

# Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



**Nottingham**  
**City Council**

Reference Number:

4370

Author:

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Department:

Resident Services

Contact:

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Subject:

Approval to participate in Afghan Locally Employed Staff Relocation

Total Value:

£325,435.80 (Type: Revenue)

Decision Being Taken:

- (1) To obtain approval to participate in the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Programme (ARAP) as per the Home Office scheme communicated on Thursday 3rd June 2021, and to drawdown central government grant monies, as per the Council Plan priority to be a city that welcomes those in need of refuge or shelter.
- (2) To seek authority to make a direct award of funds to Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum (NNRF).
- (3) To obtain dispensation, for operational reasons, under Financial Regulation 3.29 from the requirement to undertake a tendering process under Contract Procedure Rule 4.1.2.

**Reasons for the Decision(s)**

Central government has written to all local authority Chief Executives and Leaders seeking support and participation in resettlement of locally employed staff (LES) who have supported UK armed forces in Afghanistan, under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Programme (ARAP). As NATO forces withdraw from Afghanistan, the government is now seeking to accelerate relocations into UK local authority areas, within a planning envelope of 600 families nationwide, with arrivals commencing September 2021. Participating local authorities will be supported with a 12-month grant funding package to enable delivery of required outputs. Local authorities will be required to provide integration support for the first 12 months, including sourcing of accommodation, reception at accommodation, welcome briefing, GP/DWP/school registrations, cash support until benefits are in payment, and advice/assistance around employment, welfare, housing, health, utilities, and education. It is indicated that Nottingham City Council will be requested to resettle up to six families (approximately 24 individuals), attracting a maximum estimated income of £325,435.80. Nottingham City Council also undertakes partnerships with four Nottinghamshire district authorities (Gedling, Broxtowe, Rushcliffe, and Newark & Sherwood) to provide direct support (administration, finance, contract management and monitoring, etc) to their participation in refugee resettlement, retaining 8% of district grant monies in consideration of management fees -- the Community Partnership service would recommend replication of this approach for ARAP (assuming a maximum of six families per authority), attracting additional income. Delivery would be undertaken by a combination of internal Community Partnerships services in partnership with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum, and based heavily upon established and embedded resettlement practices. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum (NNRF) is a key partner of Nottingham City Council in provision of services to vulnerable migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, and is the lead organisation in a successful consortium tender for NCC Communities of Identity funding. As a large

charitable body operating county-wide in the migration sphere, ad hoc integration support for vulnerable migrants, including Afghan LES, is likely to default to NNRF irrespective. Additionally, NNRF has worked successfully with NCC to provide integration casework support to vulnerable refugees under previous resettlement schemes (VPRS/UKRS), and therefore has considerable experience in this sphere, well-developed and embedded processes, staff already in post, and a great deal of previous good practice and learning, facilitating the required rapid response. This approach therefore represents best value for the Council, considering the requirement to deliver this work at both scale and pace. Dispensation from relevant Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules is sought until September 2022, due to the rapid deterioration of the situation in Afghanistan, and the resultant risk to life and limb. Please note that a detailed Funding Instruction and Statement of Outcomes remains under development by central government, and specific details may be subject to change. This work is also in accordance with the Council Plan pledge to be a city that welcomes those in need of refuge or shelter.

**Briefing notes documents:**

LES Briefing Note v0.8.docx

**Other Options Considered:**

**Non-participation: Considered but not accepted, as this accords with a Council Plan priority. Income loss arising from suspension during 2020-21 due to COVID-19 of other resettlement work will impact considerably on established staffing, partnerships and networks developed and embedded over several years. Although delivery of this work at the requested pace is a considerable challenge, and will divert resource from preparations for resumption of refugee resettlement. Participation in this programme will offer some resilience and mitigation in budget terms, and apart from the requested pace, falls well within day-to-day business for refugee resettlement staff.**

**Tendering process and services contract: As ARAP work is commencing with little more than six weeks notice from central Government, and in consideration of the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan, there is not time to undertake procurement of a provider of the required services.**

**Background Papers:**

**Improved Funding Offer for the Afghan Relocation Scheme.docx LA Factsheet on the Afghan Locally Employed Staff Relocation Scheme.pdf Limitations on funding use and ineligible expenditure.docx 210603 Ministerial Letter to LAs Political Leaders DAs on Afghan LES Scheme Joint Sig Afghan Locally Employed Staff Relocation Schemes v2.0**

