Local Government York and North Yorkshire

18 October 2019

North Yorkshire Refugee Resettlement

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the government's recently announced global resettlement scheme.
- 1.2 To seek the commitment of the Leaders of North Yorkshire District Councils and North Yorkshire County Council to propose to their council's participation in the government's future refugee resettlement scheme from 2020/21.

2 Background

- 2.1 The number of refugees worldwide is calculated to be the highest ever at 25.9 million¹ and since 2017 refugees have made up almost one per cent of the global population for the first time in modern history².
- 2.2 In June 2019 the Home Secretary wrote to Parliament to reaffirm the commitment to the resettlement of refugees beyond the conclusion of the Syrian Resettlement Programme (SRP) and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS) in 2020. A letter outlining the details was subsequently sent to Council leaders to seek local authorities' participation in the new scheme, as attached in Appendix A. Further details about the new scheme (provisionally called the 'global resettlement scheme') is attached in Appendix B.
- 2.3 In summary:
 - The global resettlement scheme will incorporate the current resettlement programmes (SRP, VCRS and Gateway Protection Programme) into one new 'global resettlement scheme'.
 - In 2020/21, the first year of the new scheme's operation, the government will aim to resettle 5,000 refugees.
 - In 2020/21 the grant provided to local authorities and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) will be funded at the same rate and for the same period as the current SRP and VCRS schemes (five years for local authorities and one year for CCGs).

¹ Source: UNHCR 19 June 2019

² UNHCR Global Trends 2017

- The government has not been able to confirm the funding for arrivals after 2020/21 due to needing to await the outcome of the comprehensive spending review. The government has however declared its intention to run the new programme in the long term. Consequently, the scheme is not to be seen as a one year's extension to the existing resettlement programmes but rather a permanent consolidation into one scheme.
- The numbers of refugees to be resettled on a yearly basis beyond 2020/21 is thought to be unlikely to change significantly and the funding is expected to remain the same, though it is not known yet whether inflationary cost pressures will be taken into account in subsequent years.
- The geographical focus will be broadened beyond the Middle East and the North Africa region. This will also enable the addition of a new process for emergency resettlement, allowing the UK to respond quickly to instances of heightened protection need, providing a faster route to protection where lives are at risk. The numbers of refugees brought under this emergency aspect of the new scheme is expected to be a minor part of the overall number of refugees to be resettled.
- The process for accepting refugees will be the same, with the UNHCR making recommendations to the Home Office, and the final decision resting with local authority.
- The Community Sponsorship scheme will continue and the numbers will be in addition to the 5,000 refugees to be resettled in 2020/21 by local authorities. (To date in North Yorkshire one family (4 persons) has been resettled under the Community Sponsorship scheme and is not included in the numbers resettled by North Yorkshire local authorities.)
- 2.4 In the Yorkshire and Humber region, the regional partnership agreement between Migration Yorkshire and local authorities is likely to remain the same under the new scheme. The Refugee Council will continue to provide the integration support in 2020/21, as planned, but a procurement exercise is expected to take place at the same time to appoint an integration support provider for the longer term. This exercise will also provide an opportunity to re-model the existing integration support if required. Other regional commissioned support will also be reviewed.

3 Syrian Resettlement Programme (SRP) and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS) in North Yorkshire

3.1 In 2016 North Yorkshire councils agreed to resettle a minimum of 197 SVPs (Syrian Vulnerable Persons) and 22 people under the VCRS scheme (219 refugees in total), with each district pledging a minimum commitment based upon North Yorkshire as a whole taking one percent of the country's total. Scarborough Borough Council did not take part in resettling persons under the VCRS.

