IN ATTENDANCE:

Core Members
Doris Neville-Davies (DND) Governor representative
Helen Dean (HD) Guildford Diocese
Anne Cooper (AC) Bell Farm Primary School
Nerys Roberts (NR) Parent representative
Simon Parr (SP) Arundel and Brighton Diocese
Leo Morrell (LM) Southwark Diocese
Maggie Mackie (MM) Chilworth CofE (A) Infant School

LA Officers
Claire Potier (CP) Principal Manager for Admissions and Transport (Strategy)
Nicholas Smith (NS) School Commissioning Officer
Mark Scarborough (MS) Principal Lead for the Virtual School
Linda Culley (LC) Secretary
Katie Weller (KW) School Commissioning Assistant

ACTION

1. Apologies for absence / attendance of alternate members
   1.1 Apologies were received from:
       Mark Brett-Warburton LA member
       Chris Townsend (CT) LA member
       Mary Ryan Westminster Diocese
       Suzanne Miller Parent representative
       Matthew Armstrong-Harris (MAH) Rodborough School

       CP explained that Mark Brett-Warburton had offered his sincere apologies,
       He no longer chaired the Children and Education Select Committee and
       thought that representation on the Admissions Forum would pass to the new
       Chair of that Committee. He had therefore arranged another meeting.

       The group agreed that Doris Neville Davis should Chair the meeting and
       election of Chair and Vice Chair would be held at the next meeting.

2. Confirm minutes of 2 February 2018
   2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2018 were agreed with one
       amendment. Leo Morrell represented Southwark Diocese and not Arundel
       & Brighton as recorded under 1. of the draft minutes. The minutes would be
       updated and published on the SCC website.

3. Matters arising from the minutes
   3.1 Item 3.1 – CP commented on the Chief Schools Adjudicator’s report which
       had been circulated to the Forum. The local authority’s annual report would
       be submitted to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator at the end of June.
       For this report, there had been a greater focus on separating new round and
in year and the template report included questions about looked after children and fair access.

**Item 4.8** – NS informed the Forum that the building work at Cranmere had been agreed on the basis of the forecasts and the procurement of the building but there had been some timing issues. The PAN had been reduced from 90 to 60 for 2019 but the number of places offered for 2018 was higher. He stressed the difficulties of ensuring sufficient places and said that this would be continually reviewed.

**Item 7.3** – CP confirmed that she had not heard any more from the DfE regarding admission of children previously in care outside England and the letter from Nick Gibb. The majority of local authorities had responded saying that they needed more guidance regarding how this could be evidenced. CP would update colleagues as soon as she heard more as there should be consistency within the area. She had already received a query from a school who were looking at their 2020 arrangements. The Forum noted that this was an issue for the DfE as they were trying to bring admissions legislation into line with the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

**Item 13.1** – The SEND processes were still being finalised therefore CP would invite a colleague to the next Forum meeting.

4. **Constitution and Terms of Reference**

4.1 CP had received a request for the CEO of an Academy Trust to be a representative on the Forum. The constitution did not include provision for a CEO of an academy trust to be a member and CP had agreed to raise this with Forum members. HD stated that admissions were generally delegated to the local governing bodies and the group discussed this in detail. They noted that in her 2016 annual report, the Chief Schools Adjudicator had said that academies should make clear where responsibility for determining admission arrangements lies.

4.2 It was agreed that CP would provide a form of wording under paragraph 2.3 of the constitution to include a member of the Academy Trust where they acted as the admission authority for a school. She would then send the wording to the group for comments.

4.4 Under paragraph 3.1 of the constitution, DND wanted to stress that members of the Forum should nominate an alternate member when they were unable to attend.

4.5 Under paragraph 1.1 of the constitution, DND questioned whether the roles of the Forum should be evaluated regularly and, if so, how the Forum could do this. CP suggested that the roles of the Forum should be referred to within the paperwork on specific items and they should be reviewed once a year. It was agreed that this item would be added to the next Forum agenda.

