

<b>Meeting of South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership</b>	<b>Integration Joint Board</b>
<b>Held on:</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> December 2023</b>
<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children</b>
<b>Summary:</b>	
<p>The purpose of this briefing is to provide an update to the IJB in relation to South Ayrshire’s continued approach to receiving Unaccompanied and Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC).</p>	
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Andrew Craig, Service Manager</b>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	
<p><b>It is recommended that the Integration Joint Board</b></p> <p>Notes the implementation process and improvement activity that has taken place to support young people living in South Ayrshire and the future developments associated with our responsibilities as Corporate Parents to Unaccompanied and Asylum-Seeking Young People.</p>	
<b>Route to meeting:</b>	
As discussed with Mark Inglis, Head of Children’s Health, Care and Justice	
<b>Directions:</b>	<b>Implications:</b>
1. No Directions Required <input type="checkbox"/>	Financial <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Directions to NHS Ayrshire & Arran <input type="checkbox"/>	HR <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Directions to South Ayrshire Council <input type="checkbox"/>	Legal <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Directions to both SAC & NHS <input type="checkbox"/>	Equalities <input type="checkbox"/>
	Sustainability <input type="checkbox"/>
	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>
	ICT <input type="checkbox"/>

## UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING CHILDREN

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this briefing is to provide an update to the IJB in relation to South Ayrshire's continued approach to receiving Unaccompanied and Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC).

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

#### **2.1 It is recommended that the Integration Joint Board**

Notes the implementation process and improvement activity that has taken place to support young people living in South Ayrshire and the future developments associated with our responsibilities as Corporate Parents to Unaccompanied and Asylum-Seeking Young People.

### 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Since the last update provided to the IJB in February 2023, South Ayrshire has received and welcomed a further 11 UASC. This includes 1 spontaneous arrival and 10 through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). Currently, South Ayrshire Council (SAC) supports 20 young people (18 through the NTS and 2 spontaneous arrivals).
- 3.2 The Settlement Hub has continued to meet, plan and provide a wide range of services to UASC through, Education, Health, English Spoken as other Language (ESOL), Police Scotland and Social Services. In 2023, the membership extended to include Employability and Skills Team.
- 3.3 The Settlement Hub for UASC continues to meet as referrals are received from the Home Office/COSLA. The Hub continues to provide a practical multi-service approach to welcoming young people arriving in South Ayrshire and to ensure appropriate support and resources are identified to meet their needs. Young People continue to be offered a wide range of support services. The coordination of education, employability and ESOL has significantly developed. ESOL classes now take place on a Wednesday afternoon for all UASC. This has allowed a "community" model of support and relationships to take place.
- 3.4 The benefits this has offered to the wellbeing and inclusion of young people has seen a reduction in young people feeling lonely and isolated and being able to develop positive relationships with each other. This was an area that young people shared with us as a worry when consultation in 2022 took place. Further expansion of ESOL is being explored with a view that ESOL classes will be developed to create a "twilight" learning hub, which will be online as a delivery method and not to impact on the school day. Additionally, ESOL is looking to develop an accreditation programme to support a SQA qualification. A development day for Settlement Hub members is planned to take place in February 2023.

- 3.5 Accommodation has continued to be available to UASC through Fostering, Residential Children's Services and Supported Housing options. Managers have worked closely with colleagues in Housing to develop additional housing accommodation. This has seen four 2 bedroomed flats becoming available and has allowed good matching to take place and supported young people to share accommodation. Contractual support from the Quarriers Housing Support Service has been put in place on an outreach basis.
- 3.6 The original offer from South Ayrshire was that there would be capacity created through additional Foster Carers to enable the accommodation of two Young People in 2022 and three in 2023. The practice within SAC and the demands under the NTS to receive UASC has overwhelmingly been a challenge however, the creativity, relationships, skills and knowledge that have been needed to meet the legal requirements is commendable both operationally and developmentally.
- 3.7 Young People continue to receive a high standard of advocacy support through the Guardianship service whilst they are applying for Right to Remain. 5 of our young people who arrived in 2022 have received a Right to Remain status for 5 years. This has opened further opportunities, their rights and entitlements with applications for accommodation, college courses and employability.
- 3.8 IJB will be aware that as the numbers of UASC (including spontaneous arrivals) has significantly increased, an ELT paper has been completed identifying the need for a permanent Resource Worker post (L10) and a Business Support assistant (L4). This will allow for the coordination and development of support to continue but enhance the data collected and cultivate a culture that improves knowledge, skill and training opportunities both locally and nationally for UASC, carers and staff supporting them.
- 3.9 Through ongoing recruitment and development of resources, 5 in-house Foster Carers have been identified to provide care to UASC. Additionally, 3 young people live at Sundrum View, 2 in Cunningham Place Children's House and the other 10 young people have accommodation/shared accommodation within properties secured for them through Quarriers Housing Support and SAC Housing. All young people have an allocated worker within the Young People Support and Transition Team.

