SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND LEARNING

DATE: **21 NOVEMBER 2012**

REPORT OF: **CLAIRE POTIER, PRINCIPAL MANAGER ADMISSIONS AND TRANSPORT**

SUBJECT: **CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS AND COORDINATED SCHEMES FOR 2014 ADMISSION**

KEY ISSUE/DECISION:

The Cabinet Member is asked to approve for public consultation the proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools and the proposed Coordinated Schemes for September 2014, with suggested changes as set out below.

DETAILS:

1. The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Coordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 require all admission authorities to consult on their admission arrangements every seven years, unless they are proposing any changes to their arrangements, in which case they must consult each year they are proposing a change.

2. Consultation must take place for a minimum of eight weeks, between 1 November and 1 March, and all admission authorities must then determine their arrangements by 15 April, whether or not they have been subject to consultation.

3. Surrey County Council is proposing some changes to its admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and as such is intending to consult on its proposed arrangements between 26 November 2012 and 21 January 2013.

4. Full details of the proposed admission arrangements are set out in APPENDIX 1 and its Annexes, as follows:

APPENDIX 1	Admission arrangements for Community & VC schools
ANNEX 1	Proposed Published Admission Numbers
ANNEX 2	Schools to be considered as adjoining/shared sites for sibling priority
ANNEX 3	Schools to be considered to admit local children
ANNEX 4	Coordinated Schemes
ANNEX 5	Catchment map for Esher High
ANNEX 6	Catchment map for Southfield Park Primary
ANNEX 7	Catchment map for Woodmansterne Primary
ANNEX 8	Catchment map for Oxted
ANNEX 9	Catchment map for Tatsfield Primary

5. Where changes are proposed text is highlighted in bold.

6. Local Authorities are also required to consult on their Relevant Area every two years. As Surrey last consulted on its Relevant Area in November 2010, it is due to do so again this year. The proposed consultation is included at APPENDIX 2 but proposes no change to the Relevant Area that was determined in 2011.

Banstead Community Junior School – Reigate and Banstead

7. Banstead Community Junior School currently has a reciprocal sibling link with Banstead Infant School but there is no feeder link from the infant school to the junior School. Instead the admission criteria for the junior school currently follow the standard criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in Surrey.

8. From September 2014 it is intended that both schools will have a PAN of 90 (please see paragraph 55 which sets out the proposal to increase the PAN for Banstead Infant School from 80 to 90).

9. It is therefore proposed to introduce a feeder link to Banstead Community Junior School for children at Banstead Infant School so that the admission arrangements would be as follows:

    1. Looked after and previously looked after children
    2. Exceptional social/medical need
    3. Children attending Banstead Infant School
    4. Children with a sibling attending Banstead Community Junior School or Banstead Infant School at the time of the child's admission
    5. Any other children

10. This would bring the admission criteria in to line with the criteria that exist for most other schools which have a feeder and reciprocal sibling links.

11. Whilst there is still no guarantee that all children at Banstead Infants who apply would be given a place at the junior school it is quite likely that in most years those who want to transfer would be able to. In this way these criteria would provide continuity and a clearer transition for children and would reduce anxiety for parents.

12. In line with Surrey County Council policy, due to the reciprocal sibling link between the infant and the junior schools, the introduction of a feeder link would also enable sibling priority to be given to a child who is applying to start at the infant school in Reception even if they have a sibling who would have left the infant school by the time the younger child starts. This is because the admission criteria provides for them to be admitted to the junior school thereby retaining their sibling priority.

13. This proposal is supported by the Governing Body of Banstead Community Junior School.

Connaught Junior School and Hammond Community Junior School – Surrey Heath

14. The infant and junior schools in Bagshot and Lightwater are keen to provide support to Valley End and Windlesham Village infant schools to ensure that, as far as possible, parents with children at these schools can see a transition route to junior school.

