

Cabinet

28th August 2018

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities - Councillor E Ruane

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive (People)

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:** Award of a Grant to Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre

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**Is this a key decision?**

Yes - As the decision involves awarding of funds that will have a significant impact across more than 2 electoral wards in the city.

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**Executive Summary:**

Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre (CRMC) offers advice and support to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. The Centre has received funding from Coventry City Council since 2003. In April 2016, Cabinet Member (Community Development, Co-operative and Social Enterprise) approved the award of a two year grant of £387,752 per annum for the period October 2016 - September 2018. It was also agreed that a service review would be undertaken to ensure alignment of refugee support in the city and that a progress report would be provided 12 months after the grant was awarded. This report reflects the full review of the grant for the Centre that has now been completed, with findings presented in this report.

**Recommendations:**

Cabinet is requested to:

- 1) Approve the award of a grant to the Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre at the existing grant levels until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. This will be subject to break clauses and annual review as part of budget setting.

**List of Appendices included:**

Appendix 1- Case Studies

Appendix 2 – CRMC Review Recommendations

**Background papers:**

None

**Other useful documents**

Report Submitted to Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2016

<http://democraticservices.coventry.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=655&MId=10831&Ver=4>

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

## **Report title:** Service Review of the Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre

### **1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1. With Coventry's longstanding history of migration, being an asylum dispersal city and more recently being a designated 'City of Sanctuary', a large number of migrants have been welcomed here. Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre (CRMC) offers vital support to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants across the city. The service supports a diverse range of people, many of whom do not speak English and some who have escaped violence and persecution in their own countries. The Centre aims to prevent homelessness and destitution, helps people make a positive contribution to the city, supports access to employment opportunities and encourages integration. With the recent changes in legislation around immigration and the uncertainties of the UK leaving the European Union, challenges faced by refugees and migrants will continue. The numbers of destitution cases in the city has already seen a sharp rise. With this in mind it is important to keep specialist support services in place preventing pressures which would otherwise would fall onto statutory services.
- 1.2. The Centre has received funding from Coventry City Council since 2003. In April 2016, the Cabinet Member (Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise) approved the award of a two year grant of £387,752 per annum for the period October 2016-September 2018. It was also agreed that a service review would be undertaken to ensure alignment of refugee support in the City and that a progress update would be brought back to the Cabinet Member (Community Development) 12 months after the grant was awarded. Since the last report in November 2017 the Centre has relocated to Norton House in the Hillfields area of the city. This report provides findings and recommendations of the full review recently carried out with respect to services provided at the Centre.

### **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1. **Option 1:** Reduce the funding: This option has been carefully considered in the light of the data over the last 3 years reflecting:
  - 1) Increase in complex needs of this client group due to changes to immigration policies.
  - 2) The wider impact that the withdrawal or reduction of this funding will have on the wider services provided in the city including community cohesion and homelessness.

This has further been evidenced through case studies provided by the centre attached to the report as appendices. Hence, this option is not recommended.

- 2.2. **Option 2:** Continue funding at existing levels alongside targeted changes to some elements of service delivery with some funding identified being utilised to improve the infrastructure and management of the Centre.

This is the recommendation proposed for approval by the Cabinet. This option is supported by the recent Migrant Needs Assessment findings that included voluntary sector views on the services provided by the Centre and the value of these services for this client group.

### **2.3. Service Review Findings**

- 2.3.1. A review of the services provided by the Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre was undertaken between October 2017 and March 2018 by reviewing data from across the various services offered by the Centre as well as getting feedback from the clients and

partners across the sector. This also includes an analysis of costs for the Centre as well as evidence from stakeholder, service user and staff consultation.

## 2.4. Key Customer Demographics:

2.4.1. A total number of 2,066 people were supported for the period of \*2017/18 and 2,372 in 2016/2017.

- 28% are new clients starting support in 2017/18 compared to 48% in 2016/17. This is broken down as below for 2017/2018:
  - 75% were self-referrals, or those who heard about the service through word of mouth or family and friends.
  - 27% were asylum seekers, 42% were refugees, 21% were EU migrants and 10% of clients were classed in another category for immigration status.
  - 59% were male and 41% were female.
- The majority of clients are young adults aged between 18 and 39 years. 37% of new clients were aged between 18 – 29, 31% aged between 30 – 39, 20% in the 40 – 49 age bracket, 8% aged between 50 – 59. 2% were under 18 and the remaining 2% were over 60.
- The main countries clients came from were Eritrea, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Sudan.
- New clients predominantly live in CV1 (22%) and CV6 (26%) postcodes. The remainder of clients reside in CV2 (17%), CV3 (11%) with other CV post codes making up 7% of clients. 12% of clients have no fixed abode, with the remaining 5% categorised as “other”.

2.4.2. The main issues customers required support with were:

- Home Office and Immigration
- Benefits
- Destitution
- Asylum Support
- Housing
- 

\*Note: all years are reported from April to March as financial years.

