

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Date: 23 September 2013

Subject: Relocation of Government-employed Afghan staff

Report of: Heather Bolton, SEEC Director



Recommendations

SEEC Executive members are asked to:

- i) Note the request from the Home Office for local authorities to consider hosting relocated Afghan staff and their families
- ii) Note the offer of Government financial support for authorities who receive families
- iii) If interested in receiving families, members should ask SEEC staff to provide a copy of a Cabinet Office 'in confidence' briefing note, which outlines areas eligible for inclusion in the financial support package for authorities.

1. Background

- 1.1 In June 2013 Defence Secretary Philip Hammond announced a redundancy package that will be available to eligible locally-engaged Afghan staff working for the UK Government in Afghanistan. Options include training, severance payments or, in some cases, relocation to the UK.
- 1.2 The Cabinet Office is leading a task force to ensure suitable reception arrangements are in place for staff entitled to relocation. As part of this UK-wide programme, there will be a financial package to help local authorities who agree to receive Afghan families and support them while they settle in the UK.
- 1.3 The Cabinet Office has contacted SEEC (see letter as Annex 1) to ask for pledges from local authorities who are interested in hosting relocated staff. The Cabinet Office is also writing directly to all local authorities via the LGA.
- 1.4 Details of the financial package and numbers of staff involved are not yet finalised but an outline of initial expectations is available in an 'in confidence' briefing, available on request from SEEC staff. For those interested in detailed discussions we can provide contacts at the Home Office and in the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration.
- 1.5 The Cabinet Office is keen to open discussions with local authorities in time for an anticipated first wave of relocations in early 2014, with further waves into 2015.