

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Award of contract for the refurbishment, furnishing and set up of up to 50 units of accommodation for Afghan Refugees and for people from the Ukraine resettling in Herefordshire through the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme and the Ukraine Family Visa Scheme.
Date of decision:	13 th November 2023
Decision maker:	Corporate Director Community Wellbeing
Authority for delegated decision:	The chief executive's scheme of delegation CW08; Commissioning, quality assurance and contract management relating to all ages.
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	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. Legal, finance and commercial colleagues have been consulted and their advice has informed this commissioning process.
Decision made:	Following a failed open tender process, a negotiated procedure process was undertaken to enable the award of this contract to Daniel Wharton, General Builder. The contract value is up to £370,000 (exclusive of VAT) for 12 months, with the option to extend for a further 12 months.
Reasons for decision:	<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 717 Ukrainian guests (as at 01.11.23) to stay with over 260 sponsors through the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, of these 324 are still with 125 sponsors. 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 supporting longer term resettlement.</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</p>

	<p>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. The LAHF funded properties will range in age, condition and location as they are being purchase from the open market. The matching process for these properties has commenced.</p> <p>These properties will have to be prepared for occupation including painting, carpeting/flooring, furnishing and equipping for occupation.</p>
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	<p>The financial risks arising from this decision are low. All costs of providing this service will be met by funding provided by central government to resettle refugees / Ukrainians.</p> <p>Legal and Commercial support has been sought to ensure compliance with the negotiated procedure process, following a failed open tender process.</p>
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	<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>
Details of any declarations of interest made:	<p>None</p>

Signed..... Date: