SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 24 March 2022

PRESENT: Councillors Chris Rosling-Josephs (Chair), Vic Bowden, Peter Garbutt, Talib Hussain and Andrew Sangar

.....

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Denise Fox and Sioned-Mair Richards.

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 7 and 8 on the agenda (items 6 and 7 of these minutes), 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 24th February 2022, 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 him with regard to home to school transport or school admissions.

6. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS

6.1 In attendance were the appellant, the appellant's representative and Andy Tierney (Customer Services).

6.2 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.

6.3 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon two cases where the parent had appealed against the administrative decisions

made by the Executive Director with regard to the refusal to grant home to school travel bus passes (Case Nos.ST/01 and ST/02).

6.4 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 requests for home to school travel passes had been refused at Stage 1.

6.5 The appellant explained to the Committee the reasons for the requests for home to school travel passes for her two children. She stated that she had not wanted to move her child due to the disruption caused by the family situation in previous years. The child had thrived at the current school, but in addition to the family's low income status, no children's support payments had been paid by the children's father.

6.6 In response to questions from Members of the Committee, Andy Tierney stated that the appellant had not subsequently requested a move to a school nearer her home as there had been no mid-term transfers. If the appellant had put Forge Valley down as her first choice, then it was likely that the child would have originally found a place at that school. In addition to this, if the appellant had kept the child on the waiting list, a place would have been found in subsequent years. If this was not the case, a travel pass would have been issued for the current school as long as the child was on the waiting list for Forge Valley or one of the other two qualifying schools. Mr Tierney stated that, under the current Home to School policy, it was not possible for officers to exercise any discretion in these two cases as it was outside their remit.

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

6.8 RESOLVED: That the appeals be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional education, family and medical circumstances demonstrated (Case Nos.ST/01 and ST/02).

7. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - PRIMARY

7.1 *Request to Prioritise on the Waiting List - Reception Year 2022/23 Case No. M1)*

7.1.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had expressed a wish for their child to be admitted to a primary school 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 pupil on a waiting list, within their respective category, for admission if and when a place becomes available.

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

7.1.3 RESOLVED: That the pupil be prioritised within their admissions category of 'non-catchment' prior to the allocation of places, on the grounds that there are exceptional family and medical circumstances (Case No.M1).

7.2 *Requests to Prioritise on the Waiting List – Reception 2022/23 (Case Nos. P1 and P2)*

7.2.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon two cases where parents had expressed a wish for their children to be admitted to a primary school 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 which pupil, both of whom had been prioritised, should be ranked highest within their admissions category, for admission if and when a place becomes available.

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

7.2.3 RESOLVED: That the pupil in Case No. P1 be prioritised first, and the pupil in Case No. P2 be prioritised second, within their admissions category of 'non-catchment' prior to the allocation of places, on the grounds that there are more exceptional family and medical circumstances in Case No.1 than in Case No.2.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 21st April 2022, at 2.00 pm, in the Town Hall.