

Public Document Pack

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Director: John Williams

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09 September 2021

CABINET - TUESDAY, 14TH SEPTEMBER, 2021 SUPPLEMENTARY PACK: UASC AND SELECTIVE LICENSING

Please find enclosed, for consideration at the next meeting of the Cabinet taking place on Tuesday, 14th September, 2021, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No	Item
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8	<u>Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children</u>
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Report of Executive Director (Children and Public Health) attached

9	<u>Selective Licensing</u>
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Report of Executive Director (Growth and Housing) attached

Robert Harris
Principal Democratic Services Officer

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director,
to

Cabinet

on

14th September 2021

Report prepared by: Steve Cornwall / Laurence Doe

Agenda
Item No.

8

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s):

Cabinet Member: Councillor

Part 1 (Public Agenda Item) / Part 2 (Confidential Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the current crisis in Kent and recommend that Cabinet agrees to accept 0.07% (27) of the child population in Southend as Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). This is in line with other local authorities and practice in Southend since 2016.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To formally agree for Southend to take 0.07% (27) UASC of the child population.
- 2.2 Southend to take two UASC per month until we reach 0.07% (27) because of the high numbers of UASC numbers coming in through Kent.
- 2.2 To agree a 1 year temporary funding increase upfront of £122,000 to fund an additional Social Worker post and 2 Personal Assistants to work with the expected increase of UASC children, noting that where additional income will be received for the additional UASC placements, if placement costs can be sustained within the additional income a proportion of this cost will be mitigated.
- 2.2 To note the funding pressures in relation to support and placement cost of UASC and that this position will continue to be closely monitored and reviewed.

3. Background

- 3.1 Previous decisions include on 10th November 2015 Cabinet considered a notice of motion about refugees arriving in Europe referred from Council on 22nd October 2015. On 5th January 2016 Cabinet considered a further notice of motion referred from Council on 10th December 2015 about refugees (The minute refers to the Council reviewing its ability to receive more refugees in the light of further information). Also see report to Cabinet on 19th June 2018 and the corresponding minutes of Cabinet (54) and People Scrutiny Committee on 10th July 2018 (127) re

Syrian refugees (This provided authority for a programme to bring an additional 30 individuals to Southend by 2020) (See Appendices 1,2,3)

- 3.2 The Secretary of State has written to all local authorities requesting support to welcome Afghan Locally Employed Staff who have worked for the United Kingdom and risked their lives alongside British forces in Afghanistan over the past twenty years, and are now relocating to the UK with their families (See Appendix 4)
- 3.3 There is a difficult and ongoing situation in Kent regarding the arrival of migrants. Numbers of migrants have been increasing in record levels over the past few months. This has led to unprecedented numbers of vulnerable young people needing care as UASC. This situation has now created an urgent situation in Kent such that they are no longer able to accept any new children into their care since 17th August 2020 and are being dealt with by the Kent Intake Team (at the port). As a result, the Home Office renewed its request for placement pledges and to consider any further support Southend might be able to offer for transfers from the Southeast (See Appendix 5)
- 3.4 Southend is part of the Eastern Region National Transfer Scheme (NTS) where we are on a regional rota to receive UASC who spontaneously arrive in the Eastern Region. In Southend, we have not had a spontaneous arrival for the past 18 months and have only been asked to take two UASC as the numbers of young people arriving in the Eastern Region has significantly dropped.
- 3.5 Since 2016 Southend has agreed to receive a maximum of 0.07% of the child population in Southend (27 children) as UASC. This percentage is based on the NTS principle that no local authority should be asked to look after more UASC than 0.07% of its total child population. While the 0.07% is not a target, it is used to indicate when a local authority has reached the point where they would not be expected to receive any more UASC. Only Thurrock is at full capacity (0.07%) in the Eastern Region.
- 3.6 We rarely reach 27 UASC, as the vast majority of UASC who come to Southend are 16 or 17 years old and so turn 18 within 12 - 18 months of their arrival. For example, six months ago we were at 51% (13) of the 0.07% and due to eight UASC turning 18 we are now at 18% (5). This means the UASC care leaver population (over 18s) will continue to grow, and we currently have 36 over 18 placements.

4 Other Options

- 4.1 To not offer support to colleagues in Kent and refuse to participate in the national voluntary National Transfer scheme (NTS) - we do not recommend this as we would be neglecting a national responsibility to support vulnerable young people that needs to be shared across all areas. If the voluntary NTS is not successful, then central government may mandate the scheme.
- 4.2 Participate in the voluntary National Transfer Scheme – this option is likely to overtake the offer of support, given the expected numbers awaiting transfer and the fact that there is capacity in Southend and the Eastern Region.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 Southend has a responsibility to support these vulnerable young people and assist our colleagues. Due to the pandemic and that Southend is at the end of the line, we have not received any UASC from the NTS which has resulted in a reduction of our UASC numbers. This means there is some capacity in the system to accommodate taking 20+ UASC.
- 5.2 To be able to manage this influx of UASC as well as supporting them potentially up to the age of 25, will require additional resources by way of a social worker and Personal Advisors (x2)

36. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

Safe and well

To support mixed communities and personal independence. Young people in all parts of the borough always feel safe and secure, remaining well enough to enjoy fulfilling lives, throughout their lives ensuring that everyone has a home that meets their needs, and we are all effective at protecting and improving the quality of life for the most vulnerable in our community

6.2 Financial Implications

The Home Office provides additional funds to support UASC but it does not meet the full cost of local support. The Home Office currently provides funding of £114 per day per child on under 18 placements for local authorities who are under 0.07% of total child population, or £143 per day per child for local authorities above 0.07% of total child population. If we were to take an UASC from a local authority who is already at 0.07% under the National Transfer Scheme, the higher rate of £143 per day will also be transferred, regardless of the receiving local authorities UASC numbers. The Home Office automatically ceases payment of this the day before the UASC turns 18. UASC care leavers receive £270 per person per week equivalent £38.57 per day.

- 6.3 Even with the increased funds from government to support UASC, we anticipate that there will still remain an overspend which is due to the reduction in home office funding once the UASC becomes 18 but also current placements cost to support which is above home office funding. The current overspend forecast funding pressure on the Council for UASC placements is estimated at the region of £180k after consideration of the already approved Council's own budget of £91k. The current average cost of an under 18 UASC placement and support cost is approx. £906 per week, with home office funding of £798 per week (equivalent £114 per day) leaves a remaining average direct cost to the Council of £108 per week or equivalent approx. £5,600 per annum per child for the current 5 children. The current average cost of an over 18 UASC placement and support cost is £405 per week, with home office funding of £270 per week leaves a remaining direct cost to the Council of £135 per week or equivalent approx. £7,000 per annum per young person for the current 36 young people. We are looking towards mitigating this impact by working with the Home Office to speed up the process of determining the UASC settled status or not, so they have access to wider public funds once they turn 18, such as housing benefit. The concern is that until the young people are given 'leave to remain' status they cannot access public funds and the Local Authority continues to provide financial support. Although the process has been speeded up, due to remote interviews, it can still take months. If the application is

unsuccessful, the UASC must be supported until they are deported which takes on average between 2 – 3 years. We currently have 2 UASC in this process, so we don't receive any home office funding at this time.

6.4 We are developing plans to improve options for care leavers and are developing a community offer to help reduce some pressure on Personal Advisors and social workers. The home office monies received for UASC over 18s has recently been increased but still remains a much lower rate for UASC under 18.

6.5 A temporary funding request is being made for the additional staffing resources required to support an increase in under 18 UASC,. The annual cost for a SW Level 8 is £46k and 2 x PA's level 7 at £38k each is £76k. Total funding is £122k per year which includes on costs. It is hoped that this will be a time limited resource to deal with the immediate issues and challenges at hand and we will review after the first year, and expected the additional income received will part mitigate this additional cost.

6.6 It should be noted that there are some other costs in addition to accommodation and direct financial support e.g., meeting the young people's educational, health and social needs.

6.7 Legal Implications

The Children & Social Work Act 2017 introduced a new duty on local authorities, to provide Personal Adviser (PA) support to all care leavers up to age 25, if they want this support. Under previous legislation, local authorities were required to only provide care leavers with support from a PA until they reach age 21, with that support continuing up to age 25 if a care leaver was engaged in education or training. However, this support was not available to care leavers aged over 21 who were not in education, training, or employment. Given that it is a lot more challenging for young people to access services as an adult, increasingly young people are returning over the age of 21 to access this support.

6.8 People Implications

Currently, the average caseload for the social workers is 12.8. However, at this time of year we always have several Looked After Children (LAC), turning 16 and therefore transferred to the 16+ team. At present there are 30+ LAC in the process of transfer which will increase the average caseload to 18.8. To accommodate the expected influx of UASC will push the average social work caseload over 23.

6.9 Once the LAC turn 18 and become care leavers, they are transferred to Personal Advisor (PA) who will support them potentially up to the age of 25. We are now seeing evidence of steady influx care leavers over the age of 21 requesting services. At present the current average caseload for the PAs (Personal Advisor) is 26. It is anticipated that their caseloads are likely to increase to 35+. To be able to manage this influx of UASC as well as supporting them potentially up to the age of 25, will require additional resources by way of a social worker and Personal Advisors (x2).

6.10 Property Implications

While we do not have capacity for the UASC aged 16-17 in foster placements, there is some capacity (10% vacancy) in semi-independent placements which is often the most suitable option for UASC. Southend-on-Sea Borough Council has an established a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for placing young Care Leavers

into supported accommodation. As these placements are unregulated by Ofsted or CQC, the Council is undertaking a range of checks to ensure that there are no risks to our young people at the time of placement.

6.11 Through the establishment of our DPS we have a list of 'approved' providers whom we have vetted and assessed to assure ourselves of the quality of their support provision, accommodation, and their ability to support our young people to achieve their desired goals and outcomes. We have also sought assurances from these approved providers of their adherence to health and safety, quality assurance, safe recruitment and safeguarding policies and procedures.

