

##### **AGREED**

For Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi and the Governors to liaise with the Resources & Governance Manager on the expansion plans as the progress.

#### **13. Report on admission appeals**

The Policy & Improvement Programme Manager provided a summary of the recent appeals numbers stating that the number of appeals were increasing year on year as highlighted in the below table.

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Appeals</b>
2017-18	21
2018-19	42
2019-20	54

It was stated that since the last forum meeting took place in November 2019 44 appeals had been received, 19 of those were withdrawn, 11 were heard, 5 were upheld, 6 were refused and 3 were waiting to be heard.

It was recognised that withdrawn appeals consumed a high amount of officer time and a suggestion was made for parent partnership services to be used to mediate before an appeal was launched. It was recognised that the best time for the services to step in would be when the parent is informed of the refused place so work can begin in mediating an alternative situation before an appeal is formally submitted.

**AGREED**

For parent partnership services to be used as mediators on refusal of admission places.

**14. Review of Parent Information Booklet for 2021-22**

The Admissions Officer stated that she was currently re-drafting the booklet with additional focus being directed towards making it user friendly online. It was stated that links were being included which will bring the parent to the correct section of the Authority's website which will ensure up to date information is provided at all times

It was noted that the updated booklet would be circulated via email in July.

**15. Suggestions for future items for consideration by the Forum**

A suggestion was made for an update from Millie Taylor, SSCE Cymru, to be received at the next Forum meeting regarding Services children.

**16. Date of next meeting**

**AGREED**

That the next meeting would take place on 5 November 2020 at 8:30am.

**The meeting ended at 10.40a.m.**