**Unpublished background papers:**

**Improved Funding Offer for the Afghan Relocation Scheme.docx, LA Factsheet on the Afghan Locally Employed Staff (LES) Relocation Scheme.pdf, Limitations on funding use and ineligible expenditure.docx, 210603 Ministerial Letter to LAs Political Leaders DAs on Afghan LES Scheme Joint Sig.pdf, afghan-locally-employed-staff-relocation-schemes-v2.0-gov-uk.pdf**

**Published Works:**

**Afghan Locally Employed Staff -- Relocation Schemes  
([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/971252/afghan-locally-employed-staff-relocation-schemes-v2.0-gov-uk.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/971252/afghan-locally-employed-staff-relocation-schemes-v2.0-gov-uk.pdf))**

**Affected Wards:**

**Citywide**

**Colleague / Councillor Interests:**

**None**

**Dispensation from Financial Regulations:**

**Yes**

**Consultations:**

**Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.**

**Crime and Disorder Implications:**

As a vulnerable cohort, migrants are at risk of ASB, Hate Crime etc. Early intervention around harm prevention is the first priority and we will work with each intake to deliver key messages around Hate Crime and ASB. We work with Community Protection (CP) Intelligence Analysts to ensure that such matters are registered for consideration in the Tasking and Tensions Monitoring processes. In partnership with other CP teams and Notts Police, we provide intensive support with these matters.

**Equality:**

EIA not required. Reasons: There are no significant changes to policies or practices. Overlapping impacts on domestic abuse, hate crime, issues impacting Muslim women, and other priorities which are currently managed within the Directorate.

**Social Value Considerations:**

The funding arrangement will provide opportunities to empower smoother integration for LES families. It is anticipated that more than 50% of the LES cohort will be aged 18 or below. Experience shows that younger people achieve cultural integration more quickly than older generations, which creates a local anchor to the area for families. We are investigating use of private housing stock in delivery, enabling us to target a proportion of the grant remittance to creation of compliant, affordable and sustainable housing and mitigating impact on social housing stocks.

**Decision Type:**

Portfolio Holder

**Subject to Call In:**

Yes

**Call In Expiry date:**

21/09/2021

**Advice Sought:**

Legal, Finance, Procurement

**Legal Advice:**

The Council may receive the funding and act as the accountable body under the powers granted to it under s.1 Localism Act 2011. Any management of the fund, including distributions must at all times be in accordance with any funding obligations from Central Government.

A dispensation under Financial Regulation 3.29 in the Council's Constitution may be granted for operational reasons. These have been set out by the report author. The report author has also set out reasons as to why the proposal delivers best value for the Council and so meeting its Best Value duty under the Local Government Act 1999. Given the value of the proposed award and the type of services being delivered, it is considered that the obligations under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 are unlikely to apply. It will be necessary however to conduct a procurement process to secure a provider of these services from October 2022. Legal support will be provided as part of the procurement and contracting arrangements.

Advice provided by Naomi Vass (Senior Solicitor) on 27/08/2021.

**Finance Advice:**

<b>Advice provided by Susan Turner (Senior Commercial Business Partner) on 25/08/2021.</b>
<b>Advice documents: Afghan refugee relocation scheme - Finance Comments.docx</b>

**Procurement Advice:**

<p><b>This decision relates to the receipt and expenditure of Home Office grant funding for participation in the Home Office Afghan Relocation and Assistance Programme for Locally Employed Staff. The proposed contract with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum (NNRF) will enable the necessary services to be delivered urgently to resettle this cohort by September 2021, in accordance with Home Office requirements. NNRF is an established partner working with refugees in the City and has the necessary expertise and an established structure and staffing to facilitate the immediate response required. Therefore dispensation from Contract Procedure Rule 4.1.2 in accordance with Financial Regulation 3.29 (operational reasons) is supported from a procurement perspective. A suitable contract should be in place to ensure delivery in accordance with the Home Office grant conditions. Should further services be required the Procurement Team will support and ensure compliance through a full procurement process. Advice provided by Jo Pettifor (Procurement Team Manager) on 20/08/2021.</b></p>
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**Signatures**

<b>Neghat Khan (PH Neighbourhoods, Safety and Inclusion)</b>
<b>SIGNED and Dated: 14/09/2021</b>
<b>Frank Jordan (Corporate Director, Resident Services)</b>
<b>SIGNED and Dated: 14/09/2021</b>
<b>Clive Heaphy as Chief Finance Officer (Chief Finance Officer) - Dispensation from Financial Regulations</b>
<b>SIGNED and Dated: 10/09/2021</b>
<b>Chief Finance Officer's Comments:</b>