



**Notice of a public  
Decision Session - Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and  
Communities**

**To:** Councillor Smalley (Executive Member)

**Date:** Tuesday, 19 April 2022

**Time:** 9.00am

**Venue:** The George Hudson Board Room - 1st Floor,  
West Offices (F045)

**AGENDA**

**Notice to Members – Post Decision Calling In:**

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item\* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democratic Services by **4:00pm** on **Thursday 21 April 2022**.

\*With the exception of matters that have been subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any called in items will be considered by the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5.00pm** on **Wednesday 13 April 2022**

**1. Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member is asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registerable interests he might have in respect of business on this agenda, if he has not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests.

- 2. Minutes** (Pages 1 - 2)  
To approve and sign the minutes of the Decision Session held on 22 February 2022.

- 3. Public Participation**  
At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee.

Please note that our registration deadlines have changed to 2 working days before the meeting. The deadline for registering at this meeting is at **5.00pm on Wednesday 13 April 2022.**

To register to speak please visit [www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings](http://www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings) to fill out an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting please contact the Democracy Officer for the meeting whose details can be found at the foot of the agenda.

### **Webcasting of Public Meetings**

Please note that, subject to available resources, this public meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The public meeting can be viewed on demand at [www.york.gov.uk/webcasts](http://www.york.gov.uk/webcasts).

During coronavirus, we've made some changes to how we're running council meetings. See our coronavirus updates ([www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy](http://www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy)) for more information on meetings and decisions.

- 4. Westfield Multi-Use Games Area** (Pages 3 - 20)  
This report sets out the background to the removal of the Kingsway West Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and the commitment of the Council to reinstate a new and enhanced MUGA within the Westfield Ward.
- 5. York's welcome to Ukrainian refugees** (Pages 21 - 38)  
This report sets out the city's response to welcoming Ukrainian refugees to the city.

## 6. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Executive Member considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

### Democracy Officer:

Louise Cook

Tel: 01904 551031

Email: [louise.cook@york.gov.uk](mailto:louise.cook@york.gov.uk)

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting.

- Registering to speak
- Written Representations
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

Contact details are set out above.

**This information can be provided in your own language.**

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

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Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Communities
Date	22 February 2022
Present	Councillor Smalley (Executive Member)

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## 9. **Declarations of Interest**

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interests that he might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

## 10. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 11 January 2022 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

## 11. **Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

## 12. **York Learning – Self-Assessment Report 2020/21**

The Executive Member considered a report that presented York Learning's Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for the academic year 20/21. The full report was attached at Annex 1 with performance data at the end of the report. It was noted that the final report had to be sent to Ofsted in February 2022.

The Head of York Learning outlined the report noting that there had been significant improvement in education and training achievement across the service from moving from 77.4% in 19/20 to 81.7% in 2020/21. It was felt that this was good despite not matching pre Covid levels. She further noted a drop in funding compared to pre Covid levels due to provision going online and she highlighted the support given to online learners, including the loan of equipment. She explained why York

Learning was judged to be Good in all Ofsted areas and the key areas for improvement to become Outstanding. She added that the present offer was being worked on and the challenge around doing this online.

The Executive Member noted the hard work of all York Learning staff. In response to questions from the Executive Member the Head of York Learning explained the reason for 441 learners moving on to full cost provision. She explained that the funding was there to support a wide range of people and a number of people were moving into private provision, and that this was an important part of learners managing their personal wellbeing. She explained that they were looking at developing transferable skills for employability, working with different partners to develop their clients' needs. She added that during the last year they had begun working with the CVS on social prescribing.

The Executive Member noted thanks for the work of York Learning, and he;

Resolved: That the findings of the service's self-assessment report be considered and that the final report be recommended for publication.

Reason: To help monitor the service and ensure robust governance arrangements.

Cllr Smalley, Executive Member  
[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.13 am].



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**Decision Session – Executive Member for Culture,  
Leisure and Communities**

19 April 2022

Report of the Assistant Director (Customer and Communities)

**Westfield Multi-Use Games Area****Summary**

1. This report sets out the background to the removal of the Kingsway West Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and the commitment of the Council to reinstate a new and enhanced MUGA within the Westfield Ward.

**Recommendation**

2. The Executive Member is asked to give delegated authority:
  - to the Director of Customer and Communities to apply for planning permission for the new scheme, and
  - to the Director of Customer and Communities, in consultation with the Director of Governance, to appoint the contractor to undertake the works, in accordance with the council's contract procedure rules, and subject to the project being deliverable within the available budget and planning permission being received.

Reason: To secure the reinstatement of a MUGA in the Westfield Ward and to help meet the increasing demand for artificial grass pitches and accessible sports facilities for young people in the area.

**Background Information**

3. The Kingsway West MUGA was a 30m x 25m tarmac games area forming part of an area of open space on the Hob Moor Community Primary School site and adjacent to the Lincoln Court older persons' independent living accommodation.
4. On 18 March 2019 Executive agreed to an enhanced proposal to deliver older persons' independent living accommodation including

new build wheelchair accessible apartments and improved communal facilities at Lincoln Court.

