



Portfolio Holder Report

The portfolio holder will make a decision on this item after seven days have elapsed (including the date of publication).

Report of:	Portfolio Holder	Date of publication
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities	Councillor Michael Vincent Resources Portfolio Holder	12 August 2021

The UK Resettlement Scheme and the appointment of a subcontractor to provide resettlement support in accordance with Home Office requirements

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To outline changes to the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (SVPRS) and Vulnerable Children Resettlement Scheme.
- 1.2 To seek approval to support the UK Resettlement Scheme (which now supersedes the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and Vulnerable Children Resettlement Scheme) and provide resettlement support for up to five households every two years.
- 1.3 To seek approval to appoint a service provider to deliver sub-contracted caseworker resettlement support services to help fulfil our obligations under the UK Resettlement Scheme.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1 UK Government supported refugees resettled in Wyre under the UK Resettlement Scheme will receive appropriate support to ensure effective resettlement and fulfil Home Office funding instructions.
- 2.2 Compliance with the Council's Financial Regulations and Financial Procedure Rules ensuring cost effective procurement.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the UK Resettlement Scheme is supported by the council and that we enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Lancashire County Council to deliver the scheme.

- 3.2** That approval is given to proceed with the engagement of The Salvation Army under the exemption to Contract Procedures contained within the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedure Rules on the grounds that exceptions may apply where: “The services are of a specialised nature carried out by only one or a limited number of organisations which have local experience with no reasonably satisfactory alternatives available.”

4. Background

- 4.1** The SVPRS was announced in September 2015 and its aim was to resettle, nationally up to 20,000 Syrian refugees over five years. In January 2016, the Lancashire Chief Executives Group agreed that all Lancashire Local Authorities would work together to resettle around 150 families over the five year period.
- 4.2** Resettled refugees receive humanitarian protection for five years on arrival, after which period they are entitled to apply for indefinite leave to remain in the UK. They can work and are entitled to mainstream housing benefit. The SVPRS is fully funded by joint agreement between the Home Office, Department for International Development and the Department for Communities and Local Government, with no net costs to the Council.
- 4.3** During 2016 it was agreed with the Home Office that Lancashire County Council (LCC) would act as co-ordinator of the SVPRS in Lancashire. District and Unitary Authorities were asked to pledge how many households they were prepared to support in their area. Wyre Council pledged to support five Syrian refugee households arriving in July 2017 and then a further five refugee households every other year.
- 4.4** The scheme allows the council and our partners to play a significant humanitarian role in mitigating the impacts of the global refugee crisis, particularly in the Middle East, and will help the UK government to deliver its resettlement pledge.
- 4.5** Using funding awarded in 2016/17 the council commissioned the Salvation Army to provide resettlement support for refugees resettled in Wyre. This commission ends in July 2021.
- 4.6** To date the council has supported 11 Syrian families, five arrived in 2017 and a further five arrived in 2019. Support was provided to another family following a specific request for assistance which we were able to meet. The cohort of families expected in 2021 did not arrive as planned owing to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 4.7** Her Majesty's Government has confirmed its ongoing commitment to resettle refugees in the UK year on year under the UK Resettlement Scheme. The UK Resettlement Scheme supersedes the previous SVPRS and the Vulnerable Children Resettlement Scheme.

4.8 Government, through the Home Office, are once again making funding available to local authorities in whose areas the refugees settle and LCC will continue to be the co-ordinating council in relation to the Scheme.

5. Key issues and proposals

5.1 The council will continue to support the UK Resettlement Scheme and provide resettlement support for up to five households every two years.

5.2 It is proposed that the council re-commissions the Salvation Army to provide the refugee casework support services necessary to fulfil Government requirements. The Salvation Army have proven expertise and are the only provider of this type in the area. As a worldwide church and charity the Salvation Army are also best placed to leverage financial and other support to refugee households achieving maximum value for money.

6. Delegated functions

6.1 The matters referred to in this report are considered under the following executive function delegated to the Resources Portfolio Holder (as set out in Part 3 of the council’s constitution): “To consider departures from Rules relating to financial and contractual matters”.

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	<p>The council will be able to recover the full cost of the Salvation Army services necessarily incurred as part of the programme and as such there will be no overall impact on General Balances.</p> <p>The Council will be able to recover the cost of our officer time in supporting the UK Resettlement Scheme up to a value of £15,000 in 2021/22, £10,000 in 2022/23 and £5,000 in 2023/24.</p>
Legal	<p>The appointment of the Salvation Army complies with the exemption set out in the report and is in accordance with the Constitution.</p> <p>A legal agreement is currently being negotiated and will be signed prior to commencement.</p>

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
sustainability	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
climate change	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

List of appendices

None

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