

## Notice of Non-key Executive Decision

<b>Subject Heading:</b>	Approval to accept the International Recruitment Fund for Adult Social Care across North East London (NEL) for 2024/2025
<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Barbara Nicholls, Strategic Director of People
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Gillian Ford, Cabinet Members for Health and Adult Care Services
<b>ELT Lead:</b>	Barbara Nicholls, Strategic Director of People
<b>Report Author and contact details:</b>	Sophie Barron, Senior Commissioner – Living Well T: 01708 431082 E: <a href="mailto:Sophie.Barron@havering.gov.uk">Sophie.Barron@havering.gov.uk</a>
<b>Policy context:</b>	Havering’s Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy states:  ‘We support the development of our workforce so that we have a workforce that is equipped with the skills that are fit for purpose, flexible, proactive, responsive and resilient and motivated to stay in Havering.’
<b>Financial summary:</b>	The Department of Health and Social care (DHSC) has allocated North East London (NEL) £403,000 for 2024/25 to continue to support international recruitment for the adult social care sector with a particular focus on supporting displaced workers.

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<b>Relevant Overview &amp; Scrutiny Sub Committee:</b>	People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committee
<b>Is this decision exempt from being called-in?</b>	The decision will be exempt from call in as it is a Non key Decision

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**The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives**

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well x

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

## Part A – Report seeking decision

### DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

For the reasons stated in this report, the Strategic Director of People is recommended to:

- a. accept the International Recruitment Fund for the amount of £403,000 on behalf of all North East London boroughs and their Adult Social Care Sectors for 2024/2025
- b. enter into the respective agreement for the acceptance of the funding.
- c. Enter into a memorandum of understanding with the North East London boroughs to capture the range of activities to be developed in the deployment of funding.

### AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

**The Havering Constitution:**

#### **Scheme 3.3.3 Powers common to all Strategic Directors**

##### **1. General**

- 1.1. To take any steps necessary for proper management and administration of allocated portfolios.

##### **5. Grants**

5.1. To apply for, accept and thereafter spend / allocate any grant funding connected with their directorate provided that any match funding or residual liabilities can be met from the existing budget of the directorate. For the avoidance of doubt this delegation shall allow the acceptance of any grant offered / allocated to the Council without any application.

### STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

#### **Background**

In March 2023, the government announced the international recruitment fund for the adult social care sector, which made £15 million available to 15 regional and sub-regional partnerships across England to develop solutions to local challenges around the use of international recruitment and strengthen safeguards against exploitation. These 15 partnerships have used the funding to develop and deliver support offers to adult social care providers in their respective areas to enable them to make use of international recruitment where this assists their workforce strategy.

#### **Funding awarded in 2023-24**

Havering were awarded £370,000 in the last financial year and took the lead on managing this across North East London (NEL) which includes the following London boroughs:

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- London Borough of Barking & Dagenham
- City of London
- London Borough of Hackney
- London Borough of Havering
- London Borough of Newham
- London Borough of Redbridge
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- London Borough of Waltham Forest

A programme was developed in collaboration with the NEL boroughs to allocate this funding to a variety of providers to deliver interventions around staff and management development, specialised recruitment service, project support and pastoral care packages. The vast majority of these interventions took place from January to April 2024 and the aim is to use a proportion of the new awarded funding to continue this programme on into 2024-25.

### **Aim of 2024-25 funding**

Over the past year, alongside an increase in international recruitment of care staff, there has been an unfortunate rise in reports of unethical employment practices. The government is committed to continuing to use international recruitment to support the adult social care workforce but wants to increase its focus on ensuring the ethical and sustainable employment of international recruits within the care system.

This includes, but is not limited to, activities which:

- facilitate in-country matching of overseas recruits who have been displaced by unethical practices or by their employer's sponsorship licence being revoked
- strengthen ethical practices in international recruitment and the employment of staff working in adult social care
- develop shared solutions to prevent and respond to exploitative employment issues
- build on the work of the previous fund

Meetings have taken place at a regional level with North East London (NEL) leads to continue to develop the existing programme offer in line with the DHSC's newest requirements. Work is also underway to engage with care provider alliances and those that have been internationally recruited to provide valued input and feedback into this programme.

### **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

A MOU will be developed for sign off by all eight local authorities for the grant, supported by a Steering Group which shall meet monthly for the duration of the grant period.

## **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

**Option 1 – Do not accept the International Recruitment Fund Grant**

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This option has been considered and rejected as there a number of displaced workers working across North East London that need assistance to secure employment with alternative providers. Given the national shortage of care workers, it is crucial that we support these individuals and continue attracting new talent who can live and work safely and legally in the UK to help alleviate the staffing shortfall in this sector.

### **PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION**

The Strategic Director of People & DASS is actively working with regional directors and NEL leads to establish robust governance. Several meetings have been held to discuss the fund and mechanisms are being implemented to ensure we meet the DHSC's outlined aims.

### **NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER**

Name: Sophie Barron

Designation: Senior Commissioner

Signature:  Date: 17/05/2024

## Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

The Council has the power to accept the grant utilising its general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything an individual can do, subject to any statutory constraints on the Council's powers. None of the constraints on the Council's Section 1 power are engaged by this decision.

Any dealings which the Council has with the grant will need to be in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR) 25.1, 25.2 and 25.4 and a procurement process will be conducted in line with CPR where any procurement is required to deliver the project. This will also need compliance with the Council's governance arrangements.

The grant agreement will set out certain conditions which officers will ensure to adhere to in order to achieve full utilisation of the funding arrangements and prevent clawback recovery of sums. Subject to the officers having an understanding of the terms and conditions of the grant funding, the Council may accept the grant funding and enter into the grant agreement.

A non-binding Memorandum of Understanding will be agreed between the boroughs to assist with development and delivery of activities attributed with the funding.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

The decision paper is seeking approval to accept £403,000 of grant funding. This funding is for NEL and the London Borough of Havering is the lead on this funding. Accepting this funding provides little risk to the councils' financial position. Expenditure is linked to the funding and will only take place if the grant is accepted.

As this funding is for one year, any agreement / contract will need to end by the end of the 24/25 financial year.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)**

The recommendations made in this report do not give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

### **EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a duty when exercising its functions. This includes to have "due regard" to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not. This is the public sector equality

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duty. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

“Due regard” is the regard that is appropriate in all the full circumstances. The weight to be attached to each need is a matter for the Council. As long as the Council is properly aware of the effects and has taken them in to account, the duty is discharged.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

None.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[International recruitment fund for the adult social care sector 2024 to 2025: guidance for local authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/international-recruitment-fund-for-the-adult-social-care-sector-2024-to-2025)

### **APPENDICES**

None

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**Part C – Record of decision**

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

**Decision**

Proposal agreed

*Delete as applicable*

~~Proposal NOT agreed because~~

**Details of decision maker**



Signed

Name: Barbara Nicholls

Cabinet Portfolio held:  
CMT Member title: Strategic Director of People  
Head of Service title  
Other manager title:

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Lodging this notice**

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Committee Services, in the Town Hall.

**For use by Committee Administration**

This notice was lodged with me on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

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