5. The footprint of this extension has resulted in the loss of the MUGA and, following the completion of construction works on both Lincoln Court and the Centre of Excellence, the remaining land on which the MUGA was situated has been landscaped and returned to the community as open space.
6. The March 2019 Executive also made a commitment that alternative recreational facilities would be provided within Westfield Ward, following consultation with the community and with Sport England, in mitigation for the loss of the MUGA.
7. A budget of £200k was approved by full Council on 25 February 2021 as a New Scheme - Westfield MUGA, funded through prudential borrowing and other internal sources.
8. The Kingsway West MUGA was unmanaged, with the site being opened and closed at irregular hours. It was also a target for anti-social behaviour, meaning that the site could not be used on any occasion until it had been made safe.
9. For the new facility, we therefore looked at suitable community sites within the Westfield Ward that could manage the opening and closing, maintain the facility and promote its use for sport and active leisure purposes.
10. The ward has a limited number of community sports clubs with a site that could host a facility such as this. An approach was made to the York Acorn Amateur Rugby League Sports and Social Club ("York Acorn") which is less than half a mile away on foot from the old site. They expressed their approval for the new MUGA to be situated on their site off Thanet Road ("York Acorn Site").
11. The York Acorn Site is council owned but is leased to York Acorn until 26<sup>th</sup> January 2109 pursuant to a lease granted on 27 January 2010 for a term of 99 years.
12. The York Acorn Site has an area of grass and spoil from previous ground works, on the south-eastern corner of their site, which is underutilised by the club, and which would be the ideal site for the MUGA to be situated. The potential area could be in the region of 30m x 45m, providing a significantly larger multi-use space than the one that has been removed.



13. The planning application will be for an artificial grass pitch, with flood lighting and fencing to support the sports of Rugby League and Football but can also be used for other active leisure opportunities and informal play, the size of which will be determined by the price that the tenders come in at.
14. The draft York Playing Pitch Strategy shows that the city lacks a number of artificial grass pitches.
15. The pitch will have free-to-access sessions for young people available outside school hours and in holiday periods to maximise use.
16. The pitch will also include paid for sessions to generate revenue for maintenance and a sinking fund to preserve the asset for present and future local citizens.

### **Consultation**

17. The local community have been consulted throughout the initial plans of the proposed development of a new MUGA on the York Acorn site. This was done at the joint Dringhouses and Woodthorpe Ward and Westfield Ward Committee on 29 November 2021.
18. Recent consultation has been carried out through the Foxwood Residents Association and at Foxwood Community Centre. Many of the detailed features of the facility and its opening hours will be developed in response to this feedback.
19. Consultation with the following organisations has also been sought; Sport England awaiting their response. The Rugby Football League and the North Riding County Football Association have given their support to move forward.

### **Options**

20. Option 1 - The Executive Member is asked to give delegated authority to apply for planning permission and for the Assistant Director of Customer and Communities, in consultation with the Director of Governance, and to appoint the contractor to undertake the works in accordance with the contract procedural rules, subject to the project being deliverable within the available budget.
21. Option 2 – The Executive Member does not take forward the proposal.

## Analysis

22. Option 1 – is recommended for approval as Option 2 would mean we fail to fulfil an executive decision and leave a short-fall in community sports facilities in the Westfield Ward.

## Implications

23. **Finance:** The allocation of £200k was approved by full Council on 25 February 2021 as a New Scheme - Westfield MUGA. Soft market testing indicates that at this stage the scheme can be delivered within this allocation. A more detailed budget will be developed to ensure that this remains the case before delivery of the project.
24. **Equalities:** Based on this equality impact assessment we believe it demonstrates the project is robust and will have a positive impact on the local community. At present the ward has had a community facility removed and this equality impact assessment has been drawn up to support the reinstatement of an enhanced community sports facility.
25. There is no potential for unlawful discrimination. The only adverse impact noted is against the access for disabled people, particularly for those with a physical disability. Consideration has been given to opportunities for disabled people and we believe this can be offset by the local leisure centre Energise which is an accessible community sports facility that supports disability sport activities.
26. Throughout the project opportunities will be taken to improve the ecological impact of the scheme and to maximise the local benefits of the scheme for the surrounding community.
27. **Legal:** As indicated above, the York Acorn Site is council owned but is leased to York Acorn until 26<sup>th</sup> January 2109 pursuant to a lease granted on 27 January 2010 for a term of 99 years. A right of way runs along the south-eastern boundary of the York Acorn Site. Also, a small part of the York Acorn Site is (pursuant to a Conveyance thereof dated 1<sup>st</sup> March 1948) subject to various covenants prohibiting the construction thereon of any buildings (other than a house, garage or shed / greenhouse / conservatory). However, it is understood that the proposed MUGA will be located on a different area of the York Acorn Site which is not subject to such third-party rights / covenants in which case it would not

interfere with / breach such.

28. The Council will need to obtain York Acorn's permission for our contractor to access the proposed site to install the MUGA.
29. The lease of the York Acorn Site will need to be varied to explicitly:
  - (i) permit the use / operation of a MUGA on the proposed site
  - (ii) obliged York Acorn / the tenant to permit public access to and use of the MUGA
30. After installation, future maintenance of the MUGA will be the responsibility of York Acorn / the tenant pursuant to the lease.
31. The English Sports Council (Sport England) have the benefit of a legal charge / mortgage over York Acorn's leasehold interest in the site (to secure a grant given to York Acorn by Sport England). Accordingly written consent from Sport England to the installation of the MUGA and to the variation of the lease will be needed.
32. There are no additional HR, IT, Crime and Disorder or other implications arising directly from this report.

### **Council Plan**

33. The Westfield MUGA will support the following aims of the Council Plan:
  - Good Health and Wellbeing
  - A Better Start for Children and Young People
  - Safe Communities and Culture for All

### **Risk Management**

34. Project risks include:

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigations</b>
The project fails to be granted planning approval.	We have worked with the community club, Rugby Football League and Sport England to get support for the scheme. Extensive community consultation has been undertaken by the team.  The views received are reflected within

	the project.
A contractor cannot be found to undertake the works.	We have already done soft market testing of potential contractors, receiving multiple quotes for the work.
The final costs are not within the budget made available here.	Officers will work with the potential contractors to ensure that the project meets the brief and reflects the available resources.  There is scope within the project brief for value engineering within the scheme and to bring this in line with the budget available.

35. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks that have been identified in this report are those which could lead to the inability to meet business objectives and failure to meet stakeholders' expectations, which could in turn damage the Council's image and reputation. Measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the risk score has been assessed at "Medium". This means that the risk level is acceptable and that regular active monitoring of progress against delivery of the scheme will be required.

### Contact Details

<b>Authors:</b>	<b>Chief Officer Responsible for the report:</b>		
Paul Ramskill Community Sports Development Manager <a href="mailto:paul.ramskill@york.gov.uk">paul.ramskill@york.gov.uk</a>	Charlie Croft Assistant Director – Customer and Communities		
	<b>Report Approved</b>	✓	<b>Date</b> 6.4.22.
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	Westfield Ward		
For further information please contact the authors of the report			

### Annexes:

Annex 1: Equality Impact Assessment Westfield Multi-Use Games Area

**City of York Council**  
**Equalities Impact Assessment**

**Who is submitting the proposal?**

<b>Directorate:</b>	Customer and Communities		
<b>Service Area:</b>	Sport and Active Leisure		
<b>Name of the proposal:</b>	Westfield Multi-Use Games Area		
<b>Lead officer:</b>	Paul Ramskill		
<b>Date assessment completed:</b>	6 April 2022		
<b>Names of those who contributed to the assessment:</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Job title</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Area of expertise</b>
Charlie Croft	Assistant Director Customer and Communities	City of York Council	Communities Lead
Donna Allan	Community Sports Development Officer	City of York Council	Sport Provision
Cllr. S. Daubeney	Westfield Ward Councillor	City of York Council	Ward Member
Cllr. A. Waller	Westfield Ward Councillor	City of York Council	Ward Member

## Step 1 – Aims and intended outcomes

1.1	<p><b>What is the purpose of the proposal?</b> Please explain your proposal in Plain English avoiding acronyms and jargon.</p>
	<p>To undertake an Equality Impact Assessment on the reinstatement of a Multi-Use Games Area within the Westfield Ward.</p>
1.2	<p><b>Are there any external considerations?</b> (Legislation/government directive/codes of practice etc.)</p>
	<p>None.</p>
1.3	<p><b>Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?</b></p>
	<p>York Acorn ARLFC – The site for the MUGA and primary user. Westfield Ward Councillor’s – Responding to the loss of a community facility. Foxwood Residents Association – Representing residents’ interests. Foxwood Community Centre - Representing residents’ interests. Sport England – Statutory Planning Consultee and betterment of sporting facilities. Rugby Football League (RFL) – Governing Body of Rugby League. North Riding County Football Association (NRCFA) – Governing Body of Football.</p>
1.4	<p><b>What results/outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom?</b> This section should explain what outcomes you want to achieve for service users, staff and/or the wider community. Demonstrate how the proposal links to the Council Plan (2019- 2023) and other corporate strategies and plans.</p>

	The outcome of this project is to reinstate a recently removed tarmac multi-use games area with an enhanced facility based in the Westfield Ward that is managed and maintained with appropriate access for children and young people and for use by the community club and partners and for wider community access to increase participation rates.
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## Step 2 – Gathering the information and feedback

<b>2.1</b>	<b>What sources of data, evidence and consultation feedback do we have to help us understand the impact of the proposal on equality rights and human rights?</b> Please consider a range of sources, including: consultation exercises, surveys, feedback from staff, stakeholders, participants, research reports, the views of equality groups, as well your own experience of working in this area etc.	
	<b>Source of data/supporting evidence</b>	<b>Reason for using</b>
	Westfield and Dringhouses and Woodthorpe Ward Committee Meeting – 29 November 2021	We consulted local residents at the Westfield and Dringhouses and Woodthorpe Ward Committee Meeting to get the first community feedback on the project.
	Community Survey in January and February 2022	We undertook further research and received responses from local residents the Foxwood Residents Association, Foxwood Community Centre and the Youth Justice Service.
	Strategic participation rates / playing pitch strategy and Sport England's Accessible Sports Facilities Formerly known as Access for Disabled People Design Guidance Note Updated 2010	Planning related and evidence documents.

## Step 3 – Gaps in data and knowledge

<b>3.1</b>	<b>What are the main gaps in information and understanding of the impact of your proposal? Please indicate how any gaps will be dealt with.</b>		
<b>Gaps in data or knowledge</b>		<b>Action to deal with this</b>	
Community consultation as part of the planning process.		We will undertake further community consultation throughout the planning process to get the best facility possible within the available budget.	

#### Step 4 – Analysing the impacts or effects.

<b>4.1</b>	<b>Please consider what the evidence tells you about the likely impact (positive or negative) on people sharing a protected characteristic, i.e. how significant could the impacts be if we did not make any adjustments?</b> Remember the duty is also positive – so please identify where the proposal offers opportunities to promote equality and/or foster good relations.		
<b>Equality Groups and Human Rights.</b>	<b>Key Findings/Impacts</b>	<b>Positive (+) Negative (-) Neutral (0)</b>	<b>High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)</b>
<b>Age</b>	The original site was used by children and young people but was also a site for anti-social behaviour. No one organisation managed the site or had control of its operation. By reinstating the site at a community voluntary sports club within the same ward, brings about a positive impact for children and young people, but also the impact that older residents from the ward were involved in when the site had anti-social behaviour associated with it, but still remains within the ward.	<b>+</b>	<b>H</b>
<b>Disability</b>	The development of this site will do the most to increase participation across the area. Sport England's Accessible Sports Facilities Formerly known as Access for Disabled	<b>+</b>	<b>M</b>



	People Design Guidance Note Updated 2010 notes that artificial grass surfaces ‘are generally unpopular with players because they are considered to be ‘hard work’’, it should be noted here that not all disabilities are of a physical nature, but this will be considered in the final decision on the type of artificial grass pitch as it will not be as accessible as a tarmac facility. Consideration regarding opportunities for disabled people has been considered. The local leisure centre Energise being an accessible community sports facilities supports disability sport activities.		
<b>Gender</b>	As a city our aims are to increase those groups whose participation rates are lowest, and these include women and girls. York Acorn ARL Club’s equal opportunities policy is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among their staff and the sport, eliminating any form of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation. Rugby League is an inclusive sport at all levels whether you are interested in playing, coaching, officiating, volunteering or watching. Working to improve the mental health, wellbeing and working life of their Rugby Players and Communities.	<b>+</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	None.		
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	None.		
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	The site will be a safe place for physical activity to take place.	<b>+</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>Race</b>	None.		