6.12 There are also property implications as UASC turn 18 as they still require a form of supported accommodation and then as they leave this accommodation require permanent housing solutions.

6.13 Consultation
N/A

6.14 Equalities and Diversity Implications
The social work staff receive ongoing training as well as working with community groups to ensure that they are better able to meet the diverse needs of the UASC and to integrate them in the local community.

6.15 Risk Assessment
Southend acknowledges that UASC are extremely vulnerable young people who have suffered tremendous hardship from war torn countries, organised crime groups, modern slavery and child sexual exploitation and agree that we must offer support. We have a responsibility to support these vulnerable young people and assist our colleagues. Should we fail to do so there is a reputational risk with the local community, faith groups and Government.

6.16 Value for Money
Support funding for the UASC is through the Home Office, and we can only continue to try and reduce any additional costs to the Council. Once the Home Office has decided their status by processing their leave to remain applications, they can claim Universal Credit and Housing benefit which they will receive at a higher rate and this substantially reduces the cost to the Council.

6.17 Community Safety Implications
There are challenges not only integrating the UASC into the community and the culture, but also the use of a couple of semi-independent provision which has drawn some criticisms from neighbours.

6.18 Environmental Impact
None specifically

7. Background Papers

N/A

8. Appendices

Previous Cabinet Minutes – A1, A2, A3
Afghan LES Relocation Scheme Acceleration – A4
Urgent National Support to Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children – A5

Cabinet 10 Nov. 2015

Appendix 1

"We the undersigned wish to put before the Council a motion to rescind the decision of this Council to stop the printing and distribution of hard copies of Council papers."

Resolved:-

That it be noted that there are no plans to cease the general production and distribution of hard copy agendas and reports in the short term.

Reason for Decision

To respond to the Notice of Motion.

Other Options

None.

Note:- This is an Executive Function.

Eligible for call-in to Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

Executive Councillor:- Woodley

Called-in to Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

400 Notice of Motion - Help Refugees Arriving in Europe

At the meeting of Council held on 22nd October 2015, Members received the following Notice of Motion in relation to the arrival of refugees in Europe, which was proposed by Councillor J Garston and seconded by Councillor Flewitt (this had been referred to Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 8.4).

"This Council recognises the plight of the refugees caught in the Syrian crisis and that this is a real tragedy and genuine help needs to be offered.

We support George Osborne, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in looking at some of the overseas aid budget as a way of funding financial assistance to the many men, women and children affected and we request funding from the Overseas Aid Budget should this local authority be asked to offer assistance to any of the displaced men, women or children."

Resolved:-

1. This Council recognises the plight of the refugees caught in the Syrian crisis and that this is a real tragedy and genuine help needs to be offered.
2. It be noted that:
 - (i) On the 18 September the Council wrote to the East of England Strategic Migration Partnership with an initial offer to support 10 refugees, with a preference for families, pending clarification of the resettlement process and the funding.
 - (ii) On 2 October Richard Harrington, the Minister with responsibility for Syrian Refugees, confirmed that the government will provide some funding beyond the first 12 months to ensure local authorities can plan ahead. Full details of the additional funding are still to be known. Once they are, the Council will reassess the numbers of refugees it would be able to support.

(iii) The Council must ensure that whatever the final number of refugees it is able to assist, the appropriate infrastructure is in place to meet their potentially complex needs, not only in the first 12 months, but for the longer term.

(iv) Once more information is known, the Council will work alongside local partners, charities and faith groups in providing a positive response and that it has recently met with faith leaders to coordinate its response to assisting with the crisis.

Reason for Decision

To respond to the Notice of Motion.

Other Options

None.

Note:- This is an Executive Function.

Eligible for call-in to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Executive Councillor:- Gilbert

401 Notice of Motion - Hazard Perception Test

At the meeting of Council held on 22nd October 2015, Members received the following Notice of Motion in relation to the hazard perception test, which was proposed by Councillor McMahon and seconded by Councillor Callaghan (this had been referred to Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 8.4)

"We call upon Members of Southend on Sea Borough Council, to support a request to write to Her Majesty's Government with the following request, this being:

'That consideration be given to include within the 'Hazard Perception Test', which is part of the Theory Test for the UK Driving Licence, a digital simulation of the road as visually perceived by users of other types of road transport, namely motorcycles and cycles. This may highlight the perspective(s) that may be misinterpreted by car drivers without experience of using motorcycles or pedal cycles in the mixed highway environment'

This request is to assist the reduction of incidents of an untoward nature involving these types of transport, with particular regard to Southend on Sea's commitment to 'Safe Sustainable Transport' and the reduction of accidents, especially on our gateway roads into Southend, where unfortunately the combination of these types of transport, with low awareness of the others perception, does, on occasions, have untoward consequences"

Resolved:-

That it be noted that the Council is not the responsible authority in these matters, but officers be requested to write to the DVSA to advise them of Members' suggestions to amend the Hazard Perception Test

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Cabinet

Date: Tuesday, 5th January, 2016
Place: Committee Room 1 - Civic Suite

12

Appendix 2

Min 521

Noted cv

Con 25/2/16

(Min. 664)

Present: Councillor Woodley (Chair)
Councillors Gilbert (Vice-Chair), Jones, Moyies, Norman MBE, Terry and Betson

In Attendance: Councillors Assenheim, Folkard, Holland, Mulroney and Salter
R Tinlin, J K Williams, S Leftley, A Lewis, A Atherton, J Chesterton, J Ruffle, C Gamble and Keating

Start/End Time: 2.00 - 3.16 pm

518 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence at this meeting.

519 Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 November 2015

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th November 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed.

520 Declarations of Interest

(a) Councillor Assenheim – Notice of Motion, Local Connection Housing Allocation Policy - Board Member of South Essex Homes - non-pecuniary interest.

(b) Councillor Betson – Appropriation of Assets – Board Member of South Essex Homes and knows tenant of 75 Southchurch Avenue – non-pecuniary interest.

(c) Councillor Betson – Fostering Service Annual Report - Member of Fostering Panel – non-pecuniary interest.

(d) Councillor Terry – Flood Incident Report - Lives in area affected – non-pecuniary interest.

521 Notice of Motion - Refugees

NO REPORT

NOTICE OF MOTION
ATTACHED

At the meeting of Council held on 10th December 2015, Members received a notice of motion in relation to the support of refugees, which was proposed by Councillor Ware-Lane and seconded by Councillor Nevin (this had been referred to Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 8.4).

Resolved:

1. That it be noted:

(i) Conflicts in the Middle East have created the largest refugee crisis in generations.

(ii) Thousands of people have died while seeking sanctuary from the violence this year alone trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea; many of them were children.

(iii) The United Kingdom has played a leading role as one of the world's top international donors, supporting refugees in Syria and the surrounding area.

(iv) The UN estimates there are over 320,000 people though who live in urgent need of resettlement. Survivors of torture or sexual violence, the very elderly or disabled, there are people who cannot survive in UN refugee camps near in countries surrounding Syria.

(v) The UK has a long and important tradition of offering sanctuary to those who need protection. 100,000 Huguenots, 10,000 Jewish Kindertransport children spared the Nazi concentration camps, 160,000 Poles following the Second World War many of whom had served in the Battle of Britain, the Vietnamese Boat People, the 28,000 Asian Ugandans fleeing Idi Amin and the people who fled the war in Kosovo. This is our proud and decent tradition.

(vi) To play its part fully in solving this global crisis the British government must work for durable long term political solutions in the region, lead as a major international donor, and live up to its reputation as a place of sanctuary, integration and protection.

2. That this Council believes:

(i) That this crisis will be better managed if incoming refugees are accommodated around the whole country;

(ii) We can best rise to the crisis if a National Welcome and Resettlement Board bringing together local and national government, civil society and business leadership, is created to oversee efforts to resettle refugees and mobilise public support as in times past;

(iii) Long term political solutions are needed to ease the crisis, but in the meantime we must do what we can;

(iv) The UK must welcome its fair share of refugees to ease this crisis.

3. That it also be noted:

(i) On the 18 September the Council wrote to the Home Office with an offer to support Syrian refugees (10-12 *initially*), with a preference for families, pending clarification of the resettlement process and the final funding package available.

(ii) The Council will provide the following support to refugees (many of whom may have complex needs):

- Meet and greet arriving refugees from the designated regional airport;
- Arrange accommodation for the arriving refugees that meets local authority standards, which is affordable and sustainable;
- Furnish the property appropriately including essential white goods;
- Register refugees with utilities;
- Provide a welcome pack of groceries;
- Provide an allowance for each refugee while benefits claims are processed;
- Provide advice and assistance with registering refugees for mainstream benefits and services, including local schools, GPs and access to employment (utilising skills that some refugees may have);
- Put in place a 12 month support plan for each family to support their orientation into their new home/area;
- Provide access to accredited English language classes within one month of arrival; and
- Ensure interpretation services are available throughout the period of resettlement.

(iii) The Council has established a Displaced Communities Partnership Group to co-ordinate the Council's, partners, community and voluntary sector groups' response to supporting displaced communities, with an initial focus on the Syrian refugee crisis.

(vi) The increasing pressures on the Council to meet levels of demand for critical Council services, such as housing and social care, as a result of continuing reductions in Government support and the growing needs of residents and displaced families.

4. That the Council will:

- (i) review its ability to receive more refugees on receipt of full knowledge of final levels of government support and once the capacity of the support mechanisms being put in place by the Council and partners becomes clearer; and
- (ii) write to the Prime Minister to inform him of the Council's resolve to contribute to the country's overall response.

Reason for Decision

To respond to the notice of motion.

Other Options

None

Note:- This is an Executive Function

Eligible for call-in to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Executive Councillor:- Cllr Gilbert

← Not
called
in.

- 12 **Minutes of the meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 30th November 2015**
Minutes to follow.
- 13 **Minutes of the meeting of People Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 1st December 2015**
Minutes to follow.
- 14 **Minutes of the meeting of Health & Wellbeing Board held on Wednesday, 2nd December 2015**
Minutes to follow.
- 15 **Minutes of the meeting of Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 3rd December 2015**
Minutes to follow.
- 16 **Notice of Motion - Sunday Trading (Pages 61 - 62)**
Notice of Motion attached.
- 17 **Notice of Motion - Support to Refugees (Pages 63 - 64)**
Notice of Motion attached.
- 18 **Notice of Motion - Review/Change Housing Policy (Pages 65 - 66)**
- 19 **Notice of Motion - Southend Borough Patrol (Pages 67 - 68)**
Notice of Motion attached.
- 20 **Notice of Motion - Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership (TTIP) (Pages 69 - 70)**
Notice of motion attached.
- 21 **Notice of Motion - Changes in Electoral Arrangements (Pages 71 - 72)**
Notice of Motion attached.
- 22 **Opposition Business - Drop kerbs & Highway Issues**
- 23 **Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen and Changes to the Constitution**
Report of the Corporate Director for Corporate Services to follow
- 24 **Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2016/17**
Report of the Corporate Director for Corporate Services
- 24 **Changes to Committees, etc**

Motion to welcome, support and accommodate our fair share of refugees both locally and nationally

17

This Council notes that:

Conflicts in the Middle East have created the largest refugee crisis in generations.

Thousands of people have died while seeking sanctuary from the violence this year alone trying to cross the Mediterranean sea; many of them were children.

The United Kingdom has played a leading role as one of the world's top international donors, supporting refugees in Syria and the surrounding area.

The UN estimates there are over 320,000 people though who live in urgent need of resettlement. Survivors of torture or sexual violence, the very elderly or disabled, there are people who cannot survive in UN refugee camps near in countries surrounding Syria.

The UK has a long and important tradition of offering sanctuary to those who need protection. 100,000 Huguenots, 10,000 Jewish Kinder transport children spared the Nazi concentration camps, 160,000 Poles following the Second World War many of whom had served in the Battle of Britain, the Vietnamese Boat People, the 28,000 Asian Ugandans fleeing Idi Amin and the people who fled the war in Kosovo. This is our proud and decent tradition.

To play its part fully in solving this global crisis the British government must work for durable long term political solutions in the region, lead as a major international donor, and live up to its reputation as a place of sanctuary, integration and protection.

This Council believes:

- That this crisis will be better managed if incoming refugees are accommodated around the whole country;
- We can best rise to the crisis if a National Welcome and Resettlement Board bringing together local and national government, civil society and business leadership, is created to oversee efforts to resettle refugees and mobilise public support as in times past;
- Long term political solutions are needed to ease the crisis, but in the mean time we must do what we can;
- The UK must welcome its fair share of refugees to ease this crisis.

This Council resolves to:

- Formally express an interest in both the VPR and Gateway programmes to the Home Office, requesting that 100 refugees be resettled here;
- Write to local housing associations to encourage them to make properties available to resettle refugees;
- To commit to ensuring that refugees are welcomed in this area and help facilitate this process by coordinating local service provision and coordinating the immense public will to help;
- Write to the Prime Minister to assure him that the country stands ready and willing to help at this time of crisis.

Proposed: Cllr Julian Ware-Lane **Seconded:** Cllr Cheryl Nevin

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127 Research, findings and recommendations on current and future provision of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme

The Committee considered Minute 54 of the meeting of Cabinet held on 19th June 2018, which had been called in to Scrutiny, together with a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) proposing the extension of the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement (SVPR) Programme to enable more families to settle in Southend-on-Sea.

Resolved:-

That the following decisions of Cabinet be noted:-

"1. That the progress on the current SVPR Programme in Southend-on-Sea, as set out in Section 3 of the submitted report, be noted.

2. That the Programme be extended, in order that more families can settle in Southend-on-Sea, comprising an additional 30 individuals by 2020.

3. That the Director of Adult Services and Housing, be authorised to:

- Reach agreement with the EELGA, Home Office and other relevant bodies in order to bring 30 additional individuals to Southend, reporting on progress at the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet at regular intervals;
- Reach agreement with local partners in order to identify the local resource to welcome future families;
- Research and commission effective ways of delivering support services in order to achieve economies of scale."

Note: This is an Executive Function
Cabinet Member: Cllr Salter

128 Annual Public Health Report

The Committee considered Minute 56 of the meeting of Cabinet held on 19th June 2018, which had been called in to Scrutiny, together with a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) presenting the 2017 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health.

Resolved:-

That the Annual Report be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration, for the following reason – to look at the impact of unemployment on mental health.

Note: This is an Executive Function
Cabinet Member: Cllr Salter

54 Research, findings and recommendations on current and future provision of the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) proposing the extension of the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement (SVPR) Programme to enable more families to settle in Southend-on-Sea.

Resolved:

1. That the progress on the current SVPR Programme in Southend-on-Sea, as set out in Section 3 of the submitted report, be noted.
2. That the Programme be extended, in order that more families can settle in Southend-on-Sea, comprising an additional 30 individuals by 2020.
3. That the Director of Adult Services and Housing, be authorised to:
 - Reach agreement with the EELGA, Home Office and other relevant bodies in order to bring 30 additional individuals to Southend, reporting on progress at the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet at regular intervals;
 - Reach agreement with local partners in order to identify the local resource to welcome future families;
 - Research and commission effective ways of delivering support services in order to achieve economies of scale.

Reason for Decision:

This is a key national issue that needs to be addressed by the Council

Other Options:

That no commitment is given to settle further families within the Borough.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Called-in to: People Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Salter

55 Consultation on St Mary's Prittlewell CofE Primary School Permanent Expansion following a period of Temporary Expansion

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) seeking agreement to go out to formal consultation to change the current temporary expansion of pupil admission numbers at St Mary's Prittlewell CofE Primary School to a permanent arrangement.

Resolved:

That a formal consultation process to gauge stakeholder and public opinion on making the current temporary expansion at St Mary's Prittlewell CofE Primary School permanent by setting their admission number at 90 per year group, be approved.

Reasons for Decision.

To consult with stakeholders and obtain public opinion on making the temporary expansion permanent at St Mary's Prittlewell CofE Primary School

Other Options.

The school could return to an admission number of 60 or increase to a higher admission number of 120. The latter option would require capital investment to increase the school's accommodation.

Note. This is an Executive Function
Eligible for call-in to. People Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member. Cllr Boyd

56 Annual Public Health Report

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) presenting the 2017 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health

Resolved

That the content and recommendations of the 2017 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health, be noted

Reasons for Decision.

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 requires Directors of Public Health to prepare an annual report on the health of the local population

Other Options

None.

Note: This is an Executive Function
Called-in to: People Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member: Cllr Salter

57 Annual Treasury Management Report 2017/18

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive detailing the treasury activity for the period from April 2017 to March 2018 and reviewed performance against the Prudential Indicators for 2017/18

Recommended.

1. That the Annual Treasury Management Report for 2017/18 and the outturn Prudential Indicators for 2017/18, be approved.

2. That it be noted that the financing of 2017/18 capital expenditure of £60.996m has been funded in accordance with the schedule set out in Table 1 of section 4 of the submitted report

Public Document Pack

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Department of the Chief Executive

John Williams - Director of Democratic & Legal Services

Our ref

Telephone 01702 215000

Your ref

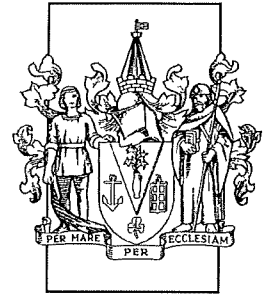
Fax 01702 215994

Date

E-mail committeesection@southend.gov.uk

Contact Name

DX 2812 Southend



Dear Councillor

CABINET - TUESDAY, 19TH JUNE, 2018

Please find enclosed, for consideration at the meeting of the Cabinet taking place on Tuesday, 19th June, 2018, the following report that was unavailable when the agenda was printed

Agenda No Item

- | | |
|----|--|
| 15 | Research, findings and recommendations on current and future provision of the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme (Pages 1 - 8) |
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Yours faithfully

Tim Row
Principal Democratic Services Officer

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Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Deputy Chief Executive (People)

to

Cabinet

on

19th June 2018

Report prepared by: Olivia Brown, Programme Coordination
Officer

Agenda
Item No.

15

Research, findings and recommendations on current and future provision of the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme (SVPR)

**People Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member: Councillor Lesley Salter
A Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1 1 To inform Cabinet of current progress and to recommend that Cabinet endorses the extension of the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement (SVPR) Programme by the Council for more families to settle in Southend

2. Recommendations

- 2 1 To note progress on the current SVPR Programme in Southend as outlined in Section 3 below
- 2 2 That the Programme is extended in order that more families can settle in Southend, comprising an additional 30 individuals by 2020
- 2.3 That the Director of Adult Services and Housing, is authorised to
- Reach agreement with the EELGA, Home Office and other relevant bodies in order to bring 30 additional individuals to Southend, reporting on progress at CMT and Cabinet at regular intervals
 - Reach agreement with local partners in order to identify the local resource to welcome future families
 - Research and commission effective ways of delivering support services in order to achieve economies of scale

3. Background

- 3 1 On 7th September 2015, the then Prime Minister, David Cameron, made a commitment for 20,000 Syrians in need of protection to be resettled in the UK under the SVPR Programme. It is run in partnership with the UNHCR, the Home Office and DCLG. All local authorities were asked to ascertain if families could be settled within their boundaries and to pledge to support the scheme. As a

result, on 18th September 2015, the Council wrote to the Home Office pledging to support families in Southend under the scheme. A Motion to Council on 5th January 2016 then confirmed Southend's commitment to settle 10-12 individuals. It was noted that the practicalities of supporting the Programme should be reviewed before any further commitment was made.

