

Report for: Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	8 th December 2022
Subject:	Afghan Resettlement Schemes
Key Decision:	Yes - by virtue of level of revenue spend over £500,000
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap - Acting Corporate Director Resources
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Jean Lammiman - Portfolio Holder for Communities and Culture
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Equality Impact Assessment

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the Council's approach to responding to the Government's Afghan Resettlement Schemes.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Authorise the provision of integration support to qualifying Afghan individuals, referred by the Home Office to prevent homelessness;
2. Authorise the Interim Assistant Director of Strategy and Partnerships, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder of Communities & Culture, to spend the grant received from the Government to deliver the Afghan Resettlement Schemes programme, which could exceed £3.6 million (based on supporting 30 households); and
3. Note the monthly discretionary voluntary payment to qualifying Afghan individuals in year 1 (£200), in year 2 (£100) and year 3 (£50) for additional financial support.

Reason (for recommendations):

To ensure the Council is able to assist qualifying Afghan individuals to successfully resettle in the borough and provide integration support as part of the Afghan Resettlement Schemes programme.

Section 2 – Report

1. Introductory paragraph

- 1.1. After the fall of Kabul in August 2021, the Government accelerated the Afghan Resettlement Schemes to support evacuated Afghan individuals to resettle in the UK, under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme and the new Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme. The Council has already supported 10 households to resettle in Harrow since October 2021 (which was Harrow's share of a London commitment made in August 2021), and this report sets out the Council's approach to further adopt qualifying Afghan individuals in order to provide accommodation and integration support, over the 3-year life of the Schemes.
- 1.2. Harrow has an established Afghan community, which has been a draw for many evacuated Afghan individuals wanting to settle in London. As a result of the local dynamic, this report recommends supporting additional qualifying Afghan individuals as we recognise many have already arrived in the borough, and by providing integration support, we have the ability to intervene early on in their resettlement to increase the chances of a positive impact, prevent

approaches to homelessness and mitigate the pressures on other council services. The Council will be able to claim funding for qualifying individuals and have the agency to utilise the funds to procure services for the beneficiaries that can also benefit the wider community.

2. Options considered

2.1. To not support any additional Afghan households beyond Harrow's initial commitment to integrate 10 households.

2.1.1. This option was rejected as not supporting qualifying Afghan households in the borough requesting integration support could lead to potential difficulties in their integration. As well as challenges in accessing key services as newly arrived Afghan households are navigating unfamiliar systems. This may result in more intensive and expensive intervention by the Council if households' needs are not met, which may lead to an increase in homelessness.

2.2. To continue with the Home Office property matching process to accommodate additional Afghan households from bridging hotels.

2.2.1. We have now met our commitment of supporting 10 households by procuring properties in the private rented sector to be matched to households in bridging hotels. As the programme has evolved, there have been many direct approaches from qualifying households in Harrow requesting integration support. To factor demand on local pressures, it is suggested to establish pathways to support households already in the borough through adoption, instead of facilitating arrival of additional households through the property matching process.

2.3. To support qualifying Afghan individuals in Harrow with integration support.

2.3.1. This approach is recommended as it enables the Council to support qualifying Afghan individuals, who are already in the borough to avoid difficulties in integration by ensuring individuals are supported in accessing key services as they resettle in Harrow. Through this approach, the Council will be able to draw down tariff funding (please see paragraph 3.7) and could assist with the prevention of an increase in homelessness approaches and enable better life chances in Harrow for resettled individuals.

3. Background

3.1. The large-scale evacuation of Afghan citizens in August 2021, led to the creation of Operation Warm Welcome, a cross-government programme to support evacuated Afghan individuals. In light of their arrival to the UK, the Home Office requested local government to

commit to welcome Afghan individuals under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme, and the new Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme for the duration of the 3-year schemes.

