

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 3 December 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 items 6 and 7 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 12th November, 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 – WW01

6.1.1 In attendance were the appellant, an interpreter 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.WW01).

- 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, through her interpreter, explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for a home to school travel pass for her child.
- 6.1.6 In response to questions raised by Members, the appellant stated that she was the child's grandmother whom she looked after, as her son, the child's father, had mental health problems and the child's mother had abandoned her. She said that the child had suffered trauma in her young life but had now settled well into her current school and had started to make friends. The appellant also stated that she too has health problems. The appellant said that although her son lived on his own in a different part of the city, she takes the child to visit him.
- 6.1.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant and the interpreter left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.
- 6.1.8 RESOLVED: That the appeal be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional educational, family and medical circumstances in the case (Case No.WW01).

6.2 Verbal Appeal – KI/EC01

- 6.2.1 The case had been scheduled to be heard at previous meeting of the Committee, but the appellant had failed to attend on that occasion, so the case was deferred to give her a further opportunity to attend and present her case. Although the appellant had expressed a wish to attend the hearing, she again failed to attend. She had submitted further evidence prior to the start of the hearing, and the case was heard in her absence based on the information submitted.
- 6.2.2 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.KI/EC01).
- 6.2.3 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.
- 6.2.4 RESOLVED: That a decision be deferred to allow the Executive Director, People Services to identify which are the three qualifying schools and the Executive Director, be authorised to make a decision in the case (Case No.KI/EC01).

6.3 Verbal Appeals – Case Nos.KI/ED02 and KI/ED03

- 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 reports and commented upon cases where the parent 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.KI/ED02 and KI/ED03).
- 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 requests for home to school travel passes had been refused at Stage 1.
- 6.3.5 The appellant explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for home to school travel passes for his children.
- 6.3.6 In response to questions raised by Members, the appellant stated that the school his children had attended previously taught Arabic as part of the curriculum and this was very important to him, his family and the local community for cultural and religious purposes. However, the school had ceased to teach Arabic from September this year, so he found an alternative school where the language would be taught and, after a successful appeal, his children now attended that school. The appellant said that his children had received travel passes to attend their previous school so couldn't understand why they were no longer entitled. Andy Tierney confirmed that the zero fare bus passes which had previously been granted had been done so in error.
- 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 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, is not one of the three qualifying schools (Case No.KI/ED02 and KI/ED03).

7. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES

- 7.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted reports and commented upon cases where parents had made a request for the Committee to consider a change in the family's circumstances, in connection with their request for places at their preferred primary school and, arising therefrom, it was:-
- 7.2 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 these cases (Case Nos OUT/1 and

OUT/2).

(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 Nos. OUT/1 and OUT/2, be considered as matters of urgency in order for the requests 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. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 8.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday, 21st January, 2020, at 12.30 p.m., in the Town Hall.