

Housing Select Committee			
Report Title	Independent review of Refugee Resettlement Programme		
Key Decision	No	Item No.	6
Ward	None		
Contributors	Executive Director for Housing, Regeneration and Environment		
Class	Part 1	Date:	18 September 2019

1. Purpose of paper

- 1.1 This paper sets out the context for and recommendations of a review of the refugee resettlement work between 2016 and early 2019.
- 1.2 Actions proposed as part of the programme's continuous improvement work and in response to the review are also set out in the paper and appended.
- 1.3 The purpose of this paper is to provide members with an update on the refugee resettlement work and a forward-look at the improvement work planned.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Housing Select Committee:
 - Note the findings of the review and the response to the recommendations set out in this report
 - Note the changes to the programme so far and the action plan for further improvement

3. Policy Context

- 3.1 The contents of this report are consistent with the Council's policy framework. It supports the priorities set out in the Corporate Strategy 2018-2022:
 - Open Lewisham
 - Tackling the housing crisis
 - Giving children and young people the best start in life
 - Building an inclusive local economy
 - Delivering and defending: health, social care and support
 - Building safer communities
- 3.2 It will also help meet the Council's Housing Strategy 2015-2020 in which the Council commits to the following key objectives:
 - Helping residents at times of severe and urgent housing need
 - Building the homes our residents need

- Greater security and quality for private renters
- Promoting health and wellbeing by improving our residents' homes

