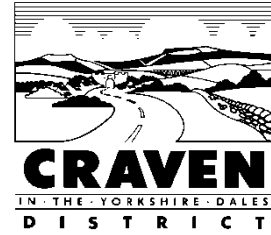


Policy Committee – 11th September 2017.



REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

Report of the Director of Services

Lead Member: Richard Foster

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of Report:

To inform members of the current position with regard to the resettlement of refugees in Craven and seek a decision as to whether the Council should accept additional refugee families who are eligible for resettlement under Family Reunification.

2. Recommendations – Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Agree to support family reunification and accept one additional family under the SVP or VCRS scheme if requested, subject to there being sufficient private sector housing available.

3. Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Update

- 3.1 In January 2016, Members agreed that Craven District Council would accept 25 refugees as part of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons resettlement scheme (SVP).
- 3.2 The first two families arrived in July 2016, with subsequent arrivals in September 2016, January 2017 and the final family arrived in June 2017. In total we have exceeded our initial commitment and resettled 30 refugees. All the families have been housed in private rented accommodation in Skipton.
- 3.3 Families receive intensive integration support during their first year of resettlement. We have received confirmation from North Yorkshire County Council that support will continue for years 2 – 5 under the Independent Living Advice Service, which is designed to support those who still need assistance with certain aspects of life in the UK. This will include telephone advice and sign posting to services, some 1-1 support if needed, and monthly briefings on a variety of topics related to increasing knowledge with regards to life in the UK.

4. Vulnerable Childrens Resettlement Scheme Update

- 4.1 Members also agreed that Craven District Council should participate in the Vulnerable Children’s Resettlement Scheme (VCRS). A family has now been identified and they are due to arrive in early autumn. This will complete the Councils total commitment to both refugee programmes.

5. Family Reunification.

- 5.1 Under the SVP and VCRS Resettlement scheme, the Home Office is working closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to ensure that vulnerable refugees can, where possible, be resettled as a family group. Unfortunately many families have become seperated during their displacement and whilst some have been resettled in the United Kingdon, they often have close family members remaining in countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt who wish to join their extended family in the UK under a resettlement scheme.
- 5.2 If accepted onto the SVP or VCRS scheme, the Home Office would seek to rehouse them as close as possible to family members that have already been resettled, depending on the availability of housing in the local authority area. It is therefore possible that we may receive a request from the Home Office to accept an additional refugee family over and above the total that we originally committed to.
- 5.3 Members should be aware that it is highly likely that social rented accommodation would be used to house any future arrivals, as it has proved difficult to source suitable private rented accommodation.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial Implications.

There are no cost implications to the Council as any costs will be met by the grant paid from the Home Office.

5.2 Legal Implications:

None. The Council has already signed agreements for both the SVP and VCRS programme.

6. Contribution to Council Priorities:

The resettlement of refugees is a key delivery mechanism of the Council Plan Priority: Resilient Communities – creating sustainable communities across Craven.

7. Risk Management:

There are no strategic risk management issues arising from the report.

8. **Equality Analysis:**

Not completed.

10. **Consultations with Others:** CLT, Legal, Finance.

11. **Access to Information : Background Documents:**

None

12. **Author of the Report:**

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13. **Appendices:**

Appendix 1- Letter from Home Office regarding Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme - Extended Family Members.