

# Notice to the Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee



## Urgent Key Decision form

### DECISION DETAILS

**Decision Maker:** Assistant Chief Executive

**Decision Title:** Authority to Enter into a Grant Agreement for the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Scheme

**Description of Decision:** This waiver will cover the following linked decisions: (A). Deputy Leader to agree to enter into a Grant Agreement with the Home Office to provide funding to assist with housing and supporting Afghan families who move to Brent under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Programme; and (B). Assistant Chief Executive to agree the allocation of grant funding to provide support and assistance to resettle Afghan staff (who were employed by the British armed forces and the UK Government in Afghanistan) to help them to adjust to life in the UK in the 12 months following arrival into Brent

**When will the Decision be made?** 01/09/21

**Will the accompanying report be:** Open  Part Exempt  Fully Exempt

#### Reasons for exemption (if applicable)

The report will contain the following category of Information exempt from publication under the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely paragraph:

### TYPE OF URGENCY

#### Please tick all that apply:

- A. The decision is urgent and 28 clear days' notice of the decision cannot be given but at least 5 clear days' notice can
- B. The decision is extremely urgent and even 5 clear days' notice of the decision cannot be given
- C. The decision will be made by members at a meeting and 28 clear days' notice that the proposed decision may be discussed in private (i.e. the report will contain information exempt from publication) cannot be given
- D. The decision must be implemented urgently and the 5 day call-in period must be dis-applied to allow the decision to take immediate effect.

### REASONS FOR URGENCY

**If you have selected options A, B or C please explain:**

▪ **Why it was not possible to provide the required notice (i.e. why the decision or exemption was not anticipated)**

The situation in Afghanistan was suddenly inflamed requiring immediate withdrawal of Afghans and their families who had worked for the British Army or the British Government. This cohort of people are fast being removed from Afghanistan to safety in the UK. The scheme is being accelerated and housing is required as a matter of urgency for these families.

Brent is a welcoming place for refugees and wants to do its part to help, support, and welcome these displaced families. We have identified suitable properties to house two families and need to agree the funding in order to continue with this aim.

The grant funding needs to be in place in order to house the families; the decision to enter into the grant agreement needs to be agreed to.

▪ **Why it is impractical to defer the decision to a later date to allow the appropriate notice to be provided.**

The families in question have been through a traumatic experience, fearing for their lives as they escaped Afghanistan. Hotel living is unsuitable for these families as the large numbers of displaced people living in one place makes them vulnerable to abuse, including community dissent and hate crime. To enable them to begin to settle into their new life in the UK in their own home as quickly as possible would be highly beneficial to all family members, for their health and mental health.

**If you have selected Option D please explain why the council's interest or the public interest would be seriously prejudiced by the decision not taking immediate effect.**

Brent is a diverse borough and welcomes people from all different backgrounds. We have experience of delivering programmes related to integration and support for newly arrived and emerging communities including the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. Brent is ready to take on its fair share of duty and responsibility to assist the Government at this time.

If we did not act with immediate effect, it would seriously undermine the council's reputation as a welcoming and accepting borough. It is also in the interest of the Afghan families who have fled from Afghanistan to implement this decision with immediate effect enabling them to begin their new life as quickly as possible and begin to recover from any trauma they have experienced.

We are not able to house these families without the funding so agreement to apply for the funding is paramount.

**SIGN-OFF**

**Assistant Chief Executive**

**Printed Name: Shazia Hussain**

**Signature:** *Shazia Hussain*

**Chief Executive**

**Printed Name: Carolyn Downs**

**Signature:** *Carolyn Downs*

**THE FOLLOWING SECTION IS TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE SERVICES**

CHAIR OF COMMUNITY & WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Notice to:** Councillor Ketan Sheth, Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

**The Chair is asked to:**

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <p><b>Note that an urgent decision will be taken as detailed in the form above.</b></p> <p>The decision is deemed urgent because insufficient (less than 28 days) notice of the intention to take the decision was provided on the Forward Plan. However, at least 5 clear days' notice has been provided and therefore the Scrutiny Chair is only required to note that the decision will be taken.</p>   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Permit the extremely urgent decision to be taken as detailed in the form above.</b></p> <p>The decision is deemed extremely urgent as less than 5 clear days' notice of the intention to take the decision has been provided. The Scrutiny Chair is asked to agree that the decision is urgent and cannot be reasonably deferred for the reasons detailed in the form above.</p>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <p><b>Permit discussion of exempt information in private relying on Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972</b></p> <p>If a report is likely to contain information exempt from publication under schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, then 28 days' notice of this must be provided on the Forward Plan. Where this requirement has not been met, the agreement of the Scrutiny Chair is required before proceeding.</p>  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Permit the dis-application of the 5 day call-in period, allowing the decision detailed in the form above to take immediate effect.</b></p> <p>A Cabinet decision or a Key Decision cannot be implemented until the 5 day call in period has elapsed and no valid call-in has been received. The call-in protocol can be dis-applied if the council's or the public interest would be seriously prejudiced by the decision not taking immediate effect. The Chief Executive must determine whether a decision is urgent in this regard. The consent of the Scrutiny Chair to the matter being treated as urgent is also required.</p> |

SIGN-OFF

**Notice sent to Councillor Ketan Sheth, Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on 31/03/20**

**Chair's approval:** Required  Not Required

**Date approval granted (if applicable): 01/09/21**