Title of Report: Syrian Vulnerable Person Relocation Scheme - Summary Report

Report to be considered by: The Health and Wellbeing Board

Date of Meeting: 28th January 2016

Purpose of Report: This report sets out the background to the Syrian Vulnerable Person Relocation Scheme, the implication of the scheme on the Council and other agencies; the scoping work undertaken by Council Officers and the suggested way forward to receiving refugees into West Berkshire.

Recommended Action: It is proposed that the Board note the details of the scheme and consider their implications for their own organisations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When decisions of the Health and Wellbeing Board impact on the finances or general operation of the Council, recommendations of the Board must be referred up to the Executive for final determination and decision.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will the recommendation require the matter to be referred to the Council’s Executive for final determination?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this item relevant to equality?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outcome Where one or more ‘Yes’ boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality. In this instance please give details of how the item impacts upon the equality streams under the executive report section as outlined.

Health and Wellbeing Board Chairman details
Name & Telephone No.: Graham Jones – Tel 07767 690228
E-mail Address: gjones@westberks.gov.uk

Contact Officer Details
Name: Carolyn Richardson
Job Title: Civil Contingencies Manager
E-mail Address: crichardson@westberks.gov.uk
Executive Report

1. Introduction

1.1 In September 2015 the Government announced the expansion of the refugee resettlement programme with a commitment that over the term of the parliament 20,000 vulnerable Syrians would be resettled across the UK.

1.2 Since September this Council, through a working group have been considering the implications, working with other agencies, other local authorities and the voluntary sector to develop a plan for integrating any refugees accepted.

1.3 Positive engagement has been received from the other partners and the key issue of housing appears to be nearing resolution with 2 – 3 new private sector homes being made available for the scheme.

1.4 There have been a number of challenges to resolve and there will be challenges to overcome during the period of the scheme. Some of these challenges include cultural understanding, housing availability, language barriers and having the ability to work with some of the statutory rules. Many of these are now being resolved and others are progressing as a result of positive engagement with other agencies and partners.

1.5 The Council Resettlement Plan is now in its final stages of development (Appendix C) such that an offer to the home office could be made at the end of December 2015 early January 2016 with a view to receiving our first refugees in February/March 2016.

1.6 Currently it is estimated that the impact on the Council be limited over the 5 year period of the scheme by way of staff resourcing and costs. The staff impact for the first families is likely to be more intense than future families as the processes and learning are put in place. All costs for the first few years will be covered by the Government.

2. Conclusion

2.1 The Council has spent the last 3 months preparing with local partners and have now identified housing to commence Phase 1 (2-3 families). The Government will be funding the scheme and we are confident that our costs will be covered. As a result the impact on the Council is likely to be minimal.

2.2 The Full Council has agreed to support the Scheme (ref meeting on 10th December) and therefore an offer to the Home Office will be made in soon initiating the process. To this end:

(1) The Steering Group will progress the plan;

(2) In Phase 1 we plan to accommodate 2-3 families (10 – 15 people);

(3) A review is undertaken 3 months post the arrival of the first refugees and a report prepared for this Board detailing successes, issues, costs and process;
(4) External communications will be low key for safeguarding reasons.

3. **Equalities**

3.1 A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out as part of the scheme and can be made available on request.

**Appendices**

3.2 Appendix A - Supporting Information

3.3 Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment

3.4 Appendix C - Syrian Refugee Vulnerable Person Scheme, DRAFT, West Berkshire Resettlement Plan Version 1 Dec 2015