4.6 DND also pointed out that she now represented the Surrey Governance Association and so any reference within the constitution to the Surrey Governors Association should be updated to read the Surrey Governance Association.

5. **Update on School Commissioning**

5.1 NS provided updates from the School Commissioning team since the last minutes:

5.2 **Reigate & Banstead Primary** – New 2FE primary school proposed for NW Horley from 2020.
Hatchlands Primary School would open in September 2018 as 1FE as their funding agreement had now been signed.

Secondary – Merstham Park would open in September 2018 as 4FE. Also, St Bede’s had expanded from 270 to 300 for September 2018.

5.3 Mole Valley
Primary – There were no signs of school place issues but there were significant vacancies in some of the borough. There could be a potential expansion at a primary school in Dorking but the School Commissioning team were monitoring numbers.

Secondary – No further update.

5.4 Tandridge
Primary – A formal objection to the removal of the Year 3 PAN at St John’s CofE Primary School in Caterham had been submitted to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator as this could lead to a lack of places for children attending St Peter & St Paul’s CofE Infant School.

Secondary – De Stafford School has expanded to offer 180 places from September 2018.

5.5 Epsom & Ewell
Primary - There were no issues but places were very tight. Some difficult placements had been made and this would continue to be monitored by officers.

Secondary – For the next two years it was anticipated that the borough could manage with the present provision but the local authority was having discussions with schools in the area for beyond that time. They were also working with a free school promoter in the area.

5.6 Spelthorne
Primary – No further update – the Forum noted that for the majority of areas the birth rate between 2012/15 had peaked but in Spelthorne it had continued to rise.

Secondary – Additional places would be put in as recorded in the last minutes over the next three years but beyond that further additional provision would be needed.

5.7 Elmbridge
Primary – Bell Farm and St Andrews primary schools had additional places added for September 2018. Consistently, the demand in the area was high and the local authority had to ensure they provided for the peak but did not provide too many places. In this way the bulge classes are anticipated to be temporary.

Secondary – The EFSA continued to work on the provision of a free school and the local authority were working with Elmbridge on planning permission. Timescales for the delivery of the school are tight and the local authority is dependent on the ESFA for this. As a result the local authority would be in discussion with local schools to mitigate any potential delay. It was noted that when the school came online, it may impact on admissions at other secondary schools in the area.
5.8 **Woking**

**Primary** – There were pockets of high demand in the area but the birth rate had reduced and the peak had been managed with bulge provision rather than permanent accommodation.

**Secondary** – Hoe Valley School provided an additional 1 FE bulge for 2018. Bishop David Brown had reduced their PAN for 2019 and the local authority had raised an objection with the Office of the Schools Adjudicator as these places would be needed. NS stated that his team were keen to work with the school about how they resolved their issues but places were needed to ensure sufficiency. In the medium term further growth in demand was anticipated and after a three year period there would be a peak that may not be sustained so this would be discussed with local schools.

5.9 **Runnymede**

**Primary** – There were pockets where places were tight but there were also pockets with a lot of places. Going forward there would be significant housing in the area. The local authority had been working with Runnymede Borough Council to identify the response to this. Historically there had been delays with the build of new housing and some schools had been struggling with low numbers.

**Secondary** – No further update.

5.10 **Surrey Heath**

Within primary and secondary Surrey Heath had the most unfilled places.

**Primary** – As part of the Deepcut Barracks development, building work would include a 2 FE primary school. An academy presumption competition would be undertaken to identify a Multiple Academy Trust to operate the school.

**Secondary** – No additional places were needed. One school was consulting on reducing PAN on condition that it would increase again if places were needed.

5.11 **Guildford**

**Primary** – Provision was tight but no additional places were required.

**Secondary** – There would be two permanent expansions at Guildford County and St Peter’s Catholic School.

5.12 **Waverley**

**Primary** – An additional class at Highfield South Farnham had created some vacancies in this area.

**Secondary** – Weydon School had offered over their PAN this year and Farnham Heath End had increased its PAN from 190 to 220.