#### 4. REPORT

- 4.1 To date there are a total of 20 UASC that have arrived and being cared for in SAC since January 2022. The gender mix has been 19 males and 1 female. The YP living in South Ayrshire are in either foster care, residential care or independent living, with supports. The YP have very successfully integrated into Education with several young people now accessing further education, 4 UASC have transitioned to accommodation in Glasgow where they are successfully attending University and Higher Education.

- 4.2 Continued support through the Scottish Guardianship Service and Interpreters has also been provided. The Guardianship Service has delivered relevant input to Foster Carers in May 2022. Foster Carers in South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership were encouraged and invited to participate in these sessions. Further delivery of relevant input, at a local level, has been requested of the Guardianship Service and other services relevant to UASC
- 4.3 Targeted recruitment for South Ayrshire Foster Carers for UASC is ongoing. Partnership work has been established with Housing Services to create appropriate housing support options for identified young people. This extensive and developmentally focussed relationship between HSCP staff and Housing Services has allowed new accommodation options to be available for UASC and YP who are transitioning to independent living, or for those who actively choose to live independently on arrival, with supports.
- 4.5 Part of the consultation was with the YP who have come to South Ayrshire and their views were collected. Overall, the feedback was very positive and expressed views of a positive experience since coming to South Ayrshire.

## **5. STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

- 5.1 As set out within the IJB's strategic aims, the emphasis is placed on the role of the Settlement Hub and operational practice, ensuring that young people will grow well, live well and age well.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

The numbers of UASC arriving will increase and it is estimated an additional 6 - 9 unaccompanied children will be coming to live in South Ayrshire during 2024.

### **6.1 Financial Implications**

- 6.1.1 The funding from the UK Government provides financial support for South Ayrshire to ensure that young people are provided with high standards of accommodation, care and support.

### **6.2 Human Resource Implications**

- 6.2.1 The consideration of an identified Health and Social Care Worker is being given to provide dedicated and skilled support and the funding of this will be balanced against the income generated through the funding already in place.

### **6.3 Legal Implications**

- 6.3.1 There is a duty to engage with the National Transfer Scheme and given South Ayrshire's historical low number of UASC, there was no valid justification which could be offered, not to contribute to the scheme.

### **6.4 Equalities implications**

- 6.4.1 None known at time of writing but will be discussed further.

### **6.5 Sustainability implications**

6.5.1 The funding allocated is through the National Transfer Scheme to support UASC, which is being used to support, housing and social and welfare needs.

## **6.6 Clinical/professional assessment**

6.6.1 The Chief Social Work Officer is fully aware of the approach we are taking and supportive of our approach.

## **7. CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

7.1 This is ongoing work from the Settlement Hub and the various stakeholders involved in supporting UASC. The South Ayrshire Strategic Change Team supported consultative work to obtain feedback on the work carried out and any areas we can learn/improve on. This was in the form of three separate feedback sessions (Settlement Hub members, operational staff and Foster Carers) taking place in mid-June 2022 through to end of July 2022. A recent consultation took place with Foster Carers, in September 2023. From this there was an identified need to develop a support group that all carers could attend. Should ELT approve the Resource Worker post (see 3 above) this would fall into that remit.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT**

8.1. There is a risk that there could be more UASC allocated to South Ayrshire or who “arrive” in South Ayrshire, beyond the capacity which we have to support and accommodate them appropriately. This will continue to be monitored.

### **REPORT AUTHOR AND PERSON TO CONTACT**

Name: Mark Inglis, Head of Children’s Health, Care and Justice  
Phone number: 01292 294308  
Email address: [Mark.Inglis@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:Mark.Inglis@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**Date of Report: 21 November 2023**