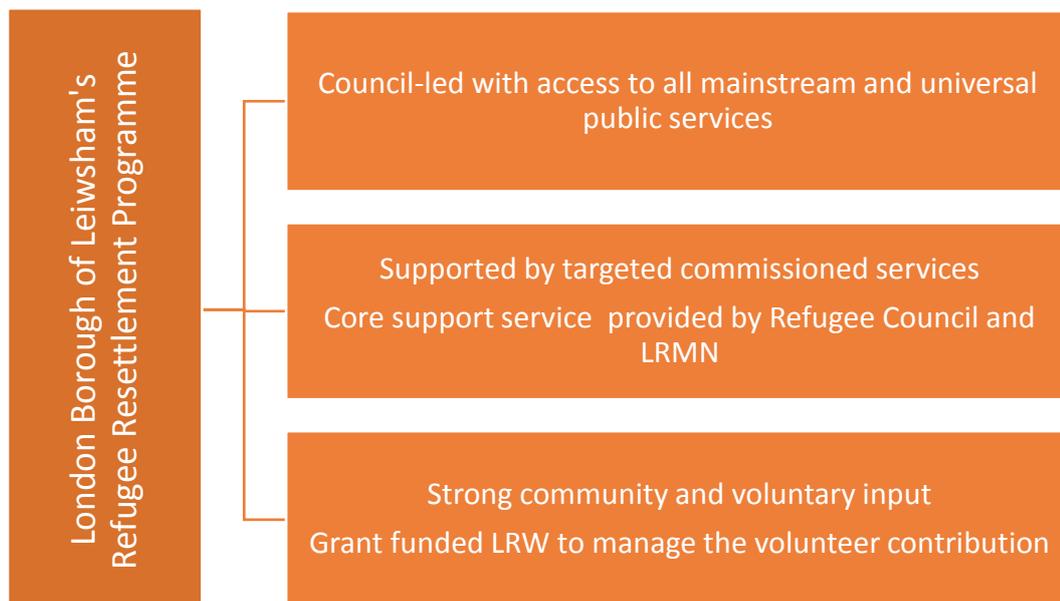
4. Background

- 4.1 In response to the humanitarian crisis in Syria, the government said it would support the resettlement of 20,000 vulnerable Syrian refugees by 2020 through the Vulnerable Person's Resettlement Scheme. This work is coordinated by the Home Office and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- 4.2 At a meeting of Full Council on 21 September 2016, after representations from various community groups in support of the programme, all councillors voted in favour of participating in the scheme. On 22 March 2017, Mayor and Cabinet voted to extend Lewisham's offer to include households from the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCS). This includes non-Syrian refugee families in the region who have been highlighted as 'vulnerable' by the United Nations because of the needs of their children.
- 4.3 In September 2018 Mayor and Cabinet agreed to resettle a further 100 refugee families, and this was formalised in the new Corporate Strategy, approved at Full Council on 27 February 2019 alongside a commitment to become a Borough of Sanctuary. In June 2019 the Home Office confirmed the extension of the programme which would see refugees accepted from across the world. This Global Resettlement Scheme will follow the same format of the existing programme, but accept refugees from a wider range of countries.
- 4.4 Resettlement through the programme requires us as an authority to identify suitable homes, accept referrals from the Home Office matched to those homes and take responsibility for the families we accept from arrival at the airport. Families will typically arrive with few possessions, so part of the housing provision involves ensuring a basic package of goods are ready for the family on arrival.
- 4.5 Additionally, resettlement support must be provided to move the family towards independence, and this focuses on tenancy sustainment and management; budgeting, including benefits management; ESOL and other employment, education and training; health and care needs.
- 4.6 It is the intention of the programme that families are supported to rebuild their lives, and to participate fully in the community they are resettled in, with refugee status granted for five years to enable this. The Council commissions a support provider to deliver intensive support to the family on arrival, and supplements this core provision with a range of additional services. On top of this, families are entitled to access all of the borough's universal and mainstream services like any other residents.

5. Programme development

- 5.1 As set out above, the resettlement work at Lewisham began in 2016 and has seen significant growth.
- 5.2 The Council initially intended to resettle 10 families in 2017, and following the success of the initial 10 and the ongoing commitment to resettlement in the borough which led to more offers of housing for refugee families to rent, ultimately welcomed 17 families across 2017.

- 5.3 The programme was delivered by an officer based across governance and housing, who was able to commit approximately half their time to the work alongside their existing responsibilities.
- 5.4 Following the election in 2018, an enhanced commitment was made to welcome 100 families. This would make Lewisham London's leading borough for refugee resettlement, and was both a significant scale-up locally as well as an unprecedented number in the London region.
- 5.5 In response to this increased commitment, significant changes have been made in the three essential components of the programme: the Council's role as programme lead, the support provider commissioned by the Council and the co-ordination of volunteers
- 5.6 First, as part of the Council's broader commitment to being an Open Lewisham, and changes in staffing at senior levels in Housing Services, a new programme management structure was developed which saw the replacement of the single part-time dedicated post with two new posts – a Refugee Resettlement Programme Manager, to deliver the programme full-time, and a Projects and New Supply Strategy Manager, to hold strategic oversight and development of the programme as part of their portfolio which also includes work on housing supply across the borough.
- 5.7 Second, the Council reviewed the contract for support provision for the families and recently commissioned the Refugee Council working together with Lewisham Refugees and Migrants Network (LRMN) to take over this role. It is hoped that this combination of national and local expertise will be of great help to the families as they adjust to life in Lewisham.
- 5.8 Third, under the original programme, the co-ordination of volunteers for the refugee resettlement programme had been one part of Lewisham Citizens' several activities. With the increased commitment in the programme, a new organisation, affiliated to Lewisham Citizens, was set up, Lewisham Refugee Welcome (LRW) with the purpose of recruiting and co-ordinating volunteers. LRW has been awarded project funding of £20,000 per annum to March 2021 as part of the Council's main voluntary sector grants programme in order to carry out this work.
- 5.9 In addition to the changes in all three roles in the programme, the Council has developed an improved clarity of roles and the formalisation of the cross-cutting approach to supporting families with appropriate input from each of the Council as programme lead, our commissioned provider, and a dynamic and passionate community and voluntary sector. The diagram on the next page sets out the intention:



5.10 The new programme team were in post at the start of March 2019, and began work to understand the needs of existing families, prepare for the first arrivals of the new commitment and formalise the programme structures to reflect the increased scale of the work and develop them in response to identified gaps. This included:

