

## SHROPSHIRE LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM

**Present:** Bob Thompson (BT) – Community Member (Chair)  
 Hilary Burke (HB) – Community Secondary School Head Teacher  
 Karen Morris (KM) – Community Primary School Head Teacher  
 Lisa Crossley (LC) – Telford & Wrekin CYPS  
 Roger Evans (RE) – Council Member  
 Phil Adams (PA) – Own Admissions Authority Schools Head Teacher  
 Philip Sell (PS) – Hereford Diocese  
 Ed Potter (EP) – representing Nick Bardsley  
 Cary Tay (CT) – Early Years and Childcare Development

**In attendance:** Phil Wilson (PW) – Shropshire Local Authority  
 Carol Sneddon (CS) Shropshire Local Authority  
 Sally Herbert (SH) - Shropshire Local Authority

**Apologies:** Claire Gaskin (CG) – Aided Primary School Head Teacher  
 Karen Bradshaw (KB) – Shropshire Local Authority  
 Sabrina Hobbs (SH) – Special School Representative  
 Nick Bardsley (NB) – Council Member

**Date:** Tuesday, 12 June 2018

**Venue:** Ludlow Room, Shirehall, Shrewsbury

No.	Action	Owner
1.	<u>Apologies for absence</u>  Apologies were confirmed as above.	
2	<u>Welcome to new members</u>  Ed Potter was welcomed to the meeting on behalf of Nick Bardsley. It was noted that this would be last meeting for Hilary Burke.	
3.	<u>Declaration of interest in agenda items</u>  BT explained that this is a standard item and asked members to declare their interest, as and when relevant.	
4.	<u>To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2018</u>  The minutes were read and agreed as an accurate record.	

5.	<p><u>Matters Arising from the Minutes</u></p> <p><u>5.2 – Summer Born Children</u>  CS presented to an early years conference in March which was well attended by a mixed audience. Feedback indicated that the conference had been valuable to early years providers and as a result some of the attendees who represented schools have asked for talks at their primary settings.</p> <p>CT attended the conference and felt discussion was of a good standard and valid between independent sectors. Feedback showed that the implications of keeping children back on the same site had not been realised. CT is concerned that early years settings are using deferrals to clear a dip in numbers for the next year.</p> <p>CS explained that nationally it is felt there may be a new Admissions Code which will provide clarity on what parents can do. Usual practice has been for one or two deferrals per year until last year when there were 30. This figure has already been surpassed for this year.</p> <p>PA commented and PW agreed that information to date shows there is no strong evidence to indicate that a deferral makes any difference to a child by the time they are 16 years old</p> <p>KM advised that the last intake at Meadows Primary where children entered the school at different times was six years ago. They undertake considerable canvassing in order to encourage all children to start school in September and the school have had no deferrals.</p> <p><u>7 - Application Update for 2018</u>  PW advised that he had a meeting with Shrewsbury Head Teachers plus the Head of Mary Webb and will be meeting again in the Autumn. It has been agreed there is a need to expand one or more of the Shrewsbury secondary schools, but it is about working in partnership with all the schools and needs to be phased and primarily based on sites: the preference order is Meole Brace, Priory and Belvidere.</p> <p>RE expressed his concern about what was circulated to members in terms of numbers of preferences for the schools and commented that he has been approached by someone living in Longden who has been allocated a place at Bishops Castle. After discussion it was realised that the applicant had moved into the area and subsequently the application had been received after places were allocated.</p> <p>BT felt this was an issue beyond this particular meeting. He clarified there will be a need for a staged expansion of schools to co-incide with the increase in pupil numbers, but this is ongoing and not immediate.</p> <p>PA stressed the need to ensure there are no surplus spaces and that schools are full. He commented that he attended the appeals and it was apparent that the majority of the appeals were due to the appellant not being happy with the alternative school offered. PW advised that he and CS were invited to the Board of Academy and advised that a very high powered board of trustees has been appointed and it is hoped to see a significant immediate turnaround.</p>	
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	<p>CS advised that we will be reporting on the impact of having one school in Shrewsbury that has less popularity than the others. It is hoped that will improve as we move forward. PW confirmed that the other three schools will not be expanded due to parental preference. It will be about responding to demographics due to housing.</p> <p>BT asked that any expansions to schools are robust and not just demountables. PW agreed that wherever possible this would be the case, but the primary task is to ensure that the places are available when required.</p> <p>PA commented on the effect on Corbet School. If school places in Shrewsbury increase with the same numbers as at present, they will take in properties from other schools around the county.</p> <p>PW is acutely aware of this and confirmed that Shifnal primary schools will see the first expansions. It is about managing the process and if housing slows down, so too will the phasing in order to effectively budget and avoid compromising the sustainability of any surrounding schools.</p> <p>RE explained that he is talking from the parents' perspective so that they have parental choice, commenting that people from Greenfields area have been attending Meole Brace since the closure of Wakeman, but this year that did not happen. RE is concerned that planning applications are being granted and no requests for capital towards the schools.</p> <p>BT did not feel LAF was the forum for these concerns to be discussed. Although important they should be addressed with councillor colleagues in a different forum.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Determination of Admissions Arrangements 2019/20</u></p> <p>CS – the Forum last met in January when allocations not been completed for the secondary level and the closing date had only just passed for primary applications.</p> <p>It is now well past the allocation dates and into the appeals process. The closing date for secondary was 31 October 2017 and primary 15 January 2018. The Admission Number for each school determines how many children can be accommodated and the over subscription criteria determines who is eligible.</p> <p>91.7% of Shropshire parents were allocated a place at their first preference secondary school, while 98.7% were offered a place at one of their preferred schools. 95.4% were offered a place at their first preference primary school with 98.7% of Shropshire parents being offered a place at one of their preferred schools. Not yet received national figures but will circulate to committee members once received.</p> <p>The data shows the figures for all applicants regardless of where they live as well as for Shropshire residents only.</p> <p>16 March saw the start of the secondary review process with many parents appealing for more than one school. Head Teachers were encouraged to attend and support the appeals and some schools had three days of appeals.</p> <p>The report circulated shows an area by area summary.</p>	

