

Bristol City Council Overview and Scrutiny – Councillor Workshop

‘School Place Planning and School Admissions in Bristol’

Date: Monday 19th December

Venue: The Writing Room, City Hall

Time: 1 – 4pm

Background information for Councillors

What is scrutiny?

Overview and Scrutiny, known in Bristol as ‘Scrutiny’ is a process that ensures that decisions taken by the Council and its partners reflect the opinions, wishes and priorities of residents in Bristol. Scrutiny is carried out by elected members who understand and promote the concerns of the local residents who elected them. The Scrutiny process connects decision makers to local residents and involves the community whenever possible.

The scrutiny function is not decision-making, but scrutiny bodies and events generate reports and recommendations which must be considered and responded to by the council’s cabinet, and by some partners.

What is a scrutiny Workshop?

This is an informal meeting of members which could be used for a variety of purposes, for example to provide detailed information or to develop a collective view and decide a way forward, or to agree areas of questioning for a later scrutiny event. A workshop can be useful in situations when members want an opportunity to have a detailed discussion on an issue with officers outside the context of the formal Commission meeting.

Background to this Workshop

The People Scrutiny Councillors identified ‘school admission arrangements in Bristol’ as a priority area at the scrutiny work planning workshop in September 2016.

The Mayor has also identified this as a priority area and the draft Corporate Strategy references the need to increase the number of school places and further consideration of the admissions process (Our future – Bristol and its council in 2022). The Mayor referred the issue to the People Scrutiny Commission for consideration at the work planning workshop.

Councillor Brenda Massey, People Scrutiny Commission Chair led a steering group of four Councillors, supported by Officers, to consider the most appropriate approach to the issues. It was agreed that to fully explore the issues, two scrutiny events would be required (outlined below). This is the information pack for the first event – the all Councillor workshop.



19 12 16	All Councillor Workshop	<p>Bristol City Council Officers will use a combination of presentations and group discussions to provide a detailed overview of the school place planning and admission process in Bristol. An in depth understanding will:</p> <p>a) Assist Councillors to support / sign post constituents and manage public expectations</p> <p>b) Provide the knowledge required for the Inquiry Day (see below), including information on the Local Authority's strategic responsibilities.</p> <p>The focus of the Inquiry Day will be the School Admissions process in Bristol. The Councillors steering group acknowledged that a good understanding of school place planning was also be required for the workshop and information has been provided. The workshop discussions will shape the content and format of the inquiry day.</p>
03 02 17	*Inquiry Day	<p>The Inquiry Day will seek to establish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are Councillors satisfied that the current BCC place planning arrangements and school admission arrangements support Bristol families? • Are there alternative approaches to school place planning and school admission arrangements which could be considered? • Are we providing appropriate support and challenge to school admission arrangement policies? <p>If Councillors would like to attend the Inquiry Day attendance at the Workshop is strongly recommended to ensure a consistent knowledge base.</p>
<p>*An Inquiry Day is a focussed, structured one-off event consisting of presentations and group work which engages a range of members, officers, community and partner representatives, and other stakeholders to take an overview of a particular issue and provide a forum for questioning invited speakers and witnesses etc.</p> <p>An Inquiry Day is not open to the public but work will take place to ensure a wide variety of stakeholders are engaged and those people who wish to contribute to the discussion are able to do so.</p>		

If you have any question please contact Karen Blong – Policy Advisor, Scrutiny



Bristol City Council Overview and Scrutiny – Workshop

An Overview of School Place Planning and School Admission Arrangements in Bristol

Date: Monday, 19th December 2016

Venue: The Writing Room, City Hall

Time: 1pm – 4pm

Programme

1.00pm Registration

1.15pm Welcome and Introductions

- Councillor Brenda Massey – Chair of the People Scrutiny Commission & Councillor Claire Hiscott – Cabinet Member for Education

1.20pm Quiz

1:30pm School Place Planning

- Paul Jacobs, Service Director for Education & Skills

1:50pm Questions and Answers

2.00pm Overview of the Legal Framework – including how schools set their admission criteria

- Ian Bell, Place Planning Manager

--- 15 minute comfort break ---

2:25 pm The process in Bristol

- a) How do parents / carers apply for a school place?
- b) How are places allocated?
- c) Advantages and disadvantages of community schools versus schools with a wider catchment area?

3:25pm Questions to the panel

- Paul Jacobs, Ian Bell & Hayley Leman (School Admissions Lead)

3:35pm Discussion and Feedback

- Is further information required?
- Would an Inquiry Day be appropriate?

3:55pm Close

4pm finish