- 3.2. **The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP)** scheme offers relocation or other assistance to Locally Employed Staff in Afghanistan (and their families) who have worked in roles which could place them at risk of reprisals as a result of their work for the UK Government.
- 3.3. **The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)** provides protection for vulnerable refugees and people identified as at risk and in need. The scheme was announced in September 2021 and formally opened in January 2022 and prioritises:
 - those who have assisted the UK efforts in Afghanistan and stood up for values such as democracy, women's rights, freedom of speech, and rule of law; and
 - vulnerable people, including women and girls at risk, and members of minority groups at risk (including ethnic and religious minorities and LGBT+).
- 3.4. The government pledged to resettle more than 5,000 people on the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme in the first year and up to 20,000 over the coming years.
- 3.5. British nationals, who were evacuated as a result of the crisis are also eligible for support under the Resettlement Schemes.
- 3.6. Anyone who is resettled through the ACRS and ARAP schemes will receive indefinite leave to enter or remain in the UK, and they will have full entitlement to public funds, including housing, health, education, and the right to work.
- 3.7. The schemes are funded over a 3-year period, with some funding ringfenced to Year 1 of resettlement:
 - A total of £20,520 per individual for Local Authorities (LAs) to provide integration support
 - Per adult funding for English to Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) at a total of £850 in Year 1 via LAs
 - Per child funding for Education ranging from £2,250-£4,500, dependant of age in Year 1 via LAs
 - Additional Housing Support Costs Fund to be accessed by LAs if households are adversely affected by the benefit cap
 - £2,600 per person for Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) in Year 1
- 3.8. In Autumn of 2021, responding to the Government's objectives under Operation Warm Welcome, the Council pledged to resettle 10 Afghan households by September 2022. This commitment was made in line with Harrow supporting a fair share of resettlement across London, agreed through London Councils.

- 3.9. The 10 households, (consisting of 57¹ individuals - of which 49 qualify for funding) under the Schemes receive on-going integration support, and accommodation provided in the private rented sector. The integration support comprises of assistance with school admissions, ESOL provision, registering with key services and employment support.
- 3.10. In resettling these households, the Council co-ordinated with statutory partners for healthcare provision, such as signing up with local General Practice Surgeries and Dental registrations, alongside engaging with voluntary and community sector (VCS) partners.
- 3.11. As a result, the voluntary group, Harrow Citizens have assisted with accommodation set up ahead of households arriving in the borough through soft furnishings. The Basherri project, a community-based initiative provided hot meals and household items on the day of arrival. Citizens Advice Bureau assist with advice on budgeting and benefit claims, and Harrow Law Centre advise on immigration related issues. Households have also been signposted to local Afghan organisations, such as the Afghan Association of London, and Afghan Association Paiwand for services that they offer, such as women's groups, youth projects and mental health support.
- 3.12. A discretionary voluntary payment of £200 per month from the Council has been allocated to qualifying individuals, and non-qualifying children (those who were born in the UK after the evacuation) for Year 1 of their resettlement. The voluntary payment was allocated to support households financially as it was expected that households would have been in receipt of Universal Credit and would not have been employed having arrived from bridging hotels. As the first arriving families are now moving into Year 2, we are extending the discretionary payment on a tapered basis to £100 per month in Year 2 and £50 per month in Year 3. All of these costs are affordable within the tariff funding the Council is receiving.

4. Current situation

- 4.1. There are a significant number of Afghan individuals remaining in bridging hotels around the country. There are no bridging hotels in Harrow, but Harrow's demography shows an established and growing Afghan community. As a result of this, over the course of the programme, there have been direct homelessness approaches from Afghan households, who were part of the evacuation from Afghanistan. These households were case worked by the Home Office and may qualify under the Afghan Resettlement Schemes.

¹ Figure includes non-qualifying members, i.e., those who were not part of the evacuation and were joined by their qualifying family or children born in the UK after the evacuation.

Currently, there are 10 Afghan households in emergency and temporary accommodation.

