



North Devon Council

Report Date: 6 June 2022

Topic: Asylum Dispersal

Report to: Strategy & Resources Committee

Report by: Jeremy Mann; Head of Planning, Housing & Health

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. On the 13th April, 2022, the Minister for Safe and Legal Migration announced that the UK would move to a full asylum dispersal model with immediate effect.

1.2. This paper seeks to highlight the change in Gov. policy and provide members with the opportunity of contributing to the informal consultation (9th May – 1st July, 2022).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. It is recommended that members:

Note Government's implementation of this new policy for asylum accommodation dispersal.

Give a steer on the proposed response to the government's consultation on the arrangements set out in Appendix B which the Chief Executive will issue in consultation with the Leader and Lead Member for Housing.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To ensure that Government can plan for the implementation of this policy with a full understanding of the implications/impacts for North Devon Council and the local community.

4. REPORT

4.1. There has been increasing pressure on the asylum system, with hotels being used across the country as contingency accommodation for new arrivals. There is an insufficient amount of existing dispersal accommodation.

4.2. An announcement by Government. was made to councils on the 13th April, 2022. Local authorities will be expected to participate in a new system of full dispersal to allow the Home Office to move from hotels to less expensive and more suitably dispersed accommodation, with work starting immediately.

4.3. The briefing note sent to SW Chief Executive by the South West Migration Partnership is attached as Appendix A.

4.4. The impacts of asylum dispersal on local government and local housing needs could be significant. Government has indicated, however, that considerations such as fairness for local authorities (informed by market availability) are important allocation principles.

4.5. Officers are participating in Home Office workshops, and the Council has been given the opportunity to participate in an online survey, refer to Appendix B.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Government has indicated their intention to complete a new burdens' assessment to understand the financial cost associated with full dispersal. It is anticipated that any such costs are fully reimbursed by Government and will not impact upon the authority's revenue budget.

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. Government. has indicated that they will not consult on the policy of full dispersal but will invite views on:

- 1) The impacts of asylum dispersal on local government.
- 2) Models of accommodation.
- 3) Wider 'plan based' considerations.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7.1 There are no environmental implications associated with the recommendations contained in this report.

8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8.1. The implementation of these arrangements could impact on local housing need.

9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT



- 9.1. Article of Part 3 Annexe 1 paragraph: 1
- 9.2. Referred or delegated power? Delegated

10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provision of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: (The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report). None.

12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

The author confirms that advice has been taken from the following:

Leader	23/5/22
Leader Member for Housing	23/5/22
Chief Executive	23/5/22
Deputy Chief of Resources	23/5/22
Council's Solicitor	23/5/22