



Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE



Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council Equality and Climate Impact Assessment

September 2021

Contents

Section 1: Summary details..... 3

Section 2: Detail of proposal..... 4

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics..... 6

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts 10

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts 11

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Climate Change Impacts 11

Section 4: Review 14

Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	Housing
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Project to secure accommodation and support to aid the resettlement of Afghan Locally Employed Staff (ALES) and their families in response to the government's Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy.
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	New project
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).	<p>The project positively impacts on Afghan Locally Employed Staff (ALES) and their families who are being resettled in the UK under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP).</p> <p>This specific project will support ALES who have worked for the UK and risked their lives alongside British forces in Afghanistan over the past twenty years and who are now relocating to the UK with their families following NATO's decision to withdraw military forces from Afghanistan. Securing accommodation and wrap-around support services will enable ALES and their families to relocate and settle in the Cherwell area and to access local services, education, employment and health care. Whilst there will be increased pressure on the available capacity of education and health care services, there are no other negative impacts identified. The council will continue to operate the existing vulnerable persons resettlement project and housing register applicants will continue to have access to the available social housing, housing and homelessness advice, and support services across the district.</p>
Completed By	Vicki Jessop
Authorised By	
Date of Assessment	31 August 2021

Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p>Context / Background</p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>The ARAP scheme acknowledges and reflects that the situation in Afghanistan has changed, and with it the potential risk to the local staff who have worked for the UK Government. As a result, government are working at pace to relocate around 3,000 people (or approximately 600 families) before September 2021.</p> <p>In July 2021 councils were asked for more offers of support to resettle those who have served the UK in Afghanistan especially offers of support from areas who can provide or source larger homes of four bedrooms or more, to suit the needs of those ALES arriving in large family groups.</p> <p>On 20 August 2021 councils were advised of a new ALES Housing Costs Fund of £5m to support councils who are finding it difficult in sourcing larger properties for families. The funding package guarantees rental payments until benefits are in place and a new fund will enable LA's to top up rent shortfalls above local housing allowance levels.</p> <p>In response to the ARAP and the government's call for additional help from local authorities, the Council has identified an opportunity to secure accommodation for 10 families along with wrap-around support services to enable ALES and their families to relocate and settle in the Cherwell area and to access local services, education, employment and health care.</p>
<p>Proposals</p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>See above. It is intended that the council leases 10 homes from the MOD for the purposes of housing Afghan personnel through the Government's Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy for Locally Employed Staff. They will settle with 5 years leave to remain status and have recourse to public funds once their habitual residency test is confirmed.</p> <p>This has been decided as the best course of action to meet the identified need for larger family homes as there is a lack of readily available and affordable supply within the social housing stock in the district and the MoD properties are in good condition and ready for letting.</p>

Appendix 2

<p>Evidence / Intelligence</p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>Data to inform the need for this specific project has been provided by the Home Office and South-East Migration Partnership (SEMP). In addition, intelligence and data gathered from the Emergency Planning Team and the Syrian and Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme in the district has been used to analyse and benchmark costs and service requirements for the new project. Financial cost assumptions are based on the Home Office funding package and estimated costs to support typical family of six (i.e., two adults and four children under 18) with accommodation provided by the MoD. Internal stakeholder group: Finance, Legal, Build!, Property, Facilities and Estates, Revenues and Benefits, Housing, Children, Education and Families have provided expertise to develop this project. Council inspections of MOD properties for lettable condition have been undertaken. Legal department consultation with MoD for leases is ongoing. MoD and SEMP, OCC and CDC for joint management of this project. Continued work with the SEMP and Home Office will enable us to establish the specific needs of individuals and family members who are to be relocated to the district, and to tailor support according to needs.</p>
<p>Alternatives considered / rejected</p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>Investigating CDC managing MoD homes – CDC unable to take this forward and offer assured shorthold tenancies to families. CDC can offer temporary excluded licenses under S193 of the homeless act which requires families to become statutory homeless. This option is not favoured as this escalates the family into priority statutory homeless services. The ARAP scheme is intended to enable families to settle in communities which is not always possible through statutory homeless provisions where offers and location of properties are limited.</p> <p>Investigating a registered housing provider to manage homes – this option is the best option as it enables families to have security of tenure for up to 12 months whilst accommodation is found in the private sector where larger properties can be sourced using financial assistance from the council bond scheme and Home Office funding.</p>

