



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

