	REPORT TO CABINET TO BE HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2016	
	Key Decision	YES
Corporate Priority Aim 3 – Creating Healthy and Vibrant Communities	Cabinet Portfolio Holder	Cllr Bill Chatt, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Housing

REPORT OF: DIRECTOR (TW) - 16/036

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FROM THE HOME OFFICE REGARDING
THE RESETTLEMENT OF SYRIAN REFUGEES**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1) Note the request from the Home Office to all Councils to support the Government's commitment to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees in the United Kingdom over the next 5 years.
- 2) Agree to support a North Yorkshire wide resettlement scheme. This scheme shall enable the resettlement of 200 Syrian refugees countywide over the next 5 years. This scheme forms part of a wider commitment being made by all Yorkshire Councils to support the resettlement of 1,500 Syrian refugees across the region.
- 3) Agree that the Council's commitment to this scheme shall be no more than 36 people (estimated to be around 10 families). This figure is a pro-rata proportion of the wider North Yorkshire commitment.
- 4) Give authority to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with North Yorkshire County Council and the other District Councils concerning this scheme. Note the proposed Governance structure for the operation of the scheme.

- 5) Note that the key role of the Council within this scheme shall be sourcing suitable accommodation, either in the private rented or social housing sector. Costs associated with this shall be paid for by Government through Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Grant (VPRG).
- 6) Give delegated authority to the Housing Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Housing, to work in partnership with NYCC and the other Districts to use Home Office VPRG to procure a specialist support provider along with other ancillary services that are necessary for the smooth resettlement of refugees. Note that NYCC shall be the accountable body for the receipt of this grant and the procurement of such services.
- 7) Give authority to enter into agreement with Migration Yorkshire to enable overall regional co-ordination and support.
- 8) Give delegated authority to the Director (LD), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Housing, to agree a variation to the Council's nomination deed with Yorkshire Coast Homes regarding the allocation of social housing to enable the allocation of homes to Syrian refugees. Note that the use of social housing to support the resettlement of Syrian refugees would be used as a last resort, and required only where suitable private rented accommodation cannot be sourced. Note that where social housing is required, lettings shall be made as 'direct matches'.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure the Council complies with its obligations to resettle Syrian refugees.

HIGHLIGHTED RISKS:

See attached matrix.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In September 2015, the Home Office wrote to all Local Authorities seeking their assistance to support the Government's pledge to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees within the UK over the next 5 years.
- 1.2 This report seeks agreement from Cabinet to support this request through the Councils participation in a North Yorkshire resettlement scheme. This scheme seeks to enable the smooth and effective resettlement of 200 refugees over the next 5 years and forms part of a wider pledge being made by all Yorkshire Councils to resettle 1,500 refugees across the region.

2. CORPORATE AIMS/PRIORITIES AND THE COMMUNITY PLAN

- 2.1 Contributes to Aim 3 of the Council's Corporate Plan, 'Creating Healthy and Vibrant Communities'.

3. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 3.1 Members will be aware from media reports of the scale of the humanitarian crisis that has been unfolding within war torn Syria over recent months. It is estimated that over 9 million Syrians have fled their homes since the outbreak of the civil war. The vast majority of these refugees are residing in camps within neighbouring countries such as Lebanon and Jordan.
- 3.2 To support the global response to this crisis, the Prime Minister announced in September last year that during the remainder of this parliament, the UK will accept up to 20,000 Syrian refugees from the refugee camps in countries neighbouring Syria.
- 3.3 Through their scheme, the government is working with the United Nations Refugee Agency to identify who will enter the UK. This process includes security vetting by the UK Home Office. Those who are accepted by the Home Office are being granted a five year humanitarian protection visa before they enter the UK. On arrival they have the same rights as UK citizens to education, employment, health care and public funds. It is understood from the Home Office that those chosen within the camps shall be amongst the most vulnerable refugees and shall be predominantly made up of families. Unaccompanied children will not be included in this first round of resettlement. It is understood that recent the Government announcement regarding the resettlement of unaccompanied children shall be delivered through alternative arrangements than those applicable to families.
- 3.4 The Home Office pays a grant per person to local authorities accepting refugees under the resettlement programme. Grant funding is expected to cover the full costs of resettlement for each individual resettled. Levels of year 1 funding have been confirmed as £8520 per person:

	Adults	Children 5-18 years	Children 3-4 years	Children 0-3 years
Local authority costs	£8,520	£8,520	£8,520	£8,520
Education	£0	£4,500	£2,250	£0

- 3.5 Local authority costs cover management of the scheme, housing, and cultural integration including English language provision. There is also an element included in the local authority costs for social care (in the region of £500). Additional grant funding is also being paid to cover educational costs and Special Educational Needs costs.
- 3.6 Other costs will be paid directly to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for welfare benefits costs and to NHS England/Clinical Commissioning Groups for primary and secondary medical care costs.
- 3.7 The Home Office has confirmed that 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. This funding includes support for integration such as additional English language training as well as social care. The Home Office also intends to provide a special cases fund to provide additional support for the most vulnerable people.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultation has been undertaken with a wide variety of organisations to support the development of this proposed North Yorkshire Resettlement Scheme, including all North Yorkshire Councils, North Yorkshire Police, various CCGs and Health Trusts, the Home Office and Migration Yorkshire.
- 4.2 At the local level, discussions have been had with key partners from a variety of organisations including YCH, the Police, NYCC and Health.

