

REPORT TO: Schools Forum

DATE: 21 January 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director, Children's Organisation and Provision

PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People and Families

SUBJECT: Recruitment of School Admission and Exclusion Appeal Panel Members

WARDS: All

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides information on the process involved in Independent School Admission Appeals and the recruitment drive for additional volunteer Panel Members.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That members of the Forum consider the request for the nomination of volunteers for Halton's Independent School Admission Appeals Panel.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Independent School Admission Appeals Panel hear appeals when parents exercise their right of appeal in relation to the allocation of school places to a particular school. Appeals Panels also hear appeals against exclusions from a particular school.

3.2 Halton Borough Council is seeking nominations for volunteer members to sit on such Panels. Usually, volunteers will come into one of two categories:

Lay persons – i.e. those without experience in the management of any school or the provision of education; and

Persons with experience in education either as (for example) a School Governor, Teacher or Head teacher (past or present). Also in this category would be parents with a child registered and attending at a Halton school.

3.3 The role of Panel member is carried out in a voluntary capacity. There is no direct payment for sitting on appeals panels, but travelling allowances are paid and lunch and refreshments are provided on the day. It is not a requirement that they live in the Borough.

- 3.4 Training is provided and arranged by the Borough Council. In addition, new panel members are encouraged to sit as observers in the early stages to gain an understanding of the process and to sit alongside experienced colleagues.
- 3.5 Panels are supported at hearings by a clerk whose role is independent of the local education authority. The clerk administers the preparations for the hearing, including the distribution of paperwork prior to the hearing, meets the parents on the day and provides advice and guidance to the panel at the hearing and at the decision making stage.
- 3.6 Decisions of Appeals Panels are binding on both parties (i.e. parents and the school).
- 3.7 Further details can be obtained from the Independent School Admissions Appeals Team Manager – Angela Scott on 0151 511 8670 or email: angela.scott@halton.gov.uk.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

6.3 A Healthy Halton

6.4 A Safer Halton

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The Independent School Admission Appeals process contributes to all of the Council's priorities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None identified.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

The Independent School Admission Appeals process operates within all relevant legislation.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None under the meaning of the Act.