

REPORT TO: Health and Wellbeing Board

DATE: 12th October 2016

REPORTING OFFICER: Director of Public Health

PORTFOLIO: Health and Wellbeing

SUBJECT: Prospective Health and Wellbeing Needs Assessment for the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme

WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform of the Health and Wellbeing Board of the findings and recommendations of a Prospective Health and Wellbeing Needs Assessment for the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme.
- 1.2 This report does not encompass initial accommodation for Asylum Seekers, widening Asylum Seeker Dispersal or Unaccompanied Minors as these are different processes, although Health and Wellbeing Needs may overlap.
- 1.3 Further information about Refugees, Asylum Seekers and a planning application for change of use of Lilycross Care Centre can be found at: - <http://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/refugees.aspx>
<http://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/pdfs/LilycrossHouseFAQs.pdf>

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That the Board

- 1. note the report; and**
- 2. Support the recommendations in Section 3.3**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Background

The UK Government has committed to resettling 20,000 Syrian refugees over the next five years. The Syrian refugees will be part of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme and have 5 years humanitarian protection. Across the North West, local authorities including Halton Borough Council have committed to supporting the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme. Liverpool City Council is co-ordinating the resettlement programme of 510 refugees on behalf of other local authorities in Merseyside. It is expected that Halton will host 100 of these refugees. However, it is unknown what the family/individual profiles and needs are. The Local Authority will deliver housing provision, initial reception arrangements, casework and orientation support with English for Speakers of Other Languages classes, in line with Central Government's 'Statement Of Requirements'.

A multi-agency forum has been established with stakeholders in Halton to assess, plan and implement local delivery for the Syrian Resettlement Programme.

3.2 Key Issues from the Prospective Health and Wellbeing Needs Assessment

Syrian Refugees health and wellbeing needs will be influenced by four discrete phases of the refugee experience Pre-Flight, Flight, Temporary Settlement, Resettlement. It is anticipated that Syrian Refugees entering the UK through the resettlement programme will be the most vulnerable men, women and children, with complex health and wellbeing needs, based on the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees criteria for resettlement eligibility.

Housing, Health, Education and Employment are identified as major critical factors in the resettlement. Integration and access to state and voluntary agencies upon resettlement can be aided or impeded by language, reciprocal cultural knowledge, social connections, safety and stability.

3.3 Recommendations

Consider Migration Yorkshire Guide and Checklists for Syrian Resettlement and discuss implementation design and plan within a Halton context

3.3.1 Housing

- Consider the availability and location of housing for Syrian refugee resettlement within Halton with a focus on safety and stability and access to facilities

3.3.2 Health

- Consider the availability and location of primary and dental care for Syrian refugees within Halton
- Identify 'best practice model' for primary care uptake, registration and assessment (tool) with Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS England and Public Health England
- Ascertain interpreting services and capacity, plus ensure translation policy is in place and communicated
- Establish training needs of health professionals in migrant health, refugee health needs, culture and working with interpreters
- Identify capacity and referral pathways for secondary, maternity, mental health and other specialist services
- Discuss potential social care needs, capacity and referral pathways

3.3.3 Education and Training

- Consider the availability, capacity and location of early years, primary and secondary education for Syrian refugees within Halton considering 'catch-up' support, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and health and wellbeing school support.
- Discuss education opportunities for work experience, vocational training or professional registration for Syrian refugees within Halton
- Develop communications strategy with education stakeholders to ensure community cohesion within Halton

3.3.4 Employment

- Consider the skilled/unskilled employment opportunities within Halton with local/regional stakeholders
- Consider the skilled/unskilled work experience opportunities within Halton with local/regional stakeholders
- Identify processes for professional registration validation and work experience with local/regional/national stakeholders

3.3.5 Language, Culture and Social Connections

- Ascertain interpreting services and capacity (Housing, Health, Education and Employment) and implement translation policy
- Identify local and regional community/religious/black minority ethnic organisations to support integration and access to services
- Develop communications strategy for local host community to facilitate social connections and support cohesion
- Ensure individual integration plans are developed for Syrian Resettlement Refugees to facilitate social connections with host community, groups and services

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme does not relate to a Council policy but is part of the UK response to a global humanitarian crisis.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Local authorities will receive 12 months of a refugee's resettlement costs through Central Government for orientation support and education costs for the first year from arrival (providing £8,520 per person in year 1), with reducing support in years 2-5. Additional funding may be available for local authorities to support refugees beyond their first year in the UK. Clinical Commissioning Groups will receive funding for registration with primary care and dentists (£600 per person) and secondary care costs (£2,000 per person). Additional or exceptional, healthcare costs are to be considered on a case-by-case basis at a national level (Home Office, 2016). Health services commissioned by the Local Authority, for example school nursing, health visiting, sexual health services are not to receive additional funding.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

It is unknown how many Resettled Syrian Refugees will be children and young people. However, it is anticipated that Halton Borough Council services for children and young people including Early Years, Education, Health Visiting, School Nursing, etc will be utilised.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

It is not known what the employment and skills background of Resettled Syrian

Refugees will be. However, it is anticipated that there will be a need for courses in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and professional revalidation.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Discussions with Halton CCG are already taking place through the Multi-Agency Forum. Liverpool City Region has formed a Health Group with Public Health in Local Authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups, NHS England and Public Health England. It will be necessary to ensure close co-ordination between all health providers with clear standards of practice and referral pathways. Public Health England North West has developed a Migrant Health Primary Care Checklist and will provide training to practices in November.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Resettlement of refugees has the potential to increase community tension in the Borough. Nationally this issue has been used by a number of far right extremist groups to stir up racial hatred and community tensions. Discussions with Cheshire Police are already taking place through the Multi-Agency Forum. Housing allocations will be undertaken with the Police. It will be necessary to ensure close co-ordination between agencies and a clear communications strategy.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

Based on the low numbers of Syrian Refugees to be resettled in Halton, the risk is anticipated as low.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

The Equality Act 2010 protects everyone in the UK and imposes duties on public authorities that apply to Resettled Syrian Refugees

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None