

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 17 February 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Nasima Akther, Chris Peace, Andrew Sangar and Ian Saunders

.....

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

1.1 RESOLVED: That Councillor Ian Saunders be appointed Chair of the Admissions Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Anne Murphy.

3. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

3.1 RESOLVED: That the public and press be excluded from the meeting before discussion takes place on items 7 and 8 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.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

4.1 Councillor Chris Peace declared a personal interest in Case Nos. 23, 25 and 26 (Primary Admissions Requests) as she was familiar with the pupils' families, and did not take part in the consideration of the requests.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20th January, 2016 were approved as a correct record.

6. ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

6.1 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

7. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS

7.1 Verbal Appeals- Case Nos. STCA1 and STCA2

7.1.1 In attendance were the appellants and Amanda Dale and Julie Pryor (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 meeting.
- 7.1.3 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 (Case Nos. STCA1 and STCA2).
- 7.1.4 Amanda Dale explained the Stage 1 and Stage 2 appeals criteria regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. She informed the Sub-Committee of the reasons why the applications had been refused at Stage 1 and then the subsequent refusal of the appeals at Stage 2.
- 7.1.5 The appellants explained to the Committee the reasons for the requests for home to school travel passes for their two children.
- 7.1.6 In response to questions raised by Members, the appellants stated that they were still in a transitional stage regarding residency and that during several house moves, the family are trying to keep things consistent for the children and it would not be in their best interests to move schools at present.
- 7.1.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellants and the Customer Services officers left the meeting to enable the Sub-Committee to consider the evidence.
- 7.1.8 RESOLVED: That the appeals be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional family and financial circumstances in the cases (Case Nos. STCA1 and STCA2).
- 7.2 Verbal Appeal – Case No.LF1
- 7.2.1 In attendance were the appellants and Amanda Dale and Julie Pryor (Customer Services).
- 7.2.2 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.
- 7.2.3 The Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had appealed against the administrative decisions made by the Executive Director with regard to the refusal to grant home to a school travel bus passe (Case No. LF1).
- 7.2.4 Amanda Dale explained the Stage 1 and Stage 2 appeals criteria regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. She informed the Sub-Committee of the reasons why the application had been refused at Stage 1 and then the subsequent refusal of the appeal at Stage 2.
- 7.2.5 The appellants explained to the Committee the reason for the request for a home

to school travel pass.

- 7.2.6 In response to questions raised by Members, the appellants stated they had originally been refused a place for the child at their preferred school and had been allocated the school he now attended. Members were informed that the child has a medical condition and does not like change in his life and he was happy at the school and it would be too disruptive to him to change to another school.
- 7.2.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellants and the Customer Services officers left the meeting to enable the Sub-Committee to consider the evidence.
- 7.2.8 RESOLVED: That the appeal be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional educational circumstances in the case (Case No.LF1).

7.3 Written Appeals

7.3.1 The Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, submitted reports and commented upon three 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.

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

7.3.3 RESOLVED: That (a) two 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, the schools that the pupils are requesting passes for are not their catchment schools/nearest suitable schools (Case Nos. PWAC1 and STCA1def); and

(b) one appeal be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional educational circumstances in the case (Case No. FIPA1).

(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.STCA1def 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).

8. **SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES**

8.1 Requests to Prioritise on Waiting Lists

8.1.1 The Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, submitted reports and commented upon 26 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.

8.1.2 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:-

8.1.3 RESOLVED: That (a) 10 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. 2, 4, 8, 13, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25 and 26);

(b) two pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'catchment and sibling' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances (Case Nos.7 and 22);

(c) two pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'catchment' category on the grounds that there are exceptional family and medical circumstances (Case Nos.16 and 20);

(d) one pupil be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'sibling' category on the grounds that there are exceptional family circumstances (Case No.6);

(e) three pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'non-catchment' category on the grounds that there are exceptional family circumstances (Case Nos.11, 14 and 21); and

(f) consideration of eight appeals be deferred to enable the Executive Director to seek further information (Case Nos. 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 12, 15 and 17).

8.2 Request to consider change of circumstances

8.2.1 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:-

8.2.2 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. DT1).

(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.DT1 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).

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday, 16th March, 2016, at 2.00 pm, in the Town Hall.

DRAFT