

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 16 June 2022

PRESENT: Councillors Maleiki Haybe, Karen McGowan, Safiya Saeed, Gail Smith, Garry Weatherall and Ann Whitaker

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

1.1 RESOLVED: That, in the absence of the Chair of the Committee (Councillor Vic Bowden), Councillor Gail Smith be appointed Chair of the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 No apologies for absence were received.

3. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

3.1 RESOLVED: That the public and press be excluded from the meeting before discussion takes place on items 7 and 8 on the agenda, 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.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

4.1 There were no declarations of interest.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21st April, 2022, were approved as a correct record.

6. ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

6.1 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.

7. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEAL

7.1 In attendance were the appellant and Julie Pryor and Andy Tierney (Customer Services).

7.2 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked attendees to introduce themselves. She then outlined the procedure which would be followed during the meeting.

- 7.3 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.BR/01).
- 7.4 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. He also informed the Committee that the appellant did not apply for any of the four nearest schools when applying for transition from junior to secondary school.
- 7.5 The appellant explained that, following a decision taken by the Ombudsman that this case should be reheard, he outlined the reasons for the request for the home to school travel pass.
- 7.6 In response to questions from Members of the Committee, the appellant stated that he could produce incident reports from the Police which showed that there had been threats of violence to family members, both online and verbally. He said that, although the family did not live in the Sheffield area, the abuser still travelled to and from the area each day due to the fact that they worked in the area.
- 7.7 The Customer Services officer informed the Committee that the abusive child no longer attended the catchment school.
- 7.8 In response to further questions, the appellant stated that he had a younger daughter who would attend the same feeder school that his son attended and then the same secondary school. The appellant felt that the Council's policy was flawed and that his son was being treated unfairly as he knew of other children living in the area who did receive a bus pass, to which the Committee were informed that such families did live within the catchment area and were entitled to receive a home to school travel pass.
- 7.9 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant and officers left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.
- 7.10 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 the catchment/qualifying school (Case No.BR/01).

8. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES

- 8.1 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 at the primary school had been allocated on the 19th April national allocation date by the City Council, in accordance with the published admission criteria.

8.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting evidence and information provided by the pupil's parents, including medical evidence. The Committee was asked to consider whether there were any significant and material changes in the circumstances of the family, since the original application was 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:-

8.3 RESOLVED: That upon consideration of the case, and with due regard to the additional information now submitted, the Committee considers that the pupil be prioritised within the admissions category of 'non-catchment' on the school's waiting list, on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances and also be granted a fresh application (Case No.B1).

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 21st July, 2022, at 2.00 p.m., in the Town Hall.