

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 15 October 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, Talib Hussain and Sioned-Mair Richards

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

**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, 8 and 9 on the agenda (Items 6, 7 and 8 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 MEETINGS**

4.1 The minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> February and 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2020 were approved as correct records.

**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 appellants in respect of five cases with regard to Primary School Admissions, the Executive Director, People Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, under powers delegated to him had determined that:-

- (a) two pupils be prioritised within their admissions category of “catchment” prior to the allocation of places, and that they be placed first and second on the waiting list respectively, on the grounds that there are exceptional family and medical circumstances (Case Nos. G1 and G2);
- (b) one pupil be prioritised within the admissions category of “non-catchment” prior to the allocation of places, on the grounds that there are exceptional

family circumstances (Case No. W1);

- (c) one pupil be prioritised within the admissions category of “sibling” prior to the allocation of places, on the grounds that there are exceptional family circumstances (Case No. NE1); and
- (d) one pupil be not prioritised on the “non-catchment” waiting list, as there were no exceptional circumstances demonstrated (Case Nos. B1).

## **6. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS**

### **6.1 Verbal Appeal – KI/ED01**

- 6.1.1 In remote attendance were the appellant and Andy Tierney 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 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/ED01).
- 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 her child.
- 6.1.6 In response to questions raised by Members, the appellant stated that her child had been forced to leave his previous school due to severe bullying issues which resulted in him attending hospital with a broken bone. The appellant said that the school her son now attends was due to a managed move to a school in the same “cluster” family of schools. She added that the schools within her catchment area or nearest suitable school were not acceptable as they did not offer the same Ofsted results as the school he now attends.
- 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 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting information and evidence provided by the pupil’s parent and, arising therefrom, it was:-
- 6.1.9 **RESOLVED:** That, subject to the applicant providing evidence of the managed move to the Executive Director, People Services, the appeal be upheld and a zero fare travel pass be granted until the end of the current academic year, on the

grounds that there are exceptional family circumstances in the case (Case No.KI/ED01).

6.2 Verbal Appeal – BR01 and BR02

6.2.1 The appellant had stated that he wished to make verbal representations to support his appeal, but unfortunately when contact was made with him to discuss his case, his remote connection had been lost and the host of the meeting was unable to make further contact with him. The Committee decided to consider the cases in the applicant's absence.

6.2.2 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 home to school travel bus passes (Case Nos. BR01 and BR02).

6.2.3 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting information and evidence provided by the pupils' parents and, arising therefrom, it was:-

6.2.4 RESOLVED: That (a) the appeals be not upheld on the grounds that there were 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 the catchment school (Case Nos.BR01 and BR02); and

(b) the Committee did, however, consider that, due to the technical difficulties preventing his access to the meeting, the appellant should be offered another opportunity to present the cases to the Committee, should he so wish.

**7. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES - REQUEST TO BE PRIORITISED ON THE WAITING LIST**

7.1. 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 the school 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 catchment category, for admission if and when a place becomes available.

7.2 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:-

7.3 RESOLVED: That the pupil be prioritised at the top of the waiting list in the catchment category, on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances in the case (Case No.N1).

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

**REQUEST TO CONSIDER A CHANGE IN CIRCUMSTANCES**

- 8.1 The Executive Director, People Services, submitted a report 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 secondary school (Case No.ODV1).
- 8.2 RESOLVED: That upon consideration of the case, 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.ODV1).

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee will be held on a date to be arranged.