



## **Briefing Paper for Overview and Scrutiny Commissioning Committee**

**Date**                      **8 September 2009**

**Title**                        **Secondary School Catchment Area Review**

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### **Background**

In April 2009, The Cabinet Member for Achievement and Learning agreed the determined admission arrangements for admission in September 2010. However, in response to a significant amount of feedback from parents in specific areas of the county agreed that there should be a review of secondary catchment areas.

The Cabinet Member wrote:

“It is six years since we undertook a significant review of catchment areas for secondary schools in Buckinghamshire. I will, therefore, immediately following the Easter holidays, be asking Officers to set out terms of reference for an independent review of our secondary catchment areas. I will announce more details of this as soon as I am able. We will, of course, work with schools, parents and communities in trying to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people throughout Buckinghamshire.”

The Local Authority is currently undertaking development work and consultation on School Place Planning across the county and therefore any review of catchment areas must take this work into account and ensure that any subsequent proposals do not compromise the Area Plans.

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **Aim of the Review:**

To assess the impact of current secondary school catchment areas on the Local Authority and the school based admission authorities and to recommend a range of options for further development which may better secure the fair allocation of places. Any recommended changes could not be implemented before September 2011.

**Age Group Covered:**

10 – 19 years

**Groups Affected:**

Children and young people and their parents, schools and communities throughout Buckinghamshire.

**Objectives of the Review:**

- To review and analyse the impact of the current admission arrangements, with reference to the statutory requirements of the School Admissions Code 2008
- To identify available options for change
- To make recommendations to the Cabinet Member

**Key Tasks:**

- To understand and analyse the current arrangements and areas of low parental satisfaction
- To listen to the views of parents, councillors, officers, stakeholders and the Admissions Forum
- To review and evaluate available options, measuring them against the effectiveness of current arrangements, the current level of parental satisfaction and fairness, taking current legislation into account
- To ensure options are compatible with the School Place Planning Framework and Area Plans
- To present options to the Cabinet Member concerning any revision to catchment areas or admission rules and to identify the next steps in implementing any changes
- To make recommendations to the Council and other appropriate authorities concerning consultation, timeline and publication of proposals

**Timescale:**

- Meeting with Admissions Forum members September 2009
- Informal consultation September to November 2009
- Interim report on analysis and review to Cabinet Member October 2009
- Report outlining available options December 2009

**Recommendation:**

Members are asked to note the details of the review.