<b>Religion and belief</b>	None.		
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	None.		
<b>Other Socio-economic groups including:</b>	<b>Could other socio-economic groups be affected e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes?</b>		
<b>Carer</b>	Young carers advertised for use. Working with Local Area Co-ordinator's, Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust about supportive activities for young people.	+	M
<b>Low income groups</b>	The Westfield Ward is one of the most disadvantaged wards in the city. The number of community clubs within the ward and the number of opportunities for people to increase their physical activity is also lower than other wards. By reinstating an enhanced multi-use games area that is managed and open at key times for children and young people to use has been taken into consideration and will be a feature of the free session time that will be managed by the York Acorn ARLFC Club. Impact of Covid, less funds available, reduction in participation rates. Extracurricular activity and the support of their educational attainment.	+	H
<b>Veterans, Armed Forces Community</b>	None.		
<b>Other</b>			
<b>Impact on human rights:</b>			

List any human rights impacted.	None.		
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**Use the following guidance to inform your responses:**

Indicate:

- Where you think that the proposal could have a POSITIVE impact on any of the equality groups like promoting equality and equal opportunities or improving relations within equality groups
- Where you think that the proposal could have a NEGATIVE impact on any of the equality groups, i.e. it could disadvantage them
- Where you think that this proposal has a NEUTRAL effect on any of the equality groups listed below i.e. it has no effect currently on equality groups.

It is important to remember that a proposal may be highly relevant to one aspect of equality and not relevant to another.

<p><b>High impact</b> (The proposal or process is very equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is significant potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or public facing The proposal has consequences for or affects significant numbers of people The proposal has the potential to make a significant contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights.</p>
<p><b>Medium impact</b> (The proposal or process is somewhat equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is some evidence to suggest potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or across services, but mainly internal The proposal has consequences for or affects some people The proposal has the potential to make a contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>
<p><b>Low impact</b> (The proposal or process might be equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is little evidence to suggest that the proposal could result in adverse impact The proposal operates in a limited way The proposal has consequences for or affects few people The proposal may have the potential to contribute to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>

## Step 5 - Mitigating adverse impacts and maximising positive impacts

5.1	<p><b>Based on your findings, explain ways you plan to mitigate any unlawful prohibited conduct or unwanted adverse impact. Where positive impacts have been identified, what is been done to optimise opportunities to advance equality or foster good relations?</b></p>
<p>Based on this equality impact assessment we believe it will have a positive impact on the local community. At present the ward has had a community facility removed and this equality impact assessment has been drawn up to support the reinstatement of an enhanced community sports facility.</p>	

## Step 6 – Recommendations and conclusions of the assessment

6.1	<p><b>Having considered the potential or actual impacts you should be in a position to make an informed judgement on what should be done. In all cases, document your reasoning that justifies your decision. There are four main options you can take:</b></p>
<p>- <b>No major change to the proposal</b> – the EIA demonstrates the proposal is robust. There is no potential for unlawful discrimination or adverse impact and you have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitor and review.</p>	

- **Adjust the proposal** – the EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. This involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance quality or to foster good relations.
- **Continue with the proposal** (despite the potential for adverse impact) – you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and how you believe the decision is compatible with our obligations under the duty
- **Stop and remove the proposal** – if there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you should consider stopping the proposal altogether. If a proposal leads to unlawful discrimination, it should be removed or changed.

**Important:** If there are any adverse impacts you cannot mitigate, please provide a compelling reason in the justification column.

<b>Option selected</b>	<b>Conclusions/justification</b>
No major change to the proposal	We believe the EIA demonstrates the proposal is robust. There is no potential for unlawful discrimination. The only adverse impact noted is against the access for disabled people, particularly for those with a physical disability. Consideration regarding opportunities for disabled people has been considered and we believe this can be offset by the local leisure centre Energise which is an accessible community sports facility that supports disability sport activities.

## Step 7 – Summary of agreed actions resulting from the assessment

<b>7.1 What action, by whom, will be undertaken as a result of the impact assessment.</b>			
<b>Impact/issue</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Community Consultation	Further community consultation as part of the planning process	Community Sports Officer and Community Club	Autumn 2022

## Step 8 - Monitor, review and improve

<b>8.1</b>	<p><b>How will the impact of your proposal be monitored and improved upon going forward?</b> Consider how will you identify the impact of activities on protected characteristics and other marginalised groups going forward? How will any learning and enhancements be capitalised on and embedded?</p>		
<p>As part of the planning application process, we will undertake further community consultation. We will keep the equality impact assessment live throughout the process and continue to monitor the impact against the protected characteristics. Once the facility has been built, we will be able to assess those that are using the site against the protected characteristics.</p>			

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**Decision Session – Executive Member for  
Culture, Leisure and Communities**

19 April 2022

Report of the Assistant Director (Customer and Communities)

**York's welcome to Ukrainian refugees****Summary**

1. This report sets out the city's response to welcoming Ukrainian refugees to the city.

**Recommendation**

2. The Executive Member is asked to:
  - Note the actions currently being taken.
  - Agree the initial funding to City of Sanctuary set out in paragraph 16.
  - Agree the grant arrangements set out in paragraph 23.
  - Agree the arrangements with Migration Yorkshire as set out in paragraph 29.

