

Submission to Cabinet

16 September 2016

From Robert Sharp CC,
Labour Leader

**Item 8 – Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (SVPRS)**

It is disappointing to find Cabinet at odds with local partners on a topic of such importance and that to date, we are not seemingly playing a full part in delivering this Government scheme.

It is also of concern that at a time when we are seeking to develop closer ties with local Councils and others as part of a Combined Authority, we seem unable to establish an effective dialogue or working relationship that would prevent misgivings over governance, decision making and funding to be so publically aired even though the first two refugee families have already been accommodated in the County after almost 12 months of planning.

At the Cabinet meeting of 11 September 2015, the Labour Group sought Cabinet to resolve:

That a cross party panel be immediately established to work with officers to identify how this authority can provide assistance; ensure early and robust plans are put in place; and that effective co-ordination across partners is established.

Considering the position this Council now finds it in, it seems Cabinet was mistaken in rejecting this suggestion and the Labour Group would ask again for such a panel to be established urgently in advance of the next proposed arrivals in November. The panel could also consider actions taken under the National Transfer Scheme.

As a Group, we have readily acknowledged that our capacity as a Council to assist will inevitably be governed by available resources and whilst we have a desire to do more, have accepted the level of support for 250 refugees over five years as pragmatic. We have not sought political capital out of the issue with full and public praise given to the Conservative Leader of Charnwood Borough Council for his personal leadership on the matter.

We urge Cabinet to acknowledge our concerns and establish appropriate oversight.

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