

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 1 APRIL 2025

ANGUS NEW SCOTS REFUGEE INTEGRATION STRATEGY 2025-29

**REPORT BY AUDREY MICHIE, SERVICE LEADER, VIBRANT COMMUNITIES; AND
PETER MCDONNELL, SERVICE LEADER, CHILDREN, FAMILY AND JUSTICE**

1. ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report seeks the approval of the Angus New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy for the period 2025-2029 following a period of consultation with partners which will form the Council's policy in relation to resettlement delivery.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES

- 2.1 This report contributes to outcomes across the following plans:

The Angus Community Plan 2022-30:

- Provide the best start in life for children
- Improve physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Create more opportunities for people to live well and achieve their personal goals

The Council Plan 2023-2028:

Caring for our People

- Reduce inequalities in all our communities
- Provide the best start in life for children
- Create more opportunities for people to live well and achieve their personal goals
- Improve physical, mental health and wellbeing

Caring for our Place

- Enable inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe communities across Angus

3. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) notes the ongoing work being undertaken by the Resettlement and ESOL Vibrant Communities team and partners to support New Scots who are arriving and living in Angus; and
- (ii) agrees the Angus New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy 2025-29.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Angus Council have worked closely in partnership with the UK and Scottish Governments, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) and other local authorities to provide support to people fleeing the war in Ukraine since February 2021.
- 4.2 The Angus Ukraine Co-ordinating Group established multi-agency meetings, bringing together a range of stakeholders, including representatives from health, education, housing, social work, Police Scotland, and third-sector partners. This collaborative approach ensures coordinated support for people from Ukraine. Local communities in Angus have also played a vital role by providing assistance through support groups.

- 4.3 At the Policy and Resource Committee meeting on May 2, 2023 [Report \(117/23\)](#), members received an update on the establishment of a new Resettlement and ESOL team within the Vibrant Communities service. The coordinating group of partners remains active and continues to report to a Strategic Oversight group, led by the Service Leader (Resources) in Children, Families, and Justice.
- 4.4 The Scottish Government published a [New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy in 2024](#). The purpose of this is to coordinate the efforts of organisations and community groups across Scotland involved in working towards better outcomes for forced migrants.

5. CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 The Resettlement & ESOL team was fully established in January 2023 and is fully funded through the dedicated resettlement funds. The team have met and assessed:

- 300 guests from Ukraine;
- 68 families from Afghanistan; and a
- 4 asylum seekers.

Resettlement and ESOL support are also provided to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children in partnership with the Horizon Team within Children, Families and Justice.

- 5.2 The Resettlement and ESOL teams and Partners work to the following principles:

- Refugees and asylum seekers live in safe, welcoming, and cohesive communities and can build diverse relationships and connections.
- Refugees and asylum seekers understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and can exercise them to pursue full and independent lives.
- Refugees and asylum seekers can access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs.
- Work is aligned to policy and legislation which has an impact on refugees and asylum seekers and is informed by their rights, needs and aspirations.

- 5.3 Refugees and asylum seekers are offered a comprehensive support package upon arrival in the UK. The support package includes an initial, full resettlement assessment with each new arrival and, thereafter, support to ensure new Scots have access to safe, secure housing, health services, education, employment and training and, key to successful integration, opportunities to integrate from day one.

- 5.4 The ESOL team provides a range of English language support for speakers of other languages, including formal SQA-accredited classes up to Level 4 and informal community language sessions. In collaboration with Dundee and Angus College, additional support is available for learners at SQA Level 5 and above.

6. PROPOSALS

- 6.1 The Angus New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy (Appendix 2) aligns with national priorities and brings a local perspective on resettlement in Angus. The strategy reflects how we will work with families and individuals on their journey to full resettlement and integration. An operation plan has been developed to deliver the strategy, and all actions arising from the strategy will be reported through Pentanna and the Community Learning and Development plan.

- 6.2 The Resettlement and Integration Strategy will ensure a coordinated, effective, and sustainable approach to supporting refugees and displaced individuals. It will ensure:

- Work is coordinated through strong partnerships
- There is a smooth transition and stability for new arrivals
- Community Cohesion and Social Integration
- New Scots are supported with ESOL and employment opportunities

- Sustainable Long-Term Planning
- Alignment with National and Regional Policies
- Future demand is managed and coordinated with partners

6.3 Future Demand

There are several pathways for Afghans to come to the UK, these schemes are set to be integrated in the coming months. The new scheme will see a set allocation for each local authority, exact numbers for Angus are expected shortly.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme has been extended by 18 months until 2027 and although numbers have declined, new arrivals continue to be recorded both nationally and locally each month.

While Angus has not yet participated in other UK Resettlement Schemes (UKRS), demand for refugee support from other regions is growing. Monthly requests are received via CoSLA.

Beyond refugee resettlement, the team also supports asylum seekers. Under a new asylum dispersal matrix, Angus could receive up to 210 asylum seekers, depending on successful accommodation procurement by Mears. Initial support will be minimal, but once asylum decisions are made, demand will increase. The team will need to engage with all new arrivals to assess future plans and potential rehousing options, helping to prevent homelessness and destitution.

- 6.4 The Angus New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy provides a framework upon which new Scots living in and arriving in Angus receive the necessary support for successful resettlement and integration. The service is fully funded by tariff from the UK and Scottish Governments for the provision of this work in supporting UK Resettlement Schemes.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. All associated costs will be met from tariff funding for UK Resettlement Schemes, currently Scottish Government Homes for Ukraine and the UK Government ARAP and Asylum funding streams.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 There are no direct risk implications arising from the recommendations of this report

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached.

11. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND WELLBEING IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 11.1 A Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment has been carried out within the EIA.

12. CONSULTATION

- 12.1 All Resettlement and ESOL partners have been consulted on the Angus New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy (2025-2029). The strategy has also been signed off by the Strategic Oversight group for Resettlement and ESOL. Consultation has been undertaken with the Director of Finance, the Director of Legal,

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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List of Appendices:

Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 2: Angus New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy