

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 21 November 2012

PRESENT: Councillors Talib Hussain, Chris Rosling-Josephs, Nikki Sharpe and Clive Skelton

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1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

- 1.1 RESOLVED: That Councillor Nikki Sharpe be appointed Chair for this meeting as part of a training exercise.

2. WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING ARRANGEMENTS

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and outlined basic housekeeping and fire safety arrangements.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 3.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Alison Brelsford.

4. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

- 4.1 RESOLVED: That the public and press be excluded from the meeting before discussion takes place on agenda items 7, 8, and 9 on the grounds that they contain exempt information described in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 5.1 Councillor Talib Hussain declared a personal interest in the first two home to school transport appeals (Case Nos. Fir1 and Fir2) and did not take part in the consideration of those appeals.

6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 6.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17th October, 2012 were approved as a correct record.

7. ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

- 7.1 The Committee noted that, since its last meeting, no decisions had been made by the Interim 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.

8. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS

8.1 *Discretionary Home to School Transport (Special Educational Needs)*

8.1.1 The Interim Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had appealed against an administrative decision made by the Interim Executive Director with regard to the refusal to fund discretionary home to school transport in respect of their child.

8.1.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting information and evidence provided by the pupil's parents, including a report from a Child Educational Psychologist and, arising therefrom, it was:-

8.1.3 RESOLVED: That the appeal be refused on the grounds that a Tribunal had found that the child was not statemented and that although the child had been placed at the school on appeal, transportation to such school should not be funded on the grounds that there are no exceptional circumstances demonstrated.

8.2 *Home to School Travel Bus Passes*

8.2.1 The Interim Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, submitted reports and commented upon 37 cases where parents had appealed against the administrative decisions made by the Interim Executive Director with regard to the refusal to grant home to school travel bus passes.

8.2.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting information and evidence 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:-

8.2.3 RESOLVED: That (a) seven appeals be upheld on the grounds that there are either exceptional educational, financial, medical or family circumstances in the cases (Case Nos. WY1, PA1, Kec1, Ked1, Ked4, Tap1 and WF1);

(b) 28 appeals 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, (i) the distance from the home addresses of 19 pupils to the schools for which they are requesting passes for is less than the distance in the criteria (Case Nos. Fir1, Fir2, Har1, Har2, Sac1, SG1, SG2, St.J1, St.J2, St.Ms1, St.H1, St.H2, As1, Ked5, Me1, Me2, PW1, PW2 and Tap2), (ii) eight of the pupils do not attend one of their three nearest qualifying schools (Case Nos. Ast1, C11, FoV1, HS1, Ked3, PW3, PW4 and Tap3) and (iii) with regard to the remaining appeal, relating to a voluntary-aided school, the religious education provided at the school is not of the pupil's parents' religion or denomination (Case No. As2); and

(c) consideration of the remaining two appeals be deferred to enable the Interim Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, to seek further information regarding family circumstances and medical information, respectively, from the pupils' parents (Case Nos. Hat1 and Ked2).

9. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS

9.1 Primary School Places – Request to Reconsider a Case

9.1.1 The Interim Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had requested the Council to give further consideration to an expressed preference for an alternative primary school place, based on the submission of additional information and, arising therefrom, it was:-

9.1.2 RESOLVED: That upon consideration of the case, and with due regard to the additional information now submitted, the request for an alternative primary school place be not granted on the grounds that the Committee considers that there has been a material change in the family's circumstances (Case No.BD1).

9.2 Secondary School Places – Request for Further Statutory Appeal Hearing

9.2.1 The Interim Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had made a request for a further statutory appeal hearing on the grounds of changes in the family's circumstances and, arising therefrom, it was:-

9.2.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee is of the opinion that the additional information now submitted does not warrant a reconsideration of the case (Case No.FV1).

(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 the above request be considered as a matter of urgency in order for the request to be considered at the earliest possible opportunity and to allow for arrangements to be made for the appeal to be heard by the Education Appeal Panel, although it had not been possible to give five clear days' notice that the request was to be considered).

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday, 19th December, 2012 at 1.00 p.m. in Howden House.