- 3.2 In the Yorkshire and Humber region the arrivals period was April 2016 to November 2018 but most local authorities except those in North Yorkshire continued to resettle families up to the present over and above their original pledges. North Yorkshire started in July 2016 and finished in February 2018, as shown in **Appendix C**.
- 3.3 The actual number of refugees resettled in North Yorkshire was 238 refugees in total (209 SVPs and 29 VCRS across 50 families), linked to the relatively large family sizes that we were allocated. The nationalities of the VCRS families resettled were Sudanese and Iraqi.
- 3.4 Families were typically two adults and three children. Most of the children were primary school aged. Seven families (34 persons) have since left North Yorkshire; the main reason being to live nearer to relatives resettled elsewhere in the UK rather than because of the rural nature of North Yorkshire. The latter risk was reduced by resettling a number of families within the same town.
- 3.5 Just under 30% of the families included family members with complex needs. The complexity of need varied widely from people with some mobility issues to severely disabled adults and children including children with genetic disorders and life-limiting illnesses.
- 3.6 Experience has shown that where the bulk of families were received early on within a district's resettlement programme, it provided a stronger network for the families from the start. It was also easier to manage resources than having arrivals stretched out across several flights. However, the local housing supply and suitability of an area to resettle the families ultimately determined the pace of resettlement.
- 3.7 45 properties were used for the initial resettlement of the families, with three bedroomed properties in greatest demand as shown below.

	No. resettled (July 2016 to February 2018)	House size – no. of bedrooms					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
SVP	209	0	3	30	5		1
Table 2: VCR	S: housing – North	Yorkshire					
	No. resettled (April 2017 to January 2018)	House size – no. of bedrooms					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
North Yorkshire	29		3	4			

Table 1: SVP: housing – North Yorkshire

3.8 There have subsequently been 11 house moves within the county, involving either the whole family or individual family members moving out of the original property allocated to them.

4 Participation in the global resettlement scheme: issues to consider

- 4.1 The figure of 5,000 refugees to be resettled in 2020/21 is similar to the commitments made by Prime Minister David Cameron in September 2015 and April 2016 to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees and 3,000 VCRS refugees in under five years. It is assumed that from 2021/22 onwards there will be a similar number of refugees resettled nationally per year as the 5,000 refugees to be resettled in 2020/21.
- 4.2 All local authorities will need to consider a formal proposal regarding participation through their normal decision making processes.
- 4.3 Informal discussions indicate that in principle North Yorkshire County Council will participate in the global resettlement scheme on an ongoing basis provided that:
 - this is in partnership with North Yorkshire district councils;
 - the funding is no lower than envisaged by the Home Office;
 - arrangements are similar to the SRP and VCRS programmes; and
 - families are resettled on a phased basis across districts as happened on the SRP and VCRS programmes (because resettling families across all districts each year would not be affordable and would be likely to result in poorer outcomes for refugees).
 - 4.4 Based upon the experience of the existing refugee resettlement scheme across the county, flexibility by district councils to allow housing officers to use a range of housing types, including where available social or council housing, will enable the resettlement of further refugee families to be speeded up. Not all vacant property can be used, for example if police intelligence flags up that the local area would not be suitable to house a refugee family.
 - 4.5 To date, issues with the use of private rented property in the county have been:
 - It proved more difficult to source due to affordability issues, finding properties that were suitably adapted, and finding private landlords who were willing to accept families on out of work welfare benefits.
 - The predominant use of private rented property slowed down the speed of the resettlement significantly in terms of numbers of families being able to be accepted from each flight. This resulted in more time and cost having to be spent.
 - The use of private rented property has in some instances proved to be more time-consuming for district councils (especially those that are stock transfer landlords), in relation to the day-to-day management of the properties beyond Year 1 when the Refugee Council's housing support function no longer continues but where families might require ongoing tenancy support.

- It has become apparent from the resettlement programme to date that families in private rented property are more likely to need to move property after their first 12 months in the UK. House moves result in additional costs and can also be unsettling for the families concerned, coming on top of the upheavals they faced prior to being resettled in the United Kingdom. A house move could also mean a change of school and further distance for the adults to travel to the English language classes.
- There are less opportunities to resettle families with complex mobility needs using private rented property. This is because private landlords understandably might be unwilling for the necessary adaptions to be made to their property.
- 4.6 Future arrivals would need to continue to be resettled in towns to ensure that they had access to the appropriate support services. If new arrivals were resettled in the same town in the district as our existing refugee families, it would help to consolidate a support network between families and possibly improve outcomes.
- 4.7 It is envisaged that a schedule of arrivals across each of the seven North Yorkshire districts would begin with resettling families in no more than three districts at a time. Resettlement would be over the space of several months in the initial districts before moving on to the remaining districts once the former had reached their agreed resettlement number. For practical reasons it is not envisaged that a district will spread out its resettlement of families across each of the years 2020/21 to 2023/24 as this would be more difficult to manage and require a greater level of resource on an ongoing basis.
- 4.8 Careful consideration would need to be taken locally as to regards the country and cultural background of refugees being resettled under the new scheme from each flight and in relation to existing immigrant communities. Resettling only one family from a separate cultural background to other refugee families heightens the risk of that family moving out of the county. In the first few years it is anticipated that most of the refugees will continue to be from Syria due to the continuing crisis there.
- 4.9 There are a number of positive reasons for participating in the new global refugee resettlement scheme in North Yorkshire:
 - On the whole the refugee resettlement programme has progressed smoothly in North Yorkshire and the families have settled in relatively well considering their past traumatic lives. The Refugee Council has commented that compared with some of the larger metropolitan areas in the region with more established Arabic-speaking communities, the refugee families in North Yorkshire have more quickly built up their understanding of the English language and their independence. 15 clients of working age are now in employment – eight are in full-time work and seven are in part-time work. A number of other adults have construction experience and so work placements are being explored to this end with a range of employers. Many

more adults are volunteering to gain useful experience before entering the world of work. Two of our young adults will be starting apprenticeships in September 2019 and a number of our other young adults (+16 years to 19 years) continue to attend college. This includes English language classes and vocational courses. In most cases children were able to secure a school place at their nearest school or an alternative school within their local catchment area.

- There has been a good spirit of partnership working between the local authorities in North Yorkshire, the Refugee Council and the other resettlement partners such as Health, schools and the Police. This spirit of co-operation and commitment would need to continue in order to ensure that the refugee resettlement for later arrivals was a success. The refugee resettlement programme will continue to require up to a five year commitment of support to be provided to each family by resettlement partners in relation to their various roles and responsibilities.
- The current level of funding provided by the Home Office to local authorities is sufficient to provide appropriate levels of support to the refugee families resettled in North Yorkshire.
- 4.10 If there is agreement for some or all North Yorkshire local authorities to participate in the global resettlement scheme, it will be advisable to proceed on the basis that participation will be a longer term commitment than 2020/21. Locally, as a minimum, a commitment over four years (2020/21 to 2023/24) to resettle refugees is needed for planning purposes. If individual councils require, they could then undertake their own review towards the end of that period regarding future participation in the scheme. The alternative of having annual ('stop' 'go') decisions whilst waiting for specific government commitments about numbers to be resettled nationally would make it difficult to manage a resettlement programme locally.

5 Indicative numbers that could be resettled by participating local authorities

- 5.1 Under the current scheme, North Yorkshire councils working together resettled on average 150 persons (approximately 30 families/properties) each year from the start to the finish of the resettlement period in the county (July 2016 to February 2018).
- 5.2 Due to pressures on local housing and other local authority housing commitments, including the duties introduced under The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, a more conservative target of 50 refugees per year (approximately 11-13 families) is proposed to be resettled under the new scheme, rather than continuing with the higher average resettlement rate achieved under the current scheme.
- 5.3 50 persons being resettled in North Yorkshire each year from 2020/21 to 2023/24 would equate to one percent of the envisaged national programme of 5,000 persons per year. This is the same 'fair share' approach used for the SVP and VCRS programmes, given that the county's population is just under one percent of

the UK population. Using this approach, the number of refugees that would be resettled in each district is shown in the table below. To reach an average of 50 persons being resettled each year would require a minimum of two districts a year to participate and in some instances would involve three districts. The actual numbers resettled might be marginally higher than those listed below due to the need to match family sizes to specific properties.

District	2018 population mid-year estimate by district	Percentage of North Yorkshire population by district	Anticipated number of refugees to be resettled in total 2020/21 to 2023/24
Craven	56,832	9.3	19
Hambleton	91,134	14.8	30
Harrogate	160,533	26.1	52
Richmondshire	53,244	8.7	17
Ryedale	54,920	8.9	18
Scarborough	108,736	17.7	35
Selby	89,106	14.5	29
Total	614,505	100	200

Table 3: ONS 2018 population estimates

5.4 District Councils would need to ensure that they were able to arrange to provide this supply of housing during their allocated time period. The County Council would need to ensure that the other elements of the resettlement package were also in place. The schedule of charter flights is likely to be known some time in advance of families arriving, providing an opportunity for Housing Officers to have early discussions with national, regional and local housing providers to secure their commitment to the project.

6 Recommendation:

6.1 That the Leaders of North Yorkshire District Councils and North Yorkshire County Council propose to their council's participation in the government's future refugee resettlement scheme from 2020/21.

Neil Irving Assistant Director - Policy, Partnerships and Communities North Yorkshire County Council

26 September 2019

Appendices:

Appendix A: Letter to Council Leaders, dated 17 June 2019, from the Rt. Hon. Caroline Nokes MP, Minister of State for Immigration: Home Office, and Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth, Minister for Faith: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Appendix B: UK Resettlement Scheme: Note for Local Authorities, August 2015 (Home Office)

Appendix C: North Yorkshire Refugee Resettlement Schedule: July 2016 to February 2018



Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth Minister for Faith

Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP Minister of State for Immigration

2 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DF www.gov.uk/home-office

Council Leaders Local Authorities in England

Sent via email

17 June 2019

Dear Leader,

We are writing to inform you that the Government has today reaffirmed our commitment to the resettlement of refugees in anticipation of the conclusion of our three largest resettlement schemes in 2020. We hope this is welcome news to you and your communities. The success of resettlement in the UK to date has been achieved by working in partnership with over 300 local authorities. Many of you are participating in delivering the current schemes and your work to support and integrate these vulnerable refugees is greatly appreciated.

In the statement the Home Secretary has made to Parliament, he set out the Government's ongoing commitment to resettlement. We will consolidate our biggest schemes into a new global resettlement scheme. Our priority will be to continue to resettle the most vulnerable refugees, identified and referred by UNHCR. Under the global resettlement scheme, we will broaden our geographical focus beyond the Middle East and North Africa region and will also be better placed to swiftly respond to international crises in coordination with global partners.

In the first year of operation, the UK will aim to resettle in the region of 5,000 of the world's most vulnerable refugees. Ensuring local authorities can provide resettled refugees with the help and support they need to successfully integrate in their new communities remains central to our approach. Hence, we are happy to confirm we have retained current funding rates for those arriving in the first year of the scheme, meaning a local authority will continue to receive the five-year tariff of £20,520 for each refugee with a top-up (for year 1) for children aged 3-18 years.

A new process for emergency resettlement will also be developed, allowing the UK to respond quickly to instances of heightened protection need, providing a faster route to protection where lives are at risk. We will work closely with local authorities, regional Strategic Migration Partnerships and other partners over the coming months as we develop the new arrangements.

The Community Sponsorship scheme, which enables community groups to directly welcome and support refugees in the UK, will continue. Building on the experience of delivering the current schemes and the significant contribution of our community sponsors, a key part of our resettlement offer will be that those resettled through our community sponsorship and Mandate routes will be in addition to our yearly, global commitment.

We would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the invaluable contribution that many of you have made in delivering the current commitments. We hope you will continue to support refugees under the new scheme. In addition, we would welcome pledges of support from authorities yet to engage in resettlement. Our officials will be in touch soon to provide more detailed information on how you can support us. In the meantime, if you would like to discuss any aspect of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Over the last few years, we have together made significant progress in our contribution to global resettlement efforts. We recognise the positive difference that local authorities, regional Strategic Migration Partnerships, communities, and community sponsors have made to the lives of refugees resettled in the UK. It is right that we today reaffirm our ongoing commitment to supporting refugees, and to working with partners to find a longer-term approach to refugee protection – an approach that restores dignity and offers refugees a viable future.

We are copying this letter to regional Strategic Migration Partnerships.

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Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP Minister of State for Immigration Home Office

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Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth Minister for Faith Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government



Appendix B

UK Resettlement Scheme Note for Local Authorities

August 2019

Introduction

Resettlement continues to be a critical protection tool, providing a pathway to safety for refugees who can no longer remain in their host-countries. With the support of local government, the UK's existing schemes have provided safe and legal routes for tens of thousands of people to start new lives. However, the global need for resettlement continues to grow; the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimate that in 2020 more than 1.4 million refugees will need to be resettled.

The UK Government confirmed on 17 June 2019 its ongoing commitment to resettlement, announcing plans for a new UK Resettlement Scheme which will see thousands more refugees provided with a route to protection when it begins in 2020. This briefing note sets out further information for local authorities about the new scheme.

Overview

The UK Resettlement Scheme will consolidate the existing Vulnerable Persons' Resettlement Scheme (VPRS), Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS) and Gateway Protection Programme which will all naturally come to an end in 2020. This new scheme will be open to refugees identified by UNHCR to be in need of resettlement to the UK because of their vulnerability and does not have a specific geographical focus. Those resettled through our Community Sponsorship and Mandate routes will be in addition to our yearly, global commitment.¹

We are looking for the ongoing support and participation of local government across the UK and encourage local authorities to submit their offer of places for the new scheme as soon as possible. We continue to warmly welcome interest from those authorities who have yet to take part in resettlement.

We are planning a smooth transition, with arrivals under the new scheme expected to start once arrivals under the VPRS are completed; this is estimated to be in Spring 2020. We expect there to be a seamless continuation of arrivals between the current and the new scheme. This is in line with feedback from regional Strategic Migration Partnerships (SMPs) on what LAs would find most helpful in transition.

We would also welcome conversations with local authorities who are able to offer additional places under the current schemes. This would enable authorities to maintain momentum with their arrivals and ensure consistency in provision of services as we move towards the start of the new scheme.

Eligibility

The new UK Resettlement Scheme will continue to be based on vulnerability, with refugees assessed for resettlement by UNHCR against their <u>resettlement submission categories</u>. We

will work closely with UNHCR to identify vulnerable refugees from around the world where resettlement to the UK offers the best durable solution.

Who we will resettle

In the first year of the new scheme it is anticipated that the caseloads of refugees we resettle will continue to look broadly similar to those we see under our existing schemes, with the majority coming from the MENA region. We already operate in line with UNHCRs global priorities and will continue to do so, however over time the nationalities of refugees resettled may change in response to world events and the global context.

As the profiles of those we resettle change, the Home Office will continue to work closely with SMPs and local authorities to match refugees to housing availability in areas that can provide appropriate support to those we resettle.

Numbers

In the first year of operation of the new scheme, the UK will aim to resettle in the region of 5000 refugees with those arriving through our Mandate and Community Sponsorship routes additional to this number. The Government remains committed to resettlement, and decisions on the number of refugees to be resettled in subsequent years will be determined through future spending rounds.

Year on year, resettlement volumes are likely to fluctuate according to the flow of referrals from overseas and the availability of suitable accommodation and support in the UK.

Role of Local Authorities

Local authority participation in the new scheme will continue to be voluntary, with refugees allocated in the same way as currently under VPRS and VCRS. We will continue to work closely with local authorities across the UK to ensure they are able to support those who are allocated to them for resettlement under the new scheme.

Local authorities will retain the same role in the community sponsorship process and we would ask they continue to engage positively with groups that come forward to participate in community sponsorship.

Role of Regional Strategic Migration Partnerships

SMPs will continue to provide support to local authorities to help deliver resettlement, including coordinating offers of places and planning for the arrival of refugees, together with sharing of expertise and knowledge to enable councils to resettle successfully.

Funding Package

The funding package available under the new scheme will mirror that currently paid under VPRS and VCRS; a local authority will receive a five-year tariff of £20,520² for each refugee with an additional education tariff (for year one) for children aged 3-18 years. Additional

funding will continue to be made available, on a case by case basis, for exceptional costs incurred by local authorities, including; property adaptations, void costs for larger (4 bed) properties, special educational needs, and adult social care.

The post-arrival resettlement support requirements of local authorities will mirror those issued under the VPRS and VCRS.

