

CONTRACT FOR REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT BEFRIENDER SERVICES 2023-2026
COUNCILLOR STEVE ALLEN, CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES
July 2023
Deadline date: N/A

Cabinet portfolio holder: Responsible Director:	Cllr Steve Allen, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities Adrian Chapman Executive Director, Place and Economy
Is this a Key Decision?	YES If yes has it been included on the Forward Plan: YES Unique Key decision Reference from Forward Plan: KEY/21NOV22/02
Is this decision eligible for call-in?	YES
Does this Public report have any annex that contains exempt information?	NO

RECOMMENDATIONS
The Cabinet Member is recommended to:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authorise the contract award to The British Red Cross Society for a sum of £1,035,942, commencing 1 September 2023 to 31 March 2026 with the option to extend for two periods of 12 months each, for the delivery of refugee resettlement advice, support and integration services to families settled under Government refugee programmes.

1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1.1 This report is for the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities to consider exercising delegated authority under paragraph 3.4.3 of Part 3 of the constitution in accordance with the terms of their portfolio.

2. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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3. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

3.1 Since 2017, Peterborough has supported the Government's policy of helping to resettle legal refugees under the United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme. Initially launched to resettle 20,000 Syrians nationally, the scheme has expanded to accept any legal refugee as part of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees scheme.

In 2021, the Government launched a further programme to resettle Afghans following the withdrawal of international military forces from Afghanistan. Many of the Afghans who have been forced to flee the country have served the UK Government during its time in Afghanistan.

3.2 Peterborough City Council has agreed to resettle refugees under both schemes and has previously commissioned a local charity to undertake a number of key functions to help integrate new arrivals quickly. These include helping refugees to:

- Open a bank account
- Access health and social care services
- Access education and adult skills training
- Learn English, including gaining formal accredited English qualifications
- Understand UK laws, culture, and behaviours
- Understand their rights and responsibilities, particularly in managing their tenancy
- Develop money management and budgeting skills
- Apply for welfare benefits
- Find employment and access support to become work ready
- Integrate into Peterborough and access social and community opportunities

Depending on which programme a refugee has been resettled under, the council provides support for either three or five years, working closely with our commissioned partner. Full funding for the work is provided by Government to the council via an annual grant.

3.3 The council and its commissioned partner, also provides support to resettled families for both Fenland District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council, claiming full Government funding.

3.4 The contract for the existing services expires on 31 August 2023 and a competitive procurement exercise was undertaken to select a service provider.

3.5 Work to support Ukrainians under the Homes for Ukraine programme is funded under a separate arrangement and outside of the scope of this contract.

Procurement Process

3.6 The procurement was conducted under Regulation 27 (Open Procedure) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Four Bids were received by the Council; however, one was deemed to be non-compliant as it could not demonstrate that it met the selection questionnaire criteria. The Council therefore proceeded to assess three bids.

A panel considered all three eligible bids and scored each based upon a number of set questions which all bidders had responded to. Each bidder was first scored individually by panel members and scores were then moderated by the panel, to give an agreed overall weighted qualitative score for each Bid. Each overall weighted qualitative score was then combined with its relevant weighted pricing score to produce the final overall weighted scores for each Bid.

3.7 The British Red Cross Society achieved the highest overall weighted score, thus representing the most economically advantageous tender and are therefore recommended as the preferred

Bidder for the next three years, with two options to extend for a period of 12 months each at the Council's sole discretion.

The panel noted the extensive experience that the British Red Cross Society has in resettling refugees nationally and felt confidence that they could deliver services to meet the needs of refugees locally.

3.8

Bidder	Total Quality Weighted Score	Pricing Score	Combined Weighted Score
The British Red Cross Society	63.00	25.74	88.74
Bidder A	51.00	30.00	81.00
Bidder B	52.00	21.20	73.20

4. **CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

4.1 The contract supports the following priorities:

1. The Economy & Inclusive Growth
 - Homes and Workplaces
 - Jobs and Money
2. Our Places & Communities
 - Places and Safety (including any rural implications)
 - Lives and Work
 - Health and Wellbeing
3. Prevention, Independence & Resilience
 - Educations and Skills for All
 - Adults
 - Children

5. **CONSULTATION**

5.1 The Multi Agency Forum were notified of the tender and all organisations invited to tender.

6. **ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

6.1 The work provided under this contract will help refugees to access key public services and build a new life in the UK. The support, although time limited, will provide a sustainable platform from which newly arrived families can learn new skills, find employment, and actively engage in the wider community.

7. **REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 The British Red Cross Society will help the Council meet its requirements for support set out in the grant funding provided by Government. The provider demonstrated that they have a strong understanding of the requirements and well-developed plans for how to provide the necessary support and intervention to benefit newly arrived families.

Following the outcome of the procurement process, The British Red Cross Society were identified as having submitted the most economically advantageous tender.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The Council could consider delivering these services in-house, however, there is limited capacity and experience to directly deliver the contract. In addition, a service provided directly by the Council is likely to be more expensive than the voluntary sector can provide.

The Council could also consider no longer providing any integration services to the newly arrived refugees; however, this would be against the Government guidance within the funding agreement and would likely result in the Council returning the funding.

The Council has reviewed whether a call-off contract from a framework would have been possible, but no suitable framework could be identified.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 9.1 Budget is provided to fund these services by way of a government grant. Funding is in place for a 3-year period for families settled under the Afghan programme, and five years for families under the United Kingdom Resettlement Programme.

Legal Implications

- 9.2 The procurement of the services has been undertaken in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Equalities Implications

- 9.3 None identified.

10. DECLARATIONS / CONFLICTS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS GRANTED

- 10.1 None.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985) and The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

- 11.1 None.

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 None.