15. Following several meetings involving the Headteachers at Bagshot Infant School, Connaught Junior School, Hammond Community Junior School, Lightwater Village Infant School, Valley End Infant School and Windlesham Village Infant School it has been proposed that the Local Authority should consult on changing the admission criteria for Connaught Junior School and Hammond Community Junior School as follows:

Connaught Junior School

1. Looked after and previously looked after children
2. Children with an exceptional medical/social need
3. Siblings
4. Children attending Bagshot for whom Connaught is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
5. Children attending Windlesham Village or Valley End for whom Connaught is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
6. Children with siblings at Windlesham Village or Valley End for whom Connaught is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
7. Other children for whom Connaught is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
8. Children attending Bagshot for whom Connaught is not the nearest school with a Junior PAN
9. Other children for whom Connaught is not the nearest school with a Junior PAN

Hammond Community Junior School

1. Looked after and previously looked after children
2. Children with an exceptional medical/social need
3. Siblings
4. Children attending Lightwater for whom Hammond is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
5. Children attending Windlesham Village or Valley End for whom Hammond is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
6. Children with siblings at Windlesham Village or Valley End for whom Hammond is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
7. Other children for whom Hammond is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
8. Children attending Lightwater for whom Hammond is not the nearest school with a Junior PAN
9. Other children for whom Hammond is not the nearest school with a Junior PAN

16. After siblings, these admission criteria have the effect of providing priority for children who have the junior school as their nearest school ahead of those who do not.

17. They also provide for children attending Valley End or Windlesham Village infant schools to receive priority at one of the junior schools if it is their nearest school. Currently, although the majority of these applicants gain a place from the waiting list if they are not allocated a place through the initial allocation, parents of children at these schools are left in some uncertainty regarding their child's transition to Year 3.

18. This uncertainty may lead parents to seek alternative infant provision at the outset or to seek alternative primary provision before their child finishes Year 2 and both

these schools feel that this has impacted on their ability to maintain numbers at PAN.

19. Children who might be displaced if these criteria were introduced would be likely to be those who had other junior provision that was nearer. In this way, these schools would ensure that they serve families within their local community and the nearby rural communities which are not served by alternative junior provision.
20. It is also intended that, as a consequence of this proposal, a reciprocal sibling link would be introduced between Bagshot Infant School and Connaught Junior School. This is currently being considered by the Governing Bodies of both schools and an update will be provided at the Cabinet Member meeting on 21 November 2012.

Eastwick Junior School – Mole Valley

21. Following a consultation process, Eastwick Infant and Junior schools became federated in October 2012.

22. Whilst there is not currently any feeder link from the infant school to the junior school there is currently a reciprocal sibling link between the two schools. Instead the admission criteria for the Junior school currently follows the standard criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in Surrey.

23. The PAN for the infant school is 75 (not including placements in their Unit) and the PAN for the junior school is 90.

24. The Local Authority has received 191 signed letters from parents which each request a change to the admission criteria for Eastwick Junior School so that children at the infant school are provided for.

25. However there is concern that a straight feeder link might have a detrimental impact on other local schools as families, who might otherwise favour the alternative infant school of Polesden Lacey, might apply for Eastwick Infant School in order to benefit from the feeder link to the junior school.

26. As such, the Local Authority is exploring whether it might be feasible to introduce a feeder link for children from Eastwick Infant School on a tiered basis so that priority might be given to children for whom it is the nearest school ahead of children for whom it is not, as follows:

    1. Looked after and previously looked after children
    2. Exceptional social/medical need
    3. Children with a sibling attending Eastwick Junior School or Eastwick Infant School at the time of the child's admission
    4. Children attending Eastwick Infants for whom Eastwick Junior is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
    5. Other children for whom Eastwick Junior is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
    6. Children attending Eastwick Infants for whom Eastwick Junior is **not** the nearest school with a Junior PAN
    7. Any other children

27. On the basis that all schools in the area are currently able to admit all children for whom their school is nearest, this would be likely to ensure that all children at

Polesden Lacey who have Eastwick Junior as their nearest junior provision would still be offered a place at that school.

28. Although not offering a straight feeder link this proposal would offer some parents more certainty but should not discourage other parents from taking up places at more preferred infant provision.

29. This proposal is due to be considered at a meeting between the Headteachers of Dawnay School, Eastwick Infant School, Eastwick Junior School and Polesden Lacey Infant School on 13 November 2012.

