

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC REPORT

Report to:	CABINET
Report of: Date of Decision:	Strategic Director for People 14th February 2017
SUBJECT:	MIGRATION – BIRMINGHAM CITY OF SANCTUARY POSITION STATEMENT
Key Decision: Yes	Relevant Forward Plan Ref: 02732/2016
If not in the Forward Plan: (please "X" box)	Chief Executive approved <input type="checkbox"/> O&S Chairman approved <input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant Cabinet Member(s):	Cllr Waseem Zaffar – Transparency, Openness and Equality
Relevant O&S Chairman:	Cllr Mohammed Aiklaq – Corporate Resources and Governance
Wards affected:	All

1. Purpose of report:
<p>This report aims to:</p> <p>1.1 Present to Cabinet for approval Birmingham’s City of Sanctuary Position Statement.</p>

2. Decision(s) recommended:
<p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>2.1 Approves Birmingham’s City of Sanctuary Position Statement</p>

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3. Consultation

3.1 Internal

Birmingham's City of Sanctuary Position Statement has been developed in consultation with colleagues from Social Care, Education, Housing and Public Health

The following Cabinet Members have been consulted during the production of the position statement:

Cabinet Member – Housing and Homes
Cabinet Member – Value for Money and Efficiency
Cabinet Member – Children, Families and Schools
Cabinet Member – Health and Social Care

All have confirmed agreement with Birmingham's City of Sanctuary Position Statement and support the identified responses.

Officers from Finance, Legal and Democratic Services and Procurement have been involved in the preparation of this report.

3.2 External

Birmingham's City of Sanctuary Position Statement has been developed in consultation with the Home Office who have responsibility for developing and implementing the national policy framework. The West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership has also been engaged.

Consultation has been undertaken with key voluntary and community sector organisations and networks to include members of the Birmingham Multi Agency Forum and the City of Sanctuary committee. All have supported the development of the single position statement and have welcomed the measures set out within the statement.

G4S who deliver the accommodation and support service contract to asylum seekers on behalf of the Home Office have also been consulted as part of the development of the position statement.

The Police and the NHS have been consulted and are supportive of the proposals.

4. Compliance Issues:

4.1 Are the recommended decisions consistent with the Council's policies, plans and strategies?

The recommendation contained within this report is consistent with:

- A vision for the future of Birmingham City Council Priorities on a set of clear objectives which are Children, Housing, Jobs & Skills and Health.
- Being a fair city: where people are not excluded from opportunities or services because of their background
- Being a democratic city: where citizens are encouraged to participate in civic life and the right to be heard.

4.1.1 Council Business Plan and Budget 2016+

The development of a single position statement for the city on migration supports the council's Business Plan and also addresses the need to ensure more partnership working is undertaken to support the implications of the statement.

4.1.2 Future Council

The recommendations and position statement are consistent with the future council model and sets out to achieve the objectives of Children, Housing, Jobs & Skills and Health.

4.1.3 Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility

Not applicable

4.2 Financial Implications

This report sets out a position statement to support migration with a more uniform approach.

There are a number of resettlement programmes hosted either by the Council or by other agencies within Birmingham with different funding arrangements from the Home Office and other Central Government departments. These programmes provide funding to support the initial work in settling vulnerable individuals and families as part of our commitment to the City of Sanctuary. In the medium to longer term, there may well be financial impacts on the Council's services which cannot be quantified at this stage which goes beyond the initial period and this will need to be considered as part of the Long Term financial plan before further commitments are entered into.

All costs associated with the education pilot post for Syrian refugees will be funded through the government grant received for the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme.

4.3 Legal Implications

Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2000 gives the Secretary of State power to award grants to local authorities for expenditure incurred by them in the provision of welfare services determined by the Secretary of State.

4.4 Public Sector Equality Duty

An initial Equality Analysis has been undertaken and there were no adverse impacts identified during the development of the single position statement.

5. Relevant background / chronology of key events:

- 5.1 Birmingham City Council has successfully responded to the need to support the migration of individuals into the city for many years. The city is now home to a vibrant mix of communities, some of whom have started new lives here after fleeing persecution in their homelands.
- 5.2 As a consequence of the conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Eritrea patterns of movement and migration across Europe have changed with an increasing number of people leaving their homes to seek sanctuary in Western Europe.
- 5.3 The European Union requested that all countries within Europe respond positively to offer sanctuary to those in need. Our Government confirmed its support and the Home Office in turn requested support from Local Authorities.
- 5.4 In December 2015 Birmingham became recognised as a City of Sanctuary providing a culture of hospitality and welcome, especially for refugees seeking sanctuary from war and persecution.
- 5.5 A range of discussions have subsequently been held to define the City of Sanctuary position statement with reference to the new patterns of migration, Birmingham's longstanding commitment to asylum seekers and refugees and the needs of all Birmingham residents.
- 5.6 The Birmingham City of Sanctuary Position Statement attached to this Cabinet Report is the outcome of these discussions and reflects a single shared view of how Birmingham will act as a City of Sanctuary.

6. Evaluation of alternative option(s):

- 6.1 A failure to approve a single Position Statement as set out in this Cabinet Report could result in Birmingham's City of Sanctuary provision being disjointed, poorly understood and inadequately co-ordinated between the wide range of partners and stakeholders. Such a situation could in turn result in the City failing to balance well the needs of asylum seekers and refugees with the needs of the existing population which could have a detrimental impact on the lives of citizens and community cohesion.

7. Reasons for Decisions (s):

- 7.1 To approve the Birmingham City of Sanctuary Position Statement and endorse the rollout of the position statement across all council directorates.

Signatures	<u>Date</u>
Councillor Waseem Zaffar Cabinet Member for Transparency, Openness and Equality Peter Hay Strategic Director for People

List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:

List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):
Appendix 1 – Birmingham City of Sanctuary Position Statement Appendix 2 – EA – Initial Screening