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Resettlement of families involves all age groups within that family unit. Responding quickly to the rapidly changing situation in Afghanistan will ensure suitable accommodation and support is provided to the affected families which will enable them to settle as quickly as possible and to access health care, education and employment applicable to age.	Accommodation has been identified and will be secured in September 2021 with families able to move in as soon as they are available. Commissioned support services will recognise the different age-related support and safeguarding needs within the family group.	Assistant Director of Housing & Social Care Commissioning.	Review October 2021.
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As above – homes may need minor adaptations, but major adaptations will not be provided due to temporary nature of accommodation	Accommodation may need to be sourced in the private or social rented sector for major adaptations	As above with support from the Afghan Resettlement Project Officer	As above

Appendix 2

Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No known impact	Once the families and individuals have been identified to be resettled in the Cherwell area, additional information may be available that will enable tailored support services to be provided where needed.		
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No known impact	Once the families and individuals have been identified to be resettled in the Cherwell area, additional information may be available that will enable tailored support services to be provided where needed.		
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ability to provide suitable, safe and secure accommodation quickly will ensure that pregnant women and new parents can register with a local GP and hospital and can access local medical care for themselves and their babies as soon as needed.			

Appendix 2

Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This project specifically supports Afghan families. Responding quickly to the rapidly changing situation in Afghanistan will ensure suitable accommodation is provided and affected families are settled as quickly as possible. The support provided to the family will also respect the different cultures involved.</p>	<p>The contracts for commissioned support services include a requirement of the support provider to adhere to the Human Rights Act and Equalities Act 2010.</p> <p>Safeguarding procedures will also help to mitigate risk of potential race-related issues.</p>	Afghan Resettlement Project Officer	September 2021 and ongoing monitoring of support service contracts.
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Responding quickly to the rapidly changing situation in Afghanistan will ensure suitable accommodation is provided and affected families are settled as quickly as possible. Acknowledging the cultures involved, the support provided to the family will ensure that the needs of all family members are met.</p>	<p>Commissioned support services will ensure that the needs of all family members are met.</p>	Afghan Resettlement Project Officer	September 2021 provision of accommodation and ongoing monitoring of support service contracts.

Appendix 2

Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No known impact	Once the families and individuals have been identified to be resettled in the Cherwell area, additional information may be available that will enable tailored support services to be provided where needed.		
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This project specifically supports Afghan families. Responding quickly to the rapidly changing situation in Afghanistan will ensure suitable accommodation is provided and affected families are settled as quickly as possible. The support provided to the family will also respect the different cultures, religions and beliefs involved.	The contracts for commissioned support services include a requirement of the support provider to adhere to the Human Rights Act and Equalities Act 2010. In addition, the work of the support service will enable links to be made to local faith groups and places of worship as needed.	Afghan Resettlement Project Officer	September 2021 and ongoing monitoring of support service contracts.

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As part of the resettlement process, families will be supported to connect with, and make use of, rural community services and facilities, or to take up employment that will also support sustainable rural communities.		Afghan Resettlement Project Officer	Ongoing monitoring of support service contracts.
Armed Forces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supports Afghan Locally Employed Staff (ALES) – who have worked for the UK and risked their lives alongside British forces in Afghanistan over the past twenty years and are now relocating to the UK with their families.			
Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Areas of deprivation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Other Council Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The impact on capacity of local education and health care services	The resettlement project requires multi-agency working to ensure appropriate provision of school places, special educational needs and health care are provided and are accessible to the families from the outset.	Afghan Resettlement Project Officer	Monitoring via multi-agency working groups and monitoring of support provider contracts
Providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The voluntary sector and support agencies are being mobilised to support families from within the Home Office funding envelope			
Social Value ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Families are being supported into employment, which may benefit the local and social economy			

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Climate Change Impacts

¹ If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

Appendix 2

OCC and CDC aim to be carbon neutral by 2030. How will your proposal affect our ability to reduce carbon emissions related to

Climate change impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Energy use in our buildings or highways	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Our fleet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Staff travel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Purchased services and products (including construction)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Maintained schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Appendix 2

We are also committed to enable Cherwell to become carbon neutral by 2030 and Oxfordshire by 2050. How will your proposal affect our ability to:

Climate change impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Enable carbon emissions reduction at district/county level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Energy Performance Certificates will be provided for each property let, along with gas and electrical safety certificates. Homes with better EPCs produce less carbon. EPCs help to identify the energy efficiency of the properties and how energy consumption may be reduced which could result in a decrease in utility costs for the tenant.	The properties will all be let with an EPC and regulatory certificates. Property inspections will be undertaken to ensure they are maintained in good order. The support provider can advise the tenant on suitable measures that could help to reduce energy use whilst living in the properties.	Afghan Resettlement Project Officer	Monitoring of support contracts and liaison with landlord.

Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review Date	September 2022
Person Responsible for Review	Afghan Resettlement Project Officer
Authorised By	Assistant Director of Housing and Social Care Commissioning.