

 <b>Brent</b>	<b>Officer Key Decision</b>
	<b>Report to the Assistant Chief Executive</b>
<b>AUTHORITY TO AWARD THE GRANT FUNDING FOR THE AFGHAN RELOCATION AND ASSISTANCE SCHEME</b>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Key Decision
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	One Appendix 1 Grant Funding Instructions & Agreement
<b>Background Papers<sup>1</sup>:</b>	N/A
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## 1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report. requests approval to award the grant funding from the Home Office for the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Scheme

## 2.0 Recommendation(s)

That the Assistant Chief Executive:

2.1 Approves the Council entering into a grant agreement with the Home Office for the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Scheme and for the

<sup>1</sup> Urgency procedure form, Afghan Resettlement Scheme; Individual Member Decision form ARAP funding.

sum outlined in the table in paragraph 3.10 to support the relocation of up to 16 Afghan families to Brent.

### **3.0 Detail**

3.1 The purpose of the funding under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Scheme is 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 including:

- Assisting with the distribution of Biometric Residence Permits
- Registering with local schools or English classes
- Attending local Job Centre Plus appointments for benefits assessments
- Registering with local GP and other healthcare providers (as required)
- Providing assistance with access to employment

3.2 In accordance with the funding instruction (included in Appendix 1), the funding covers all costs, expenses, liabilities and obligations that are related to, incurred by, or arise out of the delivery, activities and operations of the scheme between 22 June 2021 and 31 March 2022.

3.3 All funding applications and payments will be assessed on an individual basis.

3.4 Funding requests must be made within three months of the period the funding is claimed for.

3.5 Exceptional costs may also be covered under this funding, but written agreement from the Afghan Scheme Payments Team must be sought. The exceptional costs are: property adaptations; property void costs; support for children with identified educational needs; and social care provision which are not normally funded through mainstream provision.

3.6 Funding will cease if the person:

- moves out of the Local Authority area;
- no longer wish to receive assistance;
- applies for a different immigration status, or
- dies.

3.7 Brent Council has taken part in the vulnerable persons resettlement scheme and is keen to support those in greatest need. We are an inclusive borough, which believes in equality for all, and we are trying to build a cohesive inclusive society.

3.8 The grant is for 12 months for each family, and is available from 22 June 2021 until 31 March.

3.9 The Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Resources and Deputy Leader of the Council have approved application for this funding, initially for two families, but up to 16 families over time.

3.10 The table below sets out the grant payments available.

Descriptor		Tariff	When to claim
Integration support package (per person for 12 months following arrival)		£10,500	40% on day of arrival Two subsequent equal payments after four and eight months
ESOL (single payment per adult who requires it)		£850	On arrival
Cash Support (per person per week up to a maximum of four months if required)	Single (under 25)	£59.20	Can be claimed between the end of month four and the beginning of month eight following arrival of the recipient – all claims must be evidenced
	Single (25 or over)	£74.70	
	Couples	£117.40	
	Child (under 18)	£37.75	
Rent/Accommodation (per person per day, up to a maximum of four months if required)		£15	

3.11 A further top-up fund can be claimed for shortfall of rent after the initial four months if the benefits cap is lower. The top-up is equal to the above tariff.

3.12 The higher rate rent funding is available for the one year duration of this grant. Following that time, a family may be living in a house that they are unable to afford. This will create a pressure on the Council as they will have to be supported to find suitable accommodation.

3.13 The process for claiming additional or exceptional void costs is different; authority from the Home Office must be sought beforehand for estimated expenditure, the in principle decision will be returned within five working days when sufficient information has been provided. The Local Authority can then submit the evidence of expenditure to the Home Office and once approved the payment will be made within ten working days.

#### 4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The purpose of the funding is 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.
- 4.2 In order to make a claim to the Home Office, the Council has to incur the costs first before a grant application can be approved for payment. There could also be additional pressure on the Council after the one grant expiration as explained in paragraph 3.12.
- 4.3 There is a potential risk that if the Home Office do not grant us this income to support these families then the Council will have to cover the costs as a pressure. This is unlikely to happen as they will have assigned us this family.
- 4.4 An example of a family with two adults and two children would see this amount of funding:

Descriptor		Tariff	Total	Claim immediately
Integration support package (per person for 12 months following arrival)		£10,500	£42,000	£16,800
ESOL (single payment per adult who requires it)		£850	£1,700	£1,700
Cash Support (per person per week up to a maximum of four months if required)	Single (under 25)	£59.20	-	-
	Single (25 or over)	£74.70	-	-
	Couples	£117.40	£2,034	-
	Child (under 18)	£37.75	£654	-
Rent/Accommodation (per person per day, up to a maximum of four months if required)		£15	£7,300	-
Total			£53,688	£18,500

In the above example, £18,500 can be claimed immediately the beneficiary enters the Local Authority, leaving an outstanding amount of £35,188.

- 4.5 The Council will be an accountable body in respect of grant funding and in accordance with Financial Regulation 9.1.1, the Director of Finance approves entry into such arrangement.

## 5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 In accordance with paragraph 13 of Part 3 of the Constitution, submission of bids for additional resources from government and other bodies is a decision for individual Cabinet Members in relation to their portfolio area in consultation with the Leader. Officers have confirmed in Section 3 that relevant approval was obtained.
- 5.2 The Assistant Chief Executive has delegated authority pursuant to paragraph 9.5 and 9.7 of Part 3 of the Constitution and Financial Regulation 8.2.2 of Part 2 of the Constitution to enter into a grant funding arrangements. In doing so, the Assistant Chief Executive must ensure that the objectives of the grant agreement are consistent with the Council objectives and priorities in accordance with Financial Regulation 9.1.2.
- 5.3 As the Council will be an accountable body in respect of grant funding and in accordance with Financial Regulation 9.1.1, the Assistant Chief Executive must only exercise delegated powers to enter into grant funding arrangements where the Director of Finance approves entry into such arrangement. The Director of Finance has confirmed in the Financial Implications approval to entry into the grant agreement.
- 5.4 The Council is required to enter into a formal grant agreement, a copy of which is at Appendix 1. Legal Services have reviewed the grant agreement and can confirm that it is legally permissible for the Council to enter into the grant agreement.

## **6.0 Equality Implications**

- 6.1 The Council must in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
  - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,
- pursuant to s149 Equality Act 2010. This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 6.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 6.3 The purpose of the duty is to enquire into whether a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic. In

other words, the indirect discriminatory effects of a proposed decision. Due regard is the regard that is appropriate in all the circumstances.

- 6.4 The Afghan families arriving under the scheme are not likely to speak English but part of the scheme is to provide them with English lessons. Officers are also putting preparations in place to ensure our interpreting services are able to provide the relevant service. Provision has also been built into the scheme to ensure people with disabilities or limiting conditions receive the care they require. The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no adverse equality implications.

## **7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

- 7.1 The Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Resources and Deputy Leader of the Council have approved application for this funding, initially for two families, but up to 16 families over time.

## **8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications**

- 8.1 The grant allows for Afghan families to be housed in the Private Rented Sector. Affordable private rented sector properties are always hard to come by. It is expected that after the programme ends, the families will be self-sufficient with the ability to provide for themselves. There are no other property or accommodation implications as a result of the award of the grant.

**Report sign off:**

**ANNE KITTAPPA**  
Senior Policy Officer, Strategy and  
Partnerships