

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough

The Leader of Kent County Council

DECISION NO:

24/00071

For publication *[Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]*

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Afghan Resettlement (ARAP and ACRS) and United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) – proposed service delivery from February 2025

Decision:

As the Leader of the Council, I propose to:

1. **Approve** the acceptance of Home Office grant funding for the Afghan Resettlement Schemes (ARAP and ACRS) and the United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) and to determine the appropriate delivery model.
2. **Agree** to Kent County Council continuing to be the 'Lead Recipient' for the Home Office grant for all districts in Kent with the exception of Ashford, Canterbury and individuals resettled to the Ministry of Defence and Local Authority Housing Fund properties in Dover.
3. **Approve** that the Afghan Resettlement Schemes (ARAP and ACRS) and the United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) be delivered based on the preferred option (recommissioning using a new commissioning delivery model).
4. **Delegate** authority to the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Leader to take relevant actions, including but not limited to, entering into the relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary, to implement the decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

The current contract under which Kent County Council commissions a large part of the day-to-day resettlement and integration casework support for the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP), the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) and the United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) will come to an end on 31st January 2025.

There are two options for delivering the scheme from 1st February:

- (a) All service provision is moved in-house and delivered by an internal KCC team.
- (b) Recommissioning integration and casework support elements using a new commissioning

model to make it more likely that the service is delivered by one commissioned provider

A new commissioning model is the preferred option to be progressed.

The decision affects all Electoral Divisions.

The decision involves potential expenditure of over £1m.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The proposed decision will be considered by the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on the 10th September 2024.

The Corporate Management Team were consulted on the 4th June 2024.

Consultation has also taken place with groups of the current cohort of refugees KCC is supporting, with the district housing authorities, with several voluntary groups, with current providers and other refugee resettlement teams.

Consultation with potential suppliers has also taken place via a series of market engagement events.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Other options considered but discarded:

- 1) Do Nothing. The current contracts will end on the 31st January 2025 and alternative provision for the existing refugee families will have to be sought until their time on the schemes comes to an end. If not, there is a risk of particularly vulnerable families who are not yet integrated, independent or self-sufficient falling through the net, becoming an added burden to local services.

Resettlement through 'safe and legal' routes continues to be a critical tool for refugees who face specific or urgent risks. Given the national expectation that all regions will contribute, it is anticipated that activity to support refugees will be a significant long-term area of work and focus for the Kent County Council and the District/Borough Councils going forward.

- 2) Recommission using the existing multiple provider commissioning model. The review of our current service delivery highlighted the disadvantages of using multiple commissioned providers to deliver the programme.

Each delivery model option was assessed using the same set criteria. The criteria and weighting were developed in relation to the scheme criteria, review of the current delivery model, consultation on our delivery model with key stakeholders, review of other refugee resettlement delivery models and analysis of key risks. This delivery model option scored the least against the assessment criteria and so was discounted.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

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signed

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date