- 4.2. Further to this, there are 3 households who were part of the evacuation and had joined family members in social housing in Harrow. These households are in significantly overcrowded accommodation.
- 4.3. Many Afghan households have vacated bridging hotels outside of the Home Office property matching process and settled in Harrow. These households have sourced their own accommodation at market rates, which in many instances is unaffordable.
- 4.4. Issues with unsuitable properties have potential to increase homelessness approaches in the borough. Households may experience debt or rent arrears because they have been affected by the benefit cap or have taken financial commitments in the private rented sector which they cannot afford.
- 4.5. In summer of 2022, the Government introduced the 'find your own accommodation' pathway which enables households in hotels to source their own accommodation in the private rented sector. The Government have asked councils to help Afghan households who choose this pathway to receive financial, advocacy and integration support. Market rent in Harrow is considerably high and affordability is a key concern with this pathway, as such we will consider cases on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.6. Further to this, the Government have introduced the homelessness referral pathway. Households in bridging accommodation are to be given a maximum of two suitable offers of accommodation. If both offers are rejected without good reason, the Home Office will give a minimum of 56 days' notice for the household to leave the bridging hotel. If households are unable to secure their own accommodation, the Home Office will signpost them to submit homelessness application to local authorities. The fair allocation of homelessness referrals is monitored by the Strategic Migration Partnership led by the Greater London Authority for the London region.

5. Why a change is needed

- 5.1. We have met our pledge to support 10 Afghan households and at this stage recommend establishing pathways to support households already in the borough, instead of facilitating households to move to Harrow through the Home Office property matching process.
- 5.2. The Government is requesting additional pledges in 2022/2023 to provide integration support for further households in bridging hotels. Given the local pressures referenced above, our proposal is to support qualifying Afghan individuals, who are already in the borough

as the funding we can draw down can assist them with integration support; help to avoid them becoming homeless; and alleviate some of the risks to households being adversely impacted by the global cost of living crisis.

- 5.3. It is challenging to predict the number of households that could be supported under this programme since the Council is not informed of qualifying households from the Home Office. Having said that, the Council has regularly received enquiries on integration support from evacuated Afghan households, and local intelligence from VCS partners indicates that there may be up to 30 qualifying households in the borough.
- 5.4. Through providing integration support, our intervention has the potential to improve self-sufficiency in households, and to get individuals employment ready, which will not only help them integrate in the wider community but also lift the benefit cap for those that have been affected.
- 5.5. In adopting qualifying households in the borough, we would need to be informed of the household's resettlement status by the Home Office and will need to receive a formal referral. Following receipt of the referral, the Council will undertake a property suitability assessment including landlord compliance checks, ensure the property is affordable, and of the right size for the family to avoid issues of overcrowding. Should these checks fail, the Council will not be able to assist qualifying Afghan households in the borough with integration support, as a key aspect of the Government programme is to ensure households are placed in suitable accommodations.
- 5.6. Where the property is deemed unsuitable, referrals will be made to Environmental Health, and if needed to other appropriate services to ensure the property is compliant against safety measures.
- 5.7. If the property is suitable and affordable, the Council will inform the Home Office of adoption and will be able to draw down the funding to support qualifying Afghan households.
- 5.8. During the programme, households will have the choice to move to other parts of the country and so under the Resettlement Schemes, the Council can only draw down funding if the households reside in Harrow. If the households move, then the tariff funding will follow to the local authority where they reside.

6. Implications of the Recommendation

- 6.1. This is a self-funded programme. Adopting households in the borough will enable the Council and other services such as Education, ESOL and Health to access funding to commission and

provide key services and assistance to evacuated Afghan individuals.

