

REPORT TO CABINET

30 August 2017

Subject:	Migration Fund – Sandwell Transition Education Partnership Service (STEPS)
Presenting Cabinet Member:	Councillor Simon Hackett - Cabinet Member for Children's Services Councillor Steve Trow - Cabinet Member for Core Council Services
Director:	Executive Director of Children's Services – Jim Leivers Director – Education, Skills and Employment – Chris Ward Executive Director – Resources – Darren Carter
Contribution towards Vision 2030: 	
Key Decision:	Yes
Forward Plan (28 day notice) Reference:	SMBC 16136
Cabinet Member Approval and Date:	Councillor Hackett – 10 July 2017
Director Approval:	Jim Leivers – 10 July 2017 Chris Ward – 25 April 2017 Darren Carter – 29 June 2017
Reason for Urgency:	No urgency applies
Exempt Information Ref:	No exemption applies
Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):	This is a Council-wide initiative
Scrutiny Consultation Considered?	This report has not been presented to Scrutiny.
Contact Officer(s):	Balwant Bains, Executive Head Teacher, LACE and STEPS Tel. 0121 569 2895

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the Director – Education, Skills and Employment applies for Controlling Migration Funds to support local priorities of Sandwell New Arrivals Partnership (SNAP), specifically Sandwell Transition Education Partnership Service (STEPS) detailed below.
2. Approves the implementation of the following actions identified within the appraisal report to reduce any risk to the Council:
 - Prior to submission of the final bid, ensure that the application has been strengthened to the satisfaction of the Department of Communities and Local Government;
 - Ensure that terms and conditions of grant funding are reviewed by Strategic Finance prior to entering contract agreement;
 - Review the Risk Register to ensure that all risk are identified, with sufficient mitigating actions to reduce any risk to the Council;
 - Further develop outputs, outcomes and methods of monitoring to support the effective delivery of the project;
 - Finalise the membership of the proposed Management Committee; and
 - Ensure that all revenue costs to be funded by the Council can be met from Children’s Services existing available resources and are included in both medium and long term future budget projections.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks approval from Cabinet for Sandwell to apply for Controlling Migration Funds to support local priorities including the Sandwell New Arrivals Partnership’s (SNAP) delivery plan and particularly the Sandwell Transition Education Partnership Service (STEPS) Agenda for 2017 – 2019. The proposal form is attached as Appendix 2.
- 1.2 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council hosts the Sandwell New Arrivals Partnership (SNAP). It comprises of statutory and voluntary sector partners working in partnership to ensure that the needs and the impacts related to economic migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and resettlement are identified, assessed and incorporated effectively into local policy, priorities, commissioning and service delivery.

The partnership is also responsible for responding to national migration policies and related challenges impacting on Sandwell Council and partners. The overarching vision of SNAP is: “Working together, we will support newcomers to be part of Sandwell’s communities”.

- 1.3 In order to address Newcomer needs, and alleviate some of the pressures on local services and schools, a pilot project was introduced in January 2017. The Sandwell Transition Education Partnership Service (STEPS) facilitates and addresses the gap between arrival into the Borough, and securing a school place. It also aims to develop a one-stop approach to meet the range of needs of Newcomer families.
- 1.4 Sandwell Transition Education Partnership Service’s (STEPS) overall aim is to support Newcomers’ families with mid-year admissions and school places. This will also enable the Service to capture intelligence relevant to the child’s Education as an Additional Language (EAL) needs and family’s needs. In order to address the aforementioned challenges, STEPS aims to:
- Support Sandwell’s admissions process and Safeguard all International New Arrivals.
 - Assess language capability of Newcomer children and develop Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing.
 - Provide International pupils (Sandwell residence) with a safe, welcoming environment where they are valued and encouraged to participate.
 - Use formative assessment to identify the learning strengths and needs of each pupil against the DfE proficiency in English Scale; and so minimise potential lost learning time in school.
 - Ensure that pupils and their families see their languages, culture and identity reflected in the classrooms, the Centre and as part of an inclusive curriculum designed around British culture and values.
 - Ensure that a child is school ready and contribute to our Public Health priorities of school readiness.
 - Use data to support and inform the transition process of each pupil into school/college.
 - Provide a cohesive, multi-agency approach to supporting families and pupils throughout their time at the Centre and during the transition process into school/college.
 - Build capacity in Sandwell School to support EAL learners.
 - Support new arrivals to integrate into local resident communities by developing pathways to access ESOL.
 - Build resilience for new arrival families and achieve Corporate priority to “help people help themselves”.
 - Protect the wider community from communicable diseases through an holistic health and wellbeing provision for new arrival families.

