

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 21 February 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Chris Rosling-Josephs (Chair), Andy Nash, Chris Peace and Andrew Sangar

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Talib Hussain and Craig Gamble Pugh.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

- 2.1 **RESOLVED:** That the public and press be excluded from the meeting before discussion takes place on items 6, 7 and 8 on the grounds that, if the public and press were present during the transaction of such business, there would be a disclosure to them of exempt information described in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 In Item 7 (Primary Admissions Requests), Councillor Andy Nash declared personal interests in Case Nos. F8 and F9 and did not speak or vote on the cases.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17th January, 2018 were approved as a correct record.

5. ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

- 5.1 The Committee noted that, since its last meeting, no decisions had been made by the Executive Director, People Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, under powers delegated to her with regard to home to school transport or school admissions.

6. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS

6.1 Verbal Appeal – WW1

- 6.1.1 In attendance were the appellant and Hilary Hoult (People Services).
- 6.1.2 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked attendees to introduce themselves. He then outlined the procedure which would be followed during the meeting.

- 6.1.3 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted a report and commented upon a case where the parent had appealed against the administrative decision made by the Executive Director with regard to the refusal to grant Special Educational Needs (SEN) home to school transport (Case No.WW1).
- 6.1.4 Hilary Hoult explained the SEN transport policy which stipulates that transport will not be provided where the applicant does not attend their nearest appropriate school. Ms. Hoult stated that the child lived 0.2 miles from the catchment school and 1.4 miles from the school he currently attends and that to provide transport would incur significant cost to the Authority. She further stated that the child currently does not have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) in place.
- 6.1.5 The appellant explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for the travel pass.
- 6.1.6 In response to questions from Members, the appellant stated that she was in the process of gathering as much evidence as possible for her child to be assessed for a EHCP to be put in place by September. She stated that she had contacted two schools within her catchment area to identify the needs required for her child, one school was unable to meet his needs and she received no response to her request from the other one. The appellant added that the school her child does attend gives full support and this was benefitting her child. She further stated that she had made every effort to get her child to school on public transport, but this had worsened his condition.
- 6.1.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.
- 6.1.8 RESOLVED: That the appeal be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and educational circumstances in the case (Case No. WW1).
- 6.2 Verbal Appeal – BRO1
- 6.2.1 In attendance were the appellant and Julie Pryor and Andy Tierney (Customer Services).
- 6.2.2 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked attendees to introduce themselves. He then outlined the procedure which would be followed during the meeting.
- 6.2.3 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted a report and commented upon a case where the parent had appealed against the administrative decision made by the Executive Director with regard to the refusal to grant a home to school travel bus pass (Case No.BRO1).
- 6.2.4 Julie Pryor and Andy Tierney explained the Stage 1 review and Stage 2 appeals process regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. Ms. Pryor and Mr. Tierney informed the Committee of the reasons why the request for a home to school travel pass had been refused at Stage 1.

- 6.2.5 The appellant explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for a home to school travel pass for his child.
- 6.2.6 In response to questions from Members, the appellant stated that his child used to attend the catchment school but had undergone a managed move, arranged by the catchment school and the school he now attends, due to issues, which he outlined in detail, with various groups of pupils who had carried out constant and sustained campaigns of bullying and harassment.
- 6.2.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.
- 6.2.8 RESOLVED: That the appeal be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional educational and family circumstances in the case (Case No. BRO1).

7. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES

7.1 Requests to prioritise on waiting lists

- 7.1.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon 31 cases where parents had expressed a wish for their children to be admitted to primary schools of their choice. The Executive Director stated that places in primary schools had been identified by the City Council, in accordance with the published admission criteria, and it had been agreed that the Executive Director would provisionally allocate places at those schools where there were places available, up to the standard number/admission limit. The Committee was requested to consider prioritising the pupils on waiting lists, within their respective categories, for admission if and when places become available.
- 7.1.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting evidence and information provided by the pupils' parents including, in some cases, evidence and advice provided by voluntary or professional bodies and organisations and, arising therefrom, it was:-
- 7.1.3 RESOLVED: That (a) 12 pupils be not prioritised on the waiting lists, within their respective categories, on the grounds that the Committee considers that there are no exceptional educational, financial, medical or family circumstances demonstrated (Case Nos. F2, F4, F6, F9, F12, F13, F15, F17, F19, F25, F29 and F31);
- (b) seven pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'catchment' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and/or family circumstances (Case Nos. F8, F10, F11, F21, F22, F23 and F28);
- (c) two pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'sibling' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances (Case Nos. F16 and F26); and
- (d) 10 pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'non-catchment'

category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances (Case Nos. F3, F7, F14, F18, F20, F24, F27, F30, F32 and F33).

(NOTE: Two cases (Case Nos. F1 and F5) had been withdrawn from consideration prior to the meeting).

7.2 Request to consider change of circumstances

7.2.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon two cases where parents had made requests for the Committee to consider changes in the families' circumstances, in connection with their requests for places at their preferred schools and, arising therefrom, it was:-

7.2.2 RESOLVED: That upon consideration of the cases, and with due regard to the additional information now submitted, the Committee considers that there has been material changes in the families' circumstances in the cases and therefore authorises the Executive Director to process new applications (Case Nos.H1 and N1).

8. **SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES**

8.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon three cases where parents had expressed a wish for their children to be admitted to secondary schools of their choice. The Executive Director stated that places in secondary schools had been identified by the City Council, in accordance with the published admission criteria, and it had been agreed that the Executive Director would provisionally allocate places at those schools where there were places available, up to the standard number/admission limit. The Committee was requested to consider prioritising the pupils on waiting lists, within their respective categories, for admission if and when places become available.

8.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting evidence and information provided by the pupils' parents including, in all three cases, evidence and advice provided by voluntary or professional bodies and organisations and, arising therefrom, it was:-

8.3 RESOLVED: That (a) one pupil be not prioritised on the waiting list, within their respective category, on the grounds that the Committee considers that there are no exceptional educational, financial, medical or family circumstances demonstrated (Case No.3);

(b) one pupil be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the "feeder" category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances (Case No. 2); and

(c) one pupil be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the "other" category on the grounds that there are exceptional family circumstances (Case No. 3)

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on

Wednesday, 21st March, 2018, at 1.15 p.m. in the Town Hall.

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