

## Notice of Non-key Executive Decision

<b>Subject Heading:</b>	Award of Contract for Immigration Advice Service
<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Patrick Odling-Smee
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cabinet Member for Housing Allocation – Martin Lardner
<b>SLT Lead:</b>	Patrick Odling-Smee
<b>Report Author and contact details:</b>	Lee Watson <a href="mailto:Lee.watson@havering.gov.uk">Lee.watson@havering.gov.uk</a>
<b>Policy context:</b>	There is a need to ensure we are able to provide additional immigration support to our newly arrived residents
<b>Financial summary:</b>	The cost of the contract will be, £0.133m, can be fully funded from existing grant monies from MHCLG.
<b>Relevant OSC:</b>	Peoples OSC
<b>Is this decision exempt from being called-in?</b>	Yes

**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 X

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council X

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### Part A – Report seeking decision

#### **DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION**

To approve the award of contract to RakLAW for immigration advice service for Havering

#### **AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE**

##### **Scheme 3.3.3**

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

- 4.1 To approve commencement of a tendering process for all contracts below a total contract value £1,000,000.

#### **STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

- 1.1 This Decision seeks Directors' approval to agree to enter into contract with RakLAW for the provision of bespoke Immigration Advice after our original contract ran out in February 2026. Open tender process took place with 1 provider submitted. RakLAW has been evaluated at 96.57 out of 100
- 1.2 Havering wish to enter into a immigration contract for a stand-alone offer with RakLAW which will provide immigration advice and to return to place of origin to Havering residents with precarious status with a view to either regularise their status giving them access to public funds thus reducing the cost of the council's obligation in providing financial and accommodation support and to support them to return to their place of origin.
- 1.1 The Contract with RakLAW is for face to face immigration advice and follow up case work for 0.8 FTE OISC level 2 immigration advisor (and associated support). This contract will run from 01.06.26 to 31.12.27 (18 months – depending on signing of contracts) for the cost of £133,000, fully funded from The Homes for Ukraine Grant (Funding from the MHCLG received on a quarterly basis allows for the commissioning or provide services that ensure guests and sponsors are provided with a source of advice and support to assist with registering for mainstream benefits and services, including where necessary specialist public health services and community integration.

#### **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

- 1.2 If this contract does not progress, there will be no immigration offer and support to return them back to country of origin provided by Havering Council to support any refugee pathway and asylum seekers on immigration issues.

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1.3 Access to immigration advice is an essential intervention for families to resolve their immigration status, gain recourse to public funds, extensions of visa, any issues with current visas and exit Local Authority support including to return to place of origin.

**PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION**

The Leader of the Council has been kept informed of the requirements that local councils have in providing support to families to rebuild their lives and fully integrate into communities.

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

Name: Lee Watson

Designation: Refugee and Crisis Response Manager



Signature:

Date: 30.04.26

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### Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

- 8.2.1 The Council has the power to procure the contract under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, which permits the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to, or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions.
- 8.2.2 The Council also has a 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 s.1 power are engaged by this decision.
- 8.2.3 The contract value is below the services threshold of the Procurement Act 2023. The procurement is therefore not caught by the full Procurement Act 2023 regime.
- 8.2.4 the procurement must however comply with the Council's Standing Orders.
- 8.2.5 Subject to the above, the contract may be awarded.

This decision paper is seeking approval to award an 18-month immigration advice contract valued at £133,000. This will be funded through the Homes for Ukraine Grant from MHCLG. Adequate grant funding has already been received and is being held in earmarked reserves.

The contract will deliver a range of targeted services, including:

- Attend and participate in a minimum of 24 drop-ins per year, aiming for 2 per month.
- Provide up to 4 days per week OISC level 2 Immigration advice: 55 beneficiaries for assessments, of which 18- 20 beneficiaries for caseload per year.
- Provide 1 training sessions/workshops of ½ day to council staff per year.
- Utilise a referral system.
- Quarterly monitoring reports on outcomes and outputs
- Issue feedback questionnaires when cases are closed

This investment could result in cost avoidance through reduced reliance on emergency housing, social care, and other public services, while supporting vulnerable migrants to secure legal status and access employment. Although the financial impact cannot be quantified at this time, it will be monitored through quarterly reporting to assess progress and inform future decision-making.

#### **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**

Standard paragraph

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;

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- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

An EqHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) is usually carried out and on this occasion this isn't required

The Council seeks to ensure equality, inclusion, and dignity for all in all situations.

There are not equalities and social inclusion implications and risks associated with this decision

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

There are no environmental and climate change implications and risks

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Specification of services

### **APPENDICES**

**Non-key Executive Decision**

**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

**Details of decision maker**



Signed

Name: Patrick Odling-Smee

Cabinet Portfolio held:

CMT Member title:

Head of Service title

Other manager title:

Date: 21/10/25

**Lodging this notice**

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

**For use by Committee Administration**

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

Signed \_\_\_\_\_