- 3.2 The first family, comprising 3 individuals arrived in July 2016, the second comprising 6 individuals arrived in September 2016. Appropriate housing was sought in the private rented sector in advance of arrival, and school places for children were identified. Frontline casework support, a criterion for at least the first 12 months of resettlement, was identified through the existing Peabody (formerly Family Mosaic) floating support contract. Regarding accommodation, this was sourced through community support, whereby church groups agreed lower rents for the two families in their properties based upon LHA rates. In sourcing future housing for more families we would take a similar approach and seek to build on these relationships that we have developed. All expenditure for the Programme, excepting a moderate amount of officer time, is met through Home Office funding.
- 3.3 Community involvement has been high, with befriending and welcome events providing a basis for continued relationships between the families and members of the community, and over 500 volunteer hours dedicated to supporting the families on and after arrival. If taken at the National Living Wage this equates to at least £3,750 in contributed hours. It should be noted that without involvement from these groups and especially church groups we would not have been able to bring any families to Southend. In addition, and most importantly, the families have expressed their gratitude in being resettled in Southend.
- 3.4 Significant benefits have been realised through this Programme, including improved health, integration of the children into local education environments and some strong improvement in adult English language skills. However challenges in successfully delivering the Programme remain, and there is a need to achieve economies of scale. Our current difficulty in providing 8 hours of good quality ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) locally and a sustainable casework mechanism to meet the often challenging needs of the families would be resolved by more families arriving and their support funding being pooled to commission services. Furthermore, the on-going support of the Programme will better see through the existing commitment we have made to the two families already settled.
- 3.5 As outlined above, there have been challenging aspects in delivering the SVPR Programme in Southend over the last year. However, despite these challenges, both families have told the SBC lead officer that they are very grateful for the opportunity to live in Southend and for the support they receive from all involved. There are many really positive stories to tell, both at the individual and family level. More broadly this Programme has propelled SBC to work cohesively with community organisations, faith communities and commissioned services towards even greater community cohesion.
- 3.6 It could also be argued that the relatively small commitment we have been able to make so far could be a factor in why integration has, in some ways, proved slow and challenging. Should more Syrian families be brought to the Borough in

the future, it is not unreasonable to expect that the families might thrive through mutual support as they share experiences and knowledge with one another – not so as to create an isolated Syrian community in Southend but so that cultural challenges to integration can be overcome with the support of fellow refugees

- 3 7 That said, the Programme is perhaps more costly in financial terms than had been anticipated, and whilst full data is not yet available to quantify this, notably in respect of health requirements of families, this will always need to be considered alongside the equally unquantifiable benefits that living in Southend brings to these two families. In other areas in the Eastern region where larger numbers of refugees have been welcomed, economies of scale have been achieved by pooling funding in order to plug any delivery gaps e.g. commissioning bespoke, accessible ESOL provision and casework support. If we resettle more families locally, we will be able to commission a more intensive range of support services with the grants available in order to achieve such economies of scale. Any such commissioned services would be opened up to benefit other communities and utilise the Asset Based Community Development approach that is being embedded in Southend. This would also allow us to have more flexibility in how the families are supported when faced with inevitable financial challenges such as the benefit cap and Universal Credit. Support for partners to ensure that the Programme does not impact them financially e.g. the CCG, would also be recognised.
- 3 8 The proposal to extend the Council's current involvement in the SVPR Programme is made on the basis of the continuing need for a humanitarian response to the ongoing crisis in Syria. The government continues to pursue its commitments under the SVPR Programme and to seek the support of local authorities in this regard. Should the Council extend its offer to an additional 30 individuals it would receive significant additional future funding in order to meet the demands of the Programme. At current levels of government investment this is understood to be £615k over the next 5 years. With the additional investment it is believed that the Programme in Southend would be more sustainable and have greater capacity to meet the support and integration needs of the individuals that relocate here. It is therefore proposed that the Director of Adult Services and Housing is authorised to reach agreement with government bodies as per the above Recommendation 3 with a view to extending the Programme locally.

4. Other Options

- 4 1 That no commitment is given to settle further families within the Borough

5. Reasons for Recommendations

- 5 1 This is a key national issue that Council needs to address.

6. Corporate Implications

6 1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

Safe

- Look after and safeguard our children and vulnerable adults

Healthy

- Work with the public and private rented sectors to provide good quality housing
- Improve the life chances of our residents, especially our vulnerable children and adults, by working to reduce inequalities and social deprivation across our communities

Prosperous

- Ensure residents have access to high quality education to enable them to be lifelong learners and have fulfilling employment

Excellent

- Work with and listen to our communities and partners to achieve better outcomes for all

6 2 Financial Implications

The budget for this programme is given to the local authority from Home Office funding, therefore the running of the programme is cost neutral to the council

Breakdown of funding for families over 5 years

Current provision:

Based on all clients for year 1		
July 2016	September 2016	Total
£	£	£
25,560	51,120	76,680

Agreed numbers	Based on all clients' for years 2-5				
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total LA payment
	£	£	£	£	£
Arrived clients 9	45,000	33,300	20,700	9,000	108,000

Projection 1: 30 individuals over 2 financial years

Agreed numbers	Based on all clients for year 1		
	2017/18	2018/19	Total
	£	£	£
Arriving clients 3 groups of 10 (1 in 17/18, 2 in 18/19)	85,200	170,400	255,600

Agreed numbers	Based on all clients for years 2-5						
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total LA payment
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Arriving clients 10	-	50,000	37,000	23,000	10,000	-	120,000
Arriving clients 20	-	-	100,000	74,000	46,000	20,000	240,000
Total clients:30	-	50,000	137,000	97,000	56,000	20,000	360,000

Projection 2: 50 individuals over 3 financial years

Agreed numbers	Based on all clients for year 1			
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	Total
	£	£	£	£
Arriving clients 5 groups of 10 (1 in 17/18, 3 in 18/19, 1 in 19/10)	85,200	255,600	85,200	426,000

Agreed numbers	Based on all clients for years 2-5							
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/2023	2023/2024	Total LA payment
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Arriving clients 10	-	50,000	37,000	23,000	10,000	-	-	120,000
Arriving clients 30	-	-	150,000	111,000	69,000	30,000	-	360,000
Arriving clients 10	-	-	-	50,000	37,000	23,000	10,000	120,000
Total clients 50		50,000	187,000	184,000	116,000	53,000	10,000	600,000

Additional Funds made available for Year 1

Education	£2,250 - £4,500 per child depending on age
ESOL	£850 per adult
CCG Per Capita claim	£2,500
Exceptional cases fund is available a Home Office discretion	

Exceptional costs are also available to the CCG

The main costs that our current budget covers are interpreter costs (£14,821 49 to date), payments to local schools to aid the integration of children (£9,000) and property set up/ maintenance costs prior to the family's arrival (£7,011 26) A DFG of approximately £5,000 is being approved in order to adapt one property for the needs of

a disabled child The Exceptional Cases fund will be accessible in order to pay for the 'making good' costs in the future to return the property to its original state

The cost to staff time is estimated at £8,000 a year (1 level 7 post, 1 day a week)

As can be seen from the tables above, financial support tapers after year one Due to funding limitations with our current provision, we were unable to procure large scale, targeted support services e.g bespoke ESOL provision, as this would not be sustainable with just 2 families and no future arrivals planned to bring in more Year 1 funding. Therefore we are currently underspent This underspend can only be used on families in Year 1 of the programme therefore we will be unable to spend it unless more families arrive By taking in more families, we will have a larger budget to pool and therefore be able to commission more targeted support services as well as support the programme in future years

6.3 Legal Implications

n/a

6.4 People Implications

Commitment to on-going internal staff resource allocation

6.5 Property Implications

The future sustainability of the programme will require sourcing more appropriate properties from the private rented sector, ideally able to support complex family make ups and accepting of housing benefit claimants

6.6 Consultation

n/a

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

In learning how to do this well as an authority and local partnership, we will be able to support other refugee and asylum seeking communities now and in the future

6.8 Risk Assessment

A reputational risk exists for SBC with community and faith groups, and the larger SVPR Programme management, if we are not meeting the targets that we should be There is a risk that with only two families we reduce the capacity for integration of the families and increase isolation

6.9 Value for Money

Funding for the programme is through the Home Office, therefore there is no cost to the Council in the direct running of the programme The families are in receipt of benefits, but the aim of the programme is to support future independence. This funding is an investment into setting up the families to live independently and give back to the

community in the future The community and social value being realised as a result of resettling families in Southend is vast due to volunteer engagement

6 10 Community Safety Implications

n/a

6 11 Environmental Impact

n/a

7. Background Papers

Background document available

8. Appendices

None

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Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



Ministry
of Defence



Home Office

To all Council Leaders and Chief Executives in England, Scotland, and Wales

30 July 2021

AFGHAN LES RELOCATION SCHEME ACCELERATION

We last wrote to you on the 3rd June regarding the Government's Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP), requesting your support to welcome Afghan Locally Employed Staff (LES) – who have worked for the UK and risked their lives alongside British forces in Afghanistan over the past twenty years, and are now relocating to the UK with their families.

This follows NATO's decision to withdraw military forces from Afghanistan. The ARAP scheme acknowledges and reflects that the situation in Afghanistan has changed, and with it the potential risk to the local staff who have worked for the UK Government. As a result, we are now working at pace to relocate around 3,000 people (or approximately 600 families) before September. There are further LES who will be eligible under the scheme which will remain open. Four flights have already arrived, bringing 137 families to the United Kingdom where they are being warmly welcomed.

Since we wrote to you last, we have been delighted to see many local authorities come forward with generous offers of support for our Afghan friends and their families. We are grateful for this positive response and would like to thank all councils who have provided offers of support and accommodation.

But we write to you now with an urgent request for more offers of support.

The increasing numbers of flights over the summer means that we urgently need more generous offers from local authorities to resettle those who have served our country so bravely in Afghanistan. All offers are appreciated, and we especially require offers of support from areas who can provide or source larger homes of four bedrooms or more, to suit the needs of those Afghan LES arriving in large family groups.