Reason: To provide an effective and coordinated welcome to Ukrainians arriving in York.

**Background****'Homes for Ukraine'**

3. The 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme opened for visa applications on Friday 18 March. Either a Guest or a Sponsor can complete the visa application; however, the form asks the person completing it to name both parties. Sponsors and guests find each other and match themselves externally: there is no central matching process.
4. The scheme is uncapped in terms of numbers. Guests can live and work in the UK for up to 3 years and access benefits, healthcare, employment and other support.
5. Sponsors must provide accommodation for a minimum of six months. Sponsors can also receive an optional 'thank you' payment

of £350 per month for up to the first 12 months of sponsorship. This payment is limited to one monthly payment per residential address, regardless of the number of individuals sponsored. Sponsors should not charge rent. They are not expected to cover the costs of food and living expenses.

6. The scheme is being rolled out in phases. In later phases organisations and community groups will be able to sponsor multiple guests.
7. Councils are expected to lead on the following:
  - a) **Reception arrangements:** Establish reception arrangements at particular ports of entry – not applicable to York.
  - b) **Data sharing:** Councils are receiving the necessary data from DLUHC about Sponsors and Guests who have applied for visas and when the visa is granted.
  - c) **Safeguarding checks:** In line with councils' statutory duty to promote the welfare of adults and children at risk they have the right to check in on Guests and inspect accommodation once they have arrived and the sponsor guidance makes this clear.
  - d) **Property checks:** Councils must visit the Sponsor household, preferably before the Guest has arrived, to confirm that the accommodation is suitable.
  - e) **DBS checks:** Councils must also undertake basic DBS checks on all adults in the sponsor household. In households where there are incoming arrivals who are children and/or vulnerable adults, an enhanced DBS check with barred lists check will be required for all adults in the sponsor household.
  - f) **Interim payment for Guest:** The council should provide an interim payment of £200 per guest for subsistence costs (from the funding allocation – see below). Councils also have discretion within the tariff to top-up or further support guests with interim or additional payments. Working age guests will be able to apply to receive Universal Credit and will be able to apply for advance payments where eligible. Pension age guests will have access to State Pension Credit and Housing Benefit provided they meet eligibility criteria.
  - g) **Provision of education:** Councils are required to provide school places for children of school age - funding set out below.

- h) **Service referrals:** Councils should provide advice and referrals to specialist public health services as appropriate e.g., mental health services, adult social care, and children's services.
- i) **Work and Benefits:** Councils should support guests to access local Jobcentre Plus appointments for benefit assessments and job-seeking.
- j) **Homelessness assistance:** It is recognised that, in some cases, the Sponsor / Guest relationship will break down and the Guest become at risk of homelessness. Councils' statutory homelessness duties will apply in this instance. There is an indication that a system may also be devised to refer people back into the system to find a new sponsor.
- k) **Community integration:** Councils are expected to play a key role in supporting the integration of Ukrainian families into their local communities. This will be particularly important in place like York that do not have strong links with the Ukrainian diaspora. Integration support might include the organisation of community events, the use of community champions and interfaith networks, increasing local authority contact / interaction with Ukrainians, access to translation services and working with local voluntary sector organisations and faith groups to help signpost advice and support.
- l) **Administering payments to sponsors:** Councils will administer the optional 'thank you' payments to sponsors of £350 per month, for up to 12 months. There is a maximum of one monthly payment per address paid in arrears, regardless of the number of guests being hosted. Payments must not be released to sponsors until property checks have been completed. This payment will be tax free and will not affect the sponsor's entitlement to benefits or council tax status.

### **Funding for councils**

- 8. The council will receive £10,500 per person in the first year. This is not ring fenced. There will be extra government funding to cover the 'thank you' payments.
- 9. The Department for Education (DfE) will also allocate funding on a per pupil basis for the three phases of education at the following annual rates:

- Early years (ages 2 to 4) - £3,000
- Primary (ages 5 -11) - £6,580
- Secondary (ages 11-18) - £8,755

(These tariffs include support for children with special educational needs and disabilities).

### **Current Position**

10. By the time of writing, i.e. 7 April, the portal showed 60 matches for York. The data does not, in all cases, show the children in the Guest group; however, the number of Guests involved is likely to be in the region of 150. A small number of visas had been granted and one group of five plus one individual had just arrived in the city. The position will be updated at the meeting.
11. Some additional capacity has been put in place in the Communities Team both to administer the scheme and to create a 'link worker' role to support Sponsors. Officers are in contact with potential Sponsors on the portal to:
  - Facilitate the DBS checks – York CVS has agreed to process these for Sponsors going forward.
  - Arrange for Housing officers to undertake the initial property inspection – the council is helping Sponsors with any issues that arise e.g. arranging gas safety checks where these have not been undertaken in the last 12 months, fitting carbon monoxide alarms.
  - Arrange a visit from the link worker who will support the guests and sponsors in all aspects as set out above.

### **The Next Stage**

12. It is clear that there is a great will amongst York's residents and organisations to support people coming from Ukraine to the city. It is also clear that our efforts as a city need to be coordinated in order to ensure that the offers of help are mobilised to best effect and meet the needs of Guests.
13. To this end, the city's Refugee Coordination Group is currently meeting weekly to coordinate the city's response. This group brings together all the key agencies in the city who are interested in supporting this initiative and/or provide statutory services. A comprehensive guide on "Support for Ukrainian Refugees" has been produced by the group for all front-line services / agencies. The

group is ensuring the consistency of information provision by providing links to respective websites.