- Visiting all resettled families in Lewisham with an interpreter to hear their experiences, feedback and ongoing needs
- Working to address any outstanding issues families had and make sure they were on track with their resettlement progress
- Establishing operational and strategic working groups to improve joint working, communications and governance
- Strengthening contract management of the incumbent provider of support services, and developing new support plans and documents
- Initiating the tender for a new support service contract and appointing a new provider
- Putting in place mechanisms and processes to identify housing for new families, including developing the approach with housing colleagues to secure PRS tenancies and achieving Mayor and Cabinet approval to provide a loan to Lewisham Homes for the acquisition of homes in the borough
- Engaging the CCG, Job Centre Plus and other key partners to renew and refresh the programme arrangements and ensure appropriate strategic arrangements were in place for new arrivals
- Reviewing all programme expenditure and income to ensure all funding is claimed, understand existing supply agreements and plan future allocations
- Working with the Lewisham Migration Forum to progress the commitment to become a Borough of Sanctuary, including delivering an event in Refugee Week to launch pledges of support and presenting to internal boards on what sanctuary means for the Council

- Welcoming the first three families of the hundred family commitment, with a further three families scheduled for arrival imminently
- 5.11 Going forward from here, a delivery framework is being developed alongside continued review and learning. The aim of the framework will be to set out clearly the service offer, pathways and delivery approach and to provide a structure for the whole programme.
- 5.12 To help develop this approach going forward, and in light of the initial small-scale of the programme and the development of it as it went on, an independent review was commissioned at the start of the year to look at the successes and learning from the first phase of the programme. The Centre for Public Innovation (CPI) were appointed to undertake the review, and worked closely with those involved in the first phase to produce a report which would be handed to the new programme team on completion to shape the development of the programme going forward. The remainder of this report is focussed on the findings of this review.

6. Findings and recommendations of the review and response

- 6.1 The review findings were finalised in August 2019. A full copy of the report is provided as Appendix B with a foreword from the Cabinet Member at Appendix A. The recommendations of the report (found in section 7.2 of the review) are set out below with a response to each recommendation in turn.
- 6.2 It was noted that those interviewed showed a firm commitment to helping families and ensuring that their experience of living in Lewisham was a positive one, and that this was the case amongst those at the Council, SHP and voluntary organisations. The report made specific reference to the conscientiousness and diligence of those it interviewed, and how this demonstrated a deep commitment to the programme and a great deal of care and concern for those families that were part of it.

Recommendation 1

- 6.3 *There needs to be a step change in key elements of the scheme, particularly the provision of appropriate English language teaching. LBL should carefully consider the planned timetable for new SVP arrivals.*
- 6.4 *The acquisition of English language skills needs to be considered a fundamental prerequisite for integration and independence. Given the paramount importance of acquiring English the Council should consider funding its own provision alongside or instead of any classes offered through the Job Centre Plus approved agencies. The teaching needs to be intensive, mandatory and pitched at a level that recognises the literacy levels of those arriving on the scheme. It should start on arrival and for at least the first six months it must be prioritised.*
- 6.5 *The Council needs to enter into discussions with Job Centre Plus, Lewisham and Southwark College and other approved providers to see if an improved offer can be arrived at quickly and within the current funding arrangements.*

Response 1

- 6.6 The report recognised that the current project management of the scheme was performing well, and that this gave confidence that the barriers to successfully accepting new arrivals could be overcome.

