

# **POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD**

**15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2015**

## **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES – Karen Jones**

### **SECTION A – MATTERS FOR DECISION**

#### **WARDS AFFECTED - All**

#### **Syrian Crisis**

#### **Purpose of the Report:**

To seek the approval of the Cabinet Board to engage in dialogue with the Welsh Government regarding the potential for Syrian refugees to be located in the county borough.

#### **Background**

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Board considered a request that had been made by Government concerning the relocation of interpreters from Afghanistan at the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 Meeting. The Cabinet Board authorised participation in the ex-gratia scheme being led by the UK Government. Officers have been meeting regularly with officials in relation to the scheme. To date, no-one has been resettled in the county borough.

More recently, the UK Government has indicated that the UK will take up to 20,000 refugees seeking to relocate from Syria. The Chief Executive and Leader of Council have received a request from Welsh Government to support the relocation of people from Syria. The Cabinet Board is asked to agree, in principle, to receive refugees into the county borough as part of the UK programme and to authorise officers to engage in dialogue with officials to develop a more detailed understanding of the needs of any refugees that might be relocated and the support services that would need to be in place to meet those needs.

## **Financial Appraisal**

There will be costs associated with any person relocated to the county borough under the programmes subject of this report. To date, the UK Government has given a commitment to fund the first year costs but discussions are continuing regarding longer term funding.

## **Crime and Disorder Impact**

The Council has a legal duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to carry out all its various functions with “due regard to the need to prevent crime and disorder in its area”.

Should any people be relocated into the county borough under the UK Government’s programme, support to integrate people into the local communities will be put in place in order to ensure community support for those being relocated.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

The Equality Act 2010 required public bodies to “pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.”

The profile of people who may be relocated into the county borough is not yet identified, however, the nature of the initiative is compatible with the Council’s equality duties.

## **Consultation**

There is no requirement for Consultation on this item.

## **Recommended**

That the Cabinet Board authorises the Chief Executive to indicate to Welsh Government this Council's support, in principle, for the programme to relocate refugees affected by the situation in Syria.  
That the Cabinet Board authorises the Chief Executive to enter into dialogue with Welsh Government officials to develop a detailed understanding of the implications attached to any persons who may be relocated.

## **Reason for Proposed Decision:**

To authorise the Council's participation in the developing programme led by the UK Government to relocate refugees fleeing the situation in Syria.

## **Implementation of Decision**

The decision is for immediate implementation.

## **Officer Contact:**

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## **Appendices:**

None

## **Background Papers**

1. Policy and Resources Cabinet Board 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 – Resettlement of Afghanistan People Scheme