14. Current key issues:

15. **City of Sanctuary:** City of Sanctuary are taking the lead for the city in addressing some important areas of work:

a) Providing advice and guidance to those considering becoming Sponsors. Many people need the opportunity to think through the issues involved and to understand the requirements of being a Sponsor. For example, whilst many households have one spare room, it is clear that Guests are coming in family groups and therefore require houses with significant space. City of Sanctuary are able to advise people about how best they can help.

Furthermore, few York residents will know anyone fleeing Ukraine with whom they can complete a visa application. City of Sanctuary can link appropriate individuals who register with them, as well as on the national site, with the name of someone who has approached them from Ukraine (from where they are getting a number of contacts).

b) Creating a register of individuals interested in helping Ukrainians coming to York e.g. translators – they have several hundred people registered so far.

c) Helping the council to support Sponsors – it is envisaged that a peer support group will be just one of the mechanisms for this.

d) Creating a support group for existing Ukrainian residents in York in collaboration with the council's Minority Communities Officer. An event to celebrate Orthodox Easter is an example of an activity currently being planned.

16. City of Sanctuary have undertaken this work so far through their volunteer trustees. They now need to take on some staffing resource to continue to build this work. It is proposed to make an initial grant of £20k to City of Sanctuary, from the government funding provided to the council, to fund this work for the period April to September.

17. **Schools:** the council's link worker is liaising with the schools admissions team when children arrive. The school admissions team in turn work with the relevant school to ensure a smooth admission for the child. The council's "Fair Access" scheme is being

employed. This scheme is designed for more vulnerable admissions and allows us to make a placement even when a school is 'full' if it is in the child / young person's best interests.

18. Training is being developed for schools both using the regional provider, SOLACE, as well as a York-developed e-module.
19. A headteacher briefing has been held on the scheme.
20. The full government funding will be passported to the school when an admission takes place.
21. **Support to Guests:** It is recognised that Guests are likely to have a spectrum of needs arising from the experiences they have suffered. In anticipation of this a range of potential responses are being developed in partnership with organisations such as York Mind and SOLACE ranging from counselling to more intensive interventions. It is recognised that support may also be need by Sponsors over time.
22. **Support Sponsors:** A "took kit" has been provided for Sponsors. This will be followed up with more personalised support including training, a 'buddy' system and peer support arrangements. These will be developed with partners including Refugee Action York and City of Sanctuary.
23. **Community Organisations:** Many community organisations are mobilising to provide drop-ins and other social support to Guests. This will be invaluable in furthering integration and reducing the risk of isolation. Two Ridings Foundation are ready to support such initiatives. It is recommended that there is provision to make grants to such organisations where appropriate from the government funding to cover costs such as room bookings; authority to make grants to be delegated to the Director of Customer and Communities in consultation with the Executive Member.
24. **Volunteers:** City of Sanctuary are bringing together specific offers such as a group of translators. CVS are recruiting volunteers as required by voluntary organisations through the volunteer bureau and the council's minority communities officer is also coordinating a group of volunteers.
25. **English as a second language (ESOL):** York Learning are working to expand the city's ESOL capacity, as quickly as possible, working with all the partner agencies who deliver ESOL, to meet the needs of Ukrainian refugees. We will aim to incorporate Ukrainian

arrivals within our regular provision from September. Between now and September, we are setting up a "Welcome to York" ESOL programme specifically for Ukrainians. This will aim to equip the learners with the emergency English they will need to navigate life here. This will be hosted at York City Church (the Citadel) starting on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April. It will enable the learners then to be placed in the most appropriate provision suitable to their needs.

26. **Migration Yorkshire:** Migration Yorkshire play an important regional role in the existing resettlement programmes, for example for the Syrian group. This includes regional coordination, advice and guidance and developing and sharing best practice. Whereas Migration Yorkshire is funded by government directly for those programmes, in this case it has been left to local authorities to decide whether to use their services. Migration Yorkshire has proposed to provide support to York on the same financial basis as the existing programmes, i.e. a 3.3% fee taken from each placement grant made by government to the council.
27. In return for this fee, Migration Yorkshire will work with government departments representing the region nationally and feeding the results of this back to the council. They will support the council as required and work with other key partners including health, police, VCS, etc. They will commission regional services where agreed such as mental health services and seek to flexibly deploy resources regionally within and outside of the programme where possible.
28. Additionally, they will provide a training programme across the region for key services and potentially for sponsors/hosts together with welcome information for Ukrainians. They will support complex cases and support the development of local and regional support services in response to the issue that emerge.
29. This expertise is likely to be very useful to York given the many unknowns we face as will the ability to buy into regional services and programmes that would not readily be available in York alone. It is therefore recommended that we take up Migration Yorkshire's offer.
30. The Refugee Council also provide support for refugees on the current resettlement schemes and have indicated their willingness to work with the Ukrainian group. If the numbers grow to such a level that exceeds the capacity of current council staff to support them effectively it is recommended that, at that stage, the Refugee Council be commissioned to provide additional capacity.

## **Options**

31. It is open to the Executive Member to agree the proposals / actions set out in this paper and/or to suggest additional or alternative ones.

## **Analysis**

32. York's response to the Ukraine refugee crisis is consistent with its role as a City of Sanctuary. It follows on from its active participation in the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme. It also follows on from the successful initiative taken between June 2020 and June 2021, when York supported the Home Office in their accommodation of asylum seekers at a temporarily repurposed hotel in York (as part of the Initial Accommodation programme). This was needed due to unprecedented pressures on the asylum accommodation system due to Covid. The report attached at Annex 1 provides an overview of the project together with lessons learned for the future.