- 6.7 In addition, officers have begun work to restructure the programme, formalising what has worked well and developing a new delivery framework to ensure all aspects of the programme are defined and have a clear offer.
- 6.8 English language, in particular, is one of the highest priority areas of this work. Language can be a key to unlock further opportunities, and lack of it can be the ultimate barrier. Families arriving in the UK for resettlement are often unable to progress through the pathways to independence due to language limitations and ESOL must, therefore, be the first priority and the findings of the review confirms this.
- 6.9 It has been officers' view since starting work on the programme in March that ESOL is a key area for development and this is reflected regionally by other boroughs across London. The local offer is not designed for the level of intensity required as part of resettlement or for the relatively low levels of ability in English that many families arrive with, and substantial work is planned to rectify this.
- 6.10 At the moment, provision comes from a range of sources including the local college, our own Adult Learning service, voluntary groups, individual paid tutors and more. While a range of provision may be appropriate for different types of need and learning styles, it is important to make sure all provision is of a high quality and that families are able to access it, and at a level which makes it effective.
- 6.11 Unfortunately, there are individuals who do not access the ESOL provision at the levels we would like, and this is for a range of reasons. We are working to reduce barriers and exploring provision with crèche facilities, and promoting existing ESOL which is family friendly. Officers are linking in to the Council's existing ESOL forum to make best use of all borough provision. Additionally, individual tutoring has been provided and will remain a necessity for those individuals with significant disability who are unable to attend classes in the community. While officers recognise the review's point on making attendance mandatory to tackle less than full engagement of those not experiencing barriers, there is no effective mechanism through which to enforce this. Instead we will consider other ways to improve engagement going forward.
- 6.12 The Resettlement team are in discussion with Adult Learning Lewisham, the Council's in-house adult education strategy and delivery service, to look into the possibility of enhancing their core offer – which families have responded to very well, and whose success is evidenced – as well as developing additional bespoke elements, which may include specific literacy support or employability work. The service has delivered successful bespoke courses jointly with other services before, and has a robust mechanism for evaluating the success of their work.
- 6.13 For the first arriving families in 2019, and several of the individuals who arrived in 2017 but who experienced significant barriers to English, a bespoke course has already begun – this course focussed on practical language and was provided with childcare so parents could focus on learning.

Recommendation 2

- 6.14 *The families already on the scheme should be considered in need of support alongside the new arrivals. The calculations made about the resources required to integrate the families should include some or all of this first wave of arrivals.*

Response 2

- 6.15 All families resettled will be supported across the full five years of the programme unless they leave the borough. Most existing families have been transitioned away from the high intensity initial support to the support offer for year 2 families, as the high intensity support is designed for families with significant levels of need and dependency, typically most present on arrival and across the first twelve months. Some families who arrived in 2017 remain subject to a dedicated support worker, where their needs still require it, and it will be the case across the programme that some families require a higher level of support and this need will be met.
- 6.16 Those families who are on the lower level of support are able to access a weekly drop-in centre run by the support provider, the support of the Council's Resettlement team and all the mainstream and universal provision in Lewisham and beyond. Specific work for families into years 2 or 3 of the programme is already taking place, including workshops on housing, but more specific activity for later year families' needs to be developed and this will be set out in the delivery framework being developed.
- 6.17 The aim of the programme has recently been articulated as mitigating the specific disadvantages arising from the refugee experience. Our model is focussed on equality and building on strengths, and we do not think it is beneficial to create false channels to support and parallel service pathways, but rather to support families to access the universal and mainstream borough services for universal and mainstream needs, with the specific programme support there to attend to refugee-specific requirements and barriers arising from the refugee experience.

Recommendation 3

- 6.18 *The Council need to review its contract management arrangements to ensure that SHP is delivering to a satisfactory level. The Council needs to explore alternative support arrangements. At the moment the Authority does not appear to be in a position to walk away from the contract and find a new provider, even if the contractor consistently performs poorly.*
- 6.19 *With appropriate support and performance management SHP should be able to fulfil its support role. CPI recommends that LBL opens up discussions with other local authorities where SHP run similar support services to see if any common themes emerge.*
- 6.20 *In the short term supporting SHP to succeed is by far the best approach. To do this there needs to be clarity around their role and the role of other agencies, in particular the voluntary sector agencies. At the moment there is neither a collegiate approach with shared targets nor a clearly bounded set of tasks with parameters for different agencies.*

Response 3

- 6.21 The report welcomed a number of substantive changes that had been made to the operation of the programme, referencing the development of clear reporting lines, additional management resource and a clear separation of the roles of those involved to delineate between strategic oversight of the scheme and operational management of the service provider.

- 6.22 In addition, a project plan has been established to identify and work through the problems that have arisen with the programme and there is an ambitious timelines for welcoming new families. The report recognises that these changes have the potential to deliver continued improvements to the delivery of the programme.
- 6.23 The commissioned support for the resettlement programme was due for retendering, and one of the first actions of the new officer team was to initiate tender activity for this service. The original specification was developed in 2016 and was the first specification officers had developed for a service of this kind. There has been significant learning since 2016 and crucially the opportunity to hear feedback from service users on how the delivery worked for them.
- 6.24 The specification was reworked, the method statements for assessing the provider were enhanced and the evaluation of the bids was undertaken by a cross-service panel with expertise in safeguarding, children's services, floating support, refugees and housing.
- 6.25 Additionally, the contract management capacity on the programme before the new staffing structures were implemented in March was not at the level required to maintain a firm grip on the provider, and going forward the contract management of the new contract will be a key focus of the programme and a strand of the improvement plan. A new approach to performance management of the contract was set out in the recent tender, which consists of minimum service standards combined with regular outcome reporting that enables flexibility of approach to suit the personalised nature of a service of this kind.
- 6.26 The new contract, which started in August of this year, will be for twelve months to allow officers time to develop the new delivery framework which will inform any future tendering.

Recommendation 4

- 6.27 *There is no need to define 'resettlement' or 'integration', if the programme works to the headline expectations set out by the Home Office, namely that if a number of goals are reached then it is reasonable to expect that integration will emerge from these.*
- 6.28 *There needs to be a common understanding of what the programme is trying to achieve. That could be based on some shared expectations, namely that families will have stable housing, will be receiving the benefits they are entitled to, are working in legitimate employment, will have attained a sufficient level of English, will have an understanding of the cultural 'norms' in the UK, and will be able to navigate health and education in order to get support for themselves and their families. In other words they can operate at a level that sees them at no greater disadvantage than others in the Borough who share similar socio-economic characteristics.*
- 6.29 *Whilst not defining what resettlement or integration means, LBL should be clear that the aim of the programme is not to privilege these particular arrivals in the Borough but rather try to reduce any deficits and ensure that households on the SVP pathway are not disadvantaged by having arrived as refugees.*

Response 4

- 6.30 As set out earlier, a new vision for the programme has been established in line with the Council's commitment to be an Open Lewisham and a Borough of Sanctuary,

which seeks to mitigate the specific marginalisation arising from the refugee experience while ensuring that all mainstream and universal services are accessible and inclusive. The Council's understanding of, and work with, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants and the groups that support them is rapidly developing, and this will continue to inform the programme, as will work with the new support provider, the British Refugee Council, who have significant experience for us to learn from.

- 6.31 The intention of the delivery framework will be to set out clearly what the approach is for the various strands of resettlement and work to define the shared expectations will be developed alongside this. A memorandum of understanding is also planned to define the roles of the Council, the commissioned support provider and the community and voluntary sector in the programme and formalise a shared understanding of the purpose and aims of the work in a tripartite agreement.
- 6.32 The report noted that whilst there was a range of views amongst those interviewed as to the expectations of the scheme, that the view was expressed that Lewisham should seek to be an exemplar for resettlement and integration work.

Recommendation 5

- 6.33 *Lewisham should further investigate any perceived or actual differences in the levels of support available to people arriving on the SVP scheme and the VCRS scheme. If families are being brought in from both routes and supported by the Local Authority through the same local scheme then the Council should ensure a consistent level of support determined by need not by arrival category.*

Response 5

- 6.34 While there are formally two types of referral – through the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme and the Vulnerable Person's Resettlement Scheme – this is a distinction that is not reflected in the operations of the Home Office programme. The Council accepts referrals on both schemes, and the same Home Office funding and Council services are available to families regardless of which referral type they have. All individuals receive tailored support in line with the personalised nature of the programme and their individual needs, but all are eligible for the same services and funding where it is within our control.
- 6.35 Officers are aware that some individuals have applied for external funding and external organisations have limited the funding to Syrian families, which has meant Iraqi families have been ineligible. Unfortunately the Council is not able to require that unrelated organisations make their funding available to a wider cohort but we will work to understand where families are seeking external funding and try to address it within the programme wherever appropriate to mitigate this issue. Additionally, we will have particular regard to the reported experiences of families and wherever they feel there is an inequality we will fully investigate.
- 6.36 A new document, providing advice on how to troubleshoot common issues in commonly accessed services, and which signposts the service provider and Council complaints policy, has been produced and translated to Arabic to support families to understand their rights and to voice any concerns or complaints they have.
- 6.37 Under the new commitment, the programme has also been renamed internally to the Refugee Resettlement Programme, rather than referring to it as the 'Syrian

Programme' or 'Syrian Vulnerable Person's Programme' which officers feel is exclusionary. Partners are being reminded that the programme supports refugees from other countries than Syria, and most importantly that from arrival in the borough all refugees are Lewisham residents.