## 2.5. Destitution:

2.5.1. Definition: *someone lacking possessions and resources; especially : suffering extreme poverty*

2.5.2. **The number of destitute cases has increased by 109% from 2015/16 to 2016/17 with numbers increasing from 337 to 704 and has further increased by 72% to 1,210 in 2017/18. Destitution is closely linked to broader poverty.**

2.5.3. The recent changes in legislation have seen further restrictions in some policy areas and therefore may have impacted directly on the rise of destitution cases seen in the city. A report conducted on destitution in the UK by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2016) found that tackling destitution requires action on the fundamental drivers of poverty (e.g. unemployment, low pay and high living costs), as well as better emergency support for those in crisis. Policy areas that have an important impact are debt, immigration, asylum, housing, homelessness, mental health, addictions, and complex needs, all of which greatly affect groups of migrants. This especially affects those faced with compounding difficulties, including benefit eligibility restrictions and levels, lack of access to the UK labour market, and limited social networks and knowledge about UK support systems.

2.5.4. The destitute cases being supported by the Centre are either:

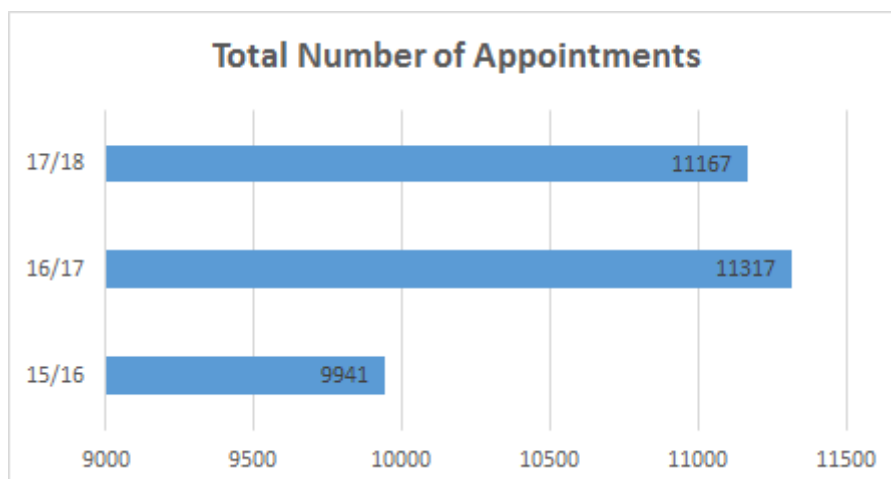
- a) Short term - where clients have received their leave to remain and are waiting for the benefit process to be completed. Some of the headline issues have been homelessness, no National Insurance number, or CRMC assisting in obtaining documentation from the Home Office in order for support to be provided from other organisations.
- b) Long term – where clients have been refused leave to remain but the Refugee Centre consider there are grounds for appeal. Headline issues include those who have no recourse to public funds and supporting clients whose support under **Section 95 Immigration & Asylum Act 1999** [Section 95 support can take the form of subsistence only (i.e cash only support) or if the asylum seeker doesn't have somewhere to stay pending their asylum claim, accommodation and subsistence support] or **Section 4 Immigration & Asylum Act 1999 support** [those who receive support under this section are generally provided with accommodation and a payment card that can be used to buy food and other essential items.] has not started from the Home Office yet.

2.5.5. In all circumstances the grant assists with food, sanitation related products as well as travel and medication costs.

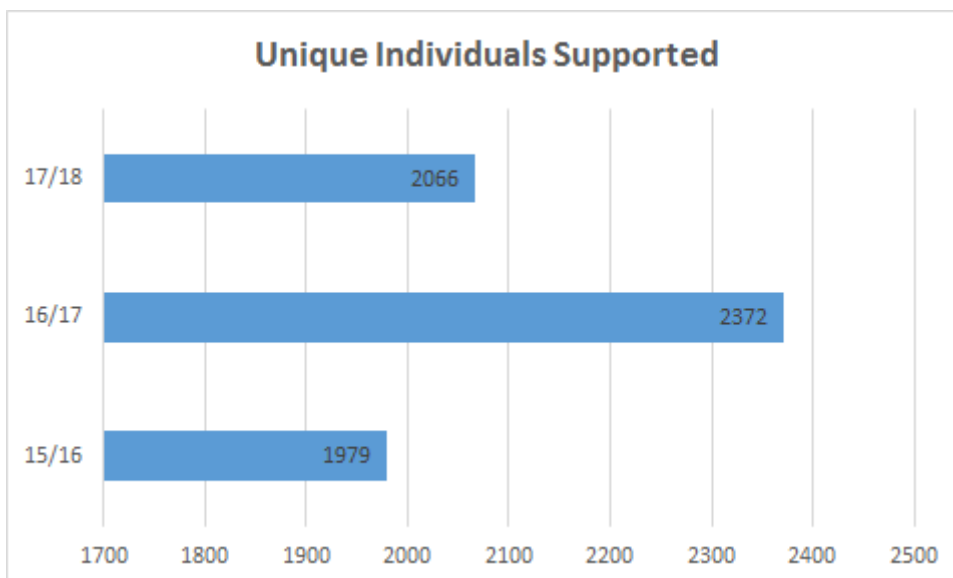
## 2.6. Levels of Demand:

