

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 15 July 2021

PRESENT: Councillors Chris Rosling-Josephs (Chair), Vic Bowden, Denise Fox and Peter Garbutt

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Talib Hussain, Sioned-Mair Richards and Andrew Sangar.

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, 8 and 9 on the agenda (items 6, 7 and 8 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 June 2021, 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 Verbal Appeal UTC01

- 6.1.1 In attendance were a representative of University Technical College (UTC) Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park and Andrew Tierney (Customer 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 a home to school travel bus pass (Case No.UTC01).
- 6.1.4 Andrew 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.
- 6.1.5 In the absence of the appellant, the representative on behalf of UTC Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park, gave background information on UTC, outlining its vision and ethos, the innovative curriculum and vision of the school, its learning pathways and principles and everything else the school had to offer the pupils attending the school and the reasons why he thought that school travel bus passes should be granted to every pupil who requested one.
- 6.1.6 In response to questions from Members of the Committee, the representative stated that he was not aware of UTC arrangements in other cities. Members stated that the hearing was not the right forum for the general policy to be reconsidered and that the Council's policy does not currently provide for bus passes to be granted to pupils attending UTC, but thanked him for his attendance and stated that the policy matter would be referred to the relevant Executive Member for consideration.
- 6.1.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the representative left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.
- 6.1.8 RESOLVED: That (a) 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 the catchment school (UTC01); and
- (b) the issue now raised regarding the University Technical College and the Council's Home to School Transport Policy be referred to the attention of the Executive Member for Education, Children and Families.

7. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES

- 7.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon five cases 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 at the primary school had been allocated on the 16th April national allocation date by the City Council, in accordance with the published admission criteria.
- 7.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting evidence and information provided by the pupils' parents, including medical evidence. The Committee was asked to consider whether there were any significant and material changes in the

circumstances of the families, since the original applications were made, to authorise that a fresh application be made, which would allow a fresh right of appeal for the school and also, based on the information provided, to prioritise on the waiting list for the School, and, arising therefrom, it was:-

7.3 RESOLVED: That (a) upon consideration of the case, and with due regard to the additional information now submitted, the Committee considers that there has not been a material change in the family's circumstances and therefore refuses to grant a fresh application, and determines that the pupil be not prioritised on the waiting list, within the non-catchment category, on the grounds that the Committee did not consider that there was compelling evidence to place the pupil above other children in their admission category (Case No. L1);

(b) one pupil be prioritised within their admissions category of 'catchment' prior to the allocation of places, on the grounds that there are exceptional family and medical circumstances, and they be also granted fresh applications (Case No. W1);

(c) one pupil be prioritised within their admissions category of 'sibling' prior to the allocation of places, on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances, and they be also granted a fresh application (Case No. D1);

(d) one 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 and they be also granted a fresh application (Case No. AG1) and

(e) one pupil be prioritised within their admissions category of 'catchment' prior to the allocation of places on the grounds that there are exceptional family and medical circumstances (Case No.N1).

(NOTE: 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, the Chair decided that Case No. W1 be considered as a matter of urgency 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).

8. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES

8.1 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 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 Executive Director stated that Case No.2 had been withdrawn from consideration prior to the meeting as the child had been placed prior to the hearing. The Committee was therefore requested to consider prioritising the pupil in Case No.1

on the waiting list, within their respective category, for admission if and when places become available.

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

8.3 RESOLVED: That the pupil 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 No.W1).

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 23rd September, 2021, at 2.00 p.m., in the Town Hall