

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 16 December 2015

PRESENT: Councillors Sioned-Mair Richards (Chair), Chris Peace and Andrew Sangar

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Nasima Akther, Anne Murphy and Ian Saunders.

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 and 7 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 The Chair (Councillor Sioned-Mair Richards) declared an interest in Case No. HS1 (Secondary Admissions Requests) and did not speak or vote on that case.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18th November, 2015 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, Children, Young People and Families, 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 The Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, submitted reports and commented upon two cases where parents had appealed against the administrative decisions made by the Executive Director with regard to the refusal to grant home to school travel bus passes.

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

6.3 RESOLVED: That (a) one 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 their catchment school/nearest suitable school (Case No. STMAR1); and

(b) one appeal be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional educational circumstances in the case (Case No. HS1).

7. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES

7.1 Requests to Prioritise on Waiting Lists

7.1.1 The Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, submitted reports and commented upon 47 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 Committee was requested to consider prioritising the pupils on waiting lists, within their respective categories, for admission if and when places become available.

7.1.2 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:-

7.1.3 RESOLVED: That (a) 29 pupils be not prioritised on the waiting lists, within their respective categories, on the grounds that the Committee considers that there are no exceptional educational, financial, medical or family circumstances demonstrated (Case Nos. 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 32, 33, 38, 39, 40, 42, 44, 45 and 46);

(b) five pupils 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 in those cases (Case Nos. 5, 12, 29, 31 and 35);

(c) five pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'sibling' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and/or family circumstances in those cases (Case Nos. 4, 9, 18, 21 and 47);

(d) five pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'feeder' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances in those cases (Case Nos. 7, 19, 22, 36 and 37); and

(e) three 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 in those cases (Case Nos. 34, 41 and 43).

(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. 47) 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).

7.2 Request to consider change of circumstances

7.2.1 The Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had made a request for the Committee to consider a change in the family's circumstances, in connection with their request for a place at their preferred school and, arising therefrom, it was:-

7.2.2 RESOLVED: That upon consideration of the case, and with due regard to the additional information now submitted, the Committee considers that there had been a material change in the family's circumstances, and therefore, authority be given for a new application to be processed in this case (Case No. HS1).

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday, 20th January, 2016, at 1.00 pm, in the Town Hall.

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