

Admissions Committee

Tuesday 31 October 2023 at 2.00 pm

To be held at the Town Hall, Pinstone Street, Sheffield, S1 2HH

Membership

Councillors Maleiki Haybe (Chair), Safiya Saeed (Deputy Chair), Talib Hussain, Sioned-Mair Richards, Garry Weatherall, Ann Whitaker and Ann Woolhouse

Substitute Members

To be appointed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant Policy Committee Chair or Opposition Spokesperson, as appropriate

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Admissions Committee carries out a statutory role, including the consideration of appeals regarding home to school transport and requests for primary and secondary school admissions.

As a lot of the work of this Committee deals with individual cases, some meetings may not be open to members of the public.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk. You can also see the reports to be discussed at the meeting if you call at the First Point Reception, Town Hall, Pinstone Street entrance. The Reception is open between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Thursday and between 9.00 am and 4.45 pm. on Friday. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda.

If you would like to attend the meeting, please report to the First Point Reception desk at Town Hall, Pinstone Street, where you will be directed to the meeting room.

If you require any further information please contact Philippa Burdett by emailing philippa.burdett@sheffield.gov.uk.

FACILITIES

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms.

Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

**ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE AGENDA
31 OCTOBER 2023**

Order of Business

- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Public and Press**
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public
- 4. Declarations of Interest**
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Minutes of Previous Meeting**
To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 September, 2023
- 6. Action Taken Under Delegated Powers**
To note the decisions made by the Director of Children's Services, acting under delegated authority, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee
- 7. Home to School Transport Appeals**
Report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services
- 8. School Admission Requests - Secondary School Places**
Report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services
- 9. Date of Next Meeting**
To note that the next meeting of the Committee will be held on 28 November, 2023 at 2.00 p.m. in the Town Hall

*(NOTE: The reports at Items 7 and 8 in the above agenda is not available to the public and press because it contains exempt information described in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended))

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ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its Policy Committees, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must not:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority –
 - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - which has not been fully discharged.

- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) –
 - the landlord is your council or authority; and
 - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
 - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
 - (b) either -
 - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership).

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously.

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from David Hollis, General Counsel by emailing david.hollis@sheffield.gov.uk.

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Admissions Committee

Meeting held 26 September 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Maleiki Haybe (Chair), Safiya Saeed, Talib Hussain, Sioned-Mair Richards and Ann Whitaker

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Garry Weatherall and Ann Woolhouse.

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 25 July, 2023 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 Director of Children's 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 In attendance were the appellant, the appellant's husband and Andy Tierney and Semaira Asif (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 Strategic Director of Children's Services, submitted a report and commented upon a case where the parent had appealed against the administrative decision made by the Strategic Director with regard to the refusal to grant a home to school travel bus pass (Case No.AS/01).
- 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 request for a home to school travel pass had been refused at Stage 1. He also informed the Committee that the child was attending a school based upon parental choice, that was not a qualifying school.
- 6.5 The appellant and her husband explained the reasons for their preference for their child be educated in a Catholic school. They stated that they had not applied for the school travel pass on the basis of low income, but due to their wish to continue their child's education at their nearest Catholic school, which they believed to be the most appropriate school for him. They added that they had found the current policy difficult to navigate and believed that it discriminated against parental choice of those with religious beliefs.
- 6.6 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant, the appellant's husband and the officers left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.
- 6.7 RESOLVED: That:-
- (a) the appeal be not upheld on the grounds that there are no exceptional medical, financial, family and social circumstances demonstrated (Case No.AS/01); and
 - (b) the Committee undertake to request that the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee consider commissioning a review of the Home to School Transport Policy, with particular regard to how other local authorities process applications for Zero Fare Bus Passes for travel to faith schools.

7. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES

7.1 Request for Fresh Right of Appeal

- 7.1.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted a report and commented upon a case (Case No. M2) where a parent had expressed a wish for their child to be admitted to two secondary school of their choice. The Strategic Director stated that places at the secondary schools had been identified by the City Council, in accordance with the published admission criteria, and it had been agreed that the Strategic Director would provisionally allocate places at the schools where there were places available, up to the standard number/admission limit. The Committee was requested to consider granting a fresh right of appeal.

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

7.1.3 RESOLVED: That the pupil be not granted a fresh right of appeal on the grounds that the Committee considers that there are no exceptional educational, financial, medical or family circumstances demonstrated (Case No.M2).

7.2 Request for Prioritisation on Waiting List

7.2.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted reports and commented upon three cases (Cases Nos. M1, KE1 and N1) where a parent had expressed a wish for her child to be admitted to secondary schools of her choice. The Strategic 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 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 waiting lists, within their respective categories, for admission if and when places become available.

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

7.2.3 RESOLVED: That :-

(a) the pupil be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'catchment' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and family circumstances demonstrated (Case No. N1);

(b) the pupil not be prioritised on the waiting list within the 'catchment' category as there are no exceptional circumstances demonstrated (Case No. M1); and

(c) the pupil not be prioritised on the waiting list within the 'other' category as there are no exceptional circumstances demonstrated (Case No. KE1).

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday 31 October, 2023, at 2.00 p.m., in the Town Hall.

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