

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

COUNCIL: 9TH DECEMBER, 2019

REFERENCE FROM CABINET: 2ND DECEMBER, 2019

“C165 SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2021-22 (ER) (SCRUTINY – LEARNING AND CULTURE) –

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration presented the report to seek Cabinet approval to consult on the Local Authority's School Admission Arrangements as required by the Welsh Government's School Admission Code issued in July 2013 which included a revision to secondary school catchment areas.

The report had been presented in order to approve consultation on school admission arrangements for pupil admissions in the academic year 2021/22. This was required in order to meet the Council's obligations to annually consult and agree the admission arrangements by no later than 15th April, 2020.

The report proposed consulting on an amendment to the existing English medium secondary school catchment areas and policy for admissions into the academic year 2021/22. The consultation period would be from 11th December, 2019 to 3rd February, 2020. A report on the outcome of this consultation would be presented to Cabinet in March 2020.

The key changes proposed related to a change in the catchment areas for English medium secondary schools. There was also a proposed minor change to the over subscription criteria which would support attendance at a child's local school. Reference to an ongoing pilot programme for the introduction of co-ordinated admission arrangements was also included.

The proposed changes would ensure a more even distribution of school places to meet future demand for pupils within a defined catchment area requiring a school place.

It was recommended that Cabinet approve the contents of the report so that the statutory consultation on Schools Admissions Policy for 2021/2022 could take place within the statutory timescales. Use of the Emergency Procedure was recommended so that consultation could commence on 11th December, 2019, and in addition it was proposed to refer the report to Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee as part of that consultation.

In addition, the Leader requested that the Director of Learning and Skills ensure that the 'Comparison of Current vs Proposed Catchment Area' maps used in Annex I to Appendix 2 be made larger as part of the consultation.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein,

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the consultation required to agree Local Authority Admission arrangements (Appendix A) for all community schools in the Vale of Glamorgan be approved.

(1) T H A T consultation on a proposed revision to secondary school catchment areas be approved.

(3) T H A T the report be referred to Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee as part of the consultation process.

(4) T H A T the use of Article 14.14.2 (ii) of the Council's Constitution (urgent decision procedure) be authorised in respect of Recommendations (1), (2) and (3) above.

Reasons for decisions

(1) Para 2.3 (page 6) of the School Admissions Code (Wales) July 2013 states that "Admission Arrangements must be consulted on for each maintained school between 1 September and 1 March, and be set by 15 April of the school years beginning two years before the school year in which the arrangements will apply".

(2) The Council was required to keep school catchment areas under review to ensure a match between the supply and demand for school places in an area.

(3) In order for Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee to participate in the consultation process.

(4) To allow the consultation to commence on 11th December, 2019."