

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 27 June 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Maleiki Haybe (Chair), Sioned-Mair Richards, Garry Weatherall, Ann Whitaker and Ann Woolhouse

1. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR

- 1.1 RESOLVED: That Councillor Safiya Saeed be appointed as Deputy Chair of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2023/24

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Karen McGowan and Safiya Saeed.

3. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

- 3.1 RESOLVED: That the public and press be excluded from the meeting before discussion takes place on items 7 and 8 on the agenda (Items 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.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 4.1 There were no declarations of interest.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 5.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16th February, 2023 were approved as a correct record.

6. ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

- 6.1 The Committee noted that, since its last meeting, the Strategic Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, under powers delegated to her with regard to Primary and Secondary Admissions and Home to School Travel Passes, had:-

- (a) prioritised one pupil on the waiting list in the sibling category on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances (Case No. N1);

- (b) authorised a fresh right of appeal on the grounds that there are exceptional family circumstances (Case No. SSA1, SSA2, SSA3); and
- (c) grant a home to school travel pass on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances (Case No. E1).

7. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS

7.1 Verbal Appeal BI/01

- 7.1.1 In attendance were the appellant, Andrew Tierney, Semaira Asif and Sharon Craig (Customer Services).
- 7.1.2 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.
- 7.1.3 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted a report and commented upon a case where the child's carer had appealed against the administrative decision made by the Director with regard to the refusal to grant a home to school travel bus pass (Case No. BI/01).
- 7.1.4 Andrew 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.
- 7.1.5 The appellant explained to the Committee the reasons for the request for a home to school travel pass for the child.
- 7.1.6 In response to questions raised by Members, the appellant stated that two of the child's brothers, one of which he didn't get on with, attended one of the child's three qualifying schools. She stated that if he was not granted a bus pass, it would make life more difficult in terms of his attendance at his chosen school, but would not stop him attending. He would be able to walk, although it was around two miles to the school, and he could also catch a bus which went very close to the school.
- 7.1.7 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant and officers left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.
- 7.1.8 **RESOLVED:** That:
 - (a) the appeal be not upheld on the grounds that there are no exceptional medical, financial, family and social circumstances demonstrated (Case No. BI/01); and
 - (b) the Committee requests that the Education, Children and Families Policy

Committee considers an amendment to the Home to School Transport Policy to the effect that Looked After Children in receipt of a bursary or scholarship be allowed to receive a bus pass if attending a private school within the City boundary.

7.2 Appeal ST/02

7.2.1 It was agreed that in the circumstances now reported, the appeal be referred to the Strategic Director of Children's Services, for determination, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.

8. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES

8.1 Request for Prioritisation on Waiting List and/or Fresh Right of Appeal

8.1.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had expressed a wish for their child to be admitted to a secondary school of their choice. The Strategic 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 Strategic 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.

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

8.1.3 RESOLVED: That the pupil be neither prioritised within their admission category of 'catchment' prior to the allocation of places or given a fresh right of appeal, on the grounds that there are no exceptional educational, family, financial or medical circumstances demonstrated (Case No. ODV1).

8.2 Request for Prioritisation on Waiting List

8.2.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted a report and commented upon a case where parents had expressed a wish for their child to be admitted to a secondary school of their choice. The Committee was requested to consider prioritising the pupil prior to the allocation of places on the National Allocation date, within the applicable admissions category prior to the allocation of places, on the grounds that there are exceptional medical circumstances.

8.2.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting evidence and information provided by the pupil's parents, including evidence and advice provided by voluntary or professional bodies and organisations and, arising therefrom, it was:-

- 8.2.3 RESOLVED: That the pupil be prioritised prior to the allocation of places, within their respective admission category, on the grounds that the Committee considers that there are exceptional medical circumstances demonstrated (Case No. OP1).

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday, 25th July, 2023, at 2.00 p.m., in the Town Hall.