

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES CABINET MEMBER
ADULTS AND HEALTH CABINET MEMBER
FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE CABINET MEMBER**

AFGHAN RELOCATION AND ASSISTANCE POLICY (ARAP)

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To update on the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and to seek approval for North Lincolnshire Council to support the extension of the local offer previously agreed in June 2021.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In June 2021 North Lincolnshire Council agreed to be part of the Afghan Locally Employed Staff (LES) Scheme. Commitment was made to relocate and house three families in North Lincolnshire. This request was based on a fair share allocation across Yorkshire and Humber based on population and capacity. Families arriving were enrolled in the newly developed *Afghanistan Citizens Resettlement Scheme* and were eligible to apply for 5 years 'Leave to Enter the UK' with a pathway for resettlement thereafter.
- 2.2 Following the NATO military forces withdrawal from Afghanistan, a process of emergency evacuation took place in August 2021. The Home Office confirmed that approximately 15,000 people had been evacuated and brought to the UK. The majority are residing in temporary accommodation.
- 2.3 A collaborative, cross government approach is being taken to support the effective integration of all those LES who choose to come to the UK including engagement with Local Authorities and each of the 11 Strategic Migration Partnerships across the UK.
- 2.4 Local Authorities received a letter from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Ministry of Defence and the Home Office seeking support in the accelerated relocation of LES, who have been supporting the UK in Afghanistan. North Lincolnshire Council

responded and agreed to house the three families requested. As a result of the increase in numbers evacuated a further request to extend our pledge has been received.

- 2.5 From a North Lincolnshire perspective, our newly suggested combined allocation, including the existing commitment, based on the fair share is 28 people. This is likely to constitute 6 households in total including the three already agreed.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Option 1 – To agree to extend our offer of support to the ARAP Scheme based on the fair share allocation.
- 3.2 Option 2 – To not agree to extend and keep with our existing pledge of 3 families.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 Local Authorities are being asked for their support and assistance as the government seeks to fulfil their moral obligation to support those who have served this country. The increase in numbers requires additional offers of resettlement, support, and housing.
- 4.2 People relocated under the scheme are supported by the respective Local Authority via a 12-month integration package which includes:
- Reception arrangements upon arrival
 - Accommodation
 - A package of advice and assistance
 - Registration with GP's and local Job Centre Plus
 - Assistance in securing school places for school aged children
 - Cash support

5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)

- 5.1 The Local Authority is provided with funding to support families through a grant funding arrangement. The Local Authority would claim an initial payment on arrival and a further payments throughout the 12-month period.

6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)

- 6.1 Extending our offer and increasing our numbers demonstrates our ongoing commitment to the ambition and priorities articulated in the Council Plan.

6.2 The provision of support and assistance to those who have served with British Forces also demonstrates our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and our ongoing support to Veterans and those who have served our country.

7. **OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

7.1 Not applicable

8. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

8.1 Not applicable

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That Cabinet Members confirm their approval for North Lincolnshire Council to extend the scheme and increase the number relocations as set out in the report.

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: Letter from Home Office, Ministry of Defence and MHCLG and Factsheet for Local Authorities