

**Report of Head of Migration Yorkshire**

**Report to Director of Communities and Environment**

**Date:** 14 March 2019

**Subject:** To accept funding to deliver a project to increase carers for unaccompanied asylum seeking children

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. Migration Yorkshire, based in Leeds City Council, supported the Regional Assistant Directors of Children’s Services Safeguarding Group, led by City of York Council in applying funding from the Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) for a new, innovative project called ‘Welcoming Young Refugees’.
2. This project works across all 15 local authorities in the region to increase skills, knowledge and capacity to support unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) – through four strands: training and guidance; research; regional structures to improve practice and foster carer recruitment.
3. The project was awarded £561,041 funding from CMF, but City of York Children’s Services did not feel able to continue managing the funding and requested Migration Yorkshire take lead responsibility for financial management in addition to the operational management which had already been agreed.
4. The project, and funding, will be managed by Migration Yorkshire and delivered across the Yorkshire & Humber region through a partnership with three local authorities.

**Recommendations**

The Director of Communities and Environment is requested to:

- Accept the funding from City of York Council, awarded through the Controlling Migration Fund to manage the Welcoming Young Refugees project.
- Enter into partnership agreements for delivery of the Welcoming Young Refugees project with the following organisations:
  - Bradford Council
  - Sheffield Council
  - North East Lincolnshire Council
- Enter into agreements with other organisations that the Head of Migration Yorkshire believes are required to deliver the Welcoming Young Refugee project.
- Enter into such other documents that the Head of Migration Yorkshire believes are needed to enable Leeds City Council to deliver the Welcoming Young Refugee project.

## **1. Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 The report outlines the proposal for Leeds City Council to accept a grant from City of York Council to manage the 'Welcoming Young Refugees' project across Yorkshire and Humber, and distribute the grant to local delivery partner organisations.

## **2. Background information**

- 2.1 The Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) is administered by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG), and in 2017 called for proposals to support councils to increase placement capacity for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC).
- 2.2 Migration Yorkshire, based in Leeds City Council, worked with the regional Assistant Directors of Children's Service Safeguarding group and City of York Council and to develop a project to meet the needs of UASC and increase placement capacity across the region. The application for funding was submitted by City of York Council, in partnership with Migration Yorkshire, and approved by the Regional Directors of Children's Services group (ADCS).
- 2.3 The funding application was approved by MHCLG on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2017 and the project started in summer 2018.

## **3. Main issues**

- 3.1 The aim of 'Welcoming Young Refugees' is to support, develop and improve the regional response to the needs of UASC. We will do this by working across the whole region to deliver training and guidance; undertake extensive research with young people, carers and social workers; develop structures which enable UASC-social workers to collaborate and support one another with practice issues and importantly work across the region to identify potential carers for UASC and undertake measures to help them register as foster carers or supported lodgings providers for their local authority, with a specific remit to care for UASC.
- 3.2 After the project had started with partnerships in place with three other local authorities to employ social workers, the City of York Children's Services did not feel able to continue managing the funding and requested Migration Yorkshire take lead responsibility for financial management in addition to the operational management which had already been agreed.
- 3.3 MHCLG and all partners have agreed to this change in project management to support the continuation of the project.
- 3.4 The project will be managed by Migration Yorkshire and will be delivered across the Yorkshire and Humber region in partnership with the following local authorities for the carer recruitment element:
  - Bradford Council
  - Sheffield Council
  - North East Lincolnshire Council
- 3.5 Migration Yorkshire's project management provides overall responsibility and co-ordination for the project. This includes formal partnership arrangements with

partner organisations, distribution of funding, progress of services, monitoring and reporting to the funders.

## **4. Corporate considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

4.1.1 The need for this project and the intended interventions were identified through consultation with local authorities in Yorkshire and Humber, the Home Office and MHCLG. The bid was supported by the regional ADCS group, and ongoing development and planning, regular consultation, meetings and conversations are taking place with the funders, Children's Services across the region and other organisations.

### **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

4.2.1 Please see attached equality, diversity, cohesion and integration screening.

### **4.3 Council policies and best council plan**

4.3.1 This project will contribute to the Safe, Strong Communities priority area of the Best Council Plan, in particular the following priority: 'Being responsive to local needs, building thriving, resilient communities'. The Plan states that 'Leeds is a growing and richly diverse city ... As a City of Sanctuary, we celebrate this diversity and want Leeds to be welcoming city for all, where people get on with each other and feel they are part of their local neighbourhood'. This project will to improve the support offered to young asylum seekers and refugees across Leeds and other areas of Yorkshire and Humber, encouraging better integration and positive contributions to the wider community for the benefit of all.

### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

4.4.1 The project was awarded £561,041 funding from CMF and this will provide funding for all costs during the period for which Leeds City Council and Migration Yorkshire will provide support.

### **4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in**

4.5.1 This is a Key Decision due to the sums of money involved and is subject to call-in.

### **4.6 Risk management**

4.6.1 Risks will be managed through a risk register updated by the project manager and overseen by the Assistant Directors Safeguarding Group.

## **5. Conclusions**

5.1 The Welcoming Young Refugees project will have a positive impact on the lives of young unaccompanied asylum seekers, refugees and the wider population. It will ensure that provision of support is tailored to meet the needs of young people who have experienced separation and trauma. It will also offer employment opportunities

to the wider community and assist local authorities in their effort to ensure placement sufficiency for Looked After Children more widely.

## **6. Recommendations**

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## **7. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.