As outlined in our last letter, the Home Office is providing a funding package to resource local authorities who come forward with offers to resettle Afghan LES and their families, enabling delivery of integration support for families and further support on employment, welfare benefits, and access to health, education and other local services. This financial support for all participating local authorities is being enhanced through additional central government integration support, including:

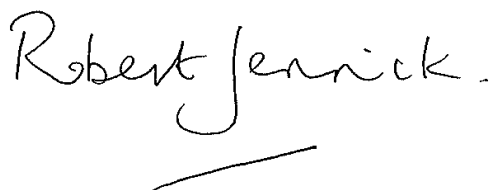
- An online welcome pack and GOV.UK landing page for all LES new arrivals - www.gov.uk/guidance/welcome-a-guide-for-arrivals-to-the-uk-from-afghanistan-on-the-locally-employed-staff-relocation-scheme
- Regular online local engagement networks for participating local authorities, to share information and resources
- Access to central government departments, to share information and work through any emerging policy or other issues that may arise

As part of the process of engaging with local authorities to shape this offer, we have heard the feedback of expert local partners from councils across the UK. As a result, we are pleased to announce that, with HMT support, integration funding has now been extended to 12 months, meaning an increase to £10,500 per person welcomed by a local authority. Furthermore, we can provide additional funding (such as for rent, travel, or other incurred costs) to cover any potential short-term period before access to benefits and services becomes available to the new arrivals.

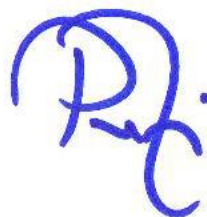
We are also making extra funding available to local authorities for the provision of English language training for adults. And we have agreed to simplify the payment structure to reduce the administrative burden on local authorities who choose to welcome the new Afghan arrivals. We hope these updates will be useful and may help you to come forward with an offer of support soon.

We will continue to listen to the feedback you provide, and our cross-Government teams will continue to engage with local authorities to answer any questions you may have. We will continue to hold frequent conversations with Strategic Migration Partnerships, and Local Authority Afghan LES Network meetings – regular sessions organised by MHCLG for local authorities from across the whole of the UK, attended by partners from across Government – both to generate new welcome and accommodation offers, but to also support and learn from those places who have agreed to host Afghan LES and their families.

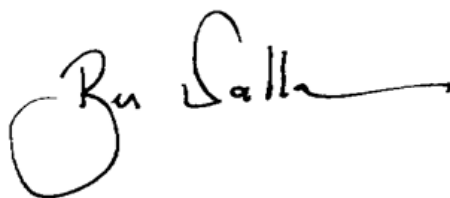
We look forward to hearing from even more local partners from across the UK very soon, with additional offers of support to welcome all those who need our help and assistance.



RT HON ROBERT JENRICK MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HOUSING,
COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT



RT HON PRITI PATEL MP
HOME SECRETARY



RT HON BEN WALLACE MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

Emma Haddad
Director General, Asylum
and Protection
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Indra Morris,
Director General, Social Care,
Mobility and Disadvantage
Department for Education,
Sanctuary Buildings,
Great Smith Street

Monday 7 June 2021

Dear colleagues,

URGENT NATIONAL SUPPORT TO UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM-SEEKING CHILDREN

Firstly, a thank you to all those who are working tirelessly to ensure that the approximately 3,000 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) enter the United Kingdom are cared for. However, some local authorities are receiving a disproportionate number of UASC in their areas and, as we enter the summer months, we are already seeing increasing pressures from growing numbers of UASC arriving on small boats on the south coast. There is a lot of ongoing work to reduce these crossings that put lives at risk. In the meantime, the Home Office and Department for Education are doing all that we can to support those local authorities such as Kent and Croydon that receive large numbers of new arrivals and ensure that these young people are properly cared for. We are therefore writing to you to ask that you consider if there is more that your local authority can do to help.

As you will know the National Transfer Scheme for UASC has not worked as effectively as we had envisaged. Following a consultation last year our two departments are working together to establish a reformed National Transfer Scheme as soon as possible. The transformation package will address many of the barriers identified through the consultation and we hope will lead to a more equitable and sustainable solution. We hope an announcement on that will be made within the next few weeks.

Over the last year many local authorities have already responded to calls for support with care for UASC with more than 600 UASC having transferred to 112 different authorities across the UK. We know too, that many local authorities continue to support high numbers of unaccompanied children, both those who arrive spontaneously and those they have taken through the National Transfer Scheme. We also appreciate that many authorities provide support for the wider asylum population, refugees being resettled to the UK and are also now considering what support they can offer for Afghans being transferred to the UK. We are very grateful for this.

While the reformed National Transfer Scheme is being finalised and put in place, we need to do what we can to help alleviate current pressures and are therefore asking whether you are able to provide support to these young people now. It only needs each authority across the UK to assume

statutory responsibility for a small number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children over the course of a year. If every local authority could commit to assuming statutory responsibility for a small number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children with immediate effect, then we would very rapidly secure a more equitable distribution of UASC across the UK.

Last week we visited one of the reception centres in Kent housing many young people who have arrived recently. We had the privilege of spending some time talking to them and know that whilst working with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children can be challenging it can also be extremely rewarding. We know that there is a great deal of expertise among local authorities in how to support these young people. We are happy to help make connections between local authorities if those less familiar with this work feel they would benefit from an opportunity to learn from the considerable experience of others.

We urgently need a pipeline of offers of placements and, as above, the number we need from each local authority is incredibly small. We can also confirm that any local authority assuming responsibility for a transferring UASC as part of this request will receive funding at the higher rate of £143 per young person per night. Separately around 200 available placements have been identified across the UK, and our teams would be happy to discuss with you whether and how any of those places might be secured for UASC arrivals.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch should you find it helpful to have further information or would welcome a discussion with one of our team. Please contact UASCNationalTransferTeam@homeoffice.gov.uk with details of what you are able to provide either immediately or over the coming weeks.

Finally, we will, of course, share information on reforms to the National Transfer Scheme at the earliest opportunity and look forward to working with you to ensure that this provides a sustainable way of supporting UASC in the longer-term.

With very many thanks for your help and support.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Haddad
Director General, Asylum and Protection



Indra Morris
Director General, Social Care, Mobility
and Disadvantage

10 June 2021

To: Directors of Children's Services, Chief Executives and Lead Member in all
Local Authorities (England only)

Dear all,

The new National Transfer Scheme (NTS)

We are pleased to write to you about the launch of the new NTS. We would like to express our gratitude for the invaluable support that so many local authorities are providing to vulnerable young asylum seekers, including to those local authorities that have provided over 600 placements to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) arriving on the south coast since June 2020. We recognise that delivering this support can be challenging but can also be extremely rewarding and that this national responsibility needs to be shared across all areas of the United Kingdom.

As you will be aware, the NTS was established in 2016 to provide a mechanism for the statutory responsibility for a UASC to be transferred between an entry local authority and another local authority in the UK, ensuring UASC get the crucial care placements that they need whilst facilitating a more equitable distribution of responsibility for UASC across the UK, alleviating pressures felt by entry authorities, and those local authorities caring for significant numbers of UASC and former UASC.

Since 2018 the NTS has experienced significant challenges. This led to a joint Home Office and Department for Education consultation with local authorities in August 2020. At the centre of the consultation was a proposal for a new rota system, which had been developed in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA), Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), Devolved Administrations and Strategic Migration Partnerships (SMPs), building on the success of regional rotas in London and the East of England.

We are grateful for the responses to the consultation, we received over 200 formal responses including 60 specifically capturing the views and experiences of young people, as well as further responses from several Non-Governmental Organisations. You will recall that a summary of the consultation responses was attached to our letter of 23 December 2020.

Today we are pleased to announce a package of measures that we believe will address the key barriers that local authorities raised during the consultation.

The key elements of the package are:

- A new voluntary national rota system reflecting pressures relating to children's services and the supported asylum population.
- An uplift to the Home Office funding rates for former UASC care leavers, from £240 per person per week to £270 representing a 12.5% uplift.
- The higher UASC daily rate of £143 for authorities with larger UASC numbers will now also 'follow the child'. That is, if a UASC is transferred via the NTS from a higher rate receiving local authority the new local authority will also receive the higher rate for that child regardless of their total UASC numbers.
- A £3m exceptions costs fund that will be made available to support local authorities experiencing exceptional costs.
- A review of the funding provided to local authorities in relation to Personal Advisor support for care leavers up to age 25.
- Support for local authorities with age assessments; and
- Operating model improvements to improve the effective operation of the new scheme.

More detailed information on the broader package is attached at Annex A.

We know that some local authorities wanted there to be a mandatory NTS, however, there was no clear consensus emerging from the consultation on this issue and we have concluded that an enhanced voluntary scheme is the right way forward at this time, although the Home Secretary will retain the existing statutory power in Section 72 of the Immigration Act 2016.

Next steps

The new national rota represents a positive and progressive change from previous arrangements, and we acknowledge that authorities and regions will need some time to develop their own local arrangements. Our officials have already started joint work with Strategic Migration Partnerships (SMPs) and representatives in regions and local authorities to prepare for the new national rota; that work will continue to support the early phases of implementation.

The new national rota will come into effect as soon as possible in July and the funding changes will be backdated to 1 April 2021. Whilst all the changes are put in place, we would be extremely grateful to local authorities for supporting the NTS through offering placements for newly arriving young people.

Over the course of the next few weeks there will be opportunities to speak directly with ourselves and our senior officials through a series of regional and national engagement events to launch the new NTS. Officials will coordinate these arrangements via SMPs, and they will be in touch regarding these plans very soon.

Finally, we look forward to continuing to work with you to achieve our shared aim of ensuring vulnerable children and young people are provided with crucial care placements and support from local authorities via the new NTS, and where all parts of the UK play their part in this important national responsibility.

Minister Philp is writing in similar terms to the Devolved Administrations.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Philp'.

Chris Philp MP
Minister for Immigration Compliance
and Justice

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vicky Ford'.

Vicky Ford MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
for Children and Families

Annex A – Detailed Information on the new NTS

National rota

The consultation responses told us that a key barrier to participation in the NTS has been the lack of certainty over the number of children local authorities will be required to support and when they will arrive.