2.6.1. An analysis of data between 2015/16 and 2017/18 shows an increase in demand for the services within CRMC and with migration across the city. The number of individuals supported by the centre has only marginally increased between 2015/16 and 2017/18 (with a large increase seen in 2016/17 and subsequent decrease). With fewer clients through the door, the number of appointments offered have seen an increase with staff spending more time with these clients (see case studies). The reasons are largely due to changes to immigration legislation specifically around asylum support. As a result individuals are returning for support with increasingly complex issues, hence needing support over a longer time period than the centre has previously experienced. Please also see details above re increase in destitute cases. **Consequently the overall number of hours spent on supporting the customers has increased and hence the value for money continues to be delivered by the centre.**

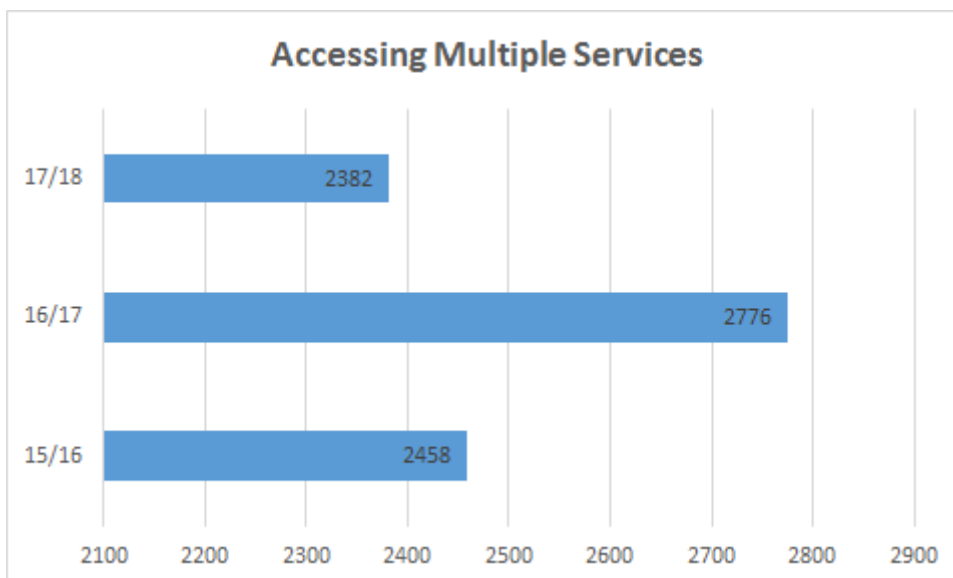
2.6.2. Total Number of appointments: The total number of appointments offered to clients has seen an increase of 12% from 2015/16:



2.6.3. Number of individual people supported: The number of individual people supported rose by 4% from 2015/16 to 2017/18:



2.6.4. Number of times all units/services have been accessed by clients: Due to complex needs, some clients may access more than one service, the below graph shows the trend from 2015 -2018 showing a slight decrease of 3% after rising in 2016/17.



2.6.5. Migrant Needs Assessment: 59 respondents (with over 50% being third sector organisations) from the Coventry Migrant Needs Assessment online stakeholder questionnaire indicated that there had been an increase or significant increase in demand for their services from economic migrants/students, asylum seekers, refugees, and irregular/undocumented migrants and resettled families over the last 12 months.

2.6.6. A similar pattern emerged with respect to what respondents thought was likely to happen to demand for services over the next 12 months. This is further supported by ONS data (2016) stating that the UK population is projected to increase by 3.6 million (5.5%) over the next 10 years, where England is projected to grow the quickest compared to other UK nations. 54% of this growth is projected to be a result of net international migration whereas the remaining 46% is a result of more births than deaths.

### 3. Results of consultation undertaken

#### 3.1. Stakeholder, Service User and Staff Consultation Findings:

3.1.1. The review findings have shown there has been an increase in demand for CRMC services over the past 3 years (increase in number of appointments with very small increase in numbers of individuals being supported). Feedback from stakeholders, service users and staff has generally been positive but there have been suggestions for areas of improvement from all 3 groups.

#### 3.2. Stakeholder Feedback:

3.2.1. A total of 59 stakeholders supporting this client group across the city were consulted on the effectiveness of the processes and services provided by CRMC to support migrants in the city. The response was very positive with 71% of respondents indicating these services and processes were effective or very effective, compared with only 4% indicating they were not effective or not effective at all. These results are set out in Table 8 below.