6. **Update on 2018 admissions round**

6i) **Additional classes for reception / junior**

The document was shared with the Forum for their information and showed where schools had offered additional places for reception and junior in 2018. The majority of the additional provision at junior had been to accommodate bulge classes moving through from Year 2. South Farnham School had reduced their Year 3 PAN but had offered over PAN to accommodate all children attending a feeder school.
6ii) Percentage of parental preferences met and applications submitted online

- The report was provided in relation to the Forum’s role of monitoring the effectiveness of the admissions process. CP explained the report and highlighted the following:
  - There had been a record number of online applications for both primary and secondary;
  - The number of first preferences met had dropped slightly for both primary and secondary;
  - The percentage of one of the preferences met for primary was slightly up;
  - The percentage of one of the preferences met for secondary was slightly down and this may have reflected the increased pressure in the secondary sector;
  - The London and national averages were helpful to see how Surrey compared to others; and
  - The national average figures for 2018 were not yet known.

- NR asked if the information provided could be split into boroughs. CP explained that this was not possible as the numbers would then represent schools rather than where the pupils lived. The stats provided were information that local authorities must produce.

7. Fair Access Protocol:

7i) Placements through admissions 2017/18

- The Admissions Forum had a role to monitor the effectiveness of the fair access protocols and the report set out the number of cases referred under the secondary and primary Fair Access Protocols in 2017/18.
- Fair access pupils with complex special educational needs or disability continued to present the most difficulties but the local authority were looking at how these cases could be resolved.
- Generally the protocols were working well and the panels worked effectively in the majority of cases. Panels took ownership and placed pupils. There had been difficulties recently with A2E, due to a pressure on that provision.

7ii) Consultation on primary and secondary protocols 2018/19

- CP stated that schools and the services that engaged with fair access had been consulted. There were only 5 or 6 comments received but some of these represented a number of schools. The protocols must be agreed with the majority of schools. A query was received about whether there was a need to consult on the protocols every year.
- There had been few amendments this year other than to the funding which had been updated so that rather than schools receiving an amount dependent upon which term the pupil started, there would be financial support of £1,000 regardless of when during the academic year the pupil was placed on roll.
- Exceptions would be for year 6 pupils placed in a primary school in the summer term, year 11 pupils placed in a secondary school in the summer term and year 2 pupils placed in an infant school in the summer term. In these cases schools would only receive £500 as the child would only be at the school for one term.
- Before proposing the change to flat rate funding, the review group had looked at the past 3 years figures and there was generally support for this change.
- A report would be presented to Mary Lewis, Cabinet Member for All Age Learning, for agreement on 3 July and when agreed the protocols would be shared with all schools.

8. **Children in Care:**
8i) **Placements 2017/18**
- The report presented enabled the Forum to monitor the effectiveness of the admissions process for children in care.
- MS stated that the process for placing children in care was a lot smoother and more efficient that in the past. The numbers were going up and would continue to do so, but they were generally very well supported and tracked. The new Executive Director was keen to bring children in care back into Surrey. There were new statutory requirements for previously looked after children and those under special guardianship and there would be more duty around the support and advice schools and local authorities needed to provide.
- CP stated that across London, local authorities were working on a similar protocol to the one used in Surrey and this may help with placements cross-border.

8ii) **Draft protocol 2018/19**
CP stated that the protocol for the processing of children in care was working very well. It was reviewed annually. There had been a change mid-year so that, where a school refused a place, the protocol included the provision for the local authority to advise an applicant of the reasons for the refusal.

9. **In year admissions review**
9.1 CP alerted the Forum to a review of processes and practices for in year admissions of more vulnerable children. This was being carried out by an independent consultant and might inform admissions processes and identify improvements for the future. A number of schools had raised concerns regarding placing vulnerable and challenging pupils and it was hoped that an independent review might establish the basis for the concerns. The brief and a survey had been circulated to all schools. It was anticipated that a report of the outcome of the review would be available by the end of the summer. This was likely to be the first phase of this work and the outcomes would guide the next steps.

