

Agenda Item 5

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Admissions Committee

Meeting held 24 September 2024

PRESENT: Councillors Ann Whitaker (Deputy Chair), Karen McGowan, Mark Whittaker and Ann Woolhouse

22. CHAIR OF THE MEETING

22.1 In the absence of the Chair of the Committee (Councillor Maleiki Haybe), the meeting was chaired by the Deputy Chair (Councillor Ann Whitaker).

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

23.1 Apologies for absence were received from the Chair of the Committee (Councillor Maleiki Haybe) and Councillor Talib Hussain.

24. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

24.1 **RESOLVED:** That the public and press be excluded from the meeting before discussion takes place on items 6 to 10 on the agenda (items 27 to 31 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.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

25.1 There were no declarations of interest.

26. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

26.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 July, 2024 were approved as a correct record.

27. ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

27.1 The Committee noted that, since its last meeting, no decisions had been made by the Strategic Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, under powers delegated to her with regard to home to school transport or school admissions.

28. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS

28.1 Verbal Appeal (Case No. KE/01)

- 28.1.1 In attendance were the appellant and Semaira Asif and Vicky Hitchen (Customer Services).
- 28.1.2 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked attendees to introduce themselves. She then outlined the procedure which would be followed during the hearing.
- 28.1.3 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted a written report and commented upon a case where the parent had appealed against the administrative decision made by the Strategic Director with regard to the refusal to grant a home to school travel bus pass (Case No.KE/01).
- 28.1.4 Semaira Asif (Customer Services) explained the Stage 1 review and Stage 2 appeals process regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. Ms Asif informed the Committee of the reasons why the request for a home to school travel pass had been refused at Stage 1. She also informed the Committee that the child was attending a school based upon parental choice, that was not a qualifying school.
- 28.1.5 The appellant explained the reasons for her preference of King Egbert Secondary School, and noted that her child had previously had 'looked after child' status and had complex needs that required a nurturing, structured, supportive and creative environment in order to build her confidence and skills. She explained that she had spent time visiting different secondary schools with her child, and felt that King Egbert would best meet her needs. She noted that the staff at King Egbert had fully supported her child's transition from primary school, and that her child travelled to school by bus with a friend, which provided her with emotional support on her journey to and from school.
- 28.1.6 At this stage in the proceedings, the appellant left the meeting to allow the next case to be considered.

28.2 Written Appeal No. KE/02

- 28.2.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted a written report and commented upon a case where the child's parent had appealed against the administrative decision made by the Strategic Director with regard to the refusal to grant a home to school travel bus pass (Case No. KE/02).
- 28.2.2 Vicky Hitchen (Customer Services) explained the Stage 1 review and Stage 2 appeals process regarding the City Council's Home to School Transport Policy. Ms Hitchen informed the Committee of the reasons why the request for a home to school travel pass had been refused at Stage 1. She also informed the Committee that the child was attending a school based upon parental choice, that was not a qualifying school.

- 28.2.3 The Committee noted that no reasons had been specified for the choice of King Egbert School over qualifying schools that were closer to the child's home address. The Committee also noted that the supporting medical documentation provided was not complete or recent, and that further information had been requested but not provided.
- 28.2.4 At this stage in the proceedings, the officers left the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the evidence.
- 28.3 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting information and evidence provided by the pupils' parents and, arising therefrom, it was:-

RESOLVED: That:-

- a) one appeal be upheld on the grounds that there are exceptional educational, financial, medical and family/social circumstances demonstrated (Case No.KE/01); and
- b) one appeal be not upheld on the grounds that there are no exceptional educational, financial, medical, financial, physical or family/social circumstances demonstrated (Case No.KE/02).

29. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - MID-TERM PLACES

29.1 Request for Prioritisation on Waiting List (Case No.S1)

- 29.1.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted a written report detailing a case where a parent had expressed a wish for her child to be admitted to a secondary school of her choice. The Strategic Director stated that places at the secondary 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 'other' category, for admission if and when a place becomes available.
- 29.1.2 The Committee gave consideration to all the supporting evidence and information provided by the pupil's parent and, arising therefrom, it was:-
- 29.1.3 **RESOLVED:** That the pupil be given priority on the waiting list in the 'other' category, on the grounds that the Committee considers that there are exceptional medical circumstances demonstrated (Case No.S1).

29.2 Request for Fresh Right of Appeal (Case No.M1)

29.2.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services submitted a written report detailing a case where a parent had expressed a wish for her child to be admitted to a secondary school of her choice. The Committee was asked to consider whether there were any significant and material changes in the circumstances of the family since the original application was made, to authorise that a fresh application be made, which would allow a fresh right of appeal for the school.

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

29.2.3 **RESOLVED:** That the pupil be granted a fresh right of appeal on the grounds that the Committee considers that there are significant material changes demonstrated in the medical and educational circumstances since the original application was made (Case No.M1).

30. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES

30.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services reported that there were no primary school admission requests for the Committee to consider.

31. SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUESTS - SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES

31.1 The Strategic Director of Children's Services reported that there were no secondary school admission requests for the Committee to consider.

32. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

32.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday 22 October 2024, at 2.00 p.m., in the Town Hall.