30. An update from that meeting will be tabled at the Cabinet Member meeting on 21 November 2012.

Hammond Community Junior School – Surrey Heath (see entry under Connaught Junior School)

Reigate Priory School – Reigate and Banstead

31. Reigate Priory is an oversubscribed junior school in Reigate. Whilst historically most children who want to have been able to transfer to Reigate Priory from Holmesdale Community Infant School and Reigate Parish Church Infant School, with the increased pressure on school places in Reigate, increasingly, there are children who have found it difficult to access a local junior place.

32. It is therefore proposed to introduce a feeder link for children from Holmesdale and Reigate Parish. However it is intended to introduce this on a tiered basis so that priority would be given to children for whom it is the nearest school ahead of children for whom it is not, as follows:

    1. Looked after and previously looked after children
    2. Exceptional social/medical need
    3. Children with a sibling attending Reigate Priory School at the time of the child's admission
    4. Children attending Holmesdale Infant or Reigate Parish for whom Reigate Priory is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
    5. Other children for whom Reigate Priory is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
    6. Children attending Holmesdale Infant or Reigate Parish for whom Reigate Priory is **not** the nearest school with a Junior PAN
    7. Any other children

33. This proposal ensures that both feeder schools would be considered equally in the admission criteria for Reigate Priory and as such, should not have a negative impact on applications for these schools. Whilst not offering a straight feeder link, it also offers some parents more certainty in the admissions process.

34. Whilst there is no guarantee that Reigate Priory would be able to allocate a place to every child who has it as their nearest school, this proposal lessens the disadvantage that might be caused to families who have chosen different infant provision or those who were unable to obtain a place at either of the feeder schools.

35. In proposing to give priority to children who have the school as their nearest ahead of those who do not the Local Authority is also ensuring, as far as it is able,

that children living further away to the north of Reigate who still have Reigate Priory as their nearest school, would not be disadvantaged in favour of other children who live closer to Reigate Priory but who actually have another school which is nearer.

36. The PAN for Reigate Priory is 150, although arrangements are being made for the school to take an extra class in 2015 to ensure that there are sufficient places in the area to accommodate a 'bulge' class that was admitted to Holmesdale Infant School in September 2012. The PAN for Holmesdale Community Infant School is 90 and the PAN for Reigate Parish is 60.

37. This proposal has received support from the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education, Holmesdale Infant School, Reigate Parish Church Infant School and Reigate Priory.

38. A similar arrangement between Dovers Green School (Infant) and Sandcross Primary was not supported by the schools and as such the Local Authority does not intend to consult on a change for these schools at this time.

Southfield Park Primary School – Epsom and Ewell

39. In 2011, after the admission arrangements had been determined for 2013 admission, the Local Authority received representation from parents living in the Parkview estate for the catchment for Southfield Park Primary School to be extended to include them. As a result the Local Authority undertook to carry out a review of the catchment prior to the consultation on the admission arrangements for 2014 admission.

40. The catchment for Southfield Park Primary School was developed to ensure that children living in the Horton Park development could access their nearest school, as they had no reasonable alternative. Whilst the Parkview estate does also have Southfield Park Primary School as their nearest school, unlike the Horton Park development, it does also have another accessible school in Epsom Primary.

41. The existing catchment for Southfield Park Primary School is used as part of the oversubscription criterion to prioritise applicants when there are more applicants than places available, with priority being given to applicants who live within catchment ahead of those who live outside of it. If there are more applicants within catchment than places available, then priority is given to those who live the furthest distance from the school. This is to ensure that the children living in the Horton Park development are provided for.

42. Historically, the school is not oversubscribed by applicants from within catchment and each year the school has admitted some children from outside the catchment area. The number allocated from outside the catchment and the distance allocated to for the past four years is as follows:

2009	15 (2.93 km)
2010	21 (3.19 km)
2011	15 (0.85 km)
2012	7 (0.44 km)

43. Information provided by parents living on the Parkview estate indicates that there will be the following number of applications from that estate each year, although

these numbers do not cover all properties on the estate and so the numbers are likely to be higher:

2013 intake	11
2014 intake	7
2015 intake	14
2016 intake	19

44. This data has not been validated and perhaps not all parents would apply for a place at Southfield Park Primary School from the Parkview estate. However, it is clear that if the catchment for Southfield Park was extended to include the Parkview estate, the Local Authority would risk there being more applications from within catchment than places available. If this were the case, with priority currently being given to families who live furthest from the school, the children who would be displaced would be those who live nearest.