- Support new arrival families to understand the school system and school life to help them integrate within resident school communities and become active citizens.

This will be achieved by;

- Raising literacy levels through the provision of differentiated English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses for Newcomer parents/carers in order to help them gain independence and understand UK public health, education, employment, housing and rights and responsibilities of UK citizens.
- Providing baseline information for schools on the Newcomer child's proficiency in English and mathematics to support them to integrate into school without delay.
- Linking to relevant pathways in both health and Public Health, to include;
- Health assessments for New Arrival families and appropriate follow-up treatment.
- Support to register with a GP.
- Health protection screening for TB and Blood Born Viruses (BBV.)
- Healthy lifestyle education – in the curriculum and through Physical Activities challenges through The Albion Foundation and links with Sandwell's Physical Activity Project Manager (Public Health Commissioning.)
- On site provision of school health visitor, midwife and GP support.
- Family Literacy classes.
- Developing Parent Ambassadors to provide incremental training, including volunteering in the centre, etc. as a route into subsequent employment. Safeguarding assured through the Local Authorities Disclosure and Barring System (DBS) clearance system. We will provide basic English and ESOL classes at the centre to develop the language abilities of the parents. This will allow them to support their children's learning, develop skills for employment and be part of a resource pool where we will be able to call upon them to support schools and the centre with interpretation.
- Working with families to Identifying levels of literacy and education in the home language of Newcomer adults to offer bespoke information about routes into subsequent employment.
- Establishing relationships with families and signposting to third sector support.
- Further background information ie statistics on migration; admissions mid-year and Sandwell New Arrivals Partnership (SNAP) Strategic Intentions 2017-2020 are appended at the end of the proposal form attached as Appendix 2.

2 IMPLICATION FOR THE COUNCIL'S AMBITION

- 2.1 The proposals in this report support Sandwell's Vision 2030 – Ambitions for People. "Sandwell is a community where our families have high aspirations and where we pride ourselves on equality of opportunity and on our adaptability and resilience. Our workforce and young people are skilled and talented, geared up to respond to changing business needs and to win rewarding jobs in a growing economy. Our children benefit from the best start in life and a high quality of education throughout their school careers with outstanding support from their teachers and families.
- 2.2 Our communities are built on mutual respect and taking care of each other, supported by all the agencies that ensure we feel safe and protective in our homes and local neighbourhoods."
- 2.3 We will continue to work in partnership with schools to give pupils a good education and provide the right number of places; protect children in Sandwell so that they are safe and feel safe; and support children and young people, particularly the most vulnerable, by making sure they attend school and behave well.

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Controlling Migration Fund will enhance existing resources and support the development of services and support offered to new arrival families in Sandwell. This project is fundamental to the delivery of our local and regional Migrant agendas, as it will allow us to better understand the needs of Newcomers.