## **The Family Visa Scheme**

33. It should also be noted that a small number of Ukrainians are arriving in York on the Family Visa route. Unfortunately, there is no funding available to councils or schools for new arrivals by this route. Furthermore, there are a number of issues about this scheme:
34. The Family Visa Scheme is silent on the issue of accommodation. It is likely that some families coming over will not be able to fit into the accommodation of the relative who has facilitated their visa. There is therefore potential for individuals / families to present to the council as homeless.
35. The council will support Ukrainians arriving on this scheme as they would any other York resident. City of Sanctuary will also provide general befriending and peer support and are encouraging and coordinating offers of accommodation for this group. Where whole properties are offered, the Council will offer to manage those properties on behalf of the owners. Rents must be offered at or below the Local Housing Allowance rate to make this workable.
36. Representations are being made to government by many agencies about the lack of funding for this scheme.



## Implications

37. **Financial:** All expenditure associated with the actions set out in this paper will be contained within the funding from government as set out in paragraph 8.

## Council Plan

38. This initiative can support many of the aims of the Council Plan and especially Safe Communities and culture for all.

## Risk Management

39. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks that have been identified in this report are those which could lead to the inability to meet business objectives and failure to meet stakeholders' expectations, which could in turn damage the Council's image and reputation. Measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the risk score has been assessed at "Medium". This means that the risk level is acceptable but that regular active monitoring of progress against delivery of the scheme will be required.

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<b>Wards Affected:</b>				<b>All</b> ✓
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## Annex:

Annex 1: Lessons Learnt Report - Hosting Asylum Seekers in a York hotel

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August 2021

## **Lessons Learnt Report - Hosting Asylum Seekers in a York hotel**

Between June 2020 and June 2021, York supported the Home Office (HO) in their accommodation of asylum seekers at a temporarily repurposed hotel in York (as part of the Initial Accommodation programme). This was needed due to unprecedented pressures on the asylum accommodation system due to Covid. This report provides an overview of the project and opportunities to improve where needed in future.

### **Overview**

1. The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent national lockdown lead to initial accommodation (IA) for asylum seekers quickly reaching maximum capacity nationally. The Home Office were unable to move the asylum seekers to dispersed accommodation due to the pause in the national housing market. As a result, hotels in cities across the country were asked to house asylum seekers until the housing market resumed and Mears could procure dispersal properties. In April 2020, City of York Council (CYC) were approached by the Home Office to use the Mercure Fairfield Manor Hotel in York. The hotel would host approx. 90 (at maximum capacity) asylum seeking adult males until further notice.
2. City of York Council worked collaboratively with a number of stakeholders including: Refugee Action York; York City of Sanctuary; York Learning; Nimbus Care; Migration Yorkshire; Migrant Help; North Yorkshire Police; Mears; and the Home Office. Feedback was received from all stakeholders in regards to the successes, challenges, and future learnings of the project.
3. Following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions on hotels on May 17<sup>th</sup> 2021 all remaining residents ('residents' refers to the asylum seeking males staying



at the hotel) were moved out of the hotel on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 and the contract between Mercure Hotel and Mears was terminated.

4. This report is split into two sections: Variables we could control; and variables we could not control. ('We' refers to the group of stakeholders listed in paragraph 2.) The two sections form an evaluation of the success or otherwise of the project and considers lessons that could be taken forward.

## **5. Variables we could not control**

### *a. Successes*

The quality of existing services in the city and their readiness to support the request was central to the success of the project. Services who had not previously dealt with large asylum seeker populations quickly put in place plans and support and rose to the challenge. Refugee Action York were the prime example of this, quickly rising to the unprecedented challenge of supporting over 150 asylum seekers during the course of the hotel.

York residents were generous with donated items such as mobile phones, clothes, and games to Refugee Action York (RAY) which was vital in ensuring the residents had a better quality of life. Without the support of our residents the hotel residents would not have been provided with spare clothes, entertainment, or in some cases, a means to communicate with their family and friends.

Focus Groups hosted by Mears were held at the hotel with CYC, RAY, North Yorkshire Police, and at least 3 residents in attendance. The focus groups allowed the residents to share their lived experience at the hotel and raise any issues they had. This led to improvements being made to the food, and further advice and assistance given on the asylum process.

Migration Yorkshire supported CYC and the wider team throughout the duration of the men's stay. They acknowledged that York is not a dispersal city and therefore has a limited knowledge and resource pool. Migration Yorkshire took



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the time to provide context to the asylum process and current situation which was invaluable.

During this time COVID-19 infection rates remained low amongst residents in the hotel. When a resident contracted the virus they were asked to isolate in their room for 14 days which helped minimise any further transmission of the virus to other residents. Meanwhile all other residents were monitored closely for symptoms.

### *b. Challenges*

In hindsight, the working relationship and communication between Mears and Mercure could have been improved upon. The hotel manager at Mercure was changed at a similar time to the management change within Mears. The timing of both of these management replacements caused subsequent issues in the communication between Mercure and Mears regarding the residents of the hotel. As both senior staff members were changed within a short timeframe relationship between both parties was not as seamless as anticipated. Both managers were new to the role and therefore had little first-hand context of the history within the hotel.

Mercure's new manager did not have the same keen interest in the project ('project' refers to the hotel being used as IA for asylum seekers) as their predecessor. Due to this they stopped attending the weekly multi-agency meeting which in turn made communication and the dispersal of key information between Mears and Mercure more difficult and less frequent. The contractual structure of the accommodation between the Home Office, Mears and the hotel made resolving matters more difficult to resolve.

The lack of timescale parameters for the project proved challenging for those involved and made it difficult for any long term planning to take place. This resulted in the team—having to take reactionary rather than precautionary measures due being unable to successfully create future plans. The voluntary sector, (VCS) in particular, would have benefited from knowing the true timescales of the project as it would have allowed RAY to apply for funding to employ extra support.