45. Whilst the Local Authority could give priority to those families within catchment who lived nearest the school, the families which would then be displaced would be those living furthest away on the Horton Park development. However it is these families which the catchment was developed to provide for, as they do not have another school within a reasonable distance.

46. As an alternative to amending the catchment for the school, it is therefore proposed to change the criteria so that after providing for children within the catchment, priority would be given to children for whom the school is their nearest ahead of those for whom it is not, as follows:

1. Looked after and previously looked after children
2. Exceptional social/medical need
3. Children with a sibling attending Southfield Park Primary School at the time of the child's admission
4. Children living in the defined catchment of the school with priority being given to children living furthest away from the school
5. Other children for whom the school is their nearest school
6. Any other children

47. In this way, whilst it does not guarantee a place for children living on the Parkview estate, they would receive a higher priority than other applicants who perhaps have Epsom Primary or Stamford Green as a nearest school.

48. Currently there are proposals to expand Stamford Green Primary School by 30 pupils in either 2014 or 2015, depending on demand. If that expansion goes ahead there may then be a need to have a more fundamental review of the catchment area for Southfield Park.

49. This proposal has received support from the Governing Body of Southfield Park Primary School.

St Ann's Heath Junior School - Runnymede

50. Following a consultation with parents by St Ann's Heath Junior School and Trumps Green Infant School, the Governing Bodies of both schools received strong support to make a change to their admission criteria.

51. On the basis that the proposed changes should not lead to children being disadvantaged, the Governing Bodies support the proposed introduction of a reciprocal sibling link between the two schools and also a feeder link from Trumps Green Infant School to St Ann's Heath Junior School.

52. The admission criteria for St Ann's Heath Junior School would be as follows:

1. Looked after and previously looked after children
2. Exceptional social/medical need
3. Children with siblings attending St Ann's Heath Junior School or Trumps Green Infant School at the time of the child's admission
4. Children attending Trumps Green Infant School
5. Children for whom St Ann's Heath Junior School is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
6. Any other children

53. Historically, the majority of children wishing to progress to St Ann's Heath from Trumps Green Infant School do so. However St Ann's Heath does also admit children to Year 3 from other schools.

54. The PAN for St Ann's Heath is currently 64 (although a separate consultation on expansion proposes that the school would have a PAN of 90 from September 2015) and the proposed PAN for Trumps Green Infant School for September 2014 is 60.

55. The schools supported retaining priority for siblings above the feeder link to ensure that families who had chosen alternative infant provision were not disadvantaged.

56. Subject to the number of siblings, the establishment of a feeder link is likely to mean that all children who want to would be able to transfer to the junior school from Trumps Green Infant School. In this way these criteria would provide continuity and a clearer transition for children and would reduce anxiety for parents.

57. To provide for the reciprocal sibling link, Trumps Green Infant School and St Ann's Heath Junior School would be described as being on a shared or adjoining site for applying sibling criteria (see APPENDIX 1 – ANNEX 2).

Tatsfield Primary School - Tandridge

58. Historically all children living in Tatsfield have always been offered a place at the school, even if other children from outside the village have been offered a place under a higher priority, e.g. if they had a sibling attending the school.

59. However in 2011/12 the number of siblings increased and the knock on effect was that three children with a Tatsfield postal address would not have been eligible for a place had the school kept to its Published Admission Number of 30.

60. Analysis of admission data and feedback from the school indicated that the number of siblings was unusual and this situation was not expected to repeat itself in 2012. As a result the Local Authority made a decision not to seek a review of the admission arrangements. This assessment was correct and the number of siblings who applied for entry in 2012 was 14.

61. However, although the sibling numbers were not unduly high, in 2012 there were still two children who lived within Tatsfield Parish who were not eligible for a place within the school's Published Admission Number of 30 on the date of the initial allocation.

62. In rebuilding Tatsfield Primary School it was the intention of Surrey County Council that it would serve the children living within Tatsfield village. As such, the Admissions team carried out a pre-consultation with parents within the school community and residents within the wider local community to ask their views on potential changes to the admission criteria. A copy of the consultation is attached as APPENDIX 4.

