

## Record of officer decision

<b>Decision title:</b>	Commissioning of an accommodation and furnishing set up service for Afghan Refugees arriving through the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) schemes and for people from the Ukraine resettling in Herefordshire through the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, the Ukraine Family Visa Scheme or the Ukraine Extension Scheme.
<b>Date of decision:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> July 2023
<b>Decision maker:</b>	Corporate Director Community Wellbeing
<b>Authority for delegated decision:</b>	The chief executive's scheme of delegation CW08- Commissioning, quality assurance and contract management relating to all ages
<b>Ward:</b>	Countywide
<b>Consultation:</b>	<p>The council has consulted with Home Office guidance, the West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership (WMSMP) and people with lived experience of resettling in Herefordshire in preparing for the next phase of refugee resettlement. It has also engaged with NHS partners, the voluntary and community sector and housing providers in determining the commissioned support for refugees which is required.</p> <p>Legal, finance and procurement colleagues have been consulted and advice provided will inform the commissioning process.</p>
<b>Decision made:</b>	To procure an accommodation and furnishing set up service for up to 50 properties for Afghan Refugees on the ARAP and ACRS schemes and for people from the Ukraine resettling in Herefordshire through the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, the Ukraine Family Visa Scheme or the Ukraine Extension Scheme.
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>	<p><u>Refugee Resettlement</u></p> <p>Herefordshire Council made a commitment in 2020 to resettle at least 125 refugees by mid-2025. A total of 84 Afghan people were resettled through the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) during 2022/23. The Council has now made the decision to undertake a second phase of resettlement for people resettling under the ARAP and ACRS schemes during Autumn 2023 into Summer 2024.</p> <p><u>Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme and Ukraine Family Visa Scheme</u></p> <p>Since March 2022, Herefordshire has welcomed 663 Ukrainian guests (as at 13.07.23) to stay with over 230 sponsors through the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme. Whilst the scheme is not a formal refugee scheme, it is fully funded by the government based on a tariff grant per guest arriving in the county.</p> <p>An operational team to run the Homes for Ukraine Scheme was established by the council in April 2022, to fulfil the requirements of the government guidance including carrying out safeguarding and accommodation checks, providing support to both households and hosts.</p> <p>The Homes for Ukraine scheme is well into its second year, there is currently no end date to the scheme and Herefordshire continues to welcome families. The focus of the scheme is now largely on individual casework and</p>

	<p>supporting longer term resettlement. There are still over 400 guests living with sponsors, with a further 140 who have moved out still living in other accommodation in the county. This includes 18 Ukrainian households in temporary accommodation awaiting longer term housing.</p> <p><u>Accommodation for future resettlement</u></p> <p>A total of 13 units of affordable accommodation have been negotiated specifically for the resettlement of Afghan refugees. A further 37 properties have been secured in partnership with local Registered Providers using grant funding secured through the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF). The terms and conditions of the LAHF grant state that 9 of these properties must be for Afghan families. The remaining 28 can be used to accommodate Ukrainian and / or Afghan families. All households must be homeless, at risk of homelessness or live in unsuitable temporary accommodation. The LAHF funded properties will range in age, condition and location as they are being purchased from the open market.</p> <p>All 50 of these properties will need to be prepared for occupation including painting (with the exception of new build properties which will already have been painted) carpeting/flooring, furnishing and equipping for occupation. The Council is looking to issue a single contract for the provision of these services, but will consider tenders from partnerships and consortia.</p>
<p><b>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</b></p>	<p>There is no financial risk arising from this decision. All costs of providing this service will be met by funding provided by central government to resettle refugees / Ukrainians.</p>
<p><b>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</b></p>	<p>To deliver this service in house. The Resettlement and Migration Team at Herefordshire Council do not currently have the capacity to deliver this service directly. The team will undertake the co-ordination work required to ensure that homes are prepared as they become available.</p>
<p><b>Details of any declarations of interest made:</b></p>	<p>None</p>