

Meeting of South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership	Integration Joint Board	
Held on:	15th February 2023	
Agenda Item:	8	
Title:	Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children	
Summary:		
To raise awareness to the IJB of the practice approach to, receiving, caring for and supporting our Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children within South Ayrshire.		
Author:	Andrew Craig, Service Manager	
Recommendations:		
It is recommended that the Integration Joint Board		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Notes the implementation process, progress of young people living in South Ayrshire and the future developments associated with our responsibilities as Corporate Parents to Unaccompanied and Asylum-Seeking Young People 		
Route to meeting:		
As discussed with Head of Service.		
Directions:		Implications:
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 up-date to the IJB in relation to South Ayrshires 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, progress of 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 Following the initial paper to Leadership Panel in October 2020 by the Head of Service for Children's Health Care and Justice in regard to South Ayrshire's approach to Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). A Short Life Working Group (SLWG) was established made up of multi-agency partners to take forward the commitment from South Ayrshire Council.
- 3.2 There has also been on going engagement with COSLA and the United Nations Refugee Agency, to ensure that South Ayrshire were as informed as possible, so as to be in a state of readiness for receiving of UASC.
- 3.3 Following the report to Leadership Panel on the 22nd of November 2021, there has been the implementation of the National Transfer Scheme, mandating Local Authorities to provide care for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children.
- 3.4 The mandating of the NTS introduced a Scotland wide rota. Scotland has been allocated a total of 44 young people out of 650 arrivals in the UK. South Ayrshire will be allocated 2 young people at each turn of the rota. The rota operates on a 2/3 monthly basis. COSLA have advised that the number and pattern of new UASC arrivals has currently slowed down. However, it could be that South Ayrshire may be initially asked to take between 6 to 8 Children Young people through the year 2022/3. To-date, South Ayrshire has provided accommodation and support to 9 UASC arrivals in 2021/2.
- 3.5 Through ongoing recruitment and development of resources, 5 in-house Foster Carers have been identified to provide care to UASC. Additionally, 1 young person lives at Sundrum View, Children's House and 2 young people reside at Quarriers Housing Support Accommodation in Ayr who have been assessed and able to live in semi-supported independent living being supported by the Young People Support and Transition Team (YPST).

- 3.6 The original South Ayrshire Short Life Working Group has now been made into a Settlement Hub for UASC. The Hub provides 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. The Settlement Hub is multi-disciplinary led and membership includes representation across South Ayrshire Council Services and the Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 3.7 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.

4. REPORT

- 4.1 To date there are a total of 9 UASC that have arrived and being cared for in SAC since January 2022. The gender mix has been 8 males and 1 female. The YP living in South Ayrshire are in either foster care, residential care or independent living, with supports. The YP are very successfully integrating into Education and have expressed aspirations to attend further education.
- 4.2 Additional support through the Guardianship Services 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.
- 4.3 Targeted recruitment for South Ayrshire Foster Carers for UASC is ongoing. Further work is required with Housing Services to establish appropriate housing support options for identified young people. Extensive and developmental discussions continue to take place between HSCP staff and Housing Services to explore Housing Options for UASC and YP who are transitioning to independent living, or for those who actively choose to live independently on arrival, with supports.
- 4.4 As a recognition of the high standards of practice in relation to the work of 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.
- 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

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 2023/24.

6.1 Financial Implications

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

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

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

6.4 Equalities implications

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

6.5 Sustainability implications

The is funding allocated through the national transfer scheme to support the UASC, which is being used to support, housing and social and welfare needs.

6.6 Clinical/professional assessment

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 The 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.

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.

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8th February 2023