63. Option 1 suggested the introduction of a catchment area but to retain a higher priority for siblings as follows:

i. Looked after children
ii. Exceptional medical/social need
iii. Siblings
iv. Children who live within the Tatsfield catchment area
v. Other children based on straight line proximity to the school

64. Option 2 suggested the introduction of a tiered sibling policy and a catchment so siblings would only get priority if they lived within the catchment:

i. Looked after children
ii. Exceptional medical/social need
iii. Siblings who live within the catchment area
iv. Other children who live within the catchment area
v. Other siblings who live outside the catchment area
vi. Other children who live outside the catchment area

65. The consultation drew the following responses:

No change	4 in favour (3 parents and 1 family member)
Option 1	27 in favour (11 parents, 15 local residents and 1 family member)
Option 2	41 in favour (11 parents, 25 local residents, 1 family member, 1 school employee, 1 District Councillor, 1 Parish Councillor and the Parish Council)

66. Reasons given, even for Option 1, were that respondents felt that children living in Tatsfield should be able to get in to their village primary school. However a small number also expressed concern for families who might get one child in to the school but then be unable to get a subsequent child in if they lived beyond the catchment area.

67. If Option 1 had applied to the 2012 intake and the catchment had been defined by the Parish boundary, all children who lived within Tatsfield parish would have been offered a place. However there would have been no places remaining for children who lived outside the parish. As such, if sibling numbers or the number of children living in the Tatsfield parish increased, it would be unlikely that there would be sufficient places available for children living in the parish of Tatsfield at Tatsfield Primary School.

68. It is the view of Tatsfield Parish Council and the District Councillor that in future years there will be more children requiring a school place from within the parish as new houses are built and large houses, previously occupied by single residents,

are sold to families. Whilst this cannot be corroborated, it is the view of the School Commissioning team that the numbers in this area will at very least remain static.

69. As even a small increase in numbers is likely lead to places being unavailable for children living within Tatsfield parish and as the consequence of this is that Surrey will have difficulty in identifying alternative places for these children, it is proposed to consult fully on Option 2, but to provide for the phasing in of the new sibling rule as follows:

1. Looked after and previously looked after children
2. Exceptional social/medical need
3. Children who will have a sibling on roll at the school at the end of the 2013/14 academic year and that sibling will still be expected to be on roll at the school on the date of the child's admission
4. Siblings who live within the catchment area
5. Other children who live within the catchment area
6. Siblings who live outside the catchment area
7. Other children who live outside the catchment area

70. It is proposed to define the catchment boundary as the boundary for Tatsfield parish.

71. The Governing Body of the school are concerned that the introduction of these criteria might act as a deterrent to families living outside of Tatsfield from applying. On the basis that just less than 50% of the school population is made up of children from outside the area, they are concerned at the impact this might have on the school. However Tatsfield Primary School is a successful and popular school that is oversubscribed. Whilst there is no evidence that families would cease to apply for the school from outside the area, the phasing in of the amended sibling rule would allow mean that the impact would be gradual and during that time the Local Authority could monitor any unintended consequence of the change, if application numbers from within Tatsfield parish do not increase.

Thames Ditton Junior School - Elmbridge

72. Thames Ditton Infant School admitted an extra class in 2012 and due to previous extra classes in 2009 and 2010, has admitted siblings from beyond the normal catchment of Thames Ditton Junior School.

73. As a result of these 'bulge' classes, the admission criteria for the Infant school were changed in September 2012 to give priority to children who have the school as their nearest school ahead of children who do not.

74. Currently, after providing for looked after children, exceptional social/medical cases and siblings, Thames Ditton Infant School provides for all children at the infant school to transfer to the junior school.

75. However, due to the pressure of places in this area, in order to ensure that families living locally to Thames Ditton Junior School are not disadvantaged if they choose a different infant provision or if they are unable to obtain a place at the Infant school, it is proposed to align the criteria for the two schools and to introduce the following admission criteria for the junior school:

1. Looked After and previously looked after children
2. Exceptional social/medical need

3. Children with a sibling attending Thames Ditton Junior School at the time of the child's admission for whom the school is the nearest school to their home address
4. Children attending Thames Ditton Infant School for whom the school is the nearest school to their home address
5. Other children for whom the school is the nearest school to their home address
6. Other children with a sibling attending Thames Ditton Junior School at the time of the child's admission for whom the school is not the nearest school to their home address
7. Other children attending Thames Ditton Infant School for whom the school is not the nearest school to their home address
8. Any other children

76. This proposal has the support of Thames Ditton Junior School.

77. This change in admission criteria would mean that places would be offered to children for the school was nearest ahead of other children for whom it was not, thus helping to ensure that a school within a reasonable distance could be offered to all children living in the area.

