



Name of meeting: Cabinet  
Date: 20 October 2015

Title of report: Resettlement of Syrian Refugees in Kirklees

Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Is it in the <a href="#">Council's Forward Plan</a> ?	No
Is it eligible for "call in" by <a href="#">Scrutiny</a> ?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Director</u> & name	Ruth Redfern 08/10/15
Is it signed off by the Director of Resources?	David Smith 12/10/15
Is it signed off by the Assistant Director – Legal, Governance & Monitoring?	Julie Muscroft 9/10/15
Cabinet member <a href="#">portfolio</a>	Cllr Graham Turner

Electoral [wards](#) affected: All  
Ward councillors consulted: N/A  
Public or private: Public

## 1. Purpose of report

To seek approval for Kirklees Council's involvement in the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (VPRS) and the resettlement of 2 families (Kirklees taking part in a trailblazer) before Christmas 2015 followed by 50-60 individual Syrian Refugees in year one, and 50-60 individuals in year two.

## 2. Key points

### Background

On Monday 7 September, the Prime Minister announced that Britain should resettle up to 20,000 Syrian refugees over the rest of the Parliament. These refugees will be taken from the camps in the countries neighbouring Syria using the established process. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will refer people to the scheme.

The offer is for Local Authorities to become involved in the existing Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (VPRS). This scheme is already running in a number of local authorities across the Country. Government has agreed that there will be funding beyond 12 months for each refugee within the scheme.

Kirklees Council has been asked by Migration Yorkshire to be involved in a trailblazer. This means accepting 2 families before Christmas in Kirklees. Joint work will take place with Migration Yorkshire, the Refugee Council and the Northern Refugee Council along with local services and partners to ensure those arriving have the support they need.

The issue of the Council's potential involvement in the government scheme was the subject of a key discussion at full council on 7/10/2015 and all councillors were in support of the council's involvement in the scheme.

### **The Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme**

The VPRS is based on need rather than being designed to meet a quota. It is Kirklees's decision on how many Syrian Refugees will be resettled in Kirklees. Individuals will be identified by UNHCR and they will be allowed to bring their immediate family with them.

Generally, families will comprise of between 4-6 people (inclusive of the head of family) but cases will also consist of single people and the occasional larger family. Local authorities will be given a minimum of 4 week's notice of new arrivals and longer for any cases with complex care needs. Local authorities confirm with the Home Office whether or not they are able to accept specific cases.

### **Profile of arrivals**

The VPRS prioritises help for survivors of torture and violence, women and children at risk, and those in need of medical care. The Home Office work with UNCHR to identify suitable cases.

All applicants (including accompanying family members) are subject to the usual immigration checks and screening prior to a visa being granted. Those with a criminal past or links to war crimes or extremism are excluded from the scheme. Those who are accepted under the VPRS are granted humanitarian protection giving them leave to remain for 5 years with full access to employment and public funds and rights to family reunion comparable to refugees. Settlement may be refused if the person is convicted of a criminal offence during their leave and will be refused if they pose a danger to the public, or to national security.

### **Central government funding**

Based on the existing VPRS, Central Government will meet the costs for year 1 and now year 2 for the arrivals in terms of: Housing management, orientation support, health and education costs. Staffing costs to cover administration of the scheme will also be met. The extent of the funding is yet to be confirmed and negotiations are taking place at a regional level working with Migration Yorkshire.

### **Work taking place in Kirklees**

Officers within Kirklees Council and our partners are working to ensure the most suitable housing, health support, school places and wider resettlement is available. Housing will initially be secured in KNH, or a local registered social landlords property and work will start to take place to look at how we could begin to work jointly with the private rented sector at a later stage.

Work with our local voluntary and community sector who already support refugees in Kirklees is taking place. They are part of an existing multi agency network and are vital in supporting the resettlement of refugees. Those groups who have not previously been involved in supporting refugees have been welcomed to be connected in to the existing network.

Kirklees proposes to resettle 2 families before Christmas 2015 followed by 50-60 individual Syrian Refugees in year one and 50-60 individuals in year two. This will be reviewed as Kirklees becomes involved in the VPRS.

## **2. Implications for the Council**

The Council will receive funding to support our involvement in the trailblazer and also to support the resettlement of additional refugees between 2015 and 2017.

## **4. Consultees and their opinions**

Discussions have been taking place on the proposed way forward and all COUNCIL services and partners contacted are very supportive of doing what they can to support those resettling in Kirklees: Safe and Cohesive Communities, Housing, KNH, Childrens and Young Peoples Service, Adult Services, Public Health, Huddersfield CCG, Locala, The Whitehouse Centre, Kirklees Multi Agency Group.

Consultation with all councillors took place at full Council meeting on 7/10/2015.

## **5. Next steps**

To develop the Kirklees approach for resettling Syrian Refugees in Kirklees working with council officers, partners and the voluntary and community sector.

Resettle two families before Christmas and work to resettle more Syrian refugees between 2015 and 2017.

## **6. Officer recommendations and reasons**

That Cabinet agree to:

- a) The Council's involvement in the VPRS scheme (including the trailblazer) and acceptance of funding from the Home Office.
- b) The resettlement of 2 families before Christmas 2015 followed by further resettlement in Kirklees as set out in the considered report.
- c) Any amendments to Kirklees Council's involvement in the VPRS scheme (including trailblazer) to be delegated to Chief Executive.
- d) The Councils involvement in VPRS is kept under review as outlined in the considered report.

## **7. Cabinet portfolio holder recommendation - n/a**

## **8. Contact officer and relevant papers**

Sarah Mitchell. Safe and Cohesive Communities.

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## **9. Assistant Director responsible**

Kimiyo Rickett. Assistant Director Communities Transformation and Change.

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