5.0 ASSESSMENT

A North Yorkshire Scheme

- 5.1 In October last year the Leader and Chief Executive agreed that the Council would work in partnership with the other North Yorkshire Councils to develop a joint response to the Government's requests regarding Syrian refugees. This process included carrying out a mapping exercise on what provision might realistically be provided and where.
- 5.2 Each local authority in North Yorkshire has identified the number of refugees that it could resettle based on housing capacity (social and private sector housing) and school places. The combined estimate overall is in the region of 200 individuals across the county. This figure equates to North Yorkshire's pro-rata contribution to the national scheme based on population size. This commitment contributes to a wider pledge being made by all Yorkshire Councils to support the resettlement of 1,500 refugees over the 5 year period.
- 5.3 Accommodating refugees in North Yorkshire is no small task. The experience of local authorities already participating in the scheme in our region is that the support needs of refugees is intensive especially in the first few weeks and months of resettlement. The rapid deployment of a range of services is required locally in order to ensure that refugees are provided with the right level of support to allow them to successfully integrate into the community. This involves housing, social care, education, health services, the DWP, Job Centre Plus and police working closely together. A challenge for all North Yorkshire Authorities is that the county currently lacks much of the support infrastructure needed to take such a scheme forward. This combined with the rural nature of our county means that we need to be realistic about numbers and where and how quickly we could resettle refugees in North Yorkshire.
- 5.4 A scattergun approach, whilst ensuring that each district would be seen to be resettling its 'fair share' of refugees, would make it difficult to co-ordinate support services and build sufficient capacity quickly enough. Placing refugees in some of our more sparsely populated areas, where appropriate

services are not available close by and where they are less likely to be able to live near to other refugees, would also risk their isolation. Other key issues to be considered include the availability of school places, the availability of suitable accommodation, community cohesion and most importantly the provision of specialist resettlement and translation services.

- 5.5 The proposed approach therefore is to initially pilot resettlement in one area of the county. This will work in year 1 by resettling a small number of families or individuals in a combined 'block' of two districts. Such an approach shall make it easier to comprehensively manage the process and build up expertise and focus specialist resettlement services over a more manageable geographical area. A review of the process could then take place before additional refugees were resettled in other suitable parts of the county in future years.
- 5.6 In terms of phasing therefore it is proposed that in year 1 focus is placed on the Harrogate and Craven (and possibly Selby) areas, with Scarborough and Ryedale falling in to year 2 of the programme and the remaining district areas coming into Year 3. In real terms this means that it is unlikely that refugees will be resettled in the Borough until 2017/18. The rationale for this approach is the proximity of Harrogate and Craven to cultural facilities such as mosques and to other resettled Syrians in Leeds and Bradford. Such an approach makes it easier to comprehensively manage the process and build up expertise. A review of the process could then take place before additional refugees were resettled in other suitable parts of the county.
- 5.7 The Council's contribution to such an approach shall be through the sourcing of accommodation. This can either be provided through the Private Rented Sector or through Social Housing Provision. Accommodation must be suitable and affordable. Costs associated with the sourcing and provision of such accommodation, include elements such as:
- Void costs (to pay the rent during the period where a property is empty and earmarked for a family pending their arrival).
 - The payment of bonds/rent in advance (where private rented accommodation is used).
 - The provision of basic furniture (procured through existing NYCC framework agreements)
 - Small repairs/improvements (to cover any minor works needed to ensure the property is safe, e.g. smoke alarms)
- 5.8 It is anticipated that housing costs shall on average be in the region of £2500 per household. These costs shall be paid for through VPRG. In addition funds are to be put aside to pay for any one off extras, these could include the cost of adaptations where required.
- 5.9 It is understood that across North Yorkshire the approach to sourcing such accommodation varies, with some authorities committed to using Council housing or housing association stock, whilst others intend to use a mix of social housing and private rented accommodation.

- 5.10 Given local levels of housing need and numbers of households on the Council's housing register it is appreciated that the use of social housing to support the Refugee Resettlement is highly contentious. At the local level the intention therefore shall be in the first instance to try and source private rented accommodation. This accommodation where identified would be inspected by Council housing officers to ensure it complied with basic standards. The Council is not however in a position to 'guarantee' to Government or the wider partnership that suitable private rented accommodation shall be readily available when required and is therefore reliant on exercising its nomination rights with Registered Providers as a 'fall-back position'. Initial discussions have been had with Yorkshire Coast Homes who have pledged their commitment to supporting these proposals.
- 5.11 Where social housing is used, allocation in the normal way (e.g. through bidding via the Choice Based Lettings system or through the statutory homelessness process) is not feasible. In order to meet funding requirements a guarantee of accommodation must be provided prior to the acceptance of any referral. Lettings to refugees would therefore need to be undertaken outside the scope of the Council's normal allocation scheme via a 'direct nomination'. This approach whilst lawful does require an amendment to the nomination deed between the Council and YCH agreed at the time of stock transfer. This report therefore seeks authority to agree a variation to that agreement.