78. It is not currently intended to introduce a reciprocal sibling link between the infant and junior school.

Trumps Green Infant School - Runnymede

79. Following a consultation with parents by Trumps Green Infant School and St Ann's Heath Junior School, the Governing Bodies of both schools received strong support to make a change to their admission criteria.

80. On the basis that the proposed changes should not lead to children being disadvantaged, the Governing Bodies support the proposed introduction of a reciprocal sibling link between the two schools and also a feeder link from Trumps Green Infant School to St Ann's Heath Junior School.

81. The admission criteria for Trumps Green Infant School would not change but Trumps Green Infant School and St Ann's Heath Junior School would be described as being on a shared or adjoining site for applying sibling criteria (see APPENDIX 1 – ANNEX 2).

82. The introduction of a reciprocal sibling link between the two schools would provide a greater chance of families keeping their children together or at schools in close proximity.

Changes proposed to the Published Admission Numbers (PAN) for schools

83. Admission authorities are no longer required to consult on proposed increases to PANs but are required to consult on any decrease to PAN. ANNEX 1 of APPENDIX 1 sets out the proposed admission numbers for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2014 admission. Changes are highlighted in bold.

84. As the Local Authority is required to consult only on decreases in PAN it is intended to consult on a decrease in PAN for the following school:

Elmbridge
Thames Ditton Junior - decrease in Junior PAN from 120 to 90 (temporary increase was agreed for September 2013 only to accommodate a 'bulge' class moving through from the Infant school)

85. For information, the Local Authority will increase the PAN for the following schools in September 2014 but these increases **will not be subject to consultation**:

Elmbridge
Bell Farm Primary – increase in Reception PAN from 60 to 90 as agreed by statutory proposals

Epsom and Ewell
West Ewell Infant – increase in Reception PAN from 90 to 120

Reigate and Banstead
Banstead Infant – increase in Reception PAN from 80 to 90
Earlswood Infant – increase in Reception PAN from 90 to 120
Earlswood Junior – increase in Junior PAN from 90 to 120
Salfords Primary – increase in Reception PAN from 45 to 60

Runnymede
Trumps Green Infant – increase in Reception PAN from 30 to 60

Spelthorne
Spelthorne Primary – increase in Reception PAN from 60 to 90

86. The following decreases in PAN are/have been subject to consultation through statutory proposals and as such these decreases will not be subject to consultation:

Elmbridge
Bell Farm Primary – decrease in Junior PAN from 120 to 30 (as agreed through statutory proposals following expansion to a primary school)

Grovelands – decrease in Reception PAN from 90 to 60 (as agreed through statutory proposals following expansion to a primary school)

Mole Valley
Charlwood Village Infant – decrease in Reception PAN from 30 to 15 (subject to separate consultation on becoming an all through primary school from September 2013)

Changes proposed to the Coordinated Schemes

87. ANNEX 4 sets out the proposed coordinated schemes which have generally been rolled forward and the dates updated.

88. Paragraph 2 of the draft primary scheme proposes to allow parents to name up to four preferences. To date Surrey has only allowed parents to name three preferences as part of their application for admission to primary school. This is the minimum requirement under the Coordination Regulations. However with the current pressure on primary school places, parents are faced with a difficult choice if they expect their local schools to be oversubscribed.

89. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that in each of the London boroughs parents are allowed to name up to six primary preferences. This is especially the

case since parents who live in London and who name a Surrey school as their fourth, fifth or sixth preference must have it considered, even though Surrey parents do not have the opportunity to name that many schools.

90. Surrey does not propose to introduce six preferences for primary school as given its mixture of rural and urban areas and the generally high primary preference satisfaction rate it is not felt that six preferences are needed. However an increase in the number of primary preferences to four would increase a parent's opportunity to get a school of their preference at the initial allocation and may reduce the number of parents wishing to add additional preferences after the allocation date or appeal for other schools.