The new national rota will give regions and local authorities greater clarity about what is expected from them under the NTS, allowing them to plan ahead for transfers. This rota will also determine a fair allocation of NTS referrals to each region, reflecting a range of pressures on local authorities. Each region will take its turn on the rota so it will be clear where responsibility lies for placing newly arrived children. It will then be for the regional Strategic Migration Partnership (SMP) UASC Co-ordinator to allocate a referral to a local authority in that region according to their own locally determined arrangements.

Responses to the NTS consultation were clear that previous modelling based on two factors alone did not fully reflect the range of pressures that local authorities are under. We have, therefore, developed an enhanced rota model that takes account of the size of each local authority, their supported asylum population and the pressures on their children's services, including from UASC and former UASC care leavers.

We have worked closely with local government partners including the Local Government Association (LGA), Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), SMPs and Devolved Administrations to determine the appropriate weighting to be applied to each factor. The resulting rota takes account of the key concerns of local authorities, while ensuring an approach that continues to act in the best interests of the child.

Full details of the rota will follow shortly.

Funding uplift

We are pleased to announce an uplift to the funding contribution provided to local authorities by the Home Office. Going forwards, in addition to those local authorities supporting the greatest proportion of UASC, all local authorities will also receive the higher rate of £143 per child per day for any UASC transferred to them through the NTS. This funding uplift will take immediate effect and will be backdated to 1 April 2021.

UASC care leavers in all local authorities will receive an uplifted rate from £240 to £270 per week. This funding uplift will also take immediate effect and will be backdated to 1 April 2021.

The Department for Education is committed to reviewing the funding it provides to local authorities to implement the duty in the Children & Social Work Act 2017, which requires them to offer Personal Adviser (PA) support to all care leavers to age 25. A survey will be issued to all local authorities in England shortly, asking them to provide details on the number of care leavers aged over 21 who are taking

up the offer of PA support; and DfE has begun to have detailed discussions with a sample of local authorities and ADCS/LGA, to complement the survey findings.

Exceptions costs funding

We recognise there are sometimes exceptional costs associated with supporting UASC. We have therefore established a £3m contingency pot of additional money which, we envisage, could be used to support local authorities facing legal costs relating to age assessment challenges to ensure these are robustly defended or where the needs of a particular child carry significant additional costs.

More details will follow soon.

Support for local authorities with age assessments

The Home Office are building a team of specialist social workers to support local authorities across the UK in a pilot scheme to conduct age assessments and provide guidance and support. This includes bringing expertise from local authorities with more experience of conducting age assessment. It is expected that this offer of support will remain in place until the National Age Assessment Board, as outlined in the [New Plan for Immigration policy statement](#), is established.

Operational improvements

A revised National Transfer Scheme Protocol will be published to reflect the new national rota and to incorporate operational improvements that have been made in response to feedback from the NTS consultation. This will include an escalation procedure that outlines the pathway to resolving any disagreements between entry authorities and receiving authorities and a more transparent data sharing package to assure local authorities that the scheme operates effectively and fairly.

Other support

We recognise the concerns, expressed through the NTS consultation, about care placement sufficiency and addressing this is a priority issue for the Government.

In addition to the £24m announced at the last Spending Review, the Department for Education will be developing plans, backed up by additional investment, to support local authorities to create more places in children's homes. Bringing new foster carers into the system and retaining the skills of experienced carers is also a priority for Government and we continue to work with local authorities and fostering services to make sure we have enough of the right foster carers in the right place at the right time for the children who need them.

We will continue to consider how we can further support local authorities to provide more care placements, including for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

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Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

**Executive Director of Growth and Housing and Executive
Director Neighbourhoods and Environment**

To

Cabinet

On

14th September 2021

Report prepared by: Faith Addy, Projects & Policy Support
Officer, Housing Development

9

Selective Licensing Implementation Report

**Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s): Policy & Resource Scrutiny
Cabinet Member: Councillor Ian Gilbert
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)**

1. Purpose of Report

To update Cabinet on the work underway to prepare for the implementation of Selective Licensing scheme within neighbourhoods in the Milton, Kursaal, Victoria and Chalkwell wards.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the financial details of the scheme as outlined in the financial implications in section 7 of this report.
2. Note the proposed discounts for the scheme including the early bird period of four months (December 2021 – March 2022) to promote early compliance as stated in paragraph 7.2.

3. Introduction & Background

- 3.1 The Housing Act 2004 gives Councils the power to introduce Selective Licensing schemes for privately rented properties in order to improve standards of management in the private rented sector (PRS) and lead to an improvement of the area.

- 3.2 The power to designate is subject to certain conditions and criteria, including the requirement to consult persons who are likely to be affected by the designation; and to consider any representations made in accordance with the consultation being met.
- 3.3 The Council has designated a Selective Licensing scheme in nine neighbourhoods within the wards of Milton, Kursaal, Victoria and Chalkwell on grounds of anti-social behaviour, poor property conditions, and high levels of both deprivation and crime. The designation will be used as a tool to tackle these issues in the proposed areas through improving the quality of the management of rented accommodation.
- 3.4 Following the decision to proceed with the introduction of Selective Licensing at full council on 18th March 2021, work has been underway to complete the next preparatory stages of the scheme ahead of the implementation date of 1st December 2021.

4 Selective Licensing Service delivery

- 4.1 To help ensure effective implementation of Selective Licensing the Council engaged expert consultants. Metastreet specialise in this area of work and have implemented and supported several licensing schemes, including in the London Borough of Havering and Slough Borough Council.
- 4.2 During our discussions with Metastreet, the project team identified a number of key operational and technical project areas which are important to help ensure the scheme achieves its objectives, including:
- Property licensing processing and management
 - Customer service, resident engagement, and communications
 - Improving property standards and reducing ASB in PRS
 - Partnership working with internal and external agencies
 - Housing enforcement and regulation

Property licensing processing and management

- 4.3 The scheme requires the Council to license up to 3,667 rented properties over a 5-year period. A majority of the applications are expected to be made later this year from the first of 1st December 2021. Therefore, a capable digital solution is required to receive, process and manage each licence in accordance with the legislation, including the collection of a 2-part fee structure.
- 4.4 Procurement of a specialist software solution to manage the Selective Licensing applications and enforcement is underway. It is anticipated that a supplier will be confirmed following the conclusion of this procurement process by w/c 13th September 2021. There has been a delay to this process, which will be outlined further in the risk section below, but internal resource and requests for additional resource are being expanded so that we ensure that we have a system for receiving applications on 1st December 2021.
- 4.5 Further project management resource to support the transition of the project into delivery and operational service has been agreed. This will ensure that the complexities of the project that span various teams and external partners can be effectively managed in this key implementation period to ensure a successful scheme is put in place.

Customer service and community engagement

- 4.6 This includes an expansion of the current Private Sector Housing function and will be resourced effectively in order to meet the demands of the new scheme. This process began with a team re-structure, the consultation of which has just concluded.
- 4.7 A communication plan has been developed to improve engagement with tenants, landlords and residents to raise awareness of the scheme. Workshops are planned with the new team to develop knowledge and skills to manage an anticipated increase in demand from tenants and landlords once the scheme is underway. New procedures are being developed to help streamline the main office-based functions.
- 4.8 The Council has also had continued discussions with SEAL in order to work together to shape the scheme and ensure the landlord community has a voice within it.

Property standards and Anti-social behaviour

- 4.9 A key objective of the scheme is to raise property standards in the sector. Selective Licensing will provide the structure for a campaign of property inspections and follow up action to ensure minimum standards are being met. This will also contribute positively to growth and sustainability of the private rented sector in the area.
- 5.0 The new Private Sector Housing function will be tasked with undertaking this inspection campaign which will run over the 5 years of the scheme. Ensuring that the team has the necessary skills and experience to undertake this work is being built into the recruitment process.
- 5.1 The scheme aims to help create stronger communities within the proposed neighbourhoods by encouraging both landlords and tenants alike to recognise their civic responsibilities and help combat anti-social behaviour (ASB). Each licence the council will issue will include enforceable conditions to manage and mitigate ASB where it arises. Partnership work with the Police and ASB teams will be important to the delivery of this work stream. Some of the recommendations from some landlords were to have lighter touch inspections for 'good' landlords so the team, in designing the processes and enforcement approach will be considering what will be the best way to encourage compliance whilst ensuring that enforcement is also carried out where it is most needed.

Partnership working with internal and external agencies

- 5.2 Successful property licensing schemes are dependent on strong partnerships with internal and external agencies, including Police, Fire, ASB teams, Planning Enforcement etc.
- 5.3 The project team is continuing engagement with all the key partner agencies. This will maximise the resources available and help deliver the best outcomes.

Housing enforcement and regulation

- 5.4 Licensing is an effective tool to tackle criminal landlords and disorderly tenants. It provides the Council with a legal platform from which to increase the effectiveness of the service in tackling poor housing conditions and management in the borough.

- 5.5 The new Private Sector Housing function will take the lead on enforcement of the scheme, including ensuring that landlords licence their property and comply with licensing conditions. The team will be required to use a range of legal tools, including statutory notices, financial penalties, orders and, where necessary, prosecutions.
- 5.6 The project team is preparing a training plan to be delivered to develop officer knowledge and experience in this area.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

Ensuring that housing within the borough meets the needs of the local residents does feed into several themes for Southend 2050 as briefly outlined below:

Safe and Well: Ensuring that public services, voluntary groups and community networks all combine to help people live long and healthy lives, carefully planned homes and new developments designed to support mixed communities and an effective, joined up enforcement to ensure that people have homes that meet their needs.

Pride & Joy: The proposals will ensure that people are proud of where they live by improving standards within the sector whilst ensuring the surrounding environment is also well maintained.

Active & Involved: Southend will continue to be a place where residents know and support their neighbours and where we all share responsibility for where we live. Selective Licensing is contributes to enhancing neighbourhoods and the environment with residents at the centre.

Opportunity & Prosperity: By improving standards in the private rented sector, residents are supported to lead happier and safer lives, thereby having fewer barriers to contributing to the local area.

