

Decision Pathway – Report

PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 03 March 2020

TITLE	Refugee & Asylum Seeker Inclusion Strategy		
Ward(s)	All Wards		
Author: David Barclay & Forward Maisokwadzo		Job title: Mayor’s Advisors on Inclusion	
Cabinet lead: Asher Craig		Executive Director lead: Mike Jackson	
Proposal origin: Mayor			
Decision maker: Cabinet Member			
Decision forum: Cabinet			
Purpose of Report: <ol style="list-style-type: none">To approve the contents of the BCC Refugee & Asylum Seeker Strategy, which seeks to improve the interactions that refugees and asylum seekers have with different service areas of the CouncilTo note the resource requirements and the implications for the 2020-21 Budget			
Evidence Base: <ol style="list-style-type: none">Refugees and asylum seekers face a range of challenges in Bristol, as detailed in the Needs Assessment undertaken in 2017In response to this Needs Assessment, a ‘Welcoming Asylum Seekers and Refugees Strategy’ was drafted in 2017, but never finalised or implemented.The Mayor and Deputy Mayor for Communities therefore instructed the Mayor’s Advisors on Inclusion to refresh the draft strategy in consultation with BCC colleagues and bring it to Cabinet for approval.Refugees and asylum seekers are currently interacting with a variety of different service areas of the Council, but there is no mechanism for joined-up thinking or working to ensure that these interactions are as positive as possibleThere have been several high-profile incidents involving refugees and asylum seekers in the city in the last few years, which highlighted areas where the Council’s practice was deficient. It is therefore imperative that we do all we can to improve our service offer for this vulnerable group, and that we do so in a transparent fashion.The Refugee and Asylum Seeker Strategy sets out a range of practical actions which would improve the Council’s practices in a realistic and achievable manner. It will be delivered by a Working Group Chaired by the Mayor’s Advisor on Inclusion.			
Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations: Cabinet are recommended to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">Approve the Refugee and Asylum Seeker Inclusion Strategy			
Corporate Strategy alignment: <ol style="list-style-type: none">The Refugee and Asylum Seeker strategy directly feeds into the Corporate Strategy vision to drive a “city of hope and aspiration where everyone can share in its success”. It touches on all 4 of the Strategy’s main themes (Empowering and Caring, Fair and Inclusive, Well Connected and Wellbeing). The Refugee and Asylum Seeker strategy also lives up to our designation as a City of Sanctuary which is specifically referenced in the Corporate Strategy.			
City Benefits: <ol style="list-style-type: none">Implementing the Refugee and Asylum Seeker Strategy would have a wide range of benefits, of which the following are just a few examples.Bristol City Council decision making and leadership becoming more inclusive of the voice of refugees and			

asylum seekers

3. Bristol City Council decision making and leadership becoming more inclusive of the voice of refugees and asylum seekers
4. Wider city strategic plans and initiatives becoming more inclusive of the voice of refugees and asylum seekers
5. Increasing awareness and expertise amongst BCC staff
6. Decreasing hate crime and community tension
7. Increasing access to affordable and sustainable housing solutions
8. Increasing educational and employment outcomes for refugees and asylum seekers
9. Increasing access to public services including healthcare
10. Increasing social integration in the city

Consultation Details:

1. A wide range of individuals from across the Council were consulted in the initial draft stage
2. Draft versions of the Strategy were then discussed at People, Resources and Growth & Regeneration EDMs, as well as at a Housing & Landlords Service Leadership meeting, and at the Bristol Refugee Forum.
3. The original Needs Assessment and draft Strategy involved extensive consultation with the VCS and others in Bristol, as well as BCC staff.
4. The Strategy was welcomed by the Mayor and Cabinet under 'Mayor's Business' at the Cabinet Meeting of October 1st 2019.

Background Documents:

1. Refugee and Asylum Seeker Needs Assessment
2. Refugee & Asylum Seeker Inclusion Strategy
3. Refugee & Asylum Seeker Inclusion Strategy Resource Requirements Appendix

Revenue Cost	£15k	Source of Revenue Funding	General Fund Division 37 Housing and Landlord Services Budget
Capital Cost	£-	Source of Capital Funding	N/A
One off cost <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>		Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/> Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/HR partners:

1. Finance Advice:

This report requests approval of BCC's Refugee & Asylum Seeker Strategy.

Necessary actions, existing and proposed ways of working are outlined in Appendix A. Associated costs will be covered within current budgets.

There will be £15k of new costs linked to the preparation of a report assessing the housing needs of refugees and asylum seekers. These new costs will be met from Housing's General Fund budget.

Finance Business Partner: Jemma Prince 12/2/20

2. Legal Advice:

There do not appear to be any legal implications arising from the actions proposed within the strategy. There are a number of areas in which the position in relation to the action outlined in the strategy remains 'to be assessed' and further legal advice will be provided as/when required in this regard.

Legal Team Leader: Husinara Jones, 4/2/20

3. Implications on IT:

IT Services do not see any direct impacts on our services as a result of this initiative. However, we will continue to champion technical solutions which promote inclusion and reduce barriers for those who do not have English as a first language both internally and via our citizen engagement platforms. We fully support this work.

IT Team Leader: Simon Oliver, 15/8/19

4. HR Advice:

The report is proposing to establish an Officers Group to take the Refugee and Asylum Seeker Inclusion Strategy

forward. This will not have any significant HR implications for Bristol City Council employees

HR Partner: Lorna Laing, 29/8/19

PR officer: John Smith, 23/8/19

EDM Sign-off	Resources EDM	8 th January 2020
Cabinet Member sign-off	Cllr Craig CMB	23 rd January 2020
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's Office	3 rd February 2020

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	YES
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	NO
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	NO
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT	NO