Furthermore, this project will support corporate objectives, such as;

- School readiness
 - Reducing the prevalence of communicable disease
 - Improving population mental wellbeing
 - Reducing the impact of illness and long term conditions
 - Addressing lifestyle risk factors.
- 3.2 The success criteria that we anticipate include;
- 95% of newcomer families supported through STEPS (monitored through admissions applications)
 - 50% of newcomer families take up and complete STEPS courses (basic English classes are attended by 15 adults each term) and IAG (register to be made public to management committee)

- 50% of newcomer families who are referred to support services (register kept)
- 95% of children who go through STEPS are placed in schools within a average of 4 weeks. (termly and end of year reporting to the management committee)
- Greater understanding of the potential of new arrival children through assessment at the centre (90% of children have robust data; some may leave for an allocated school place after 2/3 days – evidence gained from school questionnaire and case studies by transitions team)
- Rapid response to children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) whilst they are at the centre. (An SLA is in place with Inclusion support and all children who attend STEPS will be needs assessed for behaviour, Education Health and Care plans or a disability-number of children reported to schools hard to place panel and the management committee each term)
- 98% successful transition into schools – (evidence gathered from school staff questionnaires)
- 100% of CSE, FGM or Modern day Slavery cases are addressed and reported to the governing body (Centre Safeguarding Lead/Local Authority Safeguarding Officer/Police- centre record and information (numbers of cases or case studies) presented to Management Committee)
- EAL Progress made in the centre and Improved educational outcomes of new arrivals. (EAL teachers lesson observations and Children's work scrutiny once per term).
- Compiling a 'register' of voluntary bilingual mentors for the STEPS centre and new arrival families to use. (3 in 2016/17 5 in 2017/18 and 8 by 2018/19)
- Increased engagement of third sector organisations with new arrival families. (families have access to professionals from citizens advice, careers and at least 2 other 'minority' community support groups by September 2018 at the centre)
- Gather intelligence and data to contribute to Sandwell's migrant needs assessment to inform future provision of services. (100% assessment of new arrival families baseline assessment)
- Increased take up of Health intervention programmes from New arrival families, such as lifestyle programme, smoking cessation, sexual health services, etc. 'classes' to be introduced and monitored
- (Classes/sessions to be established at the centre by September 2018)

- Increase in TB and BBV screening and timely referrals to treatment services if appropriate. (A dedicated room for screening is onsite by April 2018 for referrals to be addressed)
- Increase in GP registrations for new arrival families; all family members have access to a GP within 6 weeks of attending STEPS
- Increase in new arrivals accessing ESOL provision, education and opportunities for volunteering and employment. (Basic English and ESOL classes running once per week onsite; maximum attendance (16) each week).

3.6 We will align the STEPS evaluation to the SNAP vision and delivery plan, as follows;

a) Language and Communication.

- To ensure that all Newcomers have access to a range of English Language courses and ESOL provision.

b) Housing.

- To ensure that Newcomers have access to advice and assistance in accessing and retaining appropriate accommodation.

c) Health and Wellbeing.

- Holistic Approach- through 'one stop shop' for Advice, Guidance and Advocacy.

d) School and Education

- To ensure that all new arrival children are able to achieve their full potential and are supported to access school places and integrate well within school.

e) Employment and Training.

- Newcomers realise their full potential in education at all stages of their integration and are supported in gaining meaningful employment commensurate to their skills and experience.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

4.2 Council members attended the open/Celebration event at STEPS 29 March 2017. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services has attended the centre for a visit to meet staff and with other colleagues and is fully supportive of the Centre. The programme has been fully supported by the Education, Skills and Employment directorate. There is a steering group in place that will be developed into a Management Committee.

- 4.3 The centre has been running since 3rd February 2017 to date 180 children and their families have attended the centre (initial assessment and data collection), over 72 children have successfully transitioned into school. Feedback from the school has been very positive and complementary of the child's attendance at the centre and the information they have received on their progress against national profiles.
- 4.4 English as an additional Language (EAL) network meeting have been established to spread good practice and develop capacity in Sandwell schools.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

- 5.2 All relevant customers and stakeholders have been consulted.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.2 If the Cabinet report is not approved then the Controlling Migration fund would not be applied for or obtained, then STEPS would not be able to deliver the plan for 2017-2019 and would not be able to support families and their children i.e. newcomers into Sandwell by bridging the gap between arrival and the placement of children into Sandwell Schools.

7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.2 All staff at STEPS have a contract until September 2018, at which point the service will either continue or cease to exist. HR have advised that those staff how have contacts of 2 years or more (4 staff) would have full employment rights (including redeployment).
- 7.3 The table below shows estimated budget for the three financial years from 2017 for Sandwell's Transition Education Partnership Service (STEPS)

Financial year	1 January 2018 to 31 March 2018	1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019	1 April 2019 to 31 December 2019	TOTAL
Amount requested	£100,625	£402,500	£301,875	£805,000

- 7.4 Match funding of £2,000 will be required from the Council in order to fund the cost of Interpretation Fees. These will need to be met from within existing service budgets.

- 7.5 It is proposed the funding will support with the development and implementation of the aforementioned aims, and will allow for the project to continue until at least 31 December 2019.
- 7.6 The developmental work commenced in September 2016 and the cost of the capital project £320,000 has been met by the Council.
- 7.7 January 2016 – 2017 - the centre opened for children in January 2017, and has secured some funding for the pilot until December 2017. The requested sum of £100,625 for 2017-18 includes financial commitments for the developments of the centre and ongoing embellishment required for the service (including -playground equipment, travel arrangements, shelters, food provision for children and families, staffing costs (family worker) etc.).
- 7.8 This project will not present a major risk to council resources if the action points are fully implemented.

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

8.2 Children's Rights: United Kingdom (England and Wales)

- a) The right to an education is included in a number of international conventions to which the UK is a party, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (1 and 2). Further to this, the Education Act 1996 imposes a duty on the Secretary of State to "promote the education of the people of England." (3).

Compulsory education in England begins at the age of five years old and continues until the end of the "school leaving year" in which the child is sixteen years old.(3) When a child turns five years old the parents must ensure that their child receives "efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art. 26(1) provides that "everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory."
- Education Act 1996, c. 56, § 10.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.2 The development of the centre has been monitored by HMI and their advice has been followed to ensure that all international new arrivals are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner. Families are managed appropriately so that they can access school provision in a timely manner and/or suitable agency support can be identified to assist the family. The centre is available to new Sandwell residents only.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.2 The centre data will be managed in line with all protocols currently in place for schools' data. Information will be held on secure council IT systems and passed internally through secure systems when required to schools or other council agencies.

11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT

- 11.1 There is no requirement to carry out an assessment for this proposal.

12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

- 12.1 The purpose of the report is to gain approval for a funding bid to maintain the New Arrivals Centre for two years. The future funding of the centre will be dependent on either further successful applications for grant funding or through conversion of the centre in to a full time school/academy. Should the latter occur then funding will be gained through schools DSG or High Needs Block funding.

13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

- 13.1 The development of the centre has been a collaboration between different agencies (health, housing, education, special needs education and school organisation) which helps identify children and families with additional needs, directing them to appropriate support. It serves to identify families or children who may benefit from additional support and helps them to integrate more quickly in to schools.

14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

- 14.1 The Hollies build is an SMBC building under lease for approximately 100 years. If STEPS ceases to exist the building may have to be refurbished for other uses

15 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 The New Arrivals (STEPS) Centre is designed to meet the needs of international new arrivals families arriving in Sandwell. The recommendations will allow the council to bid for funding to operate the centre for two years, assessing the needs of the families and allocating suitable education providers in the borough.

16 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Sandwell Transition Education Partnership Service Admissions Policy
- Sandwell New Approvals Partnership (SNAP) Strategic Intentions 2017-2010
- Both documents are available from Balwant Bains, Executive Head Teacher LACE and STEPS, Tel No 0121 569 2835
- STEPS webpage www.sandwell.gov.uk/STEPS

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 - Appraisal Report from Strategic Finance 19 July 2017

Appendix 2 - Proposal form

Jim Leivers

Interim Executive Director of Children's Services