Governance arrangements

- 5.12 A structure diagram of the proposed governance arrangements for co-ordinating and managing the resettlement process in North Yorkshire is attached in Appendix 1.
- 5.13 In common with the arrangements already in place in other areas of the country, a programme board would be required to oversee the strategic arrangements for North Yorkshire's participation in the scheme. This would be at county level and would include housing officers from each of the district councils together with representatives of the County Council, primary and secondary care health services and the Police.
- 5.14 Some of the board's functions will be:
- To determine the suitable areas within North Yorkshire for the resettlement of Syrian refugees, considering the implications for housing, education, health and other public services;
 - To ensure smooth arrangements are in place for the arrival of Syrian refugees;
 - To oversee the development of appropriate integration support services for refugees;
 - To consider issues relating to the support of the Syrian refugees that cannot be resolved at an operational level, and to make recommendations to the appropriate organisation;
 - To agree key messages including how the public can help; and

- To report on progress to Local Government York and North Yorkshire.
- 5.15 In relation to the day-to-day management of the process, at the local level, an operational group covering the area in which the resettlement is taking place shall be created. The purpose of this group will be to help co-ordinate the response of support services there. As a minimum, membership will need to include officers from housing, education and social care and the DWP including Job Centre Plus. A Project Co-ordinator would lead delivery and chair the operational group(s). In year 2 an operational group in another area would be set up to undertake the process of resettlement there. The original operational group would then begin to wind down as refugees there became 'mainstreamed' into society.
- 5.16 The County Council is offering to provide in-house project management to co-ordinate the project overall, including employing the Project Co-ordinator (paid for through VPRG), and to act as the accountable body.

Commissioning external specialist support

- 5.17 Some of the requirements of the refugees will be complex and the intensive nature of the resettlement process means that existing frontline staff will require additional support from specialist organisations. Specialist integration support organisations already operate in other areas within Yorkshire and provide expertise to train staff, guide partners through the resettlement process and provide cultural understanding of Syrian culture. They also employ resettlement workers to work on a one-to-one basis with refugees to provide cultural orientation, life skills, language assistance, signpost to existing support services and social connections/activities etc.
- 5.18 It is therefore proposed that a specialist provider is commissioned by NYCC through the use of VPRG. The Council's Housing Manager shall support this procurement process.

Regional support: proposed regional model for Yorkshire and Humber

- 5.19 The Home Office funds regional strategic migration partnerships throughout the United Kingdom. Their role is to work with national government, local government, and others to ensure that their region can respond to migration. Migration Yorkshire is the strategic migration partnership for Yorkshire and the Humber. Migration Yorkshire has for some years worked closely with local authorities in our region taking part in the asylum dispersal scheme and more recently those involved in the Syrian refugee resettlement programme.
- 5.20 Migration Yorkshire is proposing that local authorities collectively develop a regional model for the regional resettlement project led at regional level by Migration Yorkshire with local delivery managed by individual local authorities. This corresponds to the approach currently being discussed by the Home Office.

- 5.21 The model being proposed by Migration Yorkshire is attached at **Appendix 2**. In summary, Migration Yorkshire would project manage the resettlement programme at regional level to provide leadership and co-ordination. Migration Yorkshire would provide the link between local authorities and the Home Office. It would act as a single point through which to route and agree caseloads for our region and be responsible for contract management and compliance with Home Office requirements. Migration Yorkshire would also manage practical aspects such as arrivals (e.g. planning intake and charter flights to each region). Local delivery, including decisions relating to the number of refugees to be resettled within an area and when, would be managed at a local level by local authorities.
- 5.22 It is therefore recommended that the Council along with other North Yorkshire Authorities agree to participate within the wider Regional model and enter into partnership with Migration Yorkshire. There are no cost implications to the Council of entering into such an agreement. It is anticipated that within the proposed Home Office pilot model that some or all of a regional function would be funded initially by the Home Office. If this was not possible estimated overheads to the local authorities for a regional management function would be between 3-5% of the funding provided to local authorities by the Home Office.

Memorandum of Understanding

- 5.23 The complex nature of the resettlement process means that all partners need to be clear about their responsibilities and committed to carrying these out in a timely manner. An initial draft Memorandum of Understanding is attached at **Appendix 3**. The Memorandum of Understanding cannot be finalised by North Yorkshire County Council until it has received details of the funding agreement from the Home Office.
- 5.24 Key points within draft MoU are that NYCC have agreed to act as the accountable body for the receipt, spending and distribution of Government grant funding. NYCC are also agreeing to front fund the scheme on the understanding from that they can recover the costs retrospectively in instalments from the Home Office
- 5.25 A data sharing agreement will also need to be produced as part of the Memorandum of Understanding.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy

There are no policy implications for the Council that arise from this proposed scheme.

6.2 Financial

There are no direct financial implications for the Council that arise from this proposed scheme. Costs associated with the resettlement of refugees are met

by Government Grant. NYCC have agreed to front fund the programme and are the accountable body for the receipt and spending of grant monies.

The mechanics of how funding shall be spent or distributed have yet to be finalised.

The proposed scheme does however have indirect cost implications for the Council. These include, staff time (both to support the countywide and local co-ordination of the scheme / the physical sourcing of accommodation and checks to that accommodation). In addition, where social housing is used it is arguable that this has a knock on indirect cost for the Council, for example a letting to a refugee family could potentially mean that a local homeless person may need to reside longer within temporary accommodation.

It is understood that such costs are not however eligible for the use of VPRG. There is an expectation that such indirect costs shall be absorbed by participating local authorities.

The level of indirect cost is much harder to quantify, however given the numbers of proposed households however these costs are likely to be relatively small.

Whilst grant funding shall cover initial resettlement for up to 5 years, after that period it is anticipated that any refugees shall either return to Syria or be mainstreamed into British society, any on-going costs in relation to public or welfare support shall be absorbed by different public bodies. However it is important to note that many Syrian refugees are professional people who in the long term may make a positive economic contribution to the area.

6.3 **Legal**

This report seeks agreement to enter in to a Memorandum of Understanding with participating Councils around roles and responsibilities of different partners.

The report also seeks agreement to vary the terms of the nomination agreement with YCH.

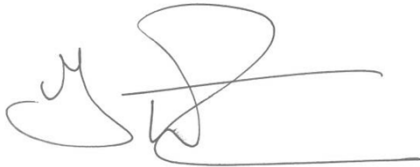
6.4 **Equalities and Diversity and Community Cohesion**

It is recognised that the resettlement of refugees has the potential to increase racial tension in the Borough. The use of social housing to resettle refugees is likely to be highly contentious given levels of local housing need. Nationally this issue has been used by a number of far right extremist groups to stir up racial hatred and community tensions. Whilst all reasonable efforts shall be made to try and source suitable private rented accommodation for this purpose its availability cannot be guaranteed.

Regrettably there are also small areas within the Borough that have a poor history of racially motivated hate crime where the resettlement of refugees would simply be unsustainable. An initial mapping of such areas has already been undertaken in partnership with North Yorkshire Police and YCH.

In addition, following the recent terrorist attacks, it is recognised that the resettlement of refugees is also likely to provoke fear within some sections of the community.

A key element of the local response shall therefore be to work in partnership to prevent and mitigate such incidents occurring. This is likely to include the development of a countywide plan to ensure close co-ordination between agencies along with a clear communications plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trevor Watson', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Trevor Watson
Director

Author: Andrew Rowe – Housing Manager
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E-mail address: andrew.rowe@scarborough.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT OR WISH TO INSPECT ANY OF THE BACKGROUND PAPERS, PLEASE CONTACT ANDREW ROWE ON 01723 383598 OR E-MAIL andrew.rowe@scarborough.gov.uk

Risk Matrix

Risk Ref	Date	Risk	Consequences	Mitigation	Current Risk Score	Target Score	Service Unit Manager/ Responsible Officer	Action Plan
1	Feb 2016	The Council does not participate in the N York's scheme	<p>Participation within the scheme is voluntary. Whilst non participation would likely result in some criticism it is unlikely to have any significant consequences for the Council.</p> <p>However such a decision would be at odds with wider national, regional and countywide commitments.</p>	The Council participates in the scheme	B1	A1	Housing Manager	
2	Feb 2016	The Council incurs unforeseen costs.	Additional funding pressure	'Housing related costs' are eligible for Government grant. Sufficient budget provision needs to be made to ensure these costs are covered. In addition NYCC are front funding the whole scheme.	B2	A1	Housing Manager	
3	Feb 2016	The Council, despite its pledge, fails to resettle the agreed number of refugees within the Borough because it cannot source suitable accommodation when needed.	The Council would not have made its proportionate contribution to the national scheme placing greater pressure on other areas	<p>The potential use of both private rented and social housing provides a greater pool of potential options.</p> <p>Payment of grant to cover housing costs also enables homes to be held empty pending the arrival of a refugee family.</p>	B2	A1	Housing Manager	

Risk Ref	Date	Risk	Consequences	Mitigation	Current Risk Score	Target Score	Service Unit Manager/ Responsible Officer	Action Plan
4	Feb 2016	Increased levels of racial hatred and racially motivated crime.	Negative impact on community cohesion within the Borough.	Partnership approach between key agencies. Careful placement of refugees. Clear communications plan	D3	C2	Housing Manager/ Safer Communities Manager	

Glossary of Terms

Risk	An event which may prevent the Council achieving its objectives
Consequences	The outcome if the risk materialised
Mitigation	The processes and procedures that are in place to reduce the risk
Current Risk Score	The likelihood and impact score with the current mitigation measures in place
Corporate Objectives	An assessment of the Corporate Objectives that are affected by the risk identified.
Target Risk Score	The likelihood and impact score that the Council is aiming to achieve
Service Unit Manager	The Service Unit or Officer responsible for managing the risk
Action Plan	The proposed actions to be implemented in order to reduce the risk to the target score