- 6.2 Southend's *Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy* aims to provide 'decent high quality, affordable and secure homes for the people of Southend'. An important priority within the strategy is to improve and make best use of the existing housing stock. To help achieve this, the strategy is underpinned by a range of actions including: advice, financial assistance, enforcement, bringing long term empty homes back in use and delivering demonstratable improvements to private rented homes through the use of licence schemes.

6.3 Prioritising the supply of safe, locally affordable homes is a key priority within the *Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy*. Improving access to good quality, well managed accommodation in the private rented sector is one of its key strategic priorities and the actions proposed to deliver this include:

- New approaches to working with the private rented sector including leasing,
- Improved joint working and support for private landlords,
- Bringing empty homes back into use, reviewing the tools/software, resources, and opportunities at our disposal to do so.
- Tackling Rogue Landlords,
- Improving the condition of accommodation,
- Addressing standards of management,
- Licensing Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO),
- Selective Licensing in the private rented sector,
- Addressing financial barriers to accessing accommodation,
- Ensuring people have support to sustain tenancies,
- Exploring opportunities for developing a Local Lettings Agency.

7 Financial Implications

- 7.1 Detailed financial modelling has been carried out for the project, currently forecasting budget pressures in the later years of the scheme. The anticipated overall pressure for the 5-year programme is £330,000, with the first year achieving a surplus which will help reduce the pressures in future years.
- 7.2 The finance model assumes to achieve an 80% compliance rate, with an early bird discount of 25% to encourage landlords to come forward early. The standard fee has been modelled at £668, with the discounted fee being £500 for the first four months of the scheme. The expenditure includes staffing, ICT and legal costs.
- 7.3 The scheme will strive to be self-funding, avoiding the requirement for funding from the council's general fund. It is expected that there will be further income generated through penalties for non-compliant landlords. This income will not achieve a surplus/ saving for the council but will be ring fenced for Selective Licensing to mitigate the anticipated pressure. The forecast pressure can also be mitigated by reducing the early bird discount rate to achieve more income. However, early bird discounts tend to encourage landlords to come forward early, as has been seen in other areas that have introduced Selective Licensing. There has also been a level of initial investment which the council has funded from its existing resources, for Project management and support, in ICT and Regulatory Services.
- 7.4 As the scheme approaches the end of its 5-year term, any potential financial pressures will be reported through the budget monitoring process if enforcement income does not bridge the forecast gap between income and expenditure.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004 gives the Council the power to designate areas of Selective Licensing to help tackle concerns over high levels of anti-social behaviour or low housing demand (e.g. low value properties, high turnover of occupiers, significant vacancy). In 2015 the conditions for designation were expanded by The Selective Licensing Houses (Additional Conditions) (England) Order 2015 to include poor property conditions, high crime, high levels of deprivation and high migration. The local authority can designate an area for Selective Licensing for five years but must first demonstrate the evidence of their concerns, look at alternative approaches and consult widely. Failure to engage in meaningful consultation with those likely to be affected by a proposed designation could lead to a scheme being quashed by the courts following judicial review.
- 8.2 In 2015 revised approval arrangements were put in place such that where the proposed designation covers either 20% of the total geographic area of the authority or 20% of the total privately rented stock (based on census figures) the designation requires approval by the Secretary of State.
- 8.3 Subject to limited exemptions, a valid licence must be held by the appropriate responsible person in respect of all privately rented properties in such a designated area, typically the landlord or managing agent. The legislation permits funds raised to be used for administration of the scheme and (subject to constraints) enforcement.
- 8.4 In addition, as a public authority, the Council must take account of the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and not act in a way which is incompatible with a Convention right. Under Article 8, any interference with the right to respect for a person's private and family life and home must be proportionate and Article 14 requires that there must be no unjustified discrimination within the scope of human rights on any grounds, such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, or other status.
- 8.5 The Council must also have 'due regard' to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Section 149(1) provides that, in exercising its functions, a public authority must have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the 2010 Act
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- 8.6 Section 149(3) provides that having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
 - (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 8.7 The general approval states that the local authority must conduct a consultation of not less than 10 weeks and this requirement has been met. The local authority must ensure that they fully consider all the evidence before making a decision to ensure that they are not subject to judicial review following the making of the designation. The legal team will continue to work with the project team throughout the implementation of the scheme.
- 8.8 The Council's legal team have previously given advice and guidance as part of the project approach and continue to work with the lead officer. The following legal implications have been prepared in full consultation with Counsel. We have also looked at best practice with other Councils that have Selective Licensing schemes in place and identified the main areas of challenge to include but not limited to;
- 8.9a Grant of a licence - The authority must apply a 'fit and proper person' test to applicants for licences and may include in any licence such conditions as it considers appropriate for regulating the management, use or occupation of the house concerned. In the instance of a dispute, the applicants will have a right of appeal to the Residential Property Tribunal.
- 8.9b Fees - When fixing licence fees, the Council has taken into account all costs that will be incurred in carrying out its functions under the Selective Licensing provisions of the Housing Act 2004.

In *R v Westminster City Council ex parte Hemming and others* [2013] EWCA Civ 591, the Court of Appeal has held that the Provision of Service Regulations 2009 prevent the authority from including in licence fees the cost of enforcing the scheme.

Based on the above case, the licence fee has been split into two part to form a clear distinction between part 1 – the cost of processing the application and part 2 – to cover the cost of monitoring and compliance to the scheme.

9 People Implications

- 9.1 In order to implement the scheme, more staffing will be required in order to conduct administration, monitoring and enforcement of a Selective Licensing scheme and coordination of the relevant council services in order to implement the scheme. This has been built into the budget forecast for the 5-year terms of this project, as outlined in Section 7.
- 9.2 During the scheme designation, several officers will be required to both administer the designation, issue licences, carry out inspections, undertake enforcement activities as well as attending court for prosecutions. This will require coordinated action between several Council departments, such as Private Sector Housing team, Planning, Regulatory Services, Housing Solutions Team, Community Safety as well as the Legal team.

10 Property Implications

- 10.1 No properties directly owned by Council will be affected but there are implications for private landlords in the designation areas.
- 10.2 The Selective Licensing scheme will introduce a new local regulatory environment for the private rented sector within the designated areas. The scheme will assist the Council in developing and maintaining a landlords' register thereby allowing transparency regarding the property and tenancy management arrangements for each address. This improved intelligence will enable the Council to notify landlords of their responsibilities and will assist the Council in responding appropriately to anti-social behaviour, crime, deprivation and poor property conditions associated with the address. Implementation of similar schemes by other boroughs has been noted to improve the environment of neighbourhoods and reduce anti-social behaviour.
- 10.3 The use of Selective Licensing is landlord and property based and will not always resolve many of the issues which are caused by 'bad tenants', however it will increase the oversight of these issues by landlords and where appropriate the use of enforcement powers where the law is being broken. In this regard, the Council will ensure licensing and enforcement are complementary.
- 10.4 The scheme will assist in increasing the consistency of safeguards available to tenants, while improving the quality of private rented stock and tackling poor

quality landlords. An outcome of this will be the effective management of properties by private sector landlords which will in turn raise property standards within the sector.

11 Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 11.1 The introduction of Selective Licensing is intended to enhance housing management practices within the private rented sector (PRS), in compliance with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) standards. It is anticipated that this will have positive outcomes for tenants across all protected characteristics, particularly those who are currently over-represented in the PRS.
- 11.2 It should be noted that data relating to the protected groups among both tenants and landlords is limited, partly due to the unregulated nature of the sector. Although Census data provides a breakdown of tenure by ethnicity and age, analysis relevant to other issues such as disability has not yet been completed by Office of National Statistics (ONS). Overall, the size of the sector and the estimated number of landlords suggests that there will be members of all protected groups among both tenants and landlords. The sector also contains a mix of household and income types that ranges across the spectrum.
- 11.3 All equality groups are likely to benefit from improvements in engagement, communication and signposting information between the Council, landlords and tenants and other service providers. Information would relate to such matters as changes in the law affecting the private rented sector (PRS), energy efficiency measures and grants availability, information on local organisations and agencies which may be able to provide support. One of the intended outcomes of licensing is that landlords will be more aware of their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and of the support and funding available to them and their tenants such as the Disabled Facilities Grant for reasonable adaptations. This will further enhance the equality outcomes for people with disabilities and long-term health conditions, older adults and their carers as well as other vulnerable groups.
- 11.4 It is likely that tenants most impacted by the scheme will be among the lower income groups in the sector, living in the poorest quality housing and, similarly, that the landlords of these properties will experience the greatest impact from their perspective.
- 11.5 In the longer term, licensing will, among its other benefits, provide an opportunity to obtain a more complete picture of the sector and its operation that will assist in identifying issues relevant to protected groups. At the same time, closer partnership working with landlords should support promotion of good practice on equalities in the sector.