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Once early Covid restrictions were lifted, individuals began moving through the accommodation system, so there was flux in the people living there. The frequent impromptu movement of residents in and out of the hotel resulted in inconsistency for the VCS, York Learning, and health sector. These decisions regarding the residents were decided by the HO and Mears only received 24hrs notice before the residents were due to be dispersed. The short time frame and lack of information resulted in the VCS being unable to ensure adequate services were set up in the dispersal area.

Another area for potential improvement was the technology within the hotel. The Wi-Fi supplied at the hotel was weak and the signal was not strong enough to reach the individual rooms of residents. Mercure were slow to source an engineer to fix this issue. Mears could have actively pursued this issue and in doing so Mercure may have arranged a resolution quicker. It became apparent that the lack of internet connection was having a negative impact on the resident's mental wellbeing as a connection was crucial to allow them to learn and communicate with friends and family outside of the hotel.

Anti-migration protesters entered and filmed the hotel and residents of which shortly after their arrival. The initial security measures put in place were not adequate and were improved after the incident.

Residents have little formal activity provided for them and are unable to work due to their asylum status. This leads to boredom, frustration and low mood for people in the setting. Covid was restrictive in terms of opportunities to put events on at the hotel or have people volunteer outside of the premises but in future this should be encouraged where possible.

The logistical and bureaucratic framework of seeking asylum within the United Kingdom is complicated and often fraught with difficulty and frustration for many. The guidelines of this process are often unclear which meant all those involved in the project had to read between the lines to understand what was happening nationally and regionally. The system also meant that residents were left uncertain about their situation, causing them distress.



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Experience on regional and national calls during this period indicate that communication from central government will aim to minimise problems and this need to be taken into consideration when receiving updates.

*c. Learnings*

Below are recommendations to ensure a more successful project.

- If key staff are replaced ensure a separate meeting is held to update them on the context and history of the project
- Focus groups should be implemented with the user group from the beginning
- In future the council should do a greater examination of the existing infrastructure before agreeing the use, particularly internet coverage.
- The council should confirm that security arrangements are in place from the beginning of the use
- Ensure a good level of security is provided at the location
- Additional classes and volunteering opportunities would be welcome without Covid restrictions.

## **6. Variables we could control**

*a. Successes*

The speed at which the multi-agency team came together resulted in a quick start to the project. All sectors were ready and willing to share their knowledge with one another to ensure all were equipped for the task at hand. The direct input of portfolio holders in the project helped drive decisions, particularly in the early stages.

Weekly multi-agency meetings were implemented following the request from the Home Office. These were found to be helpful for all sectors to check-in and ask for support or advice when needed. The consistency of these meetings ensured stakeholders had frequent and continuous contact with each other.

York Learning (City of York Council's adult education service) set up weekly English (ESOL) classes for the residents which were very well received. These were later bolstered by support from York St John University. As well as skills



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the classes provided vital structure to the resident's days. One student wrote a letter of thanks saying "I have always been shy especially when speaking English but with your help I am more confident now".

Nimbus Care's service to the residents was excellent. Initial health checks were completed for all residents entering the hotel and ongoing care was provided continuously. Nimbus and York Learning worked collaboratively to ensure all residents staying at the hotel were aware of the Covid-19 vaccine and understood the benefit of being vaccinated and the potential risks. Upwards of 50 residents were administered their first vaccination whilst at the hotel.

All organisations involved were flexible with their time and roles despite the lack of timescale. Without the flexibility the project would not have ran as smoothly as it did and may have left gaps in resources and knowledge.

The relationship between the VCS and Mears' Resident Welfare Manager was good and enabled the VCS to operate efficiently and effectively.

CYC liaised with the local community to inform them of the resident's arrival and keep them up to date where necessary.

North Yorkshire Police made the decision to provide an introductory talk and have later drop in visits. This helped build confidence with the individuals who can be suspicious of authority due to experiences with police in other countries. The early interaction with the residents was beneficial as it provided an understanding of the difficulties the residents faced and what the residents could expect from interactions with the Police during their stay.

### *b. Challenges*

Communication between Mears/Hotel to the VCS was lacking at times, particularly in regards to entertainment donations. Mears confiscated a number of donated items but did not inform the VCS leading to confusion and complaints from the residents. Often the reasoning behind the confiscation were contradictory to other Mears actions which became frustrating.





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Some issues were slow to be resolved on site, particularly resolution of internet issues and access for VCS groups. These could have been resolved quicker had the council acted faster to escalate formerly with the Home Office and Mears. In future the council should play a stronger role in resolving issues, including using existing formal complaints procedures.

Nimbus Care initially rotated the assigned GP surgeries on a weekly basis but quickly learnt that this method was not serving the residents effectively.

The local parish council were not included in the initial consultation, which led to unnecessary frustration from the local community. This relationship was well repaired but this could have been avoided by including them initially.

A safeguarding issue with one of the residents was not escalated as quickly as the situation demanded, resulting in a delayed resolution and extended potential risk.

No expectations were set out at the beginning of the project in regards to the roles of the Home Office and Mears with regard to the asylum process.

### *c. Learnings*

Below are recommendations to ensure a more successful project.

- Have at least one representative from the host hotel at weekly multi-agency meetings, and a Home Office representative once a month
- Communicate with existing dispersal cities to learn from their processes/mistakes
- A nominated Migration Lead at CYC who has existing experience with similar projects
- Request NHS numbers for the residents when blood tests are arranged. A number of residents did not receive their NHS numbers in time because they had been dispersed.
- Upskill health staff on communicable diseases that are uncommon in the UK
- Rotate GP Surgeries on a monthly basis to share provision of care



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## **7. Conclusion**

Overall the temporary provision in York was a success and the city was highlighted for praise by the Home Office and Mears. The strength of York's existing services and VCS groups were central to this. These working relationships should be maintained and supported to assist with the remaining Syrian Refugee programme and the ACRS and ARAP schemes.