

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 11 September 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Chris Rosling-Josephs (Chair), Michelle Cook, Talib Hussain and Andrew Sangar

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lisa Banes and Kaltum Rivers.

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 and 7 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 There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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

5. ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

5.1 The Committee noted that, since its last meeting, and following receipt of further evidence that had been requested from the appellants in respect of two cases, 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 Appeals, had agreed to grant home to school travel passes in both cases (Case Nos. MH1 and FV1).

6. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES - REQUEST TO CONSIDER A CHANGE IN CIRCUMSTANCES

6.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had made a request for the Committee to consider a change in the family's circumstances, in connection with their request for a place at their preferred secondary school and, arising therefrom, it was:-

6.2 RESOLVED: That upon consideration of the case, and with due regard to the

additional information now submitted, the Committee considers that there had been a material change in the family's circumstances, and therefore, authority be given for a new application to be processed in this case (Case No. FV1).

(NOTE: The above item was considered by the Committee as an urgent item of business in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 26 of the Council's Constitution and the provisions of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, in order for the request to be considered at the earliest possible opportunity, although it had not been possible to give five clear days' notice that the request was to be considered.

7. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS

7.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports upon 12 cases where parents had appealed against the administrative decisions made by the Executive Director with regard to the refusal to grant home to school travel bus passes. The parents in six cases had indicated that they wished to make verbal representations at the hearing, but four out of the six parents had failed to attend, so the cases were heard in their absence (Case Nos. UT/MA01, OA/AC01, BR05 and NO/DA02).

7.2 Verbal Appeal (BRO1)

7.2.1 In attendance were the appellant and her friend and Andy Tierney (Customer Services).

7.2.2 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.

7.2.3 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted a report and commented upon the 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).

7.2.4 Andy Tierney explained the Stage 1 review and Stage 2 appeals process regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. Mr. Tierney informed the Committee of the reasons why the request for a home to school travel pass had been refused at Stage 1.

7.2.5 The appellant and her friend explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for a home to school travel pass for her child.

7.2.6 In response to questions from Members, the appellant stated that she had asked at the Travel Interchange and had been told she would be eligible for a home to school travel pass. The appellant stated that she had wanted a smooth transition for her child from primary to secondary school with her peer group and that, as a single parent

family, she had put in place a strong support network of family and friends. The appellant also stated that she could not understand why other children from the same peer group, got on the bus at the same stop as her child and they had home to school passes.

7.2.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.

7.2.8 RESOLVED: That the appeal be not upheld on the grounds that there are no exceptional circumstances demonstrated, and having regard to the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, the school that the pupil is requesting a pass for is not their catchment school/nearest suitable school (Case No.BRO1).

7.3. Verbal Appeal – BR02

7.3.1 In attendance were the appellant and Andy Tierney (Customer Services).

7.3.2 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.

7.3.3 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted a report and commented upon the 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.BRO2.).

7.3.4 Andy Tierney explained the Stage 1 review and Stage 2 appeals process regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. Mr. Tierney informed the Committee of the reasons why the request for a home to school travel pass had been refused at Stage 1.

7.3.5 The appellant explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for a home to school travel pass for her child.

7.3.6 In response to questions from Members, the appellant stated that, as a student on a placement outside of the City for a number of days a week, she relied heavily on the support of grandparents for the care of her child on those days. She also stated that her child's friends from the feeder school were attending the school.

7.3.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.

7.3.8 RESOLVED: That the appeal be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional educational and family circumstances in the case (Case No.BR02).

7.4 Written Appeals

7.4.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon 10 cases where parents had appealed against the administrative decisions made by the Executive Director with regard to the refusal to grant home to school travel bus passes.

7.4.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting information and evidence provided by the pupils' parents and, arising therefrom, it was:-

7.4.3 RESOLVED: That (a) four appeals be not upheld on the grounds that there are no exceptional circumstances demonstrated, and having regard to the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, the schools that the pupils are requesting passes for are not their catchment schools/nearest suitable schools (Case No.AL/SA01, NO/DA02, BR03 and BR04);

(b) one appeal be not upheld on the grounds that the distance from the home address of the pupil to the school for which they are requesting a pass for is less than the distance in the criteria (Case No. PA/AC01);

(c) four appeals be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional educational and family circumstances in the cases (Case Nos.ST01, UT/MA01, OA/AC01 and UTC/MA02); and

(d) one appeal be deferred at the request of the parent who had been taken ill and wanted to submit further information (Case No.BR05).

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday, 30th October, 2018 at 2.00 p.m., in the Town Hall.