- 6.2. Not all individuals in a household may qualify under the Resettlement Schemes as the integration support is offered to evacuated Afghan individuals and does not apply to settled Afghan individuals in the UK who are joined by their family or children born in the UK after the evacuation. As substantial funding can be drawn down for qualifying individuals, the Council's approach would be to consider supporting households where at least 1 individual qualifies under the Schemes.
- 6.3. Through the tariff funding claimed, the Council may be able to alleviate some additional financial pressures for the duration of the Schemes. The current monthly discretionary voluntary payment arrangements conclude at the end of Year 1, leading to an abrupt end in financial support. Therefore, we will extend and taper the monthly payment in year 2 (£100) and year 3 (£50) to qualifying Afghan individuals and non-qualifying children for further financial support. The voluntary payment is funded through the local authority tariff, and the additional tapered payments are affordable within the existing budget and not reliant on any new funding via adoption of additional households in the community.
- 6.4. The local authority tariff is for the Council to provide integration and accommodation support. Most qualifying households in the borough have secured their own tenancies, many of which are for a short-term period. The programme offers support for 3-years, and at the end of the tenancies, the Council will encourage households to extend their tenancies or seek alternative accommodation. We can consider procuring properties in the private rented sector, but in reality the ability to procure properties at Local Housing Allowance rates will be challenging given the current market conditions.
- 6.5. The funding received from the Home Office is for 3-years, however considering the needs of resettled Afghan households, our programme of support can go beyond this period by close monitoring of the project budget, which has the potential to create sustainability and longevity into the programme.

7. Resources and Costs

- 7.1. The Resettlement Schemes are funded by government via the Home Office. The funding is in place to protect public services from any additional strain on already stretched resources and can facilitate investment in those services, which will support the achievement of integration and independence for those resettled under the Schemes.
- 7.2. The funding is provided retrospectively per individual in the following way:

Local authority tariff funding		
Year 1 of resettlement	Year 2 of resettlement	Year 3 of resettlement
£10,500	£6,000	£4,020
Education funding received via LAs		
One-off funding in Year 1		
Age 3-4 on arrival		Age 5-18 on arrival
£2,250		£4,500
ESOL funding received via LAs		
One-off funding in Year 1 for 18+ beneficiaries		
£850		
Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) funding		
One-off funding in Year 1 for all beneficiaries		
£2,600		

- 7.3. Depending on when individuals are adopted in Year 1, the funding will vary and will be subject to no other local authority claiming for the household. The Council will be able to claim 40% of the total local authority tariff and education funding within one month of resettlement and the remainder will be due in two equal instalments at the end of the fourth and eighth month of resettlement schemes. Further to the funding arrangements, local authority tariff funding will be reduced for households adopted in Year 2 or 3 of the Schemes as identified above. Therefore, we will only adopt qualifying individuals if we can claim at least an aspect of Year 1 funding to maximise the amount of funding available to the Council and partners over the 3-year schemes.
- 7.4. The following table maps the estimated local authority tariff funding that can be claimed, and expenditure anticipated depending on the number of additional households supported. Family sizes varies significantly for evacuated Afghan households, but for indicative purposes, for a family of 6, the Council could claim up to £123,120 over a 3-year period. The spend for these households has been projected in line with the current cohort's expenditure but we recognise this figure will vary.

	Breakdown for 10 existing households supported (consisting of 49 qualifying individuals)	Additional households supported, consisting of 6 individuals in each household*		
		Scenario 1 - 10 households	Scenario 2 - 20 households	Scenario 3 - 30 households
Funding received (over 3-years)	£1,005,480	£1,231,200	£2,462,400	£3,693,600
Expenditure:				
Furniture at £2,000	£22,386	£20,000	£40,000	£60,000

