

REPORT OF: HOUSING, HEALTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES MANAGER

TO: SPECIAL BUDGET EXECUTIVE

DATES: 7th FEBRUARY 2018

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SYRIAN RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME (SRP)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Executive regarding the implementation of the SRP

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To note developments in relation to the implementation of SRP.
- (2) Agree to undertake a needs assessment with the Refugee Families and that the remaining Local Integration funding be used to commission services to meet unmet needs once these are established.

REASON

To ensure Executive is updated regarding the implementation of the SRP. To also seek agreement to undertake a needs assessment with the Refugee Families and that the remaining Local Integration funding be used to commission services to meet unmet needs once these are established.

ISSUE

Syrian Refugee Programme (SRP) in Pendle

As a response to the Syrian Refugee crisis, the Council offered to welcome twenty Syrian refugee households to the borough. In September 2016, an initial eight families arrived, followed by two additional families in November 2016. Subsequently, a further ten families arrived in July 2017.

Cohort 1 - families who arrived in September and November 2016.

All families continue to reside in Pendle and are living in accommodation that meets their needs. The families, as part of the Year 2 SRP, receive

- *Caseworker support* – although to a lesser degree of intensity than in their first year of arrival, which reflects the progress they have made towards independence. Caseworkers continue to use interpretation as and when required then undertaking their duties, although this has reduced somewhat from the first year.
- *ESOL* – all adults receive 9hrs of ESOL per week whilst children receive ESOL via their schooling. The ESOL provision also includes help with child care and transportation.
- Access to health and employment support

Whilst there have been challenges, resettlement of these families and their subsequent move towards greater independence has proved to be broadly successful.

Cohort 2 - families who arrived in July 2017

These families are presently receiving Year 1 SRP support which Cohort 1 families have already received in their first year of arrival and which includes:-

- 2 x caseworkers (1 caseworker per five families) including interpretation support
- ESOL and access to health and employment support as per provided to Cohort 1 (above)

Whilst challenges have emerged, these have been minor and quickly resolved. Families are making smooth progress towards resettlement and greater independence.

Local Integration Fund (LIF)

Following the Executive report on 21st September 2017, a bidding round for LIF has since been taken forward. All bids received have been assessed and it was determined that unfortunately none of the bids received adequately met the objectives of the fund and neither did they appear to provide sufficient value for money. In light of this, an updated assessment of the needs of the Syrian families will be undertaken and it would be anticipated that the remaining LIF funding would be used to commission services which would help address any unmet need.

The future of SRP in Pendle

Under the Lancashire SRP, all Syrian families will receive support for up to five years after arrival, although the level of support will gradually reduce as families work towards resettlement and independence. Consequently, the Council will continue to work with its partners up until at least July 2022, five years after Cohort 2 arrival, to ensure that the Syrian families receive the best support available to ensure they successfully resettle and achieve full independence.

The Lancashire SRP will extend beyond 2022 as more Syrian families are due to arrive in neighbouring boroughs over the next two years in order to meet the Lancashire-wide pledge to resettle refugees. As part of this process, LCC are presently developing a Refugee Integration Strategy which could impact on how LIF funding is allocated in the future.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy

There are no known policy implications arising from this report.

Financial

The Council has already received funding for the LIF from Lancashire SRP therefore any awards made via this fund can be fully funded. . Each successful organisation will need to sign a Service Level Agreement

Legal

There are no known legal implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

There is risk to reputation should the Council fail to successfully implement SRP and administer the LIF in a fair manner.

Health and Safety:

There are no known health and safety implications arising from this report.

Sustainability:

Both SRP and the LIF are long-term commitments and are intended to contribute towards community cohesion within the borough.

Community Safety:

SRP has the potential to raise community safety issues. However, there is believed to be considerable goodwill within Pendle in supporting Syrian refugees and many local services are willing to provide support.

Equality and Diversity:

As the Programme and the LIF funding is specifically for Syrian refugees, it will be targeted at a minority ethnic group rather than being open to all.