

Admissions Committee

Tuesday 26 March 2024 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), Denise Fox, Talib Hussain, Sioned-Mair Richards, 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 may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda.

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
26 MARCH 2024**

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 30 January, 2024
- 6. Action Taken Under Delegated Powers**
To note the decisions made by the Strategic 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 - Mid-Term**
Report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services
- 9. School Admission Requests - Primary School Places**
Report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services
- 10. School Admission Requests - Secondary School Places**
Report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services
- 11. Date of Next Meeting**
To note that the next meeting of the Committee will be held on 30 April, 2024 at 2.00 p.m. in the Town Hall

(NOTE: The reports at Items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 in the above agenda are not available to the public and press because they contain 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 30 January 2024

PRESENT: Councillors Maleiki Haybe (Chair), Safiya Saeed (Deputy Chair), Talib Hussain, Ann Whitaker and Ann Woolhouse

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 6, 7, 8 and 9 on the agenda (items 5, 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 28 November, 2023, were approved as a correct record.

4.2 Matters Arising

It was noted that at the meeting of the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee on 19 December, 2023, it had been agreed that a 'Task and Finish' group would be set up to consider school admission matters. This had been agreed in response to the specific referrals that the Admissions Committee had made to the Policy Committee, dated 27 June, 26 September and 28 November 2023.

5. ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

- 5.1 The Committee noted that, since its last meeting, no decisions had been made by the Strategic 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. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - MID-TERM

6.1 Request for Priority on Waiting List – Mid-Term FV1

6.1.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had expressed a wish for their child to be admitted to a secondary school of their choice (Case No. FV1). The Committee was requested to consider giving the pupil priority on the waiting list, on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances.

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

6.1.3 **RESOLVED:** That the pupil be given priority on the waiting list in the 'other' category, on the grounds that the Committee considers that there are exceptional medical circumstances demonstrated (Case No. FV1).

6.2 Request for Priority on Waiting List – Mid-Term HH1

6.2.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had expressed a wish for their child to be admitted to a secondary school of their choice (Case No. HH1). The Committee was requested to consider giving the pupil priority on the waiting list, on the grounds that there are exceptional educational and family circumstances.

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

6.2.3 **RESOLVED:** That the pupil be given priority on the waiting list in the 'catchment area' category, on the grounds that the Committee considers that there are exceptional educational and family circumstances demonstrated (Case No. HH1).

6.3 Request for Fresh Right of Appeal – Mid-Term M1

6.3.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had expressed a wish for their child to be admitted to a secondary school of their choice (Case No. M1). The Committee was asked to consider whether there were any significant and material changes in the circumstances of the family, 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.

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

6.3.3 **RESOLVED:** That the pupil be given a fresh right of appeal on the grounds that the Committee considers that there have been changes in the circumstances of

the family demonstrated, namely exceptional medical circumstances (Case No. M1).

7. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS

7.1 Verbal Appeal AS/01

7.1.1 In attendance were the appellant, an interpreter for the appellant, and Semaira Asif and Sharon Craig (Customer Services).

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

7.1.3 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).

7.1.4 Semaira Asif explained the Stage 1 review and Stage 2 appeals process regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. Ms Asif informed the Committee of the reasons why the request for a home to school travel pass had been refused at Stage 1. She also informed the Committee that the child was attending a school based upon parental choice, that was not a qualifying school.

7.1.5 The appellant explained, via the interpreter in attendance, the reasons for his preference of Astrea Academy. He stated that this was due to his child having attended Astrea Academy since September 2022, and feeling supported within the Arabic speaking community. He stated that his child had expressed a wish to remain with established friendship groups, and indicated that he had received minimal language support when applying for a school place.

7.1.6 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant, the interpreter for the appellant, and the officers left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.

7.1.7 **RESOLVED:** That the appeal be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional educational, financial, family and social circumstances demonstrated (Case No. AS/01).

8. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES

8.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted reports and commented upon 40 cases where parents had expressed a wish for their children to be admitted to secondary schools of their 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 Strategic 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 pupils on waiting lists, within their respective categories, for admission if and when places become available.

8.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting evidence and information provided by the pupils' parents including, in some cases, evidence and advice provided by voluntary or professional bodies and organisations and, arising therefrom, it was:-

8.3 **RESOLVED:** That (a) two pupils be not prioritised on the waiting list, within their respective category, on the grounds that the Committee considers that there are no exceptional educational, financial, medical or family circumstances demonstrated (Case Nos. 3 and 31);

(b) one pupil be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'catchment area with sibling' category at one of their preferred schools and in the 'catchment area' category at their other preferred school on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and/or family circumstances demonstrated (Case No. 23);

(c) one pupil be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'catchment area with sibling' category at one of their preferred schools and in the 'other' category at their other preferred school on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and/or family circumstances demonstrated (Case No. 38);

(d) one pupil be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'catchment area' category at one of their preferred schools and in the 'siblings' category at their other preferred school on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and/or family circumstances demonstrated (Case No. 30);

(e) five pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting lists in the 'catchment area' category at one of their preferred schools and in the 'feeder school' category at their other preferred school on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and/or family circumstances demonstrated (Case Nos. 5, 11, 24, 28 and 33);

(f) 14 pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting lists in the 'catchment area' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and/or family circumstances demonstrated (Case Nos. 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20, 21, 25, 27, 32 and 39);

(g) four pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting lists in the 'catchment area' category at one of their preferred schools and in the 'other' category at their other preferred school on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and/or family circumstances demonstrated (Case Nos. 2, 18, 34 and 35);

(h) two pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'siblings' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and/or family circumstances demonstrated (Case Nos. 22 and 26);

(i) six pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'feeder school' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and/or family

circumstances demonstrated (Case Nos. 7, 8, 15, 17, 29 and 40); and

(j) four pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'other' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and/or family circumstances demonstrated (Case Nos. 1, 4, 36 and 37).

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday 27 February, 2024, at 2.00 p.m., in the Town Hall.

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