**Table 8: How effective do you think the processes and services provided by Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre (CRMC) are in supporting migrants?**

	Number of respondents	% of respondents
Very effective	11	22%
Effective	24	49%
No fixed views	12	24%
Not effective	2	4%
Not at all	0	0%
All respondents	49	100%

3.2.2. In general, stakeholders felt that CRMC provide a positive service but are an overstretched service yet they do their best to meet demand. Areas of good practice highlighted were their interpretation service, mental health support, immigration advice and housing support. The Centre was also described as a “one-stop-shop” for migrants who come to the city. It was said that CRMC are a very important central point for asylum seekers and migrants to come to and access information about other services. Also, “despite resource constraints they always do their very best to provide quality services.” It was stated “that CRMC could work more with other organisations in the city that specialise with migrant groups to help support the communities, avoid duplication and share resource.” They also need “resources to run the holistic service required and this could also be evaluated for its impact.” It was also said that “CRMC are clearly overstretched in their capacity to deliver all of the above services effectively” and that “CRMC are the best placed organisation to provide initial settlement legal support, Information and housing advice and should signpost to other organisations for other services”

#### 3.3. Service User Feedback:

3.3.1. A series of focus groups were conducted as a part of this review in order to explore the effectiveness of the Centre and the services it offers. Focus group participants were service users of the CRMC and were recruited through existing groups established at the Centre. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Over 60 people participated in these focus groups and reported having a very good experience with issues resolved by CRMC and few that were still ongoing.

### 3.4. Staff Feedback:

3.4.1. As a part of this review, staff were consulted to gather feedback from within the organisation. The centre employs 36 paid members of staff. 22 are employed full time and 14 are part-time with 96 volunteers who between them speak 60 different languages. Some of the strengths included the person-centred approach offering tailored methods of reaching out to clients. The staff valued the flexible approach the Centre provides. They also identified its ability to respond in emergency situations such as their out of hours service that other agencies are not always able to offer.

### 3.5. Areas of improvement:

3.5.1. Through the consultations with the above groups, respondents were asked to identify specific ways CRMC services could be developed further or improved. A summary of the key points are mentioned below:

- **Partnership Working:** Improvements to communication / networking / coordination / access. Stronger partnership working would be advantageous between statutory and voluntary organisations. With improved communication and co-ordination, services can better support clients in their areas of specialisms and avoid duplication. Agencies that referred in to CRMC were mainly Coventry Citizens Advice, Coventry Law Centre, G4S, Job Centre and Social Services. However there are a significant number of 'other' organisations that have referred into the service but have not been specified.
- **Additional funding/resources:** This included the need for more staff, further resource for therapy and counselling, legal advice services, ESOL and English conversation classes tailored to ability levels, additional housing advice/support including crisis support for the homeless.
- **Employment Support:** creating better opportunities for migrants including more structured volunteering programmes and opportunities for skills training and integration.
- **Support for the destitute:** this includes asylum seekers and migrants with no recourse to public funds. More resource for the Destitution Fund at CRMC to support this client group was advocated.
- **Investment in the CRMC ICT system:** to allow for a more efficient service including the introduction of an online booking system as an attempt to manage appointments more efficiently and reduce waiting times for service users.
- **Staff development and wellbeing:** As CRMC has been said to be a service in high demand as well as working with difficult issues such as trauma, a need for psychological support and internal feedback mechanisms to capture staff feedback and client needs is needed.

### 3.6. Current Provision

3.6.1. Coventry City Council currently provides £387,752 funding a year to CRMC to deliver the following services (through core budget) with extensive support from volunteers:

Service	Description	Funding
Advice Team	Provides a drop in and appointment service to support refugees, asylum seekers and migrants with any presenting or emergency issues such as access to benefits and housing	£171,227
Safeguarding Unit	Provides casework support to those people who are the most vulnerable and require ongoing support.	£104,608



Housing Unit	Provides up to 39 units of supported accommodation including housing for people with no recourse to public funds. (Part contribution)	£53,338
Work and Wellbeing Unit	Provides a support service to help people into training, employment and voluntary work.	£58,579

*\*\*Please note that all data in this report has been provided by CRMC*

### 3.7. External Funding

3.7.1. In addition, CRMC have also received funding from alternative grants/funding outside of Council funding and their social enterprise ventures. This includes:

- a small amount for therapy services purchased by GPs (costs for therapists and interpreters) is approx £65,000 that only covers the service delivery. The on-costs for this service are covered by other means including City Councils funding.
- £41,330 for Employment worker through the 2 year Accelerate Project (employability programme for the most disadvantaged funded through Big Lottery Funding and European Social Funding ending December 2018).
- 1 year of funding of £27,329 for multiple employment projects with West Midlands Police and Fire Service.
- £125,000 of funding to support Syrian and other resettled refugees related work.
- £16,000 funding to support with relocation.
- £50,000 over 2 years for contribution towards Communications Officer salary.
- £6,000 over a year's contribution to team leader roles within the organisation.
- £14,934 income from their social enterprise ventures (interpreting service and cleaning enterprise) in 2017/18.