Voluntary payment per household for 3-years: (year 1 £1200, year 2 £600, year 3 £300)	£222,600	£252,000	£504,000	£756,000
Staff costs (see paragraph 8.2 for a breakdown of cost)				
Y1	£40,389	£0	£303,898	£303,898
Y2	£266,449	£303,898	£303,898	£303,898
Y3	£303,898	£303,898	£303,898	£303,898
Additional posts as and when required	N/A	The existing staff will be able to manage further 10 households, hence no staff cost in Y1	£436,582 (2 G8 Housing Officers and 1 G9 Community Support Officer)	£591,999 (2 G8 Housing Officers and 2 G9 Community Support Officers)
Total staff costs (at top scale for 3-years)	£610,736	£607,796	1,348,276	£1,503,693
Recruitment/Legal/external costs, etc.	£139,758	£100,000	£150,000	£200,000
<u>Funding remaining (to be allocated as referenced in paragraph 7.6)</u>	<u>£10,000</u>	<u>£251,404</u>	<u>£420,124</u>	<u>£1,173,907</u>

**These projections are for illustration purposes only, based on the 3-years spectrum for each scenario and falling in the 12 months of a Financial Year. The real uptake of households may vary in numbers, and timing of joining the programme.*

- 7.5. The tariff funding for additional households will cover the furniture costs, discretionary voluntary payments to qualifying Afghan individuals and non-qualifying children, staff costs and external costs. It should be noted that the figures for additional families are projections only and so should this not materialise, then there will be no additional funding.
- 7.6. The remaining funding could be made available to provide key services through the VCS such as Harrow Law Centre for immigration advice and Citizens Advice Harrow for benefits advice. Further community projects will also be considered to facilitate integration and independence within this cohort. Other ancillary costs including additional staff costs, IT, and telephony will also be deployed through the remaining funding.

- 7.7. Additionally, other expenditure on this programme will include costs incurred through incentive payments for the procurement of properties, potential short void periods and funding for households affected by the benefit cap, which the Council may be able to claim back retrospectively. Currently, the payments for the benefit cap shortfall are being met by the Council's Discretionary Housing Payments but upon receipt of the Home Office funding, the expenditure is anticipated to be reimbursed to the Council to prevent financial pressures.
- 7.8. From these projections, the funding that could be received for the potential number of households supported and of the existing cohorts' expenditure, we are comfortable that the 3-year funding per individual is sufficient for support without creating financial pressures on the Council through an overspend in the budget.

8. Staffing

- 8.1. The authorisation of adopting households in the borough will impact on staff resources within the Council as the service will need to scale in response to demand. The existing staff resource, allocated from the current Home Office grant for co-ordinating the resettlement programme consists of:
- 1 G9 Community Support Officer 0.4 FTE (£20,722)
 - 2 G9 Community Support Officers FTE (£103,611)
 - 1 G11 Policy Officer FTE (£64,667)
 - Oversight from the Head of Community Cohesion (£40,000)
 - Recruitment of a MG1 Senior Policy Officer FTE (£74,897)
- 8.2. Currently, staff working solely on the programme are employed through secondment or agency, with the view to move agency staff to direct Council employment on Fixed Term Contracts. These posts will require extension in line with supporting additional households.
- 8.3. The staffing arrangements expected in a Financial Year amount to £303,898. The estimated costs in 2022/23 reflects delayed recruitment and amounts to £266,449.
- 8.4. Subject to Cabinet approval of the recommendations, we anticipate recruitment of two G8 Housing Officers (£46,861 per post) and further two G9 Community Support Officers (£51,806 per post), should the need arise.

9. Performance Issues

- 9.1. The outcome of the programme is not performance based, but in adopting and supporting families we are aiming to support successful integration into Harrow and the broader UK, beyond the life of the resettlement programme. Some of our partners such as Schools and Learn Harrow, as part of their regular work will be externally

regulated. By adopting households in borough, we will be able to claim education and ESOL funding for this cohort in Year 1, which will be transferred to the providers to support qualifying Afghan individuals and build capacity in their provision. Similarly, NHS partners will be able to claim funding for qualifying households in Year 1.

10. Environmental Implications

10.1. There are no environmental implications to adopting qualifying Afghan households in the borough to provide integration support.

