

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND LOCALISM CABINET PANEL
WEDNESDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 10:00AM****DETERMINATION OF HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S
ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2021/2022, FOLLOWING
CONSULTATION***Report of the Director of Children's Services*

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Executive Member:- Terry Douris, Education, Libraries and Localism

Local Members:- Tina Howard, Hemel Hempstead South East
Sandy Walkington, St Albans South
Graham McAndrew, Bishops Stortford Rural

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To seek the views of Panel on the amendments to the County Council's admission arrangements for 2020/21, following consultation.

2. Summary

2.1 The County Council must determine on an annual basis the admission arrangements and Published Admission Number (PAN) for all community and voluntary schools in Hertfordshire; and the coordinated schemes of admission to all maintained schools and academies in the county.

2.2 A minimum of 6 weeks formal consultation is required, between 1 October 2019 and 31 January 2020 to amend admission arrangements for 2021/22. Cabinet agreed on 28 October 2019 to consult on amending the County Council's existing admission arrangements for 2021/22.

2.3 Public consultation was undertaken with all relevant consultees, as specified in the School Admissions Code, between 18 November 2019 and 5 January 2020. 773 consultation letters were sent out in either electronic or paper form. The consultation document is available at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions

2.4 Local Authorities must also consult all community and voluntary controlled schools where it is proposed that PAN's are maintained or

increased. This consultation was also undertaken between 18 November 2019 and 5 January 2020.

- 2.5 Following the formal confirmation of expansion at both St. Peters Primary School in St. Albans and Belswains Primary in Hemel Hempstead, the County Council is proposing to increase the Published Admission Number at both schools from 30 to 60 for 2021/22. Consultation is not required to increase a school's Published Admission Number.
- 2.6 Admission arrangements for 2021/22 must be determined by 28 February 2020.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 Panel is asked to note and comment upon the report and recommend to Cabinet that:-
- following consultation in the appropriate Relevant Area the Published Admission Number at Richard Whittington School, Bishops Stortford is reduced from 45 to 30
 - the Published Admission Numbers at St. Peters Primary School in St. Albans and Belswains Primary School in Hemel Hempstead are increased from 30 to 60 for 201/22
 - the County Council's admission arrangements and schemes of coordination for statutory school age pupils are retained for 2021/22

4. Background

- 4.1 The School Admissions Code requires all admission authorities to consult on their admission arrangements (if there have been no changes) every 7 years. On 28 October 2019, Cabinet agreed that public consultation should be undertaken to amend the County Council's admission arrangements for 2021/22 as outlined above. Cabinet also agreed that the schemes of coordination and remainder of the admission arrangements should remain the same. The Cabinet paper is available at [Cabinet - 28 October 2019](#).¹
- 4.2 The County Council is the admission authority for 248 primary, infant and first schools and 1 secondary school. When any of these schools are oversubscribed the County Council's published admission arrangements, outlined in Appendix A, are used to determine which children should be offered places.
- 4.3 The County Council's existing admission arrangements work well with nearly 97% of children allocated a ranked primary school in 2019 and over 93% a ranked secondary school. Maintaining existing arrangements, with only changes to the published admission number

¹ <https://democracy.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MIId=1524&Ver=4>

at some primary schools, will minimise parental anxiety around school places and maximise the benefits of existing knowledge of the allocation process.

St Peter's Primary School, St Albans

- 4.4 Since 2011, there has been significant and continuing development in the city centre of St Albans, with a concentration of demand around St Peter's, Maple, Alban City and Aboyne Lodge Primary Schools, which are all within close proximity to each other and London Road, which has been a key area of development. Previous advice indicated that there was no deliverable expansion capacity in these city centre schools and therefore additional places have, of necessity, been provided across the wider area. Whilst in the short term there are sufficient places across St Albans City, placing children in schools that are not within walking distance is not a sustainable solution for families. An expansion of St Peter's was therefore proposed, as part of the PEP 8 Primary Expansion Programme, and was approved by Cabinet in July 2018. The school will provide 60 Reception places from 2020/21 under a "local agreement" with the Published Admission Number permanently increased from 2021/22. Consultation is not required to increase a school's Published Admission Number.

Belswains Primary School, Hemel Hempstead

- 4.5 Over the last 5-10 years, there has been significant development in and around the East and South East Hemel Hempstead Primary Planning Areas. Forecasts have indicated a deficit of places in South East Hemel Hempstead from 2018/19 onwards, with numbers rising across Hemel Hempstead as a whole. Underlying GP data indicates there is a significant concentration of demand around Belswains, Two Waters and Nash Mills Primary Schools. Since the 2014/15 Reception intake, in order to meet increasing local demand, some pupils have been allocated schools across the wider area and a temporary expansion was provided at Belswains Primary School for the 2016/17 intake. A permanent expansion was deemed necessary to meet local demand from 2019 onwards. The permanent expansion of Belswains Primary through the PEP 8 Primary Expansion Programme was agreed as a delegated decision in June 2018 and the school is providing 60 places for the 2021/22 Reception round under a "local agreement". Consultation is not required to increase a school's Published Admission Number.

Richard Whittington Primary School, Bishops Stortford

- 4.6 Consultation is required to reduce a school's Published Admission Number.
- 4.7 There have been 8 responses to the consultation with the majority, 88.9%, in agreement with the proposal to reduce the Published

Admission Number at Richard Whittington from 45 to 30, with several highlighting their view that this allows for better class organisation.

- 4.8 Only one respondent disagreed with the proposal, expressing concern at the reduction in places if new residents at the Bishops Stortford South development were expected to attend the school and the traffic implications of the new development and its residents driving to other primary schools.
- 4.9 The proposed reduction in the Published Admission Number at Richard Whittington Primary School has been predicated on the school being willing to expand in the future, should it be required. New primary provision is also proposed within the Bishop's Stortford South development to provide local school places for the new community. Traffic matters are considered throughout the town planning process for any new development.
- 4.10 A full breakdown of consultation responses is attached at Appendix B.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The proposals for both reduction and increases in PANs will improve the financial sustainability of all schools involved. There will be no impact on the County Council's funding as their budgets derive from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

6. Equalities Implications

- 6.1 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of, and have themselves rigorously considered the Equality Implications of the decision that they are making.
- 6.2 Rigorous consideration will ensure that proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the County Council's statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EQiA) produced by officers.
- 6.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires the County Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- 6.4 An Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted in relation to the reduction in the Published Admission Number at Richard Whittington Primary School and is attached at Appendix C. The assessment does not identify any adverse consequences in relation to the proposals that have been met.

Background Information

Cabinet 28 October 2019 -

<https://democracy.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MId=1524&Ver=4>

Cabinet 9 July 2018 -

<https://democracy.hertfordshire.gov.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeeld=146&MeetingId=427&DF=09%2f07%2f2018&Ver=2>