

Report

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Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 May 2018
Report by:	Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

Subject:	Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme (SRRP)
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ provide Committee with an update on the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme (SRRP), on both a Scotland and South Lanarkshire level
- ♦ request approval to accommodate a further 60 refugees through the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme during 2018 and 2019, subject to continuing funding and support from the Home Office

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendations:-

- (1) that the updated position on the SRRP, be noted;
- (2) that the plan to accommodate a further 60 refugees during 2018/2019, as part of the next phase of the SRRP, be approved;
- (3) that the plan to accommodate a further 60 refugees in 2019/2020, as part of the SRRP, be approved;
- (4) that the proposal to submit an Annual Report to this Committee on progress made through to 2019/20, be approved; and
- (5) that the proposal to submit an Annual Report to the Community Planning Partnership, be approved.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme (SRRP), formerly called the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (SVPRS) is designed to assist Syrians who have fled to countries neighbouring Syria as a result of the ongoing conflict in their home country. The Programme provides support to vulnerable individuals and families who are survivors of violence and torture, women and children at risk, and those needing medical care.
- 3.2. The UK Government initiated the new SRRP during 2015 with the intention to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees in the UK within a five year period up to 2020. The individuals would be from non European camps (Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt etc) and would be registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) who administer support within the refugee camps.

- 3.3. The Scottish Government and a number of Scottish Local Authorities agreed to participate in the Programme in 2015, following confirmation by the Home Office of funding arrangements, legal rights of refugees and assurances over the assessment process for families arriving. Syrian refugees have a right to remain and work in the UK for five years from their date of arrival.
- 3.4. All funding for the Programme comes from the Home Office – through the UK Aid budget, and costs are covered based on a flexible unit cost approach giving local authorities the ability to pool them.
- 3.5. Local Authorities receive the following unit costs in year one (from arrival date):-
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| Children under the age of 3 | £ 8,520 |
| Children aged 3-4 | £11,770 |
| Children aged 5-18 | £14,020 |
| Adults in receipt of mainstream benefits | £ 8,520 |
| Other adults | £ 8,520 |
- 3.6. Funds for welfare benefits are paid by the Home Office directly to the DWP and health costs are paid directly to the clinical commissioning groups.
- 3.7. In November 2015 South Lanarkshire Council and Community Planning Partners agreed to take part in the Programme and the first Syrian families arrived on 9 December 2015. Two families (9 individuals) were resettled in the Rutherglen area.
- 3.8. Supported by CoSLA, forward planning arrangements between South Lanarkshire Council, Community Planning Partners and the Home Office during 2016 and 2017 agreed that the authority would resettle 60 individuals per year (120 individuals).
- 3.9. The continuing involvement of Scottish Local Authorities in the programme was endorsed at CoSLA's Community Wellbeing Board meeting held in September 2017.

4. Current National and Local Position

- 4.1. The Scottish Government announced its participation in the then SVPRS in September 2015. Since then Scottish local authorities have received and settled 2,300 refugees.
- 4.2. From December 2015 to April 2018 South Lanarkshire Council and Community Planning Partners have resettled 32 families (118 individuals) across the geographical area.
- 4.3. The families have been housed both by the Council (68%) and Registered Social Landlords (32%). Seven families are settled within the Rutherglen and Cambuslang area, five within East Kilbride, eleven within the wider Hamilton area and nine families in Clydesdale.
- 4.4. On arrival the families require initial intensive support to assist with their integration into their new home, community and Scottish way of life. The families are supported by Housing and Technical Resources' specialist support provision - Refugee Resettlement team (RRT). Support continues to be provided for an average 8-10 months depending upon the assessed needs of each household.

- 4.5. Families have integrated well within their local communities, which have been welcoming and supportive. Children are attending school/nursery, adults are attending ESOL provision/college and working or volunteering. Families are making local friends as well as keeping in touch with other Syrians throughout the UK who have also arrived through the Programme. This provides a local and national support network for families.

5. Proposals for Ongoing Participation in the SRRP

- 5.1. Given the positive impact that South Lanarkshire's participation in the Programme brings to the lives of the Syrian Refugees it is proposed that the Council continues with its commitment to participate in the Programme, with associated Home Office funding, with a proposed 60 individuals being resettled in each financial year (i.e. 2018/2019 and 2019/2020). This equates to approximately 12–15 families over the year. This proposal is in line with the number of refugees settled in the earlier phases which reflected a proportionate share of refugees being housed in Scotland.
- 5.2. An Annual Report will be provided to update this Committee on progress made each year to 2019/20.

6. Continued Reporting

- 6.1. South Lanarkshire Community Planning partners are involved in providing support and assistance to families within the Programme and regular discussions are held between partners regarding new arrivals and the situation of resettled families. A Community Planning Partnership Group was established to plan and report on the first year. It is now proposed that an annual report be provided to the Community Planning Partnership Board with a report to be submitted autumn 2018.

7. Employee Implications

- 7.1. The Refugee Support team have been appointed on fixed contracts for a maximum term through to the end of the Programme in 2020 and are fully funded by Home Office funding provisions for the Programme.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1. The cost of the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme is fully funded by the Home Office.
- 8.2. Any alterations to support and funding arrangements will be reported to the Executive Committee for decision regarding ongoing arrangements.

9. Other Implications

- 8.1. There are no other implications.
- 9.2. There are no issues in terms of risk or sustainability in relation to the information contained in this report.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 10.1 No Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken for the information contained within this report as the SRRP arrangements are outwith the control of the Council.
- 10.2. Consultation and communication of the Programme is ongoing through the Scottish national communication strategy and a South Lanarkshire wide Community Planning communication plan. Consultation between partners regarding the proposal to resettle a further 60 individuals during 2018/2019 has been undertaken.

Danny Lowe
Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

16 May 2018

Link(s) to Council Objectives

- ◆ Working with and respecting others

Previous References

- ◆ Executive Committee Report, 7 September 2016
- ◆ Executive Committee Report, 11 May 2016
- ◆ Housing and Technical Resources Committee, 9 December 2015
- ◆ Executive Committee Report, 4 November 2015
- ◆ Executive Committee Report, 23 September 2015

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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