3.7.2. Previously CRMC have been heavily reliant on Council Funding. However, the Centre has been working in partnership with the wider organisations and been recently successful in securing external funding through the MHCLG (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) and European Union for the "Building Bridges" and "MiFriendly Cities" projects. This will support capacity building to deliver services effectively and efficiently and add value to the funding that the organisation already receives.

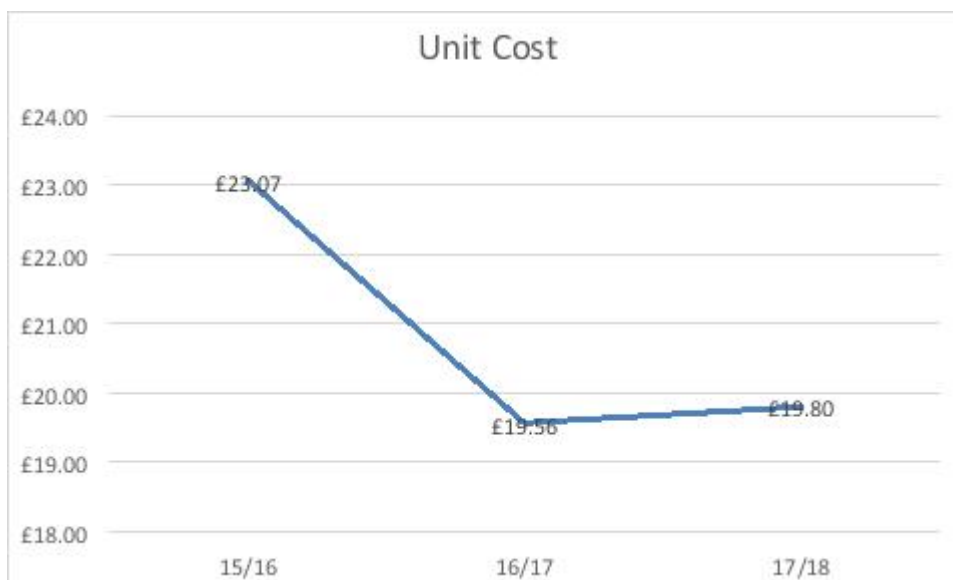
Description of activities	Total Grant (£)	Approx Grant (£) for 18/19	Source of funding
MiFriendly Cities Project funded through the Urban Innovation Action Funding (EU)	455,182	115,100	Urban Innovation Funding-For 3 years from 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2018
Controlling Migration Fund - Building Bridges Project: Information, Advice and Guidance Officer; Letting Agency; Administrator	356,984	175,854	For 2 years from 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2018
Two employment projects with the police and fire service	41,290	41,290	First one due to end July 2018. Second from July 2018 for 1 year (yet to be confirmed)
Mens Group Coordinator & Service costs	16,000	16,000	1 year funded by several Charitable Trusts

Crisis Worker salary	12,353	12,353	1 year funded by charitable trust
Team Leader salaries	16,000	16,000	1 year funded by charitable trust
Eritrean Rights Project	8,500	8,500	Funded by the DWP
Events Co-Ordinator salary	6,419	6,419	1 year funded by a charitable trust
Part funding for a HR Administrator salary	4,489	4,489	1 year funded by charitable trust
Clinical supervision (for staff and volunteers)	3,000	3,000	Funded by a charitable trust
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£908,263</b>	<b>£374,788</b>	

### 3.8. Value for Money:

3.8.1. During 2014/15 CRMC worked to decrease their unit costs and achieve greater value for money. A 22% funding reduction was achieved when the grant was renewed in April 2015 leading to loss of management and other posts without any reduction in frontline delivery of services. As part of the service review the organisation achieved cost efficiencies to enable them to increase the number of customers supported for the same amount of funding. In 2016/17 the unit costs (\*\* Note: The unit cost has been calculated by averaging the unit cost per hour per service-UPPS ( UPPS=Funding allocated to the service/total number of hours delivered) further reduced and were lower than the predicted unit cost. 2017/18 has seen a slight increase in unit costs however spending has stayed within budget.

