



SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR SPELTHORNE

PROPOSED CHANGES TO SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS FROM SEPTEMBER 2007

12 DECEMBER 2005

1. KEY ISSUE/DECISION:

To consider the proposed changes to school admissions criteria set out in the consultation document and what impact these may have on the Borough.

2. SUMMARY:

The present system of applying admissions criteria to oversubscribed community and voluntary controlled schools in Surrey can arguably be regarded as subjective and increasingly is being challenged.

The attached consultation document was sent to schools and other stakeholder groups in the week beginning 31 October 2005 and outlines proposed changes to admission criteria that would take effect from September 2007 if approved. The document reflects changes that people said they wanted in a pre-consultation exercise carried out in 2004.

3. CONSULTATION:

50,000 documents have been circulated to:

- i) parents of pupils aged 2-3 years, in year 1 and year 5,
- ii) all headteachers and chairs of governors in all Surrey's maintained schools
- iii) 6 diocesan boards
- iv) 14 neighbouring LEAs
- v) Surrey County Councillors, borough / district councillors
- vi) Parish councils
- vii) Early years
- viii) Surrey's Admissions Forum
- ix) Area Transportation Directors
- x) Colleagues in Sustainable Development.

In addition to the paper consultation:

- i) focus groups have been convened (one for each borough / district) to ensure participants have a better understanding of the admissions process and the impact any change may have at local level.
- ii) 500 1:1 interviews are being held with members of the public.

4. OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

i) That the Local Committee considers the proposed changes and how they may affect Spelthorne and agrees a response to be submitted as part of the consultation by the closing date of 16 December 2005.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Since the proposed changes are more objective, parents can better assess their chances of gaining admission to their preferred school(s). At the same time the changes are likely to encourage attendance at local schools which may result in reducing traffic congestion. The equal preference system outlined in the consultation document will increase the percentage of parents getting one of their school preferences.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Letter to parents Consultation document