10. **Determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for September 2019 - please follow this link**
10.1 The four proposed changes to the admission arrangements for 2019 had been shared with the Forum at the last meeting and CP confirmed that they had been agreed and determined by Full Council on 6 February 2018. The changes were:
- Cranmere Primary – decrease in published admission number from 90 to 60
- William Cobbett Primary - decrease in published admission number for Reception from 40 to 30
- The Dawnay School – introduction of a feeder link from Polesden Lacey Infant School at Year 3
- Reigate Priory School - introduction of a feeder link from Dovers Green and Holmesdale Community infant schools on a tiered basis
11. **Own admission authority schools admission arrangements for 2019**

11.1 CP explained the report set out a summary of own admission authority schools that had consulted and determined their 2019 admission arrangements. Schools were required to consult if they were making a change to their arrangements or if they had not consulted in the last 7 years.

11.2 The number of own admission authority schools was increasing as more schools became academies and the local authority was not able to scrutinise all determined arrangements but CP confirmed that the arrangements for those schools that had consulted, those which had not been checked last year and those with carry forward comments had all been checked. She hoped that the arrangements for all schools would be checked at least every other year. This year 103 sets of arrangements had already been checked and the team were still continuing this work.

11.3 According to the local authority’s records there were 9 schools that must consult for 2020 arrangements and these were listed in the report. The team would write to these schools to remind them.

11.4 CP felt that more schools were aware of their responsibilities and the local authority were reminding fewer schools about their duties than in the past. Schools were sent information about their new responsibilities with regard to admissions when they changed to academy status but CP would be putting together a standalone document detailing their responsibilities.

12. **Update on academies and free schools**

12.1 The updated academies list was tabled. CP stated that KW, School Commissioning Assistant maintained this information. When schools converted to academy status CP wrote to them detailing their new responsibilities with regard to admissions and provided copies of their determined admission arrangements.

12.2 KW stated that both Chart Wood School and Spelthorne Primary School were aiming to convert in October.

13. **Admissions and transport team termly update – Summer term 2018**

13.1 The Forum were provided with a copy of the summer term update for their information. CP explained that the updates were sent out at the beginning of each term to provide schools with information about admissions. Each year there would often be similar information.

13.2 CP highlighted the feedback survey on the Admissions and Transport team which had been issued to schools on Monday 11 June with a closing date of 20 July. It asked for feedback about the performance of the service and the processes used by the admissions team.

13.3 CP also confirmed that the local authority would be writing directly to parents of Year 9 pupils (over 10,000) by 12 September to let them know about schools outside Surrey with a Year 10 intake. The DfE had insisted parents should be sent individual letters. CP confirmed that Surrey did not have a University Technical College (UTC) or studio school.

14. **Any other business**

14.1 NR asked if there was any further news about a new School Admissions Code being issued by the DfE. CP responded there would be nothing until after Brexit, at least two years.
14.2 CP confirmed to the Forum that the local authority had sent objections to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator about the following schools’ admission arrangements:

- Bishop David Brown - reduction in PAN from 180 to 120;
- St John’s Primary, Caterham - removal of the Year 3 PAN

In both cases the local authority was objecting as places were needed.

15. **Items for future agendas**

15.1 A colleague would be invited to the next meeting to inform the Forum about the new SEND processes which were still being finalised.

15.2 Forum members agreed to let CP know if they had any suggested items for future agendas.

16. **Date of future Forum meetings to be held at Quadrant Court, Woking:**

- Autumn Term 2018 – Friday 28 September 2018 at 10.00am
- Spring Term 2019 – Friday 8 February 2019 at 10.00am
- Summer Term 2019 – Friday 14 June 2019 at 10.00am
- Autumn Term 2019 – Friday 27 September 2019 at 10.00am