Health Care

All refugees referred for potential resettlement undergo a health assessment through International Organization for Migration as part of the resettlement process. The findings of these assessments will continue to be passed to local authorities considering resettlement of that individual to ensure suitable treatment/support can be provided upon arrival.

As with existing schemes, resettled refugees under the new scheme will be able to access healthcare via the NHS free of charge. The £2600 per refugee for health costs made available to healthcare providers under the VPRS and VCRS will continue to be available under the new scheme.

Access to Benefits and Work

Refugees resettled under the new scheme will have access to mainstream benefits and services to enable their integration; work continues across Government to ensure services meet the needs of refugees. They will also have immediate and unrestricted access to the labour market.

English Language

Refugees will continue to be able to access English language tuition that is fully funded through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) if they are unemployed and in receipt of certain benefits; or if they are in an area that is part of the AEB low wage trial and they earn less than £16,009.50. Children in full time education will receive English language support in schools.

Additional language funding of £850pp will continue to be available in year one. This is intended to boost local capacity and supplement mainstream AEB provision. As with the current scheme, Home Office will include outcomes associated with this additional funding in the annual funding instruction. Local authorities will also continue to be able to use the tariff to further top up costs of language provision. Funding will also be available to help with child care costs in relation to attendance at ESOL classes.

Community Sponsorship

The community sponsorship scheme has been a real success and is established now, with a broad range of experience, training and support available to community groups, through Reset, the organisation established to build capacity amongst potential community sponsors. Reset currently provides services including in-person training, a range of online material to support groups in preparing their application and supporting a family <u>https://training-resetuk.org/</u> an application checking service and a post-arrival advice

line. Reset are also developing resources for local authorities about the process of providing consent.

Please get in touch with your Resettlement Contact Officer and regional SMP lead if you require further information, and to discuss your offer of new resettlement places under the current or future scheme.

Appendix C

Month	Syrian Vulnerable Persons (SVP) numbers by district	North Yorkshire Districts
2016		
July	34 (11 = Craven / 9 = Harrogate / 14 = Selby)	Craven, Harrogate and Selby
September	3 (Craven)	Craven
October	30 (8 = Selby / 22 = Harrogate)	Selby and Harrogate
November	6 (Harrogate)	Harrogate
2017		
January	52 (10 = Craven / 17 = Harrogate / 25 = Scarborough)	Harrogate and Scarborough
April	5 (Selby)	Selby
June	28 (6 = Craven / 11 = Ryedale / 11 = Scarborough)	Craven, Ryedale and Scarborough
July	5 (Ryedale)	Ryedale
2018		
January	40 (22 = Hambleton /18 = Richmondshire)	Hambleton and Richmondshire
February	6 (6 = Hambleton)	Hambleton

North Yorkshire Refugee Resettlement Schedule: July 2016 to February 2018

District	SVP minimum agreed number	Actual nos. initially resettled (exc. births in UK)	Remaining in North Yorkshire (exc. births in UK)
Craven	25	30	15
Hambleton	28	28	28
Harrogate	50	54	48
Richmondshire	16	18	13
Ryedale	16	16	16
Scarborough	36	36	36
Selby	26	27	27
Totals	197	209	183

Month	Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS) numbers by district	North Yorkshire Districts		
2017				
April	7 (2 families) = Harrogate	Harrogate and Selby		
June	5 (1 family) = Ryedale	Ryedale		
July	5 (1 family) = Selby	Selby		
September	4 (1 family) = Craven	Craven		
2018				
January	8 (2 families) = Richmondshire	Richmondshire		

District	VCRS minimum agreed number	Actual nos. initially resettled (exc. births in UK)	Remaining in North Yorkshire (exc. births in the UK)
Craven	3 (1 family)	4 (1 family)	0
Hambleton	4 (1 family)	0	0
Harrogate	7 (2 families)	7 (2 families)	7
Richmondshire	2 (1 family)	8 (2 families)	4
Ryedale	2 (1 family)	5 (1 family)	5
Scarborough	0	0	0
Selby	4 (1 family)	5 (1 family)	5
Totals	22	29	21