

9 July 2015

5. REPORTS OF CABINET

(a) MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE A DECISION BY COUNCIL

(i) Humanitarian Relief – Syrian Refugees

Recommendation

1. The Cabinet recommends that the Notice of Motion is not supported at this stage due to the financial implications, unquantifiable risks and that there is no guarantee of funding from Government beyond the first year, and also in the light of the proposed action set out in paragraph 7 below.

2. On 12 February 2015, the Council referred the following Notice of Motion to Cabinet for advice:

"The County Council wishes to play its part in the humanitarian relief programme for Syria by responding to the UK Government's call for local authorities to host small numbers of refugee families – doing so by asking the relevant Cabinet Members with Responsibility to consider providing their support and expertise to a Malvern Hills District Council-led initiative to host up to twelve such families.

We would ask Cabinet Members with Responsibility to consider committing to working collaboratively with Malvern Hills District Council and other local agencies, initially to develop a support framework and strategy as the basis of an application to the Home Office's Syrian Vulnerable Persons' Relocation Scheme (and, if successful, to participate in the implementation of the strategy by receiving, welcoming and supporting Syrian families through their process of resettlement)."

3. The Cabinet has considered a report on the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme which set out the implications for the Council of putting forward an application to the Home Office's Syrian Vulnerable Persons' Relocation Scheme.

4. The Cabinet also considered a suggestion by the original mover of the Notice of Motion (Prof. J W Raine) that the Cabinet should agree to seek information from other host authorities, contact the Government to seek reassurance, and write to MPs to seek support.

5. To prevent disadvantage to existing residents who need to remain the first priority, it was felt that in the current financial climate signing up to an unquantifiable financial risk that could have long-term implications which could not be justified.

6. The Cabinet has therefore recommended that the Notice of Motion is not supported at this stage due to the financial implications, unquantifiable risks and that there is no guarantee of funding from Government beyond the first year.

7. Additionally the Cabinet has agreed that the scheme continues to be monitored and the situation reviewed should the funding arrangements from the Home Office change and any decision to progress the scheme be delegated to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning.

(ii) Capital Programme – Post-16 Supporting Living

Recommendation

8. The Cabinet recommends that the Council approve the addition of £1million to the Capital Programme for the development of in-house Post-16 Supported Living Accommodation funded as set out in paragraphs 9 – 11 below.

9. The Cabinet has considered a report on resources for Post-16 Supported Living Accommodation. The report set out proposals to include a sum of £1million in the Capital Programme for the purchase of a diverse property portfolio to provide a suitable service for post-16 supported living.

10. The aim of the proposals was to offer a significantly better service at reduced cost, compared with some of the external provision, by having direct access to the Council's own property.

11. The Cabinet agreed to request Council to approve the addition of £1 million to the Capital Programme for the development of in-house Post-16 Supported Living Accommodation within Children's Services to be funded by revenue savings from the project.

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and background papers for the meetings of the Cabinet held on 21 May and 18 June 2015.