

<b>ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	
<b>Report to:</b>	<b>The Executive</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>25/04/16</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme</b>
<b>Portfolio Holder(s):</b>	<b>Aled Morris Jones</b>
<b>Head of Service:</b>	<b>Annwen Morgan, Assistant Chief Executive</b>
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<b>Local Members:</b>	<b>Alun Mummery</b> <b>Jim Evans</b> <b>Meirion Jones</b>

<b>A –Recommendation/s and reason/s</b>
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To authorise officers to respond to UK Government’s Home Office that Isle of Anglesey County Council would be willing to take part in the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (SVPRS) and provide suitable accommodation and support initially for up to 30 individuals or 10 families over the next 3 years. Year 1 will be accommodating up to a maximum of 10 individuals. Preference would be given to families with children of primary school age. The number and profile of families will be subject to the availability of suitable accommodation and capacity within relevant support services such as Education, social care and health, for example.</li> <li>2. To delegate strategic decision making regarding entering into agreements with the Home Office to facilitate Isle of Anglesey County Council’s participation in the SVPRS to the Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Executive.</li> <li>3. To delegate operational lead to the Head of Service, Housing.</li> <li>4. To agree that the refugees to be housed in private rented sector accommodation,</li> </ol>

depending on availability and suitability in the Menai area - more specifically Menai Bridge and Llanfairpwll areas.

5. To work with the Home Office, Welsh Local Government Association, Welsh Government, neighbouring Local Authorities, North Wales Police, Department of Works and Pension, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, the third sector including advice agencies, voluntary, charitable and religious organisations through Medrwn Môn and Coleg Llandrillo Menai to ensure a co-ordinated and effective regional approach, and joint commissioning of support, where necessary.
6. Report back to The Executive Board on progress regarding the delivery of the re-settlement and support programme in 6 months.

## **Reasons**

### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Syrian refugees who will be coming to Anglesey are ordinary families, who previously led ordinary lives in their home country of Syria, before a civil war in which over 220,000 have lost their lives, and 11 million have become homeless.
- 1.2 The refugees arriving in Wales under the SVPRS have been classified as vulnerable persons by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees [UNHCR], and come from countries such as Lebanon and Jordan. They will have been through a thorough two-stage vetting process before arrival and have been granted five years full humanitarian protection, meaning they will be entitled to work and claim benefits, the same as UK residents.
- 1.3 Medical reports are produced by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in advance of arrival. All applicants (including accompanying family members) are subject to the usual immigration checks and screening prior to a visa being granted. Those with a criminal past or links to war crimes or extremism are excluded from the scheme.

1.4 Local Authorities participating in the scheme are asked to take the lead in working with other key local partners to ensure that arrivals are provided with suitable accommodation and the specific needs of these vulnerable individuals are met. This includes working with education and housing providers, for example, and liaising with the Health Board and through them primary and secondary healthcare providers. Some Local Authorities commission the voluntary sector to deliver orientation services whilst others deliver this in-house. Consideration will also need to be given to bringing in specialist support providers subject to individuals' specific requirements.

1.5 Isle of Anglesey County Council will be looking to accommodate families with priority given to families with primary school aged children.

## **2.0 What this means for Anglesey**

2.1 The UK Government's commitment, as announced by the UK's Prime Minister on 7 September 2015, is to accommodate 20,000 people over the life of the next Parliament (up to 2020). Isle of Anglesey County Council would offer to re-settle up to 30 individuals or 10 families, over the next 3 years.

2.2 This level could be relatively easily accommodated within the private rented housing sector. However, consideration will need to be given to health, education and social care needs, which can only be assessed on an individual basis. It is impossible currently to estimate the need and demand for these services. The Home Office, through a designated portal, will pass details of each individual and medical history to the Council for an assessment of need, including whether suitable accommodation and care are available locally.

2.3 The Assistant Chief Executive has already established a multi-agency working group to take the work stream forward.

Membership consists of:-

- Representatives of the Council including Housing
- Education
- Social Care
- Housing Benefits
- Regional Community Cohesion Co-ordinator
- Betsi Cadwalader University Health Board
- Third sector through Medrwn Môn
- North Wales Police.

A Panel will be established, to assess each application, and to come to a decision whether to accept the refugees or not.

2.4 Accommodation will need to be self-contained and the Council is required to ensure that it is appropriately furnished. When refugees arrive, they are provided with basic essentials and a cash / clothing allowance to ensure they have sufficient funds to live on while their claims for benefits are being processed. This process will be led by the Revenues and Benefits Development Manager locally.

2.5 The Council working with our partners will provide:

- Advice and assistance for refugees to help them access mainstream benefits, work and services;
- A support plan for each family or individual for the first 12 months to facilitate their move to the area;
- Arrangements for the provision of English and Welsh language classes and an interpreter where required.

**3.0 Funding available** - Breakdown of local authority funding for Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme – see appendix 1

3.1 Central Government has stated that it will provide financial support to all local authorities participating in the SVPRS, in terms of orientation support, health and education costs for the first year from arrival. Staffing costs to cover administration of the scheme will also be met. The Home Office have adopted a unit cost approach whereby local authorities can be flexible between elements of the unit cost and pool them (i.e. to offset overspends in one area with underspends in another). A procedure will need to be agreed with the S151 Officer as to how funding will be apportioned.

The Home Office also state that while a uniform approach is needed to deliver the scheme as quickly and effectively as possible, there will be instances where further discussion may be necessary and some costs effectively topped up by the Home Office. A breakdown of the unit costs is provided in *Appendix 1*. Where families are granted indefinite leave to remain in the UK and chose to settle in Anglesey they will have the same statutory entitlements as any other resident. Year two to five funding will be allocated on a tariff basis over

four years, tapering from £5,000 per person in year two to £1,000 per person in year five.

