



To: Cabinet

Date: 15th November 2016

Subject: Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform the Cabinet of the outcome of the meeting of the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board at their meeting on the 10th November 2016

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board support the recommendations to Cabinet
- 2.2 In addition to the recommendations in the Cabinet Report, The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board recommend that Cabinet consider the additional information below in paragraphs 3.2 – 3.4 and consider the following recommendations:
- 2.3 That Cabinet:
- a) Notify that meeting the needs of this vulnerable group places a potential financial burden on the LA and partners (NHS and Schools)
 - b) Promote locally and nationally for all councils to take an equal financial responsibility for these children
 - c) Petition central government for a fair funding formula.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 At their meeting on 10th November 2016, the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board considered a report on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children. They also considered an additional briefing note containing the following information.
- 3.2 *The requirements of the VCRS closely match those of the SVPR covering accommodation, access to healthcare, school places, English language tuition (for adults) and a one year package of integration support.*
- 3.3 *Starting in July 2014, Coventry was the second local authority to take Syrian refugees and accordingly has built up a network of support and other extended services to assist in the resettlement of vulnerable refugees fleeing conflict. The Council relies heavily on the expertise and support of local voluntary sector agencies to support this programme. Citizens Advice Coventry, Coventry Law Centre and Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre provide key support to Syrian refugees in the City along with assistance from a number of other partners including City of Sanctuary, Positive Youth Foundation and local faith groups. Importantly Coventry schools have also played a key role in meeting the needs of newly*

arrived communities, as indeed have local NHS services. All costs associated with SVPRS are met by Central Government.

- 3.4 *This expertise and the network of support available across the City will be invaluable in meeting the needs of refugees arriving under the RVCS and potentially in providing extended support to UASC.*
- 3.5 There was cross-party support for the proposals to support these vulnerable children and agreed that this was the right thing for the city to do, continuing Coventry's tradition as a city of Peace and Reconciliation.

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