

Title of meeting: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 9 June 2016

Subject: Response to Education, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

Report by: Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director of Children's Services - Education

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Panel conducted a review into home to school transport and access to primary school places. The purpose of this report is to set out the response from the Education Service to the Scrutiny Panel's recommendations.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Panel is thanked for its work in undertaking the review
- 2.2 That the Cabinet notes and supports the recommendations in the report, which are listed on pages 5-6 of the report, and the response from the Education Service as set out in section 4 of this report.

3. Background

- 3.1 The aim of the review was to look at developing proposals around home to school transport especially where children have been unsuccessful in being allocated a place at their first choice school and to consider the more general issues relating to access to primary school places and the distance parents and pupils have to travel from home to access primary school provision.
- 3.2 At its meeting on 21 October 2015, the Panel agreed the scoping objectives of the review as follows:
- To understand the current admission arrangements at Portsmouth City Council, including parental preference

- To gather evidence on, and understand, the existing Home to School Transport arrangements in particular for children who have not been allocated a place at their first preference school
- To understand the primary pupil projections for the city
- To understand how the council is planning to meet the demand for primary school places and where the proposed primary school expansions in the city will be
- To understand the interaction between town planning and pupil place planning.

3.3 The Panel was chaired by Councillor Will Purvis and met formally on three occasions between 21 October and 18 November 2015. They received evidence from a number of Council officers which they used to draw up a series of recommendations to submit to the Cabinet.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 The Education Service endorses the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Panel and will ensure that the recommendations set out on pages 5-6 of the report will be considered and acted up on to ensure the Council continues to meet its statutory duties and to do everything it can to meet parental preferences in terms of providing every child of school age a school place within a reasonable distance of their home.
- 4.2 The Education Service will continue to closely monitor and revisit both the home to school transport policy and also the School Organisation Plan to ensure fair access for all pupils.
- 4.3 Specifically, in relation to recommendation 4 '*that consideration be given to move the sibling criteria above catchment for primary schools to ensure that parents with multiple children can get their children into the same school and can safely drop them to and from school each day*', the Council will review the policy once the outcome of the current government consultation is known.
- 4.4 And finally, in relation to recommendation 5 '*the Panel agreed that catchment should remain the top criterion however a catchment area review should be considered for secondary schools and consideration be given to overlapping catchment areas*', the Council will be undertaking an options analysis during 2016/17 before considering a city wide consultation.

5. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as the recommendations in the report do not contain any equality issues.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 Legal comments are incorporated in the body of the scrutiny report.

7. Finance comments

7.1 The financial implications are contained within the body of the scrutiny report.

.....
Signed by: Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director of Children's Services - Education

Appendices:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
School Organisation Plan	Education Service
Home to School Transport Policy	Education Service

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

.....
Signed by: