

Equality Impact Assessment

Syrian Refugee – Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme 2015

Updated 2018

Department	
Name of assessor	Alison Wilks
Strategic Management Lead	Rachel O'Reilly
Date of assessment	13 October 2015 & 24 September 2018
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	New

Please note that guidance (revised in March 2014) for completing this template is available on the intranet. This template was also revised in March 2014.

Section 1: Introduction and background (see p.10 of the guidance)

Please describe your service or function. This should include:

- The aims and scope
- The main beneficiaries or users
- The main equality, accessibility, social exclusion issues and barriers, and the 'protected characteristics'¹ they relate to (not all assessments will encounter issues relating to every protected characteristic)

If this EIA is part of a project it is important to focus on the service or policy the project aims to review or improve.

The Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) aims to provide a structured and phased programme of resettlement for the most vulnerable refugees living in camps.

Selection is based on the following criteria: 'women and girls at risk; survivors of violence and/or torture; refugees with legal and/or physical protection needs; refugees with medical needs or disabilities; children and adolescents at risk; persons at risk due to their sexual orientation or gender identity; and refugees with family links in resettlement countries'.

The Council has participated in the scheme to from October 2015.

The Council meets the Home Office requirements of the VPRS and this involves securing and furnishing accommodation, meeting and greeting the refugee households, arranging translation services, commissioning the East Surrey Family Support Programme to provide support, health, welfare and integration services and English for Speakers of other Languages courses.

From 2018 resettlement in the first year will also be provided by Council and Home Office approved local Community Sponsors.

Now describe how this fits into the Council's Corporate Priorities, Sustainable Community Strategy or other local, regional or national plans and priorities.

¹ More information and definition of protected characteristics can be found [here](#)

PROSPERITY

- **A vibrant local economy with thriving towns and villages**
 - The resettlement of refugee households in Mole Valley will add to the diversity of the area and the households will have the opportunity in the long term to contribute to the local economy through employment and voluntary work.

COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Active communities and support for those who need it

- **Improve opportunities for residents to live active lives.**
- **Promote community spirit, encourage individuals, families and communities to be support each other and help our neighbourhoods to be more resilient in times of need.**
 - Refugee households will need help and support to integrate within the local community and to improve their overall wellbeing. The VPRS and Community Sponsorship Scheme present opportunities across the local community to welcome and support refugee households and work closely together to promote community spirit.

If you are not carrying out an equality impact assessment, briefly summarise reasons why you have reached this conclusion, the evidence for this and the nature of any stakeholder verification of your conclusion.

n/a

Section 2: Analysis and assessment (see pp. 10-13 of the guidance)

Given available information, what is the actual or likely impact on minority, disadvantaged, vulnerable and socially excluded groups?

Indicate for each 'protected characteristics' whether there may be a positive impact, negative impact, a mixture of both or no impact.

Protected characteristics	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Age	✓			Refugees of all ages have been accepted to be resettled in Mole Valley and this will continue under Community Sponsorship.
Disability	✓			Positive -The VPRS aims to

				protect refugees with medical needs or disabilities
Gender reassignment	✓			The VPRS aims to protect refugees at risk due to their sexual orientation or gender identity
Marriage and civil partnership			✓	
Pregnancy and maternity			✓	
Race	✓			The VPRS is specifically for refugees from Syria of all faiths and beliefs. The Neighbourhood Police are notified of households that are resettled and should any negative incidents occur they will be notified along with the Surrey Prevent Team.
Religion or belief	✓			The VPRS is specifically for refugees from Syria. The Neighbourhood Police are notified of households that are resettled and should any negative incidents occur they will be notified along with the Surrey Prevent Team.
Sex	✓			The VPRS aims to protect refugee women who are at risk and survivors of violence.
Sexual orientation	✓			The VPRS scheme aims to protect refugees at risk due to their sexual orientation or gender identity
Other aspects to consider	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Carers			✓	
Rural/urban issues			✓	
HR issues (how will staff with protected characteristics be affected?)			✓	

What can be done to reduce the effects of any negative impacts? Where negative impact cannot be completely diminished, can this be justified, and is it lawful?

There are currently no negative impacts.

Where there are positive impacts, what changes have been or will be made? Who are the beneficiaries? How have they benefited?

The Council commissions' specialist services to meet the specific identified needs of refugees through the East Surrey Family Support Team and Community Sponsors will also play a role in the future.

Section 3: Evidence gathering and fact-finding (see p.14 of the guidance)

What evidence is available to support your views above? Please include:

- A summary of the available evidence
- Identification of where there are gaps in the evidence (this may identify a need for more evidence in the action plan)
- What information is currently captured with respect to usage and take up of services.
- What the current situation is in relation to equality and diversity monitoring (where relevant)

The Council has participated in the VPRS since October 2015 and the questions above have been answered based on the experience of the last three years.

How have stakeholders been involved in this assessment? Who are they, and what is their view?

Stakeholders have not been involved with this assessment. However, the VPRS work is monitored by the multi-agency Surrey Syrian Refugee Board and through close working with the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration and the Home Office.

Recommendations

Please summarise the main recommendations arising from the assessment. NB If it is impossible to diminish negative impacts to an acceptable or even lawful level the recommendation should be that the proposal or the relevant part of it should not proceed.

There are no current recommendations.

Section 4: Action Plan (see pp.15-16 of the guidance)

Actions needed to implement the EIA recommendations

Issue	Action	Expected outcome	Who	Deadline for action
None				

Sign off

Who will be responsible for reviewing this EIA?	Alison Wilks
Review date(s) i.e. when will this EIA be reviewed – see p.9 of guidance	September 2019
Strategic Management Lead signed off	Rachel O'Reilly

- Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for review
- Electronic copy to be forwarded to the Policy and Performance Team for publishing