Year 2 tariff is £5,000

Year 3 tariff is £3,700

Year 4 tariff is £2,300

Year 5 tariff is £1,000

- 3.2 Local authority costs cover management of the scheme, housing, and cultural integration including English and Welsh language provision. There is an element included in the local authority costs for social care also – any cases where social care costs cannot be accommodated within this figure would need to be topped up separately by making a case to the Home Office. For Special Educational Needs, the provision is expected to cover an assessment, and any specific needs identified would then need topping up separately per child.

Medical care costs are split into two – the cost of registering a new arrival with a GP, and secondary medical costs for refugees with more serious medical needs, which are potentially more expensive. The Home Office advise that legitimate costs above this would be covered. Benefits are paid directly by the Home Office to the DWP and health costs are paid directly to relevant health bodies.

- 3.3 Local authorities across Wales are already working together to provide support, ensure best value in the services they provide and to deliver efficiencies. Consideration will therefore need to be given to joint commissioning or spot-purchasing support, on an as and when needed basis, due to the low numbers involved and lack of speciality on a local basis.

Government will continue to provide local authorities with support and guidance including sharing resettlement best practice and case studies, detailed information on the cohort from UNHCR and advice about the cultural, ethnic and religious groupings from Syria. We have already learnt from the experiences of local authorities such as Ceredigion and are grateful for their support to date.

#### **4.0 Location of re-settlement placements**

4.1 The Menai area, specifically Menai Bridge and Llanfairpwll have been selected as host communities, subject to availability of suitable accommodation. Reasons for this include:

- Close proximity to multi-cultural and religion groups in Bangor;
- There are places available in local primary schools, into which the children of Syrian refugees can be placed;
- Close proximity to the Mosque in Bangor and Bangor University;
- Easy access to public transport;
- Close proximity to health resources including dentistry and GPs.

4.2 The support shown by local Elected Members and both Menai Bridge Town Council and LlanfairPG Community Council has been extremely positive.

### 5.0 Timescale

It is expected that, if The Executive Committee agrees to the recommendations within this Report, then we would be welcoming our first family to Anglesey in approximately 4-6 weeks.

### **B – What other options did you consider and why did you reject them and/or opt for this option?**

#### **Options Considered**

**Option 1:** Participation of local authorities in the SVPRS Programme is voluntary. Not taking part in this scheme would mean that vulnerable people in Syria would not be able to be relocated to Anglesey. All local authorities throughout Wales have agreed to participate in the scheme.

**Option 2:** offer to re-settle 30 individuals or 10 families over the next 3 year period. This is the favoured option, which is similar to neighbouring local authorities.

### **C – Why is this a decision for the Executive?**

### **CH – Is this decision consistent with policy approved by the full Council?**

### **D – Is this decision within the budget approved by the Council?**

Cost neutral to the Council – funding will come from the UK Government's Home Office

<b>DD – Who did you consult?</b>		<b>What did they say?</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Chief Executive / Strategic Leadership Team (SLT)</b> (mandatory)	Supportive of participation in the SVPRS as discussed on 4 <sup>th</sup> April 2016
<b>2</b>	<b>Finance / Section 151</b> (mandatory)	Comments reflected within the Report
<b>3</b>	<b>Legal / Monitoring Officer</b> (mandatory)	No comments
<b>4</b>	<b>Human Resources (HR)</b>	No comments
<b>5</b>	<b>Property</b>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Information Communication Technology (ICT)</b>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Scrutiny</b>	
<b>8</b>	<b>Local Members</b>	Very supportive
<b>9</b>	<b>Any external bodies / other/s</b>	

<b>E – Risks and any mitigation (if relevant)</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>Economic</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Anti-poverty</b>	The re-location package from the Home Office as outlined in appendix 1 provides financial support to the families, to the Council and its partners to ensure that the families are successfully integrated into the local community
<b>3</b>	<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Environmental</b>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Equalities</b>	Equality impact assessment to be completed
<b>6</b>	<b>Outcome Agreements</b>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Other</b>	The reputation of the Council may be at risk should it not agree to voluntarily participate in the SVPRS

<b>F - Appendices:</b>
Appendix 1: Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme – Unit costs

<b>FF - Background papers (please contact the author of the Report for any further information):</b>





## Appendix 1: Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme – Unit Costs

The working unit costs per refugee are:

Children under the age of 3	Unit cost = £10,720
Children aged 3-4	Unit cost = £13,970
Children aged 5-18	Unit cost = £16,220
Adults in receipt of mainstream benefits	Unit cost = £23,420
Other adults	Unit cost = £10,720

This is broken down as follows:

UNIT COST FOR SYRIA VPR SCHEME					
	Adult Benefit Claimant	Other Adults	Children 5-18	Children 3-4	Children U-3
	£	£	£	£	£
Local Authority Costs	8,520	8,520	8,520	8,520	8,520
Education	0	0	4,500	2,250	0
Special Educational Needs	0	0	1,000	1,000	0
DWP Benefits	12,700	0	0	0	0
Primary medical care	200	200	200	200	200
Secondary medical care	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,420</b>	<b>10,720</b>	<b>16,220</b>	<b>13,970</b>	<b>10,720</b>

Local authorities will therefore receive the following unit costs:

Children under the age of 3	Unit cost = £8,520
Children aged 3-4	Unit cost = £11,770
Children aged 5-18	Unit cost = £14,020
Adults in receipt of mainstream benefits	Unit cost = £8,520
Other adults	Unit cost = £8,520