91. Parents would not be obliged to name four preferences and many would not wish to do so, but it would give those parents who wish to, the opportunity to apply for an extra school. This in turn is also likely to support undersubscribed schools, as parents might be more willing to name those schools lower down in their preference list.

92. In the 2012 admission round 8,157 parents (62.8% of applicants) named three preferences, demonstrating that there is likely to be demand for four preferences.

93. Paragraph 32 of the primary and secondary schemes now provide for parents to name additional preferences after the offer day so that a parent's right to name a preference for a school is not restricted. This wording has been updated following a successful complaint to the Ombudsman.

Consultation

94. A paper setting out some of the proposed changes was passed to the School Admissions Forum on 28 September 2012.

95. The Assistant Director for Children, Schools and Families has been made aware of the proposed changes.

96. The School Commissioning team has been involved in considering the proposals for change.

97. All schools directly affected by the proposed changes have been consulted.

98. Parents, schools and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment on the proposed admission arrangements, including any changes being proposed, throughout the eight week consultation.

99. The Education Select Committee will consider the proposals prior to recommendations being put to Cabinet.

Financial and value for money implications

100. There is no significant financial impact.

Equalities implications

101. An Equality Impact Assessment is attached at APPENDIX 3. The adoption of determined admission criteria is a mandatory requirement supported by primary

legislation. The policy as it relates to Community and Voluntary Controlled schools does not discriminate by age, gender, ethnicity, faith, disability or sexual orientation.

102. Measures have been taken to reference vulnerable groups both in terms of exceptional arrangements within admissions, the SEN process and the In-Year Fair Access protocol. In addition, a right of appeal exists for all applicants who are refused a place at a particular school.

Risk management implications

103. The risks of consulting on these changes are low. There may be some local opposition to some of the proposals from those cohorts or groups that may be disadvantaged by the proposals, but it is important to identify those concerns as part of the consultation.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

104. The County Council attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change.

105. Where it is deemed appropriate to introduce tiered sibling or feeder criteria for oversubscribed schools, successful applicants are more likely to live local to the school and this may contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions if those applicants are able to walk to school.

Legal implications/legislative requirements

106. The proposed admission arrangements comply with Admissions legislation and the requirements of the School Admissions Code.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

107. The category of Looked After Children is the top criterion for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, as required by the School Admissions Code. This also includes those children who have left care through adoption, a residence order or a special guardianship order.

Section 151 Officer commentary

108. The section 151 officer confirms that all financial and business implications have been considered in this report. Any increased funding requirements as a result of this policy will be met through the redirection of existing budgets.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member approve for public consultation the proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and Coordinated Schemes for 2014, to include the changes set out in this report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

There is a statutory requirement to consult on admission arrangements every seven years, or sooner if there is a proposal to change any part of a school's admission

arrangements. The Local Authority is proposing changes to the admission arrangements and as such there is a statutory duty to consult.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- If approval is given to consult, the Local Authority will consult on the proposed admission arrangements for eight weeks between 26 November 2012 and 21 January 2013.

- A notice will be distributed to all schools in the County and will include a notice to display to parents at each school.

- A notice will also be distributed to each of Surrey's neighbouring Local Authorities and to each Diocesan Body representing schools in the County.

- The proposals will be considered by Education Select Committee for comment on 28 January 2013.

- A paper summarising the outcome of the consultation and making recommendations will then be passed to Cabinet on 26 February 2013 for decision and then to Full Council on 19 March 2013 to ratify the decision so that the admission arrangements for Surrey's Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools and the Coordinated Schemes can be determined before the legal deadline of 15 April 2013.

- The admission arrangements for September 2014 will then be published by 1 May 2013 on Surrey's website and a notice will be sent to all those consulted with.

Contact Officer:
Claire Potier – Principal Manager Admissions and Transport – 01483 517689.

Consulted:
School Admission Forum
School Commissioning Team

Informed:
Nick Wilson, Strategic Director Children, Schools and Families
Peter-John Wilkinson, Assistant Director Children, Schools and Families

Sources/background papers:
None

This page is intentionally left blank