

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 21 January 2020

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

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Michelle Cook, Talib Hussain 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 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.

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 3rd December, 2019 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 Appeals – AL/SA02 and AL/SA03

6.1.1 In attendance were the appellant and Tracey Reid (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 reports and commented upon

two cases where the parent had appealed against the administrative decision made by the Executive Director with regard to the refusal to grant home to school travel bus passes (Case Nos.AL/SA02 and AL/SA03).

- 6.1.4 Tracey Reid explained the Stage 1 review and Stage 2 appeals process regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. Ms. Reid 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 The appellant explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for a home to school travel pass for her children.
- 6.1.6 In response to questions raised by Members, the appellant stated that she had been advised at the Citizens Advice Bureau that she was eligible to claim for free school meals and/or a home to school travel pass as she met the low income family criteria. The appellant said that as far as she was concerned she had provided the correct information to Customer Services and that she had health issues which were being exacerbated by the distress caused to her. The appellant said that she was employed under a zero hour's contract.
- 6.1.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the Chair suggested that the hearing be suspended to allow the appellant provide the correct information to Customer Services.
- 6.1.8 RESOLVED: That a decision be deferred to allow the appellant to provide further information, and the Executive Director, People Services, in consultation with the Chair, be authorised to make a decision in the cases (Case Nos. AL/SA02 and AL/SA03).
- 6.2 Verbal Appeal – KI/EC01
- 6.2.1 The appellant had indicated that she wished to attend the hearing and present her case but she failed to attend. After a reasonable time had elapsed, the Committee decided to consider the case in her absence.
- 6.2.2 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.KI/EC01).
- 6.2.3 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting information and evidence provided by the pupil's parent and, arising therefrom, it was:-
- 6.2.4 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 less than the distance in the criteria (Case No.KI/EC01).

7. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES

- 7.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon 21 cases where parents had expressed a wish for their children to be admitted to primary schools of their choice. The Executive Director stated that places in primary 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.
- 7.2 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:-
- 7.3 RESOLVED: That (a) nine 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. J1, J4, J6, J8, J10, J11, J12, J17 and J18);
- (b) four pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'catchment' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances (Case Nos. J3, J7, J13 and J21);
- (c) two 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 (Case Nos. J2 and J14);
- (d) six pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'non-catchment' category on the grounds that there are exceptional family, medical and/or social circumstances (Case Nos. J5, J9, J15, J16, J19 and J20).

8. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES

- 8.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon 70 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.
- 8.2 The Committee were informed that 40 cases had been withdrawn, as the places had been allocated (Case Nos. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 35, 37, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 52, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59, 64, 65, 68 and 70).
- 8.3 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:-

8.4 RESOLVED: That (a) 23 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. 7, 8, 9, 19, 21, 27, 29, 31, 33, 36, 38, 40, 41, 49, 50, 51, 60, 61, 62, 63, 66, 67 and 69); and

(b) seven 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 (Case Nos. 2, 13, 17, 25, 45, 53 and 56).

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday, 11th February, at 2.00 p.m., in the Town Hall.