Recommendation 6

- 6.38 *Plans for housing the SVP families need to fit within a 'normal' range of housing offers that would be available to other families in housing need in the Borough. Any approach that has the appearance of privileging the SVP arrivals, even if it is clearly not at the expense of other residents, is likely to be received very negatively. Perceived unfairness in the allocation of housing, which has historically been a touchstone issue, has the potential to undermine wider efforts around integration and community cohesion.*

Response 6

- 6.39 With the Refugee Resettlement Programme based in the Council's Housing Services, officers are acutely aware of the local homelessness pressures and all work is carefully designed not to disadvantage one group at the expense of another.
- 6.40 However, it is important to recognise that any language which excludes refugees in Lewisham from 'local residents' is divisive and inaccurate, as on arrival refugees resettled in the borough are Lewisham residents. All the refugees on the programme were made homeless in their country of origin and most have spent several years in refugee camps since then.
- 6.41 We identify housing for the families on the programme as a necessary condition of resettling them, but families pay their own rent like any other family in the borough. We use a range of sources for this housing, including methods like acquisition which bring into Council ownership properties which may be used for refugee resettlement in the short term and then become a wider housing asset in the long term.
- 6.42 Any costs arising as part of housing the refugees are fully funded by the Home Office. Housing forms a strand of the improvement plan alongside other elements of resettlement which will also be formalised in the delivery framework, and additional capacity is being identified to support the enhanced scale of the work for the hundred family commitment.

Recommendation 7

- 6.43 *In Lewisham the SVP is not seen as presenting any particular risks that would require a focus on Prevent. CPI understand that this is a view shared across London in relation the SVP scheme. LBL has arrangements in place at a strategic level to ensure that any concerns about SVP can be raised and issues of interest to Prevent considered. At an operational level it would be helpful to rollout training around Prevent for all those agencies involved in the scheme. This is not because the SVP represents a risk but because there have been staffing changes and it is likely that any previous training needs to be refreshed.*

Response 7

- 6.44 Families resettled on the programme have been through extensive clearances prior to their referral to Lewisham. These families are often extremely vulnerable, and

therefore at risk of a range of harms and exploitation, and work on the programme is therefore sensitive to these harms with appropriate safeguarding considerations across the work.

- 6.45 Officers have liaised with the Council's Prevent officer to ensure that all staff are fully trained and briefed, and partners will be invited to access to any opportunities for training and guidance in this area and other aspects of safeguarding.

Recommendation 8

- 6.46 *LBL should explore a framework agreement for the spot purchase of support for families. The framework should be structured to encourage the participation of small local agencies.*
- 6.47 *Linked to the framework agreement, LBL may wish to explore the idea of nominal personalised budgets. This approach, often through a 'broker' acting between service providers and 'purchasers' is now a familiar way of working with a range of Local Authority clients. Whilst it may not be suitable for the first six months or 12 months after arrival (during which period intensive support is required), it may be a way of managing the 'step down' from the initial intensive support. Consideration needs to be given to the messaging around this. As with housing, any appearance of a 'premium service' for new arrivals to the Borough may cause increased tensions within the community. It may be that any notion of a budget is kept well away from the families and is handled entirely by the 'broker'.*