11. Data Protection Implications

11.1. The Council will receive information on household's requesting integration support from the Home Office through a secure platform. The programme does not require routinely sharing details of resettled households. Households will be signposted to services for assistance with claiming benefits and for programmes delivered by VCS partners for which consent to share personal details will be sought.

12. Risk Management Implications

12.1. Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **No**

12.2. Separate risk register in place? **Yes**

12.3. The relevant risks contained in the register are attached/summarised below. **Yes**

12.4. The following key risks should be taken into account when agreeing the recommendations in this report:

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
There is an increase in the level of Afghan evacuee homelessness in the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As recommended in this report, by adopting qualifying Afghan individuals in the borough, the Council will be able to draw down funding to provide integration support which may prevent rising levels of homelessness in the borough. 	Amber
Further to the funding arrangements, reduced funding is available for households adopted by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will only adopt qualifying households where we can claim Year 1 funding as part of the 	Amber

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
Harrow for the first time in Year 2 or 3 of the Programme and not adopted in Year 1	adoption, to maximise the amount of funding available to the Council over the 3-year period.	
Perception of resettled Afghan individuals placing pressures on stretched community resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specific Home Office funding is available for Health and Education providers in Year 1 to support local resources. ▪ Newly arrived qualifying Afghan individuals are signposted to local VCS partners for additional support as needed. 	Amber
Cohesion impact of sourcing properties in the private rented sector and pressures on social housing to resettle evacuated Afghans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Processes and policies are in place against what is a moving picture to consider local impact when sourcing accommodation and as a result, Housing Services have procured properties only in the private rented sector. 	Amber
Global cost of living crisis impacting the resettled households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All qualifying individuals and non-qualifying children will be in receipt of the discretionary voluntary payment from the Council, which is being extended on a tapered basis. ▪ The Additional Housing Support Costs fund by the Home Office is available for households affected by the benefit cap and claims will be submitted in arrears for the shortfall. ▪ Households are offered budgeting sessions with CAB to understand and manage their finances, and benefits arrangements, including 	Amber

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
	employment or change in financial circumstances.	
Not all Afghan individuals in a household qualify under the resettlement schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confirmation of case status and formal referral will be sought from the Home Office before any adoption. ▪ Households with at least 1 qualify individual will be considered for adoption. Non-qualifying Afghan individuals will not receive direct support from the Council by way of voluntary payments (this does not include non-qualifying children) but may benefit from the wider integration support offered to their household. 	Green
The grant is not spent in accordance with the grant conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integration support will be offered to qualifying Afghan individuals as per the Home Office Funding Instructions and programme expectations. ▪ Services will be commissioned in line with the needs of adopted individuals, should further qualifying individuals not materialise, then there will be no additional funding. 	Green
The Afghan resettlement schemes programme budget is overspent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This an on-going programme where existing income from the current Afghan households supported can be merged with future funding drawn down from the Home Office, allowing for financial stability. ▪ The Programme's potential budget has a healthy buffer in unallocated funds which can be deployed to meet 	Green

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
	demand as a contingency.	
Liability of redundancy payments for staff employed longer than 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any recruitment under this programme will consider current capacity and capability before employment commitment is made. ▪ Staff will be employed via secondment or on fixed-term contracts. ▪ Costs associated with redundancy payments will be managed within the programme budget, covered by the Home Office grant. 	Green

13. Procurement Implications

13.1. To deliver the resettlement programme, the Council entered into a number of contracts with local VCS organisations. These are set out below and have followed the Contract Procedure Rules. Given the speed at which the Council needed to respond, all of these procurements have been exempt from competitive tendering with the appropriate waivers obtained. Harrow Citizens is the Borough alliance of Citizens UK in North London; they are a community network who assist with supporting refugees.