12 Risk Assessment

Risk	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation
Due to delays in procuring a suitable IT function, there is a risk to the delivery of a full software solution by the scheme start date. This could pose a reputational risk if not well managed	Medium/Medium	Evaluation of a preferred provider is currently underway. Once the provider is known in mid-September, faster onboarding can be looked at to have the system ready. Additionally, we are working with ICT to mobilise internal resources in order to have an interim solution in place by the scheme start date with a view to switch to a full solution by 01/01/2022 - as a back-up scenario.
Enforcement Support officers due to be recruited to by mid November become part of Business Support Review	Low/Low	Working closely with Business Support Review Leads to ensure the needs of the Selective Licensing Scheme are fully captured and that the required capacity to deliver is understood.
The current enforcement approach is unable to fulfil the expected needs of Selective Licensing program.	Low/Medium	To mitigate this, a new enforcement policy will be taken to cabinet in February/March 2022 and will if agreed, lead to a more robust and proactive approach to enforcement via the Selective Licensing function.
Risk of legal action by applicants if we fail to duly process licence applications in a timely manner and this will leave poor housing to continue in the areas identified for intervention through designation.	Low/Low	We are procuring a system that will automate most of the application process to ensure that there is an efficient processing system in place. We are also recruiting Licensing Support officers to ensure that applications are processed in a timely manner and be a point of contact for landlords to assist in the application process
There is a risk of failure to effectively achieve the aims and objectives of the designation if the scheme does not receive sufficient applications.	Low/Low	This risk will be mitigated by offering early bird discounts for the first 4 months of the scheme as well as wide reaching comms campaign to ensure that landlords are aware of the scheme. The risk can further be mitigated by ensuring that there are sufficient staff levels to identify un-licensed properties and carry out licensing activities.
There is also a known challenge to recruiting higher skilled enforcement officers nationally, which could impact our efforts to build a team of competent enforcement officers in early 2022.	Med/High	To mitigate this, the salaries have been made as competitive as possible against London and nearby authorities, as well as promoting benefits of working in Southend and ensure all recruitment routes for officers are

		utilised. This will include working with our recruitment provider to engage with specialist agencies. Also, we are looking at alternative ways of how we can provide enforcement/inspections service.
There is a perceived risk that local rents may increase as the landlords may wish to recoup the cost of a licence fee. Selective Licensing is frequently seen as a “tax” on landlords; a cost which is likely to be passed on to occupiers in the form of rent increases, particularly given that the licence pertains to the individual dwellings.	Low/Low	The findings of MHCLG’s review indicate that there was no evidence of this being the case in the majority of the local authorities that took part in the review.
There is an unsubstantiated risk of alienating local landlords who may not be in favour of the scheme which could force them to take their business elsewhere or sell, thereby reducing the supply of much needed accommodation within the borough.	Low/Low	If some landlords do sell their portfolios, the assumption would be that the buyers would be willing to keep those properties in the private rented sector.

12.2 It is important that the mandatory licensing scheme which already exists is robustly enforced as it could cast doubt on the Council’s ability to implement the new scheme. The challenges involved and the impact on the Council’s enforcement policy require specific consideration as Government expects Selective Licensing to be a part of an overall strategy to improve the housing stock.

12.3 A risk register has been created as part of the project methodology to monitor the development of the proposals and their implementation should they be approved.

Key risks to be monitored include;

- effective communication strategies to inform landlords that licensing will be implemented and that they are required to register,
- the robustness of IT systems to ensure that licences can be processed accurately and quickly,
- the information sharing protocols between departments to ensure that a joined up and intelligence led approach is pursued,
- the rigorous on-going testing of the financial model to maintain cost effectiveness and cost neutrality,

- that customer service standards associated with the scheme are developed, monitored and achieved.
- Legal challenge associated with both the implementation of the proposal and individual cases going forward

12.4 Each of these and other supporting areas will form the context of a risk register that will be maintained by the officer leading the scheme with support from the Council Risk Manager and incorporate best practice.

13 **Value for Money**

13.1 The scheme will deliver value for local residents in rental accommodation by bringing up standards within the private rented sector in the neighbourhoods within the designation area.

13.2 With improvements in the physical condition, management practices and the overall quality of the private rented stock in the designated areas, property value in the area could eventually go up as property standards improve in line with the licensing conditions as has been the case in other parts of the contract where Selective Licensing has been successfully implemented.

13.3 Tenants will take more pride in where they live as they see anti-social behaviour and other problems being tackled. This will in turn reduce the transiency which is common in areas with such issues, thereby creating more stable communities whilst ensuring that landlords continue to earn rent from their properties without the need to re-advertise their properties each time a tenancy ends.

14 **Community Safety Implications**

14.1 The scheme will create stronger communities within the designated neighbourhoods by encouraging both landlords and tenants alike to contribute more fully to the areas in which they live, recognise their civic responsibilities as such and to see themselves as part of dynamic and vibrant local areas that are committed to combating anti-social behaviour, crime, deprivation and promoting those neighbourhoods as a place that is attractive to live, visit and do business in.

15 **Environmental Impact**

15.1 The successful implementation of the scheme will contribute positively to growth and sustainability in the proposed neighbourhoods by encouraging stability in the private rented sector and will ensure that landlords have a greater stake in the

areas that they let accommodation in and by contributing to the physical and social wellbeing of our neighbourhoods.

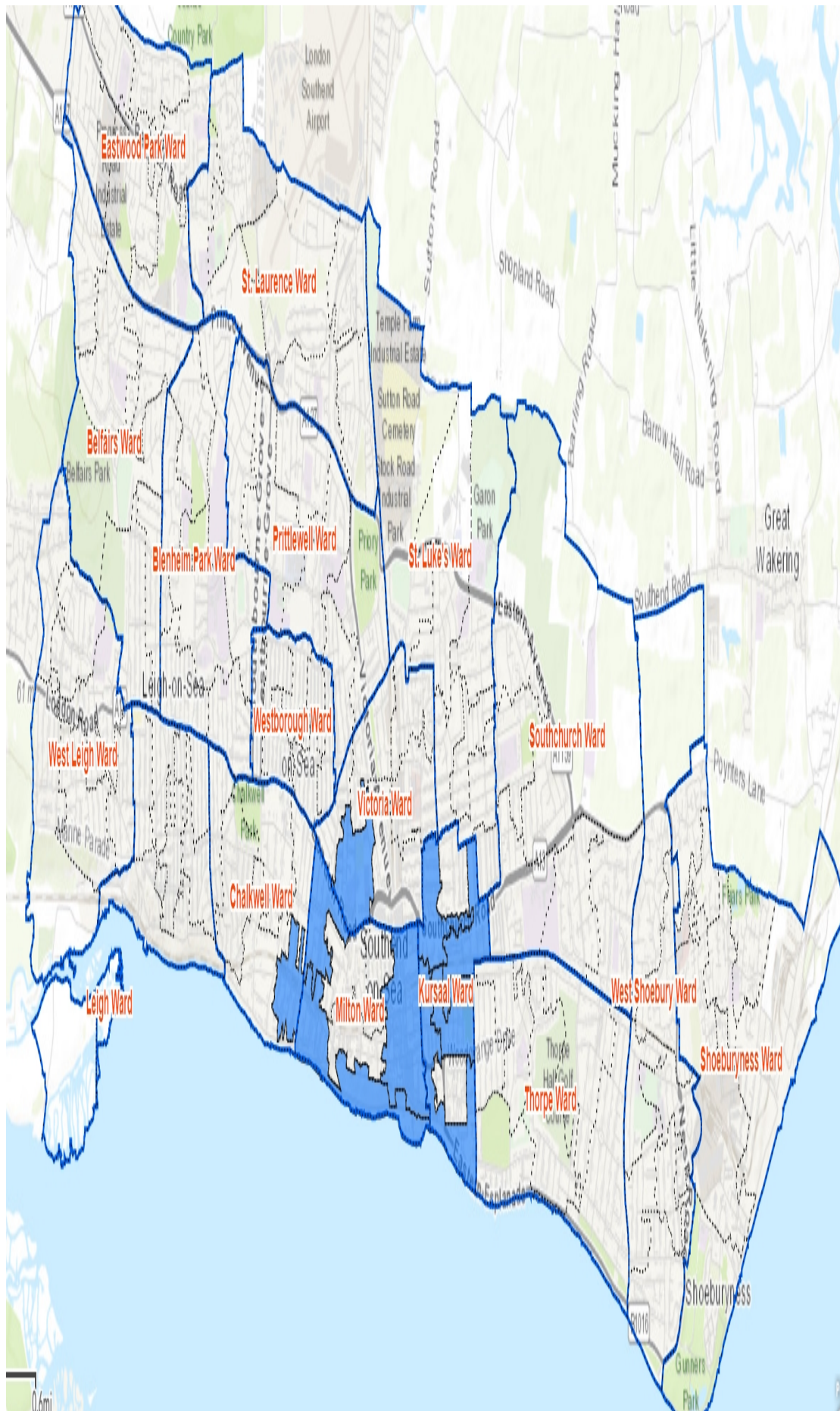
- 15.2 Other local authorities who have successfully implemented the scheme have advised that there was a noticeable improvement in the neighbourhoods within the designation and that even landlords who were opposed to the scheme in the beginning, confirmed these improvements.
- 15.3 The Selective Licensing conditions that landlords will be expected to adhere to will contribute positively and complement the work by the Waste and Environmental Care team. Due to the transiency of tenants in the private rented sector, the licence conditions will ensure that landlords are encouraged to ensure that their tenants are fully made aware of best practice when it comes to waste management.
- 15.4 This will include ensuring that tenants are advised of the correct rubbish collection days, encouraging higher levels of recycling by supporting sustainable waste management, recovering valuable materials and, by reducing waste, lowering the environmental impact of the Councils operations. High recycling neighbourhoods will be something residents, businesses and visitors will take pride and joy in. Effectively managed recycling and waste will improve the street scene and ensure our streets and public spaces are clean and inviting and will serve to change the reputation of some areas within the proposed designation.
- 15.5 One of the significant challenges for the private rented sector in the coming years is the energy efficiency of the properties the move to an EPC C from 2025. With the proposed scheme an audit of properties energy efficiency (e.g. windows, insulation, boiler etc.) will be included in the inspections that are undertaken if the scheme is agreed, so that government bids can be more targeted. This would allow for landlords to obtain grants specifically to improve the fabric of their buildings and the licensing scheme to be seen as beneficial to them.
- 15.6 In October 2020, funding was awarded to some local authorities (SBC included) through the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (LAD) project. The scheme aims to help low-income homes keep warm by improving the energy efficiency rating and reducing energy bills. Residents across the borough who meet the eligibility criteria (i.e. low income and with energy efficiency rating of E, F or G) are able to apply, as part of the Warmer Homes Local Authority Delivery (LAD) program. The Warmer Homes team would undertake a free energy assessment for the home and help with accessing grant funding for any energy efficiency improvements. A number of energy efficiency measures are available such as: door improvements, solid wall and other insulation options, low carbon heating, smart heating controls. The initiative is available for those qualifying homeowners who will take advantage of it and will aid energy improvements by ensuring warmer homes and cheaper energy bills.

16. Background Papers

Previous cabinet papers dated 17th September 2019 & 23rd February 2021.

17. Appendices

Map of designation area - Appendix A



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