Risk Scoring

Impact	5					
	4					
	3					
	2					
	1					
		A	B	C	D	E
		Likelihood				

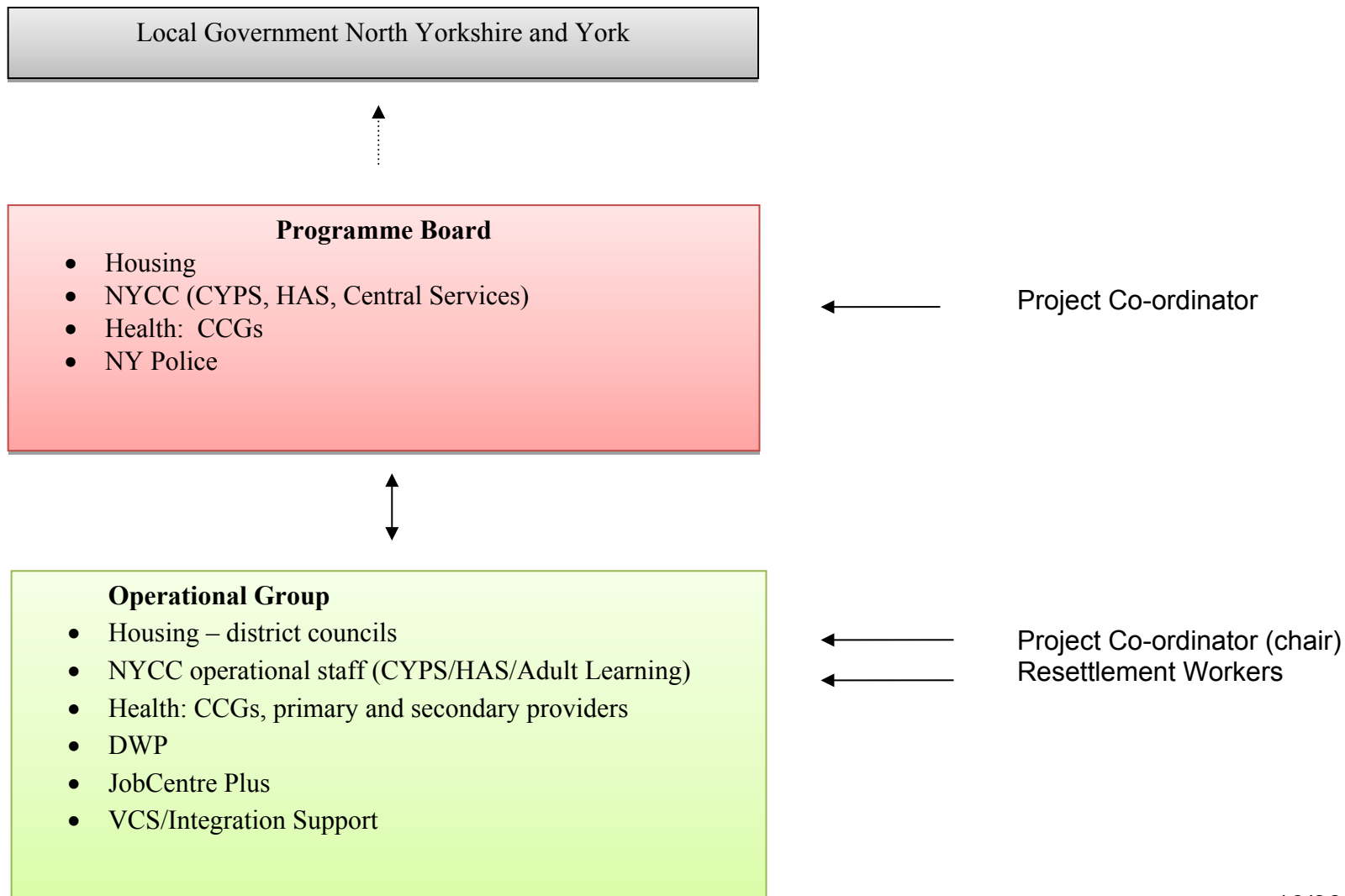
Likelihood:

A = Very Low
 B = Not Likely
 C = Likely
 D = Very Likely
 E = Almost Certain

Impact

1 = Low
 2 = Minor
 3 = Medium
 4 = Major
 5 = Disaster

Proposed governance structure: North Yorkshire Syrian Refugee Resettlement Scheme





Proposal for regional Syrian refugee resettlement model

Background

The Prime Minister announced on 7th September that the UK would take 20,000 Syrian refugees over the rest of this Parliament. The first 1,000 of these will arrive before Christmas under 'Phase 1', also known as 'trailblazers', including over 100 in Yorkshire and Humber across six Local Authority areas.

The remaining 19,000 will arrive later in the UK under 'Phase 2' and the details of this including a draft financial package are emerging, with other financial details expected in the following weeks and months. The Home Office is moving increasingly towards regional approaches and models for phase 2 and in recent days has said that they intend to pilot regional models for phase 2 in a small number of regions. This will be communicated formally in a letter from the Home Office and LGA in the next few weeks.

Local Authorities in our region have been working on their plans in a co-ordinated approach through the support of Migration Yorkshire which has included briefings to CEXs, regional meetings and workshops, support to officers in each area, and co-ordinated discussions with the Home Office. Every Local Authority in the Yorkshire and Humber region has agreed in principle to take part in the resettlement of Syrian refugees in their areas with a regional total of Syrians proportionate to the region's overall share of UK population.

Proposed Regional model for Yorkshire and Humber

Migration Yorkshire propose that Local Authorities build on the coordinated regional approach in the last few months and collectively develop a regional model for regional resettlement project led at regional level by Migration Yorkshire with local delivery managed by individual Local Authorities. This approach has been discussed and informally proposed in recent weeks within the region and is increasingly fitting the proposed national approach.

Practically, this model is being proposed at this time to enable the next phase of in-depth planning and modelling required in order to receive Syrian refugees in local areas across the region in the next few months. Yorkshire and Humber would also be well-placed to be a pilot region with the experience in resettlement and the agreed participation of all Local Authorities, although the decision on this would be taken collectively separately to the decision to work together.

The benefits of a regional model include:

- Economies of scale and better local value
- Agreed quality standards to achieve a consistent and high level of provision across areas
- Collectively plan, consider and address emerging themes and areas of concern
- More powerful regional voice collectively with Government for resolution of likely financial and operational issues

- Mechanism for resolving cross-border issues (e.g. housing vs. schools, or finances for movement of refugees between areas)
- Flexibility to work across partner areas to respond to unforeseen problems
- Enables collective and cohesive external communication and limits risk around public and political criticism
- Managing practical aspects including arrivals (e.g. planning intake and charter flights to each region)
- Share best practice and receiving support from Migration Yorkshire and other LAs throughout the programme
- Single point through which to channel complex routing and agreeing family cases, which is too difficult and too large to do separately between each LA and the Home Office
- Devolving operations and risk to regions where it can be better managed

Proposed Regional Management Function

We propose that Migration Yorkshire project manages the regional resettlement programme building on the remit from central Government and Local Authorities for leadership and coordination on migration at regional level, and providing a similar regional management function as done for the previous asylum housing contract and other projects.

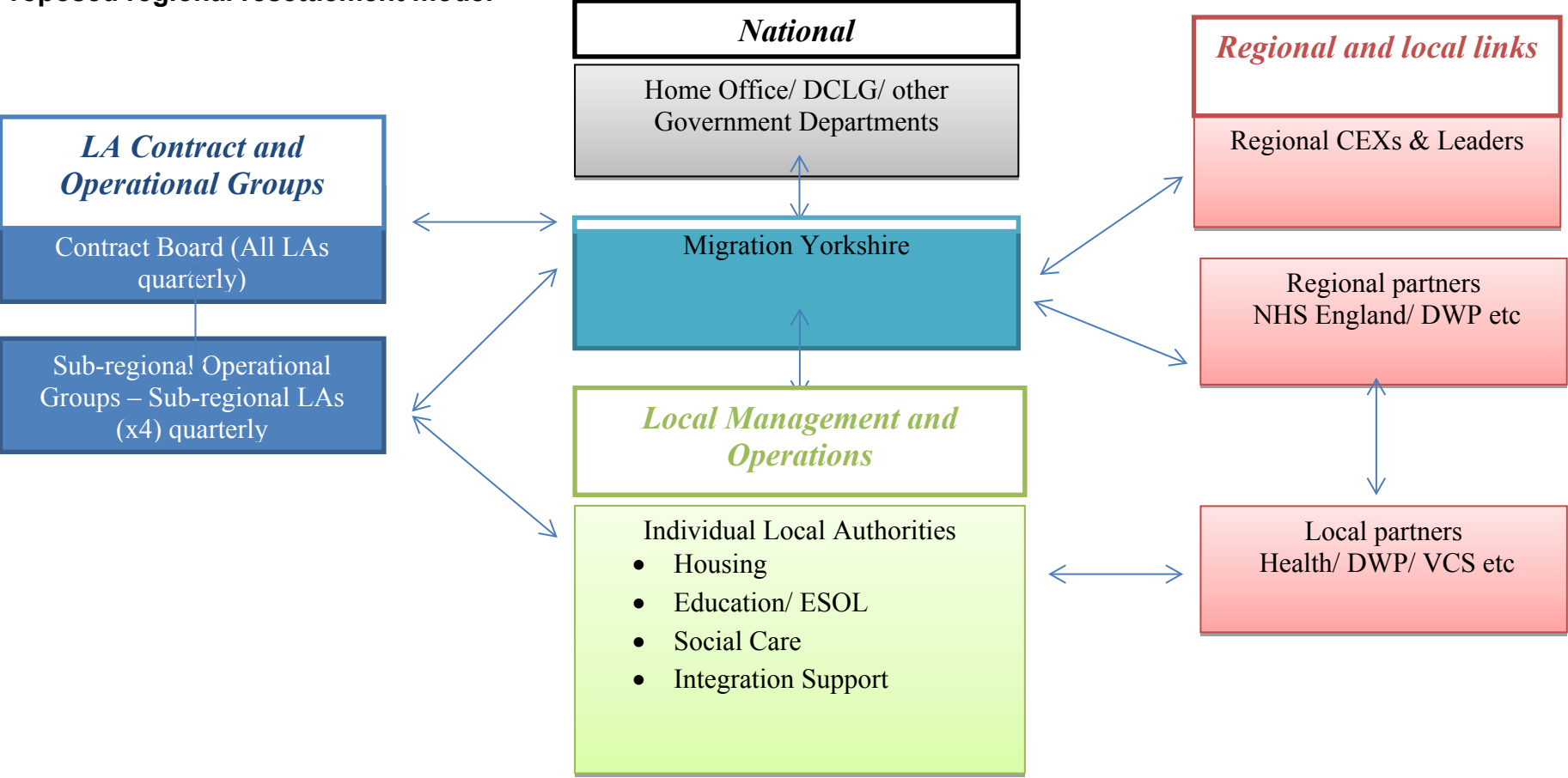
It is anticipated that within the proposed Home Office pilot model, with the devolved management and risk to regions, that some or all of a regional function would be funded additional to draft costs circulated initially by the Home Office

The proposed regional management function would include:

- Contract management and compliance
- Development and planning of programme, with support for local development
- Support with finance and reporting requirements
- Collective negotiation with Home Office
- Enabling resolution of issues between individual Local Authorities and Home Office
- Practical advice and support to local areas
- Routing of family cases from Home Office to meet local area need
- Planning, agreeing and managing arrival dates, flights and practicalities
- Regional external partnerships such as NHS England who are likely to hold the health budget at regional level and lead health approval mechanisms and other organisations e.g. DWP.
- Regional communication strategy, managing internal and external communications
- Agreeing and enabling mechanisms for LAs to work collectively, such as through joint procurements or practical service user issues
- Managing and secretariat for regional and sub-regional operational and contract structures

Under this model local delivery will be managed at local level by Local Authorities. See diagram below for illustration of regional model.

Proposed regional resettlement model



Draft Memorandum of Understanding: North Yorkshire Syrian Refugee Resettlement Scheme

This agreement is dated

Between:

1. Craven District Council of 1 Belle Vue Square, Broughton Road, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 1FJ
2. Harrogate Borough Council of Council Offices, Crescent Gardens, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG1 2SG
3. Hambleton District Council of Civic Centre, Stone Cross, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 2UU
4. North Yorkshire County Council of County Hall, Racecourse Lane Northallerton, DL7 8AD
5. Richmondshire District Council of Mercury House, Station Road, Richmond DL10 4JX
6. Ryedale District Council of Ryedale House, Malton, North Yorkshire, YO17 7HH
7. Scarborough Borough Council of Town Hall, St Nicholas St, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO11 2HG
8. Selby District Council of Civic Centre, Doncaster Road, Selby, North Yorkshire, YO8 9FT
9. North Yorkshire Police of Newby Wiske, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 9HA
10. NHS Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven Clinical Commissioning Group of Millennium Business Park, Station Road, Steeton, Keighley, BD20 6RB
11. YORLMC North Yorkshire and York
12. NHS Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby Clinical Commissioning Group of
13. NHS Harrogate and Rural District Clinical Commissioning Group of ...
14. NHS Scarborough and Ryedale Clinical Commissioning Group of
15. NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group of
16. Airedale NHS Foundation Trust of...
17. Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust
18. South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust of...
19. York Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust of
20. Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust of ...
21. Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust of
22. The Department of Work and Pensions (North East Yorkshire and the Humber), of Britannia House CH(1), 2, Ferensway, Hull, HU2 8NF

For the purposes of this Agreement all the parties above are together referred to as 'the Partners'.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out the terms and understanding between the Partner organisations to this Agreement

Background

In September 2015 the Prime Minister announced that, during the remainder of this parliament, the UK will accept up to 20,000 Syrian refugees from refugee camps in countries neighbouring Syria.

The Home Office is asking authorities to volunteer to offer to resettle a specific number of Syrian refugees between 2015 and 2020 (the number of refugees to be set by the local authority/s within the area); and as part of this to agree and implement a package of support measures that authorities would provide (directly or indirectly).

If refugees are to be resettled locally within North Yorkshire it is essential that they are given the support they need. The multiple, and in some cases complex needs of Syrian refugees requires a co-ordinated partnership response from the Partners in order to ensure their successful resettlement in North Yorkshire.

Purpose

The purpose of this MOU is to establish the principles of collaboration to resettle Syrian refugees in North Yorkshire under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme ('the Scheme') as detailed in **Appendix 1**.

This Memorandum of Understanding sets out the governance structures the Partners will put in place to deliver the Scheme and the respective roles and responsibilities the Partners will have in delivering the Scheme.

Principles of Collaboration

The Partners agree to adopt the following principles in connection with the Scheme (Principles):

- (a) collaborate and co-operate. Establish and adhere to the governance structure set out in this MOU to ensure that activities are delivered and actions taken as required;
- (b) be accountable. Take on, manage and account to each other for performance of the respective roles and responsibilities set out in this MOU;
- (c) be open. Communicate openly about major concerns, issues or opportunities relating to the Scheme;
- (d) learn, develop and seek to achieve full potential. Share information, experience, materials and skills to learn from each other and develop effective working practices, work collaboratively to identify solutions, eliminate duplication of effort, mitigate risk and reduce cost;
- (e) adopt a positive outlook. Behave in a positive, proactive manner;
- (f) adhere to statutory requirements and best practice. Comply with applicable laws and standards including EU procurement rules, data protection and freedom of information legislation. In particular the parties agree to comply with the requirements of the Information Sharing Protocol attached to this MOU in **Annex 2**.
- (g) act in a timely manner. Recognise the time-critical nature of the Scheme and respond accordingly to requests for support;
- (h) deploy appropriate resources. Ensure sufficient and appropriately qualified resources are available and authorised to fulfil the responsibilities set out in this MOU; and

(i) act in good faith to support achievement of the Scheme and compliance with these Principles.

Governance Structure

The governance structure for the Scheme for co-ordinating and managing the resettlement process in North Yorkshire is attached at Appendix 3

The Partners will establish a Programme Board and Operational Board to deliver the Scheme.

Programme Board

The Programme Board will oversee the strategic arrangements for North Yorkshire's participation in the Scheme. This group will consist of:

- Representatives of North Yorkshire District Councils
- North Yorkshire County Council:
- Representatives of North Yorkshire Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Representatives of the NHS Trusts
- North Yorkshire Police

The Programme Board's functions will include (but not be limited to) the following:

- To determine the suitable areas within North Yorkshire for the resettlement of Syrian refugees, considering the implications for housing, education, health and other public services;
- To ensure smooth arrangements are in place for the arrival of Syrian refugees;
- To oversee the development of appropriate integration support services for refugees;
- To consider issues relating to the support of the Syrian refugees that cannot be resolved at an operational level, and to make recommendations to the appropriate organisation;
- To agree a communications plan with key messages for the media, and how local groups and the general public can help; and
- To report on progress to Local Government York and North Yorkshire.

