Integrated Impact Assessment Form

Promoting Equality, Human Rights and Sustainability

Title of Policy/ Proposal	Afghan Locally Employed Staff (LES) Scheme
Completion Date	August 2021
Completed by	Kevin Anderson
Lead officer	Kevin Anderson

Type of Initiative:

Policy/Strategy

Programme/Plan	New
Project	New
Service	Existing
Function	Other

Statement of Intent

1. Briefly describe the policy/proposal you are assessing.

Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the policy being developed or reviewed (e.g. objectives, aims) including the context within which it will operate.

An EQIA is required in order to consider the Council's potential to support and assist both the UK Government and the Scottish Government in resettling refugees.

The respective governments, in conjunction with COSLA, are in contact with all Scottish local authorities to establish the support for the project and identify the likely number of refugees each authority would be able to assist. At present all Scottish councils, including Midlothian, have indicated an interest in assisting with the resettlement of refugees and have started the process of discussing a formal agreement with the Home Office to begin the resettlement in the near future.

Midlothian's contribution is assessed as being approximately 20 people. This figure was based on the proportion of refugees which Midlothian would expect to accept on a pro-rata basis, in acceptance of the Council's approval.

The process which will now be followed is that the Council will seek to reach formal agreement with the Home Office on the number of refugees or families they are relocating,

What will change as a result of this policy?

It is proposed to assist in accommodating refugees either through the statutory Homelessness provisions, the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan and the Housing Allocation Policy.

2. Do I need to undertake a Combined Impact Assessment?

High Relevance	Yes/no
The policy/ proposal has consequences for or affects people	Yes
The policy/proposal has potential to make a significant impact on equality	Yes
The policy/ proposal has the potential to make a significant impact on the economy and the delivery of economic outcomes	No
The policy/proposal is likely to have a significant environmental impact	No

Low Relevance	
The policy/proposal has little relevance to equality	No
The policy/proposal has negligible impact on the economy	Yes
The policy/proposal has no/ minimal impact on the environment	Yes
If you have identified low relevance please give a brief description of your reasoning here and send it to your Head of Service to record. N/A **If you have answered yes to high relevance above, please proceed to complete the Integrated Impact Assessment.** Completed	

3. What information/data/ consultation have you used to inform the policy to date?

Evidence	Comments: what does the evidence tell you?
Data on populations in need	The need for social rented housing in Midlothian continues to grow with over 4,400 applicants on the Housing List.
Data on service uptake/access	- At 31/3/2021 there were 802 open homeless cases in Midlothian. This has reduced from a peak of 1087 open cases at the end of 2016/17. - At any time around 400 to 420 households will be in temporary accommodation. - In 2020/21 Midlothian Council received 490 homeless applications. 65% of which were households without children or a pregnant person. 35% were from applicants under the age of 26. Of the 69 homeless applicants from people experiencing domestic abuse 64 were females, 37 of which had children as part of the household. - The majority of homeless applicants who secure permanent accommodation are provided

	with a Council or Housing Association Tenancy
Data on quality/outcomes	A range of data is published relating to outcomes for homeless households, and those who are provided with housing options advice. - [Homelessness statistics - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](#)
Research/literature evidence	- [Midlothian Council Area Profile (nrscotland.gov.uk)](#) - [Housing statistics: Stock by tenure - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](#) - [SESplan](#) - [Strategic Housing Investment Plans (SHIP) | (midlothian.gov.uk)](#) - [Midlothian Local Housing Strategy 2021-2026](#) - [The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2020 (legislation.gov.uk)](#) - [Ending homelessness together: updated action plan - October 2020 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](#) - [Improving housing outcomes for women and children experiencing domestic abuse (cih.org)](#) - [Housing-First-National-Framework](#) - [Homelessness statistics - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](#) - [Midlothian Council | Scottish Housing Regulator](#) - [Integration Joint Board - Health and Social Care | (midlothian.gov.uk)](#)
Service user experience information	We consult with Tenant Panels, internal and external partners and other service users when developing individual RRTP activities.

Consultation **and involvement** findings	Addressing homelessness is one of the key outcomes for Midlothian's current Local Housing Strategy. The Strategy was circulated to groups for feedback which included: • Equalities Groups, including support groups, societies and campaigning organisations on race, equality, older people, carers, Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, older people's, ethnic minority groups, disabled, young peoples groups, armed forces veterans, substance abuse, physical disability and learning disability. • Housing organisations, including registered social landlords, house builders, letting agents, landlord associations, relevant Scottish Government departments, and housing organisations groups such as Shelter and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations. • Community Groups, including community councils, voluntary groups, Registered Tenants Organisations and residents groups. • Other organisations, including neighbouring local authorities and the Scottish Futures Trust. These groups were also invited to attend either an LHS Stakeholder Event or "Drop In" Events while some groups requested to meet with Council Officers to discuss strategic objectives. Additional information was also obtained from other sources including: • SESPlan (South East Scotland) Housing Need & Demand Analysis 2 • Housing Waiting List Survey • Council Housing New Build Survey • Registered Tenant Organisations feedback • Registered Social Landlords feedback • Feedback from Local Housing Strategy Working Group and Community Planning Partnership Groups • Midlothian Council Tenant Surveys Homeless applications and Allocations are also monitored for: • Sex • Age • Household composition