Response 8

- 6.48 Officers are working to formalise and enhance the arrival offer and to further develop the offer for families into the later years of the programme, and will explore the option of personalised budgets as one way of delivering this.
- 6.49 We know from work to date that individual expenses arise for certain individuals, around ESOL qualifications as a requirement for university for example, which would benefit from a defined budget for each individual for costs arising uniquely to them as part of their progress pathway, and this could include supplementary services to the core universal offer.
- 6.50 As part of the work with Adult Learning Lewisham, consideration is being given to developing a framework for small-scale ESOL provision, such as individual tutors and community classes, to regularise, formalise and expand some of the smaller provision which is already part of the programme. This is another area where personalised budgets will be considered.
- 6.51 As noted in the recommendation, there are some challenges with the approach. Whilst keen to give the families autonomy and choice, and to empower them in all we do, there are a range of potential issues which would need to be overcome. These issues include ensuring best value, ensuring a focus on the programme outcomes, ensuring fairness within and across families and the possible pressure that could be put on families by providers in the pursuit of business. The particular vulnerabilities of these families make some of these issues especially significant, so while this option will be considered, it may need to be adapted or not be found to be suitable on a programme of this type.

Further response

6.52 In addition to the above, a full action plan has been developed for improvements to the programme, informed by this review, feedback from stakeholders and the findings of the new programme team. This is provided at Appendix C.

7. Next steps

7.1 Officers will act on the findings of the report, other feedback from stakeholders and the Resettlement team's findings since coming on to the programme. Some of this work has already begun and the action plan at Appendix C sets out key strands of work which will be included.

7.2 The aim of this will be to develop a robust and comprehensive delivery framework to govern the programme, which will be supported by policies and processes for distinct work areas like housing, ESOL and health.

7.3 The framework is a working document while this activity progresses, to ensure that families see immediate benefit from identified improvements as they are implemented rather than having to wait for the document to be finalised. It is the intention that this framework will shape the way the programme is delivered across the subsequent years of delivery, and will inform any commissioning activity for the core support service and any supplementary services.

8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no financial implications resulting from this report. The refugee resettlement programme is fully funded by the Home Office.

9. Legal implications

9.1 The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) introduced a public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty). It covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

9.2 In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

9.3 It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct, or to promote equality of opportunity or foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. It is a duty to have due regard to the need to achieve the goals listed above.

9.4 The weight to be attached to the duty will be dependent on the nature of the decision and the circumstances in which it is made. This is a matter for the Mayor, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. The Mayor must understand the impact or likely impact of the decision on those with protected

characteristics who are potentially affected by the decision. The extent of the duty will necessarily vary from case to case and due regard is such regard as is appropriate in all the circumstances.

9.5 The Equality and Human Rights Commission has issued Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty and statutory guidance entitled “Equality Act 2010 Services, Public Functions & Associations Statutory Code of Practice”. The Council must have regard to the statutory code in so far as it relates to the duty and attention is drawn to Chapter 11 which deals particularly with the equality duty. The Technical Guidance also covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty. This includes steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The guidance does not have statutory force but nonetheless regard should be had to it, as failure to do so without compelling reason would be of evidential value. The statutory code and the technical guidance can be found at: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-codes-practice> and <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-technical-guidance>

9.6 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has previously issued five guides for public authorities in England giving advice on the equality duty:

- [The essential guide to the public sector equality duty](#)
- [Meeting the equality duty in policy and decision-making](#)
- [Engagement and the equality duty: A guide for public authorities](#)
- [Objectives and the equality duty. A guide for public authorities](#)
- [Equality Information and the Equality Duty: A Guide for Public Authorities](#)

9.7 The essential guide provides an overview of the equality duty requirements including the general equality duty, the specific duties and who they apply to. It covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty including steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The other four documents provide more detailed guidance on key areas and advice on good practice. Further information and resources are available at:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance#h1>

10. Equality implications

10.1 The Refugee Resettlement Programme the Council delivers has a positive equalities impact, resettling the most vulnerable families from areas of humanitarian crisis. The families are usually categorised as vulnerable by the UNHCR due to characteristics which are protected under the Equality act 2010.

10.2 This report sets out the intentions to improve this programme, and make it more effective, consistent and equitable. As such this report has positive implications for equality.

11. Environmental implications

11.1 There are no specific environmental implications to this report.

12. Background documents and report author

12.1 If you require further information about this report please contact Madeleine Jeffery on 020 8314 9484.