The terms of reference of the Programme Board and the Operational Group will be determined and agreed by the Programme Board and will form a separate document to this MOU.

Operational Group

The Partners agree to set up an Operational Group consisting of frontline staff to manage the day-to-day management of the Scheme covering the area in which the resettlement takes place.

The group will consist of:

- North Yorkshire District Councils in the area in which the resettlement is taking place
- North Yorkshire County Council operational staff (Children and Young Peoples Services and Health and Adult Services)

- Health: The CCG/s and NHS Trust/s in the area in which the resettlement is taking place
- The Department of Work and Pensions
- VCS/Integration Support

This group will consist of officers from housing, education and social care and the DWP, with specific membership to be agreed by the Partners. A Project Co-ordinator employed by the County Council would lead delivery and chair the operational group(s).

The Operational Group will assist with the co-ordination of the response of support services.

Further Operational Groups may be set up where refugees are placed in other areas to facilitate the process of resettlement in that location.

Responsibilities

All Partners agree to work together through the Programme Board and Operational Groups of the North Yorkshire Syrian Refugee Resettlement Scheme throughout the lifetime of the resettlement process in North Yorkshire.

North Yorkshire County Council (County Council) will provide in-house project management to co-ordinate the Scheme overall, including employing the Project Co-ordinator.

The County Council will act as the accountable body and will be responsible for distributing the funding in relation to the Scheme.

All Partners have a collective responsibility for ensuring the success of the resettlement process so that the refugees are given timely support and assistance.

All Partners will work with other organisations not included in this MOU should the Programme Board agree to do so. This is likely to include Migration Yorkshire and Government Departments of State.

All Partners agree to plan ahead of the date of arrival of the Syrian refugees in North Yorkshire and acknowledge that the refugees will require access to some services upon their immediate arrival to North Yorkshire. Accordingly the Programme Board will agree which services will be required by when and all Partners will be expected to follow that agreement.

All Partners agree that all the refugees will have timely access to the following services and that these will be provided by the organisation/s:

- Housing: North Yorkshire District Councils
- Furnishings: North Yorkshire County Council
- Public Health Advice: County Council Public Health

- Primary and Secondary Health: NHS Yorkshire & the Humber/the appropriate Clinical Commissioning Group involved in the area in which the resettlement of the refugees is taking place/YORLMC North Yorkshire and York
- Welfare benefits: DWP
- Integration Support Services including language assistance, cultural orientation and signposting to existing support services: TBC
- Community Safety: North Yorkshire Police
- ESOL

All Partners agree that refugees with specific requirements will have timely access to the following services:

- Primary and Secondary Education: North Yorkshire County Council
- Adult Learning: North Yorkshire County Council
- Social Care: North Yorkshire County Council
- Employment support services: DWP
- Specialist health services including mental health services: NHS Yorkshire & the Humber/the appropriate Clinical Commissioning Group

Funding

The local authority funding for the cost of the Syrian refugee resettlement scheme in North Yorkshire will be provided by the Government. The Home Office has stipulated that the local authority funding will be used for:

- Housing set up and void costs (up to a maximum of 8 weeks)
- Caseworker /integration support
- Housing support for one year
- Specialist mental health costs
- ESOL provision
- Project management and any other associated costs
- Arrival costs

The County Council has agreed to be the accountable body for the funding and will enter into an accountable body agreement with the Home Office or other assigned government department. This is on the understanding that the County Council can recover the costs retrospectively in instalments from the Home Office/other assigned government department.

It is anticipated that the Home Office will provide an element of the funding up-front to the County Council and pay the remainder in arrears in set instalments over a specified period to the County Council for each individual refugee resettled. The County Council will distribute funding to the project up-front in the area in which the resettlement is taking place, as and when required, to cover specified resettlement costs outside of the County Council related-services (such as housing-related costs, specialist mental health costs, caseworker/integration support and arrival costs) to ensure that the resettlement process develops smoothly and claim back the funding from the Home Office.

Where a North Yorkshire District Council does not have any refugees proposed to be located in their area they will receive no funding.

Duration

This MOU may be modified by mutual consent of the Partners. This MOU shall become effective from the date that it has been signed by all the Partners and will remain in effect until modified or terminated by any one of the Partners by mutual consent.

Escalation

If any of the Partners has any issues, concerns or complaints about the Scheme, or any matter in this MOU, that Partner shall notify the other Partners and together the Partners shall then seek to resolve the issue by a process of consultation. If the issue cannot be resolved within a reasonable period of time, the matter shall be escalated to the Programme Board which shall decide on the appropriate course of action to take. If the matter cannot be resolved by the Programme Board within seven working days, the matter may be escalated to the Chief Executives of the Partners for resolution.

If any of the Partners receives any formal inquiry, complaint, claim or threat of action from a third party (including, but not limited to requests for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000) in relation to the Scheme, the matter shall be promptly referred to the Programme Board (or its nominated representatives). No action shall be taken in response to any such inquiry, complaint, claim or action, to the extent that such response would adversely affect the Scheme, without the prior approval of the Programme Board (or its nominated representatives).

Status

Nothing in this MOU is intended to, or shall be deemed to, establish any partnership or joint venture between the Partners, constitute either as the agent of the other party, nor authorise either of the Partners to make or enter into any commitments for or on behalf of the other(s).

Governing Law and Jurisdiction

This MOU shall be governed by and construed in accordance with English law and will be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales

Contact Information

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The Department of Work and Pensions
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