

Gloucester City Council

INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION RECORD FORM

Date of decision:	05 August 2021		
Title	Direct Award of Contract for Delivery of a Local Contribution to the UK Afghan Locally-Employed Staff Resettlement Programme		
Decision Maker	Leader of the Council (Councillor Richard Cook)		
Date published on Forward Plan	28 July 2021	Date report published	
Wards Affected	All Wards	Key Decision	Yes

Decision:

Agree to make a direct award for up to £1,720,000 under Negotiated Procedure without prior notice to GARAS, to enable the urgent mobilisation of Gloucestershire's contribution to the UK's Afghan Locally-Employed Staff Resettlement Programme.

Reason for decision:

The withdrawal of UK forces from Afghanistan has prompted the UK's Home Office to launch a resettlement programme for individuals and their families who worked as locally employed staff as part of the British mission in that country. The rapid deterioration of the security situation since the beginning of July has led to a marked acceleration of the scheme, and a number of families have already begun arriving in the United Kingdom.

The Home Office has asked for urgent support from local authorities to provide accommodation and associated integration support for these families. In July, Leadership Gloucestershire agreed that the county should aim to support up to 35 families to resettle in the county. Local authorities countywide have been asked to work urgently with housing providers to identify properties for this cohort. Under the scheme, the Home Office provide a grant to provide a package of integration support to families including initial transport and support in preparing properties for move-in (including providing basic furnishing); registration with core services such as welfare payments, education, and primary healthcare; a caseworker service to help families adjust to life in the UK, including British culture and understanding of the local area and accessing services; English-language tuition where required; and support to find employment.

The Council requires a service provider to support arrivals in moving in to their properties and to deliver the wider package of integration support envisaged by the Home Office scheme. GARAS have an existing contract with the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service for the delivery of an equivalent package of support for Syrian refugee families. This experience along with the community networks and understanding of refugee's experiences means that GARAS is considered to be uniquely well-positioned to expand their current service to deliver support to new arrivals under the

Afghan LES scheme.

The Council has determined to make a direct award for up to £1,720,000 to GARAS under Regulation 75(2) and the provisions of Regulation 32(2)(c) of the Public Contracts Regulation and used the negotiated procedure without prior notification to appoint GARAS to deliver the services.

This is on the basis that the appointment is:

- **Necessary:** the arrival of families into the UK under the Home Office scheme generates a requirement to support the successful integration of families, and to ensure the ability of families to access statutory services including social care, education and primary health services. Providing this and wider support is necessary to uphold commitments made to these families by the UK government, and to mitigate the risk created by the arrival of families into the local authority area in the absence of accompanying support.
- **Urgent:** the withdrawal of UK forces and rapid subsequent collapse of existing security arrangements in Afghanistan has led to the urgent relocation of existing families. A large number of families are already arriving in the UK and new flights arriving on a regular basis in the coming weeks. The Home Office has communicated the urgency of the demand for support to all local authorities, and the required support is beyond the capacity of the local authority to mobilise and deliver in the timeframe required. Gloucester has been specifically identified by the Home Office as an area for the relocation of Afghan families and we understand this may commence at short-notice: there is an urgent need to mobilise support now to ensure that this is available once families arrive.
- **Unforeseeable:** the requirement and the urgency generated by the pace of the deterioration of security conditions in Afghanistan were not reasonably foreseeable by the local authority and are entirely and plainly outside the control of Gloucester City or any other Gloucestershire local authority.

For the same reasons of necessity and urgency it is not practicable to publish advance notice of this decision as required by Rule 13 of the constitution. As a result this decision is being taken in accordance with (15) General Exception on the basis of Special Urgency.

Alternative options considered:

The Council considered a variation to the existing contract held by GFRS to enable delivery of this support. However, it was concluded that this offered limited additional benefit and that there were advantages to the City Council in managing this support package in its role as local housing authority and lead partner for the Gloucestershire Housing Partnership.

The Council considered carefully whether an alternative provider or route to market could be considered. However, given the urgent requirement to deliver this support and the unparalleled prior experience of delivering a similar scheme in the County it was considered that only GARAS had the capacity to mobilise this support programme to a good standard at short-notice, while minimising associated risks to the Council and/or other local authorities in Gloucestershire.

Representations received: N/A

Other relevant matters concerning the decision:

N/A

People Impact Assessment (PIA):

Screening Stage completed:	Yes	No
Full PIA required, completed and attached	Yes	No

Conflicts of interest (including any dispensations granted):

None

Officer/s consulted: Jon McGinty (Managing Director); Ruth Saunders (Head of Communities); Ben Challis City); Donna Ruck (Legal Advisor, OneLegal), Jon Topping (S151 Officer, Gloucester City) (Partnership Programme Manager); Roland Halford (Procurement, Gloucester

Background documents: N/A

Confidential or Exempt Information: Yes No

Name of document(s) which are confidential or exempt :

Scrutiny (including details of call-in procedure where applicable):

This decision will come into force at the expiry of 5 working days from the date of the publication of the decision.

Call-in Deadline: 12 July 2021

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE RECORD:

We certify that the decision this document records was made in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and is a true and accurate record of that decision:

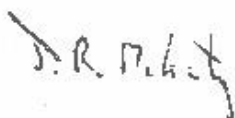
Decision Maker:
Councillor Richard Cook
Leader of the Council

Date: 05 August 2021



Proper Officer:
Jon McGinty
Managing Director

Date: 05 August 2021



CALL-IN PROCEDURE

Call-in should only be used in exceptional circumstances, such as where Members have evidence which suggests that the Cabinet Member did not take the decision in accordance with the principles set out in Article 13 (Decision Making) of the Council's Constitution.

Call-in of a decision must be requested within five working days of the publication of an executive decision. The request must be communicated in writing to a Corporate Directors by at least five Members of the Council.

Implementation of a decision that has been called-in is suspended until such time as it has been considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and re-considered by the Cabinet in light of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's conclusions and any recommendations.

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If you have any queries about the content of Decision Records please contact:

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