

Briefing to: Sefton Community Safety Partnership

Briefing from: Steve Martlew, Localities Service Manager

Date: 12 March 2020

Subject: Asylum Seeker & Refugee Update

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1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the report is to update SSCP on Asylum and Refugee issues.

2. Recommendation

2.1 SSCP note the contents of the report.

3. Refugee Resettlement

3.1 Sefton Council made a pledge to settle 125 people over the four-year period 2015-2019. Following a request from the Home office via the Liverpool City Region Refugee Programme, Sefton agreed to settle a further 25 people in 2020 meaning a total number of 150 refugees will be settled in the Borough by March 2021.

3.2 As at 5 March 2020 115 Refugees have been resettled meaning we are on target to reach our 150 quota by March 2021. The scheme remains cost neutral to the Council with all commissioning costs being met via the Resettlement Grant received from the Home Office via the LCR

3.3 Housing and support has been very successful and has been delivered in partnership with our commissioned provider South Sefton Housing Group (Bosco Society Ltd, Venus, Excell Housing and New Start). Families have settled predominantly in the Linacre & Derby wards (South Sefton) and there has been sufficient capacity within the education and health environment to manage this additional demand.

4. Asylum Seekers

4.1 Asylum Seekers are housed and supported through the National Asylum Support Service contract between Serco and the Home Office. Migrant Help offer a telephone and web chat service for asylum seekers wishing to complain about their housing or support or to raise other issues like repairs. This is done through the Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE) service. We work with Serco to ensure that they procure properties in the right place without creating additional demand on services such as Education or Health. We currently have 222 Asylum Seekers housed and supported in the borough. These are predominantly single males. The top 3 nationalities are currently Iranian, Iraqi and Albanian. The top 3 languages are Kurdish, Arabic and Farsi.

5 Sefton Asylum, Refugee and Migration Forum

5.1 The forum met for the first time in over 6 months on Monday 24 February 2020. The forum is a key platform locally to identify issues and themes that can be escalated via the governance structure. There was a good cross reference of agencies present including, Migrant Help, Merseyside Police, Sefton CCG, Serco, Liverpool City Region and the Home Office. The forum will meet quarterly and we want to encourage all groups that work with asylum seekers, refugees or migrants to attend and share their experiences and issues.

6. Recommendations

6.1 SSCP notes the contents of this report

Steve Martlew
Locality Service Manager
5 March 2020