Year	Annual Funding	Number of Customers Supported
2014/15	£498,155 ( This figure was reported as £528,925 due to admin error in previous report)	1,877
2015/16	£387,752	2,458
2016/17	£387,752	2,776
2017/18	£387,752	2,382



*Note: The unit cost has been calculated by averaging the unit cost per hour per service-UPPS ( UPPS=Funding allocated to the service/total number of hours delivered)*

### 3.9. Review Conclusions/Findings:

- The Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre is a vital specialist service that provides much needed support to Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Migrants that come to Coventry.
- The demand for the Centre (in terms of numbers of appointments) has risen over the past 3 years and is likely to stay high due to migration trends and changes to government legislation.
- Cases are becoming more time intensive and are very complex. Destitution is an issue that the centre has seen more of and would like to see more resource put in to meet need.
- In general, feedback from stakeholders and service users has been positive with areas of good practice highlighted as their interpretation service, specialist mental health support, immigration advice and housing support. However, due to constraints in resources it has been recommended that CRMC specialise in areas of their greatest strengths.
- It has also been recommended that CRMC work more closely in partnership with other organisations that support migrants in the city to share resource, avoid duplication and help to meet demand more effectively and efficiently.
- Encourage partnership working with training and staff development through minor changes to the structures, e.g. work with the Council's ICT team to support an upgrade in their ICT system.
- It is also recommended that CRMC continue to source further funding through active fundraising to support self-reliance and sustainability of the Centre and the vital services that they provide.
- In proposing that grant levels remain at current levels it is presumed that regular reviews of services will be jointly undertaken to ensure alignment with Council priorities and the wider needs of refugees and migrants' resident in Coventry.

#### **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1. The decision will be implemented from 1st September 2018 with a transition period of 3 months and a timeline of up to 12 months given to the organisation for the changes to be implemented and the delivery of the new grant to be started from 1st Dec 2018.

#### **5. Comments from Director of Finance and Corporate Resources**

##### **5.1. Financial implications**

The grant will continue to be funded from within existing Coventry City Council People Directorate budgets. The grant was reduced by 22% in 2015/16 however CRMC receives other funding from a variety of different sources. Throughout the term of the grant aid agreement reviews will take place to ensure that required outcomes are being delivered and that value for money is achieved.

The recommendation includes the inclusion of annual break clauses in the Grant Aid Agreement to allow for grant levels to be adjusted in accordance with Council budget setting.

##### **5.2. Legal implications**

The Council will make the grant payments in accordance with section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. A formal grant aid agreement will be entered into by the Council and CRMC. A formal grant aid agreement will be entered into by the Council and CRMC.

#### **6. Other implications**

##### **6.1. How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's Plan?**

This service supports the delivery of the vision and values set out within the Council Plan by protecting and supporting the most vulnerable people, helping to reduce the impact of poverty, preventing homelessness and keeping children and adults safe from harm. The services delivered through this funding will help refugee and migrant communities to get into jobs, establish new businesses in the city and hence the Council deliver its priority of aiming to improve the quality of life for Coventry people. The funding will also help support our citizens to be more active and independent and hence help the Council use its limited resources in a more targeted way.

##### **6.2. How is risk being managed?**

The recommendations contained in this report will be managed through usual City Council risk management processes. Service monitoring data will be used to review the service on an annual basis with the Centre to ascertain and shape the future services required for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants within the City. In addition to this the Refugee and Migrant Centre will be required to have their own risk management and mitigation plan in place to minimise and manage the impact of any risks the centre may face.

##### **6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?**

None

**6.4. Equalities / EIA**

Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre supports a number of people from different communities, religions and ethnic backgrounds, many of whom are escaping persecution from their countries of origin or are destitute. The service therefore has a positive impact for people with protected characteristics. The centre serves a very specific and vulnerable group of people who faced inequalities and discrimination in their home countries. These mainly include people from ethnic minority backgrounds who are now a part of this city's fabric and need the extra support to be able to better integrate into the community.

**6.5. Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

None

**6.6. Implications for partner organisations?**

None

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Nadia Inglis	Consultant in Public Health	People	25/05/2018	03/06/2018
Lara Knight	Governance Services Co-ordinator	Place	27/07/2018	27/07/2018
Kirston Nelson	Director of Education	People	13/06/2018	13/06/2018
<b>Names of approvers for submission:</b> (Officers and Members)				
Sarah Kinsell	Finance Officer	Place	13/06/2018	20/06/2018
Janice White	Legal Services	Place	13/06/2018	20/06/2018
Liz Gaulton	Director of Public Health and Wellbeing	People	14/06/2018	01/06/2018
Councillor E Ruane	Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities	-	09/08/2018	09/08/2018

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## Appendix 1



### Advice Team - Case study 1: Mr AA

AA's application for Section 4 Asylum Support has required repeated work due to the process of providing information to the Section 4 Team via Migrant Help and vice versa; this is causing delays in getting the applications to the Home Office and we are constantly helping clients to chase up their application. This means that a lot of time is being used in trying to contact Migrant Help via telephone or sending emails regularly on a repeat basis, requiring further destitution service provision while clients are still waiting for their support.

The following recent appointments show the pattern typical of applications for Section 4 support.

26/02/18: We started to fill in the Asylum Support application form (ASF1) for AA but he needed to return with further details. [2 hours]

02/03/18: We completed the ASF1 and sent it with supporting letters proving destitution. [1 hour]

22/03/18: We chased up the ASF1 by emailing Migrant Help, as we could not get through by telephone after waiting on hold for 45 minutes. [1 hour]

27/03/18: We emailed Migrant Help again to chase up the ASF1, as we had received no response to our previous enquiry. [45 minutes]

05/04/18: We called Migrant Help, as we had had no response to our previous emails and AA was very frustrated at not having heard anything regarding his Asylum Support. We were told that Migrant Help had not sent AA's application to the Home Office until 17/03/18, even though it had been submitted on 02/03/18.