The Corbet School initially breached its PAN in order to accommodate all pupils living out of catchment but attending feeder schools. There was one day of appeals with quite a few strong cases. 10 appeals were heard with one being upheld.

St Martins is for the first time oversubscribed as an all through school.

There were a significant number of appeals for Idsall and William Brookes.

Lacon Childe, Oldbury Wells and Mary Webb had refused places but have since had places released.

Shrewsbury saw considerable activity. A scatter map was shared with schools to clarify the residency of people who were successful for schools in contrast to where people lived if not offered a place at a particular school.

One particular affect appears to be very little movement from the waiting list for Adams Grammar and Newport Girls Schools. Historically there has been more movement but it appears that fewer people from the Shrewsbury area were allocated places at these schools.

The data printed shows appeals heard for different schools in comparison to other schools and years. There is a significant rise in the number of appeals lodged and appeals heard. 43 lodged last year compared to 186 this year and 14 heard last year compared to 83 heard this year. Full data from DfE will follow later. The downside to so many appeals being allowed is that there is then a need for a significant number of people to leave before allocation can be considered from the waiting list.

RE commented on the situation with regards to primary schools in Shrewsbury and those schools that serve Shrewsbury. CS explained that the problems have been in south Shropshire in Bridgnorth but there has been no pressure for Shrewsbury primary schools this year, confirming that the information provided is from national offer day and there has been considerable activity since then as it is now six weeks further on.

There are just a few appeals for Shrewsbury primary schools. In terms of catchment there is one school in south Shrewsbury where it was not possible to accommodate all catchment children and so the school exceeded their PAN by half a class.

Castlefields in Bridgnorth was the second school which could not accommodate all their catchment children. They have more catchment children than last year but this figure falls back next year and it will be St Leonard's who cannot accommodate all catchment children. In terms of expanding schools it would not be sensible given this information and St Leonards is this year helping out Castlefields and roles will reverse next year.

CS explained that it is only recently that we have started recording primary applications in the way requested by the DfE and consequently the like for like comparison is not quite right for primary allocations. There are just 25 appeals pending for the primary schools and a number of these are likely to be withdrawn.

7.	<p><u>Application Update for 2018</u></p> <p>CS apologised that the report is in draft and not yet approved by the Director of Children’s Services, but gives a flavour of what the adjudicator is requiring. Indications are that In Year admissions may be reverting to LA’s. Additional figures will be added as available.</p> <p>If the Forum have any comments these can be included in the report before it is approved and submitted to the Office of the School Adjudicator by 30 June and published on the Council’s website.</p> <p>BT asked that members read and forward any comments to him by 23 June, which will leave 7 days for them to be incorporated and the report approved. CS agreed to try to obtain percentage figures to include.</p> <p>Admission Arrangements for 2020 are available on the website and it is interactive. Comments for improvement were welcomed. Figures have been refreshed. It is work in progress.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Date and time of next meeting</u></p> <p>The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, 27 November 2018 at 5.00 pm at The Shirehall.</p> <p>HB expressed her gratitude for the civility, calmness and courtesy in which the Admissions Team constantly deal with schools and ‘stressed’ Head Teachers. CS paid tribute to HB for her attendance on the Forum for the last 12 years, for assisting with the interviews for the Admissions Manager Deputies and for her continued helpful attitude towards school admissions.</p>	