	• Marriage • Pregnancy • Gypsy Travellers • Minority Ethnic Households • Households with Disabilities Applicants with a protected characteristic may be provided with access to homeless services in a different way according to this characteristic. For example a family would not be placed in shared accommodation for a prolonged period due to legislation barring this. The above areas of research and engagement provide the Council and partners with relevant knowledge on the housing needs of equality groups which are then incorporated into future investment plans which includes specialist provision to meet identified needs.
Good practice guidelines	- [Social housing allocations in Scotland: practice guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](www.gov.scot) - [Homelessness: code of guidance - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](www.gov.scot) - [Housing Options guidance - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](www.gov.scot) - Housing-First-National-Framework
Other (please specify)	N/A
Is any further information required? How will you gather this?	N/A

4. How does the policy meet the different needs of and impact on groups in the community?

Equality Groups	Comments – positive/ negative impact
Older people, people in the	Homeless policy activities will

middle years,	lead to positive outcomes for all households regardless of age. Some activities include measures that will achieve further positive outcomes for older people. Including revisions to the Housing Allocations Policy to ensure more people in housing need are able to access accommodation without needing to seek homeless assistance, and an increased focus on homeless prevention to help people remain in their current accommodation.
Young people and children	It is recognised that that having secure, affordable housing can alleviate instances of child poverty. The RRTP includes activities to reduce the time taken for families to move into settled accommodation, and to provide affordable temporary accommodation when required.
Women, men and transgender people (includes issues relating to pregnancy and maternity)	RRTP activities will be completed in accordance with Equally Safe: Scotland's Strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls to ensure housing interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people. It is evidenced that domestic abuse primarily effects women and children, any measures and safeguards will apply equally to all victims of domestic abuse, including men and transgender people. Individual activities developed to achieve the outcomes of the RRTP will ensure full consideration is given to the needs of women, children and young people experiencing domestic abuse are fully recognised. This will ensure the

	recommendations of the [Improving housing outcomes for women and children experiencing domestic abuse](#) report are embedded within Midlothian Councils Housing and Homelessness services.
Disabled people (included physical disability; learning disability; sensory Impairment; long term medical conditions; mental health problem)	The Homeless service supports existing policies which aim to improve outcomes for disabled people, and outlines other measures that achieve more positive outcomes for all Service Users including Disabled People. This includes developing personal housing plans to identify additional, non-housing support needs. These plans will enable disabled people to remain in their current accommodation, or where this is not possible secure alternative housing without the need for homelessness assistance/temporary accommodation.
Minority ethnic people (includes Gypsy/Travellers migrant workers non-English	The RRTP outlines measures that will achieve positive outcomes for all Service Users. These will be delivered based on the needs of the individual and not on the basis of ethnicity.
Refugees and asylum seekers	Specific legislation relates to the provision of housing advice and homeless assistance to asylum seekers. Those granted refugee status are able to access services on the same basis as anyone else with a legal right to reside in the UK.
People with different religions	The RRTP outlines measures

or beliefs (included people with no religion or belief.	that will achieve positive outcomes for all Service Users. These will be delivered based on the needs of the individual and not on the basis of religious belief.
Lesbian; gay bisexual and heterosexual people	RRTP activities will achieve positive outcomes for all service users regardless of sexual orientation.
People who are unmarried; married or in a civil partnership	The RRTP outlines measures that will achieve positive outcomes for all Service Users. These will be delivered based on the needs of the individual and not on the basis of marital status.
Those vulnerable to falling into poverty	
Unemployed People on Benefits	The RRTP includes measures that will achieve positive outcomes for Service Users who are unemployed or in receipt of benefits.
Single Parents and vulnerable families Pensioners Looked after Children Those leaving care settings ((including children and young people and those with illness)	The RRTP focuses on achieving better outcomes for all service users. As Individual activities are developed they will need to demonstrate the needs of vulnerable groups are fully considered. Separate pathways for at risk groups will be developed to ensure services fully reflect their needs.
Homeless People	The RRTP will have a positive impact for Homeless People in Midlothian. The activities outlined will reduce the time spent in temporary accommodation. Services will focus on helping people to

