

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 17 January 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Chris Rosling-Josephs (Chair), Andy Nash, Chris Peace and Andrew Sangar

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Craig Gamble Pugh and Talib Hussain.

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 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 In Item 7 (Primary Admissions Requests), Councillor Andy Nash declared personal interests in Case Nos. J5, J6, J7, J8, J9, J10 and J12 and did not speak or vote on the cases.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20th December, 2017 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 her with regard to home to school transport or school admissions.

6. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS

6.1 Verbal Appeal – WS1 and WS2

6.1.1 In attendance were the appellant and her representative and Julie Pryor (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 a report 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 No.WS1 and WS2).
- 6.1.4 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 requests for home to school travel passes had been refused at Stage 1.
- 6.1.5 The appellant, with the help of her representative, explained to the Committee the reasons for the requests for home to school travel passes for her children.
- 6.1.6 In response to questions from Members, the appellant stated that during the past three years her children had been in care and that they had attended three or four different schools. She stated that since her children had returned to her care, they had settled into the school for which she was applying for bus passes for, but had moved out of the area. She added that she now had a support network in place and that her third child was in the Reception class. The appellant went on to say that her children had been afraid to form friendships in the past, but the eldest of her children had now started to make friends in school.
- 6.1.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.
- 6.1.8 RESOLVED: That the appeals be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional financial, educational and family circumstances in the cases (Case Nos. WS1 and WS2).

6.2 Verbal Appeal – LF1

- 6.2.1 In attendance were the appellant, an interpreter and Julie Pryor (Customer Services).
- 6.2.2 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.
- 6.2.3 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.LF1).
- 6.2.4 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.

- 6.2.5 The appellant, through his interpreter, explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for a home to school travel pass for his child.
- 6.2.6 In response to questions from Members, the appellant stated that his family had lived near the school for which he was applying a bus pass for, but then they had moved to a larger house. He added that his children had settled into the school and that another child, who was autistic, attended Norfolk Park School.
- 6.2.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.
- 6.2.8 RESOLVED: That the appeal be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional financial, educational and family circumstances in the case (Case No.LF1).

6.3 Written Appeals

- 6.3.1 The Executive Director, People Services, 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.
- 6.3.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting information and evidence provided by the pupils' parents and, arising therefrom, it was:-
- 6.3.3 RESOLVED: That (a) one 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 not their catchment school/nearest suitable school (Case No.AS1); and
- (b) 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 school that the pupils are requesting passes for are not one of their three qualifying schools (Case Nos.NF1 and NF2).

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

7.1 Requests to prioritise on Waiting Lists

- 7.1.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon 33 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.
- 7.1.2 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:-

7.1.3 RESOLVED: That (a) 14 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, J5, J6, J11, J12, J15, J16, J17, J18, J20, J22, J25, J27 and J29);

(b) seven pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'catchment' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and/or family circumstances (Case Nos. J2, J7, J13, J19, J21, J26 and J28);

(c) four pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'sibling' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances (Case Nos. J8, J9A, J9B and J10) ;

(d) seven pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the 'non-catchment' category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances (Case Nos. J3, J4, J14, J23, J24, J30 and J31); and

(e) one pupil be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the "feeder and sibling" category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances (Case No. JUN1).

7.2 Request to consider a change in circumstances

7.2.1 The Executive Director, People Services, 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 primary school and, arising therefrom, it was:-

7.2.2 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. HH1).

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

8.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon 58 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 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:-

8.3 RESOLVED: That (a) 25 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. 1, 2, 5, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 26, 28, 32, 36, 38, 42, 43, 44, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52 and 53);

(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. 40 and 58);

(c) 14 pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the "catchment" category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical and family circumstances (Case Nos. 4, 6, 7, 15, 24, 29, 35, 37, 39, 41, 45, 54, 56 and 57);

(d) three pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the "sibling" category on the grounds that there are exceptional family and/or medical circumstances (Case Nos. 25, 30 and 34);

(e) seven pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the "feeder" category on the grounds that there are exceptional family and/or medical circumstances (Case Nos. 9, 13, 21, 23, 31, 46 and 55); and

(f) seven pupils be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the "other" category on the grounds that there are exceptional family and/or medical circumstances (Case Nos. 3, 8, 10, 12, 22, 27 and 33).

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday, 21st February, 2018, at 1.15 p.m. in the Town Hall.

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