

**COUNCIL: 20 OCTOBER 2016**

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**EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN & FAMILIES STATEMENT**

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I would wish to draw to members' attention the work of Children's Services in supporting the national response to this critical situation.

Members will be aware that the UK Government has been working with the French authorities to facilitate the urgent transfer to the UK of asylum seeking children from the camp in Calais. This is in the context of the First Minister's statement last Friday that Wales is "ready to support the UK government in welcoming greater numbers of vulnerable children."

Councillor Elsmore and I wish to ensure that Cardiff plays an appropriate role in response to this humanitarian crisis. Over the past week officers have been working intensively with the Home Office, WLGA and partners to put in place a Council-led, multi-directorate and multi-agency response to facilitate the immediate reception of a number of unaccompanied children from the Calais camp.

The safety and wellbeing of the children is our primary concern. We understand that most of these children will have relatives in the UK. It is expected that they will be placed with relatives as soon as possible in other local authority areas across England and Wales, once those local authorities have completed the necessary arrangements.

**Councillor Sue Lent**  
**Deputy Leader**  
**Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Families**  
19 October 2016