

REPORT TO CABINET

Title: **DETERMINATION OF SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS (CHANGES TO MAIDENHEAD SECONDARY SCHOOL DESIGNATED AREAS), SEPTEMBER 2010**

Date: 26 March 2009

Member Reporting: Councillor Mrs Quick

Contact Officer(s): Rhidian Jones, Principal Education Officer, Children's Commissioning (tel.01628 796779)

Wards affected: All

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 This report concerns the proposal to change the designated areas for secondary schools in Maidenhead.
- 1.1.2 Following a resolution at the Cabinet meeting on 23rd October 2008, consultation has taken place during the period 1st December 2008 and 16th January 2009 on the possible changing of designated areas for Maidenhead's secondary schools, and Cabinet is now invited to determine any change in designated areas.
- 1.1.3 Appendices to this report are as follows.

Appendix 1 Summary of possible changes to the designated areas of Maidenhead's secondary schools

Appendix 2 Analysis of responses by the public on the scheme to change the designated area of Maidenhead secondary schools

Appendix 3 Options for changing the designated areas: *pros and cons*

Appendix 4 Map showing Option 2

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Designated Area Option 2 as shown on the attached map be adopted with effect from September 2010

What will be different for residents as a result of this decision?
Parents and children in the Maidenhead area will be offered a wider range of schools from which to express a preference for secondary education.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Background

3.1.1 At its meeting on 23rd October 2008 Cabinet resolved to open a public consultation on the possibility of changing the designated areas for the five Maidenhead secondary schools. This was done as part of the wider consultation as part of the Building Schools for the Future initiative. Consultation took place on three possibilities. *Option 1*, to retain most of the current boundaries but to introduce different tiers of designated area; *Option 2*, to extend the designated areas of three of the schools to cover the whole of Maidenhead with the other two schools taking the areas north and south of the A4 respectively; and *to retain the status quo*. These are summarised in Appendix 1. However, in the course of the consultation *a further option emerged*, called here Option 3, which is to make all five schools share the whole of Maidenhead as one designated area. A map showing Option 2 is attached as Appendix 4.

4. OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND RISK ASSESSMENT

	Option	Comments	Financial Implications
0.	Retain status quo	No change	None
1.	Option1, to introduce tiers of designated area	Would produce more complicated admission arrangements. Would lead to relatively little change in practice	Possibly to home to school transport arrangements
2.	Option 2, to give three schools the whole of Maidenhead as a designated area, with the other two taking north and south of the A4	Would simplify admission arrangements. Would lead to a significant change in the operation of parental preference	Possibly to home to school transport arrangements
3.	<i>Option emerging during consultation</i> . Give all five schools the whole of Maidenhead as a designated area	Would produce the simplest admission arrangements. Would lead to a significant change in the operation of parental preference. Would give all schools the same advantage. Would require no change on implementation of the Building Schools for the Future Programme.	Possibly to home to school transport arrangements

4.2 Risk assessment

4.2.1 No detailed modelling of the effect of these options has yet been undertaken.

5. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

5.1.1 Consultation took place between 1st December 2008 and 16th January 2009. The results of this consultation are analysed in detail in Appendix 2 to this report. Amongst those connected with Maidenhead schools, 26% were in favour of Option 1, and 39% were in favour of Option 2. The proportion favouring the status quo was 12%. 6% suggested an alternative, while the remaining 17% were either 'don't knows' or not indicated. The level of support varies widely from school to school. The proportion favouring the status quo or Option 1 (which is a refined version of the status quo) is roughly comparable to those supporting Option 2. Additionally, the message from the three Maidenhead secondary schools that responded is that more detailed modelling work needs to be undertaken before change can be effected. A number of respondents suggest that Option 2 would be fairer or simpler, but many suggested that the five Maidenhead schools should share one designated area covering the whole of Maidenhead. This has been considered as part of this report.

6. COMMENTS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL – meeting on 24th March

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1.1 The following implications have been addressed where indicated below.

Financial	Legal	Human Rights Act	Planning	Sustainable Development	Diversity & Equality
✓	✓	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A

7.1.2 Financial. Changes to the admissions arrangements, including to the designated areas, might have financial implications either way for the provision of home to school transport. The impact of these has not been modelled and so it is not possible to elaborate further at this point.

7.1.3 Legal. S.9 of the Education Act 1996, as amended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, obliges an authority to have regard to the concept of parental preference, whereby parents express a preference for their child to attend a specific school. Education in accordance with parental preference is subject to the provision of efficient education and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure.

7.1.4 The admission arrangements are governed by a strict legislative framework. Unless there is a major change in circumstances the admission arrangements cannot be altered at short notice.

7.1.5 Human Rights. The convention right under the Human Rights Act relevant to this report is Article 2 of the First Protocol, the right not be denied an education. This convention right will not be affected by this decision. This decision does not affect

any victims as defined under the Act.

Background Papers:

Education Act 1996

School Standards and Framework Act 1998

Education (Determining School Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1998

Education (Determination of School Admissions Arrangements) Regulations 1999

Education Act 2002