*At present any application for either Section 95 or Section 4 support will take at least four weeks to process. In the meantime the destitute client will often come back to ask us to try speed things up, thus requiring more casework hours.*

April 2018

### **Advice Team - Case study 2: The Z family**

The Z family's case is complex but not particularly unusual. Mr and Mrs Z came to the UK on a Tier 1 work visa in 2008 and both worked for as long as they were allowed to take employment. Their four children were born in the UK. They applied for asylum due to fear of their daughters being subjected to FGM if they returned to their home country.

After delays with their application – some caused by confusion at the Home Office due to Mrs Z being the main applicant rather than her husband – the family had substantial rent and Council Tax debts and their landlord was desperate to evict them.

13/10/17: We completed an ASF1 and submitted it by email to Migrant Help. [2 hours]

31/10/17: The family had run out of money completely but needed to submit photocopies of bank statements. We made the copies and issued a Food Bank voucher. [15 minutes]

06/11/17: The family were mistakenly told they did not have to pay their Council Tax arrears. We contacted the City Council and, when it emerged that they did have to pay after all, we sent an email to Coventry Law Centre debt team. We also emailed Migrant Help to check that the documentation they had requested had arrived. [1 hour]

13/11/17: The family was now threatened with eviction. We explained their Section 21 rights and printed out a summary for Mr Z to take home. We gave Mr Z a Food Bank voucher and cash for fresh vegetables. Mr Z offered to volunteer for us, so we put him in touch with our volunteer coordinator. [30 minutes]

16/11/17: We helped Mr Z with a school Boot Fund application. [20 minutes]

17/11/17: The family had now been awarded Section 95 support but were not yet receiving payments. We gave them some food from our cupboards and referred them to the Red Cross. [15 minutes]

21/11/17: We helped Mr Z Client to complete and submit a declaration form for their Section 95 support. [20 minutes]

24/11/17: The family were due to be taken to their Section 95 accommodation today, but the G4S driver arrived early. They were not ready and now the Home office is treating them as having failed to travel. We rang the Asylum Support Accommodation Monitoring Team, then G4S. We sent the necessary letter to help them to get an early rebooking. [1 hour]

28/11/17: We gave Mr Z cash for milk and also gave him food from the cupboards. [10 minutes]

30/11/17: The family were not taken to their new accommodation as expected today. We rang Migrant Help and were told they would get back to Mr and Mrs Z. [30 minutes]

04/12/17: We rang Asylum Support and Migrant Help to try to speed things up as Mrs Z was due to have the baby soon. We gave them a Food Bank voucher and cash for bus fares and nappies. [45 minutes]



12/12/17: We emailed Migrant Help again to try to speed things up. [30 minutes]

14/12/17: We rang the family's lettings agent to try to stall the eviction process. [10 minutes]

21/12/17: We received an e-mail to say the family had been granted accommodation in Coventry from 28th of December. We printed it out for Mr Z and also completed a health costs form (HC1). [30 minutes]

29/12/17: The move (and therefore also the family's Asylum Support) was postponed at the last minute. We gave them food and cash. [20 minutes]

08/01/18: We helped Mr Z apply for a maternity grant. [30 minutes]

11/01/18: The family were given a new move date of 12th January, so we rang Mr Z to check whether they had heard anything from UKVI or G4S. They hadn't, so we rang the Asylum Support Accommodation Monitoring Team (ASAMT) to make sure the move was going ahead, as Mrs Z was due to have a caesarean section on 19th January. We were told that the dispersal date had been changed to 26th January. We rang the family, who were extremely upset. We rang the family's lettings agent again to try to stall the eviction process. [45 minutes]

17/01/18: The new baby had been born the previous night. We gave Mr Z money for a taxi from the hospital. [15 minutes]

22/01/18: We rang the Home Office directly to check that the family was still due to be moved the following day, then rang Mr Z to tell him they were still moving. [20 minutes]

25/01/18: We wrote a letter to the Midland Enforcement Unit to inform them of the birth of the new baby. [20 minutes]

16/03/18: Mr and Mrs Z had their asylum interview yesterday. They have been asked to send in the new baby's original birth certificate, as the one we had sent had not arrived. We posted the birth certificate with a covering note to the NSA Hub in Hounslow. [45 minutes]

20/03/18: We scanned evidence of the family's elder daughter's life in the UK and sent it to the Home Office. 20 minutes]

April 2018

## **Safeguarding Unit – Case Study 1: Mr BB**

BB is a young man with severe mental health problems, a tendency to self-harm and self-medication with drug use who first came to us on the 16<sup>th</sup> August 2016. When his current caseworker first met the client his problems seemed to be health related and close liaison with his GP seemed to help, but it was decided that the mental health crisis team would give more support and closely monitor the medication he has to collect daily due to his suicidal tendencies, however due to his use of class A drugs this service has been denied.

