

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 21 April 2022

PRESENT: Councillors Chris Rosling-Josephs (Chair), Vic Bowden, Peter Garbutt and Sioned-Mair Richards

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Denise Fox, Talib Hussain and Andrew Sangar.

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 7 and 8 on the agenda (items 6 and 7 of these minutes), 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 24th March, 2022, were approved as a correct record.

5. ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

- 5.1 The Committee noted that, since its last meeting, and following receipt of further evidence that had been requested from the appellant in respect of two cases, the Executive Director, People Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, under powers delegated to him with regard to Primary Admissions, had authorised priority within the non-catchment category in Case T1 and did not agree to prioritise in the non-catchment category in Case T2.

6. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS

- 6.1 In attendance were the appellant's representative 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.SP/AC01).
- 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's representative explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for the home to school travel pass. including the fact that the family had fled domestic abuse and were rehoused at the current address.
- 6.6 In response to questions from Members of the Committee Julie Pryor informed them that the applicant lived under the statutory walking distance of two miles and therefore did not meet the distance criteria as laid out in the Home to school Travel and Transport Policy. With regard to this policy, domestic violence was considered an exceptional circumstance and as such could not be part of the decision at Stage 1 review process. Exceptional circumstances were reviewed at the Stage 2 Appeal and were not in the remit of a Stage 1 review. She also added that an application for a home to school travel pass for the older sibling had been received in January 2022, but this had been refused due to not attending one of the three nearest qualifying schools.
- 6.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant's representative and officer left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.
- 6.8 RESOLVED: That the appeal be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional education and family circumstances demonstrated (Case No. SP/AC01).

7. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES

- 7.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and

commented upon three 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.

7.2 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) one pupil be not prioritised on the waiting list, within their respective category, on the grounds that the Committee considers that there are no exceptional educational, financial, medical or family circumstances demonstrated (Case No.1); and

(b) 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. 2 and 3).

7.4 The Committee were informed that "domestic violence" was not part of the Council criteria and was not considered as a category within its Policy on transport and admission cases. The Committee asked that this be brought to the attention of the appropriate Policy Committee and that domestic violence be written into the Council's policy as a category to be taken into account when considering all applications.

8. COUNCILLOR CHRIS ROSLING-JOSEPHS

8.1 The Committee expressed their thanks for all the hard work and support Councillor Chris Rosling-Josephs, who was not seeking re-election at the forthcoming Municipal Elections and was attending his last meeting, had given as Chair of the Admissions Committee since 2016 and wished him well for the future.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on a date to be agreed.