

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2014
<b>Report of:</b>	Barbara Dale, School Admissions and Organisation Manager
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Supporting Fair Access to Educational Opportunity
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Councillor Rachel Bailey, Cabinet Member for Safeguarding Children and Adults

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### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council is committed to supporting parents through the school admissions process by ensuring fair access to educational opportunity.
- 1.2 The Council embraces the Government's commitment to placing trust back in schools and headteachers and it is therefore proposed that the role of monitoring and reporting on fair access can be implemented successfully through effective working relationships with schools and by reporting annually to the Schools Adjudicator on admissions for all schools in its area.
- 1.3 If approved, the role of the Cheshire East Admissions Forum, which was established by Cabinet for the new Cheshire East Council on 2 December 2008, will transfer to the Local Authority.

### 2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Cabinet approve the new way of working, as set out in the report summary.

### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 It is proposed that the role of monitoring and reporting on fair access can be implemented successfully through effective working relationships with schools. The Local Authority will continue to report annually to the Schools Adjudicator on admissions for all the schools in its area for which it coordinates admissions, making recommendations that support the interests of parents and their children and ensuring compliance with the provisions set out in the School Admissions Code and relevant legislation.
- 3.2 The proposal to revise current practice is recommended and fully supported by forum members.

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All Wards

#### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 All ward members

#### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 None

#### **7.0 Implications for Rural Communities**

- 7.1 None

#### **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 None

#### **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 The responsibility for ensuring that admission arrangements are compliant with the School Admissions Code 2012 falls to the relevant admission authority. Where a school is the admission authority, this responsibility falls to the governing body or Academy Trust.
- 9.2 Section 88P of the School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998 requires local authorities to make reports to the adjudicator about such matters connected with relevant school admissions, as required by the School Admissions Code. This proposal reinforces and fully supports this duty.
- 9.3 There is no legal requirement to have an Admissions Forum following changes to the School Admissions Code 2012 and relevant legislation. The legislation that now applies is the Education Act 2011 (Schedule 10), which makes changes to the Education Inspection Act 2006 section 41 (role of admissions forums), by omitting subsections (1) to (6) (amendments to section 85A of SSFA 1998).
- 9.4 The Admissions Forum is not included in the Council's Constitution.

#### **10.0 Risk Management**

- 10.1 The monitoring and reporting function of the Local Authority is supported by this proposal. This will serve as the basis for advising and reporting on fair access and for brokering discussion with schools about their duties in respect of school admissions and admissions appeals in the interests of parents and their children.

## 11.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

- School Admissions Code 2012
- School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012
- Education Act 2011, Schedule 10.
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 Schedule 41
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 85A)

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