	remain in their accommodation preventing homelessness from occurring. Where this is not possible a housing options approach will be taken to secure accommodation before temporary accommodation is required.
	It is important that a generic 'one-size fits all' approach is avoided and activities developed take into consideration the different needs and experiences of people from different groups.
Carers (including young carers)	The RRTP focuses on achieving better outcomes for all service users. Many of the activities focus on delivering improved outcomes for service users with multiple/complex needs. RRTP activities will also lead to more sustainable communities. Activities include, partnerships working between Community Justice, Housing Services, Substance Misuse and the Third Sector to ensure all prisoners identified by the Scottish Prison Service have suitable accommodation on release.
Those involved in the criminal justice system	
Those living in the most deprived communities (bottom 20% SIMD areas)	
	While Housing First will see a range of agencies working together to support people with long term/repeated instances of homelessness, whose experience of homelessness is compounded by multiple/additional support needs.
People misusing services	The Housing Allocations Policy includes provision to terminate

	a tenancy should fraudulent information be provided when during the application process.
People with low literacy/numeracy	The RRTP activities include measures to ensure those who require additional support can receive this to enable them to fully access services.
Others e.g. veterans, students	The RRTP focuses on achieving better outcomes for all service users. The revised Housing Allocations Policy has specific measure in place to support veteran. Including increased the number to support veterans who are prioritised for Housing when leaving the forces.
Geographical Communities	
Rural/ semi-rural Communities	The RRTP activities will achieve positive outcome across all communities in Midlothian.
Urban Communities	The RRTP activities will achieve positive outcome across all communities in Midlothian.
Coastal Communities	N/A

5. Are there any other factors which will affect the way this policy impacts on the community or staff groups?

- The Scottish Government is currently developing legislation that will create a wider duty to prevent homelessness. Midlothian Council will need to ensure the prevention activities contained in the RRTP satisfy the requirements of this legislation when published.

- In response to COVID-19 HARSAG has submitted additional recommendations to the Scottish Government. Where relevant RRTP

activities will be reviewed to ensure they reflect these recommendations.

- RRTP activities may be reviewed once Scottish Government funding has been confirmed.

6. **Is any part of this policy/ service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?**
    If yes, how have you included equality and human rights considerations into the contract?

Some RRTP activities, such as Housing First support will be carried out by a contracted specialist service. Contractors are required to submit evidence of their equalities and human rights policies through the procurement process.

7. **Have you considered how you will communicate information about this policy or policy change to those affected e.g. to those with hearing loss, speech impairment or English as a second language?**

The RRTP can be made available in different formats to suit the needs of specific groups.

8. **Please consider how your policy will impact on each of the following?**

Objectives Equality and Human Rights	Comments
Promotes / advances equality of opportunity e.g. improves access to and quality of services, status	The RRTP will improve access to settled accommodation, reduce the time spent in temporary accommodation and develop partnership working. By ensuring suitable accommodation is provided more quickly vulnerable people will be better placed to access other services.
Promotes good relations within and between people with protected characteristics and tackles harassment	Some RRTP activities provide assistance to equality groups to access housing if they are harassed or being victimised. Through the development of partnership working with specialist support providers, and developing a well

	training workforce that focuses on a trauma informed/person centred approach to the delivery of services.
Promotes participation, inclusion, dignity and self- control over decisions	RRTP activities ensure applicants have control over decisions made in relation to their housing requirements.
Builds family support networks, resilience and community capacity	The measures contained in the RRTP will improve access to housing service users will be better able to receive other support.
Reduces crime and fear of crime	The RRTP policy promotes safer, sustainable communities.
Promotes healthier lifestyles including Diet and nutrition Sexual Heath Substance Misuse Exercise and physical activity Life Skills	Poor housing conditions, including homelessness, are linked to poorer health circumstances for households. The RRTP includes activities that develop partnership working between Housing Services and Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership delivering services directly to people in temporary accommodation.
Environmental	
Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Midlothian (including carbon management)	N/A
Plan for future climate change	N/A
Pollution: air/ water/ soil/ noise	N/A
Protect coastal and inland waters	N/A
Enhance biodiversity	N/A
Public Safety: Minimise waste generation/ infection control/ accidental injury /fire risk	N/A
Reduce need to travel / promote sustainable forms or transport	N/A
Improves the physical environment e.g. housing quality, public and green space	The RRTP activities will improve the quality of temporary accommodation provided by ending the use of 'B&B' accommodation. Prevention activities

	will promote tenancy sustainment reducing the need for temporary accommodation.
Economic	
Maximises income and /or reduces income inequality	Income is maximised for many tenants who pay the lower housing costs as a result of being sustained/securing settled affordable accommodation.
Helps young people into positive destinations	Access to suitable housing can improve health, wellbeing and employment prospects.
Supports local business	N/A
Helps people to access jobs (both paid and unpaid)	Improving access to affordable housing increase the opportunities for people to access employment.
Improving literacy and numeracy	N/A
Improves working conditions, including equal pay	N/A
Improves local employment opportunities	N/A

9. Is the policy a qualifying Policy, Programme or Strategy as defined by The Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005?

No

10. Action Plan

Identified negative impact	Mitigating circumstances	Mitigating actions	Timeline	Responsible person
None				

11. Sign off by Chief Officer

Name Kevin Anderson

Date 03/08/2021