

# SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

## Admissions Committee

### Meeting held 17 December 2020

(NOTE: This meeting was held as a remote meeting in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020).

**PRESENT:** Councillors Chris Rosling-Josephs (Chair), Vic Bowden, Peter Garbutt, Talib Hussain and Mike Levery

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#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor 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 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 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 – VERBAL APPEAL**

6.1 In attendance were the appellant and Julie Pryor (Customer Services).

6.2 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.

- 6.3 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.AL/SA01).
- 6.4 Julie Pryor explained the Stage 1 review and Stage 2 appeals process regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. Ms. Pryor informed the Committee of the reasons why the request for a home to school travel pass had been refused at Stage 1.
- 6.5 The appellant explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for a home to school travel pass for her child.
- 6.6 In response to questions raised by Members, the appellant stated her child attended the school which was the closest Catholic catchment school to their home address. She added that her family were practising Catholics and that the non-Catholic catchment school closest to their home does not accommodate their faith in their lesson plans. The appellant felt that Catholic children were treated unfairly due to their religion.
- 6.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.
- 6.8 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting information and evidence provided by the pupil's parent and, arising therefrom, it was:-
- 6.9 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 their catchment school (Case No.AL/SA01).

## **7. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES**

- 7.1 *Request to be Prioritised on the Waiting List/Request to Consider a Change of Circumstances*
- 7.1.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had expressed a wish for their child to be admitted to a primary school of their choice. The Executive Director stated that places at the primary school 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 pupil on a waiting list, within the non-catchment category, for admission if and when a place becomes available. The parents also made a request for the Committee to consider a change in the family's circumstances.
- 7.1.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting evidence and information provided by the pupil's parents, including medical evidence and, arising therefrom, it

was:-

7.1.3 RESOLVED: That the pupil be prioritised on the waiting list in the “non-catchment” category on the grounds that there are exceptional family circumstances, and 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. P1).

7.2 Requests to Consider a Change of Circumstances/ Submit a Fresh Application

7.2.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon four cases where parents had made a request for the Committee to consider a change in the family’s circumstances, in connection with their requests for places at their preferred primary schools and, arising therefrom, it was:-

7.2.2 RESOLVED: That upon consideration of the cases, 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 new applications to be processed in all four cases (Case Nos. S1, S2, T1 and L1).

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

8.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2021, at 2.00 p.m.