Organisation	Role	Funding	Length of contract
Citizens Advice Harrow	Generalist Information and Advice, including benefits claims	£25,000	One year (January 2022-December 2022)
Harrow Law Centre	Specialist advice such as immigration	£25,000	One year (January 2022-December 2022)
Citizens UK – Harrow Citizens	Provide soft furnishings to resettled Afghan households	£8,781	6 months (June 2022 – November 2022)

13.2. The extension of contracts and further procurement of services as referenced in paragraph 7.6 will be explored in line with the needs of adopted households, which can differ from households arriving from bridging hotels. All future procurement will follow Contract Procedure

Rules, and future spend will be supported within the external funding envelope.

14. Legal Implications

- 14.1. The Afghan Resettlement Schemes is a government initiative that is aimed at resettling evacuated Afghan individuals under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.
- 14.2. Under section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, a local authority has the power to take action, which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions and therefore has a general power to enter into contracts for the discharge of any of its functions.
- 14.3. Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2000 gives the Secretary of State power to award grants to local authorities for expenditure incurred by them in the provision of welfare services determined by the Secretary of State.
- 14.4. There are no other legal implications from the decisions recommended to Cabinet. As qualifying Afghan households within the Schemes will have a legal right to reside in the UK indefinitely, including full access to public services, entitlement under the Housing Act 1996 and benefits, entitlement under the Education Act 1996 (for children aged between 3 to 18 years), there are no negative implications resulting from the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and the Immigration Act 2016 which the Council will need to consider.
- 14.5. Whilst there will need to be an assessment of every qualifying Afghan individual in due course, those assessments can be considered the implementation of this decision, rather than separate decisions. The Council will need to ensure it complies with any conditions imposed on it as part of the Schemes, and legal advice sought in respect of those conditions where appropriate.

15. Financial Implications

- 15.1. Based on the current 10 households supported, the Council is expecting to receive funding of £1,005,480 over a 3-year period. Integration support for further qualifying Afghan households adopted will be fully funded from the Home Office grant. Funding is available at £20,520 per individual (£123,120 per household of 6 individuals) over a 3-year period. There will be no direct impact on the Council's financial resources as a result of recommendations 1-3.
- 15.2. Officers responsible for managing the programme to cover all costs attributable to these schemes from the Home Office grant, this includes management and staff cost such as, salaries, recruitment,

IT and Telephony provision, transport and other supplies and services or external and internal legal advice when applicable. Any staff engaged to manage these time limited schemes should be either seconded from their substantive posts or engaged on a Fixed Term Contract basis so there is no liability and budget pressure to the Council once the schemes wound down.

- 15.3. Financial monitoring will continue in line with the budget management and monitoring principles.

16. Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

- 16.1. The Afghan Resettlement Schemes programme, and the proposals therein caters to a predefined group of refugees who are settling in the borough and hence will not result in unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- 16.2. The programme will advance equality of opportunity among those of Afghan ethnicity.
- 16.3. The programme will foster good relations between people from different groups through the wider support offered to resettled Afghan individuals, with VCS partners leading on inter-community initiatives, and related integration offer planned to help Afghan individuals feel welcome and established in the borough, through ESOL, education and employment support.

17. Council Priorities

17.1. A place where those in need are supported

- 17.2.2. The programme ensures appropriate support is given to qualifying Afghan individuals, who are already in the borough to avoid difficulties in integration by ensuring individuals are supported in accessing key services as they resettle. To this aim, all the Council's work will support successful integration into Harrow and the broader UK, beyond the life of the 3-year programme.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Sharon Daniels

Signed on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 28th November 2022

Statutory Officer: Kaniz Ali

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 25th November 2022

Chief Officer: Alex Dewsnap
Signed off by the Acting Corporate Director
Date: 17th November 2022

Head of Procurement: Nimesh Mehta
Signed by the Head of Procurement
Date: 23rd November 2022

Head of Internal Audit: Susan Dixon
Signed by the Head of Internal Audit
Date: 24th November 2022

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards

EqlA carried out: Yes

EqlA cleared by: Shumaila Dar

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Samia Malik, Head of Community Cohesion,
samia.malik@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

Call-in waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee - NO