The client does however like swimming and we have made an Active Health referral as this would give the client something positive to do and could help with his mental health.

The situation has changed recently as the client's claim for refugee status has been declined and despite his solicitor clarifying that advice obtained by Counsel that his case has very good merits to challenge he could still find himself in a destitute situation, so for now we must liaise closely with client's solicitor and other agencies to prevent this situation from happening as there is a real risk of suicide.

Client visits almost daily and at the present time this is necessary for the support that he needs.

## **Safeguarding Unit – Case Study 2: Ms CC**

CC was initially referred to the Safeguarding Unit on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2017. This client was homeless and destitute and living in Coventry Peace House who is a victim of modern slavery and has been reluctant to name her perpetrators thus losing her first claim for asylum. Now that she has submitted fresh evidence to a new solicitor (that my predecessor worked hard to find for her), we are hopeful of success.

Meanwhile after referrals to the Red Cross, our client now has a home and support that will be reviewed every six months.

The caseworker's role is to continue to support the client with her paperwork, emotional support and liaise with her medical professionals. They have also accompanied the client to numerous hospital appointments. CRMC has helped the client to engage socially in that she is now more comfortable around male colleagues and has formed a friendship with another client she met whilst in the reception waiting area. The client has also applied to volunteer as an interpreter.

April 2018

## Appendix 2

### CRMC Recommendations following the 2018 Review:

#### Context and findings of the review:

With the current political and economic climate, there will continue to be challenges for those working in the Migration Sector. With further cuts taking place to Council resource, finding ways to work smarter and encourage independence is a key focus in current local leadership. The findings from the review show that:

- The demand for the Centre (in terms of numbers of appointments) has risen by 12% from 15/16 over the past 3 years and is likely to stay high due to migration trends and changes to government legislation.
- Cases are becoming more time intensive and are very complex. Destitution is an issue that the centre has seen an increase of nearly 4 fold from 15/16 figures and would like to see more resource put in to meet need.
- Feedback from stakeholders have identified areas of good practice highlighted as the interpretation service, specialist mental health support, immigration advice and housing support. Additionally, stakeholders also pointed to a focus on CRMC working more closely in partnership with other organisations that support migrants in the city to share resource, avoid duplication and help to meet demand more effectively and efficiently.
- Staff raised concerns with training and development for example the slow/unreliable ICT systems, training and support for staff wellbeing as well as training sessions to get up to date information on changes to benefits, immigration/EU laws, employment and refugees, housing and social services.
- The review has highlighted that CRMC are very reliant on the grant provided through the Council. With the uncertainty the economic and political climate brings with it at the moment sustainability is at risk.

Within this context the following recommendations have been made:

1. Utilise the findings from the Coventry Migrant Needs Assessment and other research identified, to prioritise needs/issues that are currently most prevalent in migrant groups and that affect the most disadvantaged and tailor core services to meet these needs and issues.
2. Define the key objectives of each service area in line with the needs identified through the data provided by the centre and the Migrant Needs Assessment.
3. Discuss and agree with City council the key data, outputs and targets for each service area as well as reporting of the Key Performance Indicators.
4. Work to have a presence in local communities doing outreach activities and working with organisations that work in these communities to build good relationships and expand reach in the city.
5. Review and evaluate fundraising plan in order to source further funding through actively seeking opportunities to support self-reliance and sustainability.

6. Work with the Council's ICT team to upgrade ICT system and champion a move to the digital ways of working including the upskilling of staff.
7. Due to constraints in resources it has been recommended that CRMC specialise in areas of their greatest strengths in line with demand. Formulate a streamlined organisational model and pull resources into areas of best practice/need. E.g 7hrs of work from the Safeguarding Unit be used to add hours on to immigration advice support. (Areas identified as best practice: interpretation services, mental health, immigration advice, housing support, destitution).
8. Dedicate the Settlement Caseworker (Safeguarding Unit) to prioritise cases of destitution and work closely with internal (eg. Advice team, Housing unit) and external teams (eg. Peace House, CCC, universities etc) to support the most vulnerable.
9. Have one full time member of staff that is responsible for internal and external partnership management and managing volunteers. This role should focus on:
  - a. Establishing key partnerships with organisations that can add value to the services CRMC provide.
  - b. Monitor, manage and source training/development opportunities for staff.
  - c. Be responsible for maintaining an active database on key services being provided in the city for staff to signpost to. This should add value and avoid duplication of services in the city.
  - d. Work with partners to formulate a structured volunteer recognition scheme to attract skilled volunteers.
10. Review and evaluate services annually to analyse impact/trends in the city, discuss findings with City Council to agree, adapt the service to the changing needs of the client groups and take action in response to findings.