

## SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

### Admissions Committee

#### Meeting held 12 November 2019

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

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

1.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mike Levery.

#### **2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

2.1 RESOLVED: That the public and press be excluded from the meeting before discussion takes place on item 6 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 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2019 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**

##### 6.1 Verbal Appeal – BR01

6.1.1 In attendance were the appellant and Andy Tierney (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 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.BR01).

- 6.1.4 Andy Tierney explained the Stage 1 review and Stage 2 appeals process regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. Mr. Tierney informed the Committee of the reasons why the request for a home to school travel pass had been refused at Stage 1.
- 6.1.5 The appellant explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for a home to school travel pass for his child.
- 6.1.6 In response to questions raised by Members, the appellant stated that he has four children in two different schools. He said that they attended schools which, due to the family circumstances, meant they did not need to apply for zero fare travel passes from his previous address, but since the family have moved home, he has been unable to get all four children into the same school. The appellant added that his children had been awarded travel passes in May/June 2019, on the condition that he applied for all his children to attend a school nearer to his home, starting in September, 2019, but he misunderstood this, thinking that the condition related to the previous school year. The appellant said that his wife was disabled and therefore unable to take the children to school. The appellant stated that he had spoken to the Admissions Authority about places at schools closer to his home but had been informed that the schools did not have places for all four children. On investigation, it had been found that no applications had been received by the Admissions Authority. The Committee were informed that zero fare bus passes for his two older children had been granted in error for this academic year (2019-20).
- 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 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 and they have not applied to attend a nearer school (Case No.BR01).

6.2 Verbal Appeal – EK01

- 6.2.1 In attendance were the appellant and Andy Tierney (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.EK01).

- 6.2.4 Andy Tierney explained the Stage 1 review and Stage 2 appeals process regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. Mr. Tierney 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 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 raised by Members, the appellant stated that his child attended a feeder school to her current school which was one of the reasons that she attended there, that she had settled into the school with her peer group and was doing well. He said that she had been bullied prior to attending the feeder school and that he did not wish to consider any of the other schools within their catchment area. It was acknowledged that no evidence of bullying was presented and this had not been part of either the Stage 1 Review or Stage 2 Appeal submission. The appellant he added that the walking route to school was unsafe.
- 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 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 and is outside the city boundary (Case No.EK01).
- 6.3 Verbal Appeal – S/D02
- 6.3.1 In attendance were the appellant and Andy Tierney (Customer Services).
- 6.3.2 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.
- 6.3.3 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.S/D02).
- 6.3.4 Andy Tierney explained the Stage 1 review and Stage 2 appeals process regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. Mr. Tierney informed the Committee of the reasons why the request for a home to school travel pass had been refused at Stage 1.
- 6.3.5 The appellant explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for a home to school travel pass for her child.
- 6.3.6 In response to questions raised by Members, the appellant stated that her child had been bullied at her previous school and had suffered a bout of depression following this incident. The appellant said that her daughter had now settled into

her current school, had made some friends and was doing well. She said when she had accepted the place at the school this was not as a result of a managed move but was due to the original parental choice and it would also remove her daughter from the bullying she had been experiencing. She did not know that this would mean that she would have to pay bus fare for her child.

6.3.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.

6.3.8 RESOLVED: That the appeal be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional family and educational circumstances in the case (Case No.S/D02).

6.4 Verbal Appeal – WW01

6.4.1 In attendance were the appellant and Andy Tierney (Customer Services).

6.4.2 At the start of the hearing, the appellant was distressed and the Chair considered that it would be in the best interests of the appellant if an interpreter was provided to assist her with her case. Through the Telephone Interpreter Service, the appellant was advised of a new time and date for her to attend. She agreed to this and was informed that a confirmation letter would be sent to her.

6.5 Verbal Appeal – KI/EC01

6.5.1 The appellant in this case had indicated that they wished to attend the hearing, however they were not in attendance and, after reasonable time had elapsed, the Committee agreed to defer the case and offer the appellant the opportunity to attend at a future date.

6.6 Written Appeal – PA/AC01

6.6.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents 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.PA/AC01).

6.6.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting information and evidence provided by the pupil's parent and, arising therefrom, it was:-

6.6.3 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 less than the distance in the criteria (Case No.PA/AC01).

**7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

7.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2019, at 2.00 p.m., in the Town Hall.