

Chichester District Council

CABINET

5 December 2023

Cap on Safe and Legal Routes Consultation

1. Contacts

Report Author:

Pam Bushby, Divisional Manager Communities,
Tel: 01243 534801 E-mail: pbushby@chichester.gov.uk

Cabinet Member:

Tracie Bangert, Cabinet Member for Community Services
Tel: 01243 375782 E-mail: tbangert@chichester.gov.uk

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That Cabinet approve the draft response (Appendix 1) to the Government Cap on Safe and Legal Routes Consultation.**
- 2.2 **That delegated powers are given to the Director of Housing & Communities, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, to make any final minor amendments to the response.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Illegal Migration Act received Royal Assent on 20 July 2023 and makes it clear that if anyone enters the UK illegally they should not be able to remain here. The Act aims to:
 - Put a stop to illegal migration into the UK by removing the incentive to make dangerous small boat crossings.
 - Speed up the removal of those with no right to be here- in turn this will free up capacity so that the UK can better support individuals through safe and legal routes
 - Prevent people who come to the UK through illegal and dangerous journeys from misusing modern slavery safeguards to block their removal
 - Introduce a cap on the number of people coming to the UK through safe and legal routes each year
- 3.2 The Illegal Migration Act places a duty on the Home Secretary to set a cap on the number of entrants to the UK arriving via safe and legal routes for humanitarian purposes and for this cap to be defined following consultation with local government. The cap will ensure the UK is able to welcome, accommodate, integrate and support those arriving via these routes in an orderly and appropriate way. The consultation is open from the 20 October 2023 until the 15 December 2023. The responses will be reviewed and considered at a national and regional level before a total figure is

debated in Parliament, the cap will be reviewed and set on an annual basis, although it is amendable in the event of a humanitarian crisis.

- 3.3 There are currently 7 legal routes for refugees to enter the UK, however, the cap does not include all the legal routes, in particular, it excludes the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP), the Ukraine and Hong Kong schemes. The cap does include those arriving via the UK Resettlement Scheme, Community Sponsorship and pathways 2 and 3 of the Afghan Citizens resettlement scheme (ACRS).
- 3.3 Chichester District Council has supported a number of resettlement schemes since 2016 including the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme and ARAP. The Council has also utilised the maximum offered amount for the Local Authority Housing Fund to deliver 21 homes for Afghan and Ukrainian refugees by March 24. The district has also welcomed many Ukrainian refugees through the Homes for Ukraine scheme.
- 3.3 The consultation asks for the number of households coming through the relevant channels the Council feels able to accommodate in 2025. Our response needs to be well considered and deliverable and we will be expected to adhere to this figure once agreed. It should be noted that the Council's role in the relevant schemes is limited to provision of housing via our Registered Providers and all wrap around support is provided by WSCC who receive funding to provide these services.

4. Outcomes to be achieved

- 4.1 That Cabinet accept and agree the response to the consultation and Chichester Council have an agreed cap on the number of households we can realistically accept through the included schemes and any new government resettlement schemes.

5. Proposal

- 5.1. That the response at appendix 1 is returned to government.

6. Alternatives that have been considered.

- 6.1 The Council could choose not to respond to the consultation but clearly Government expect Local Authorities to do so to inform the national cap setting.

7. Resource and Legal Implications

- 7.1 Funding to support the costs of those arriving through safe and legal routes will continue to be provided through the resettlement tariff payable to WSCC and will not be affected by the cap.

8. Consultation

8.1 As part of the consultation we are required to consult with partners involved with supporting or housing people who are part of these resettlement schemes, we have consulted with WSCC, Hyde Housing and Clarion Housing.

8.2 WSCC are also required to respond to the consultation and have advised officers that they will consult all relevant health and voluntary sector organisations to inform their response and on behalf of all the District & Borough Councils. The Council's response must be agreed with WSCC and at the time of writing this report feedback from WSCC was still awaited, therefore, recommendation 2.2 above allows for any final adjustments required.

9. Community Impact and Corporate Risk

9.1 The overall cap will be set nationally, however, our contribution to that national cap will impact our communities in that refugees will continue to be supported to reside in the district.

10. Other implications

	Yes	No
Crime & Disorder: there are significant risks associated with serious organised crime relating to people coming into the country via illegal routes.	x	
Climate Change and Biodiversity:		x
Human Rights and Equality Impact Human Rights and Equality Impact can be significant for those people choosing to enter the country via illegal routes.	x	
Safeguarding and Early Help: there are a number of safeguarding concerns relating to people coming into the country by illegal routes and there is also risk of exploitation for those coming by safe and legal routes.	x	
General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR):	x	
Health and Wellbeing:	x	

11. Appendix

Appendix 1: Proposed response to consultation.

12. Background Papers

None.