

# RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION



## Decision taken by individual Cabinet member

(All sections must be completed (mark "N/A" as applicable))

### DECISION MAKER (Name and designation)

Councillor Gareth Williams, Leader of the Council

### DECISION AND THE REASON(S) FOR IT

The decision is to approve the Council's formal response to the Home Office consultation on *A Fairer Pathway to Settlement*, including completion of the survey questions provided in the consultation document.

The Council is responding as a public service provider and an employer. As a public service provider, to provide feedback on the implications of the proposed changes to statutory service delivery. For example, the Government are proposing to restrict access to benefits to only settled persons. This could increase demands on the Council to provide support and accommodation to meet its legal duty to prevent homelessness. As an employer, to provide feedback on the implications of the proposed changes to staff recruitment and retention. For example, the baseline timeframe for settlement is proposed to increase from 5 to 10 years. As an employer of affected staff, this may be difficult to plan for and more complex and expensive to manage. The Council did not make any broader comments on the Government's overall proposed policy changes on immigration and resettlement.

The Council's response reflects:

- The need to ensure immigration reforms do not create disproportionate burdens on local authorities, voluntary sector organisations, or vulnerable groups.
- Concerns about administrative complexity and safeguarding responsibilities arising from proposed earned settlement requirements.
- Support for exemptions for vulnerable groups (e.g., victims of domestic abuse, bereaved partners, children who grew up in the UK, and adults with long-term care needs).
- Recommendations to improve access to English language learning and ensure realistic pathways to integration.
- Recognition of potential impacts on workforce planning, recruitment, and housing services, particularly under future local government reorganisation.

This approach aligns with the Council's commitment to equality, inclusion, and proactive engagement with national policy changes.

### DATE DECISION TAKEN

11 February 2026

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

*(Those examined by officers and generated by consultation, etc)*

The Leader consulted with councillors, senior officers, and portfolio holders in making this decision.

An alternative option would be to not respond to the consultation. However, given the potential impact on local governance and service delivery, this was not considered appropriate.

Another alternative option was to provide a full response to the consultation. The Council chose not to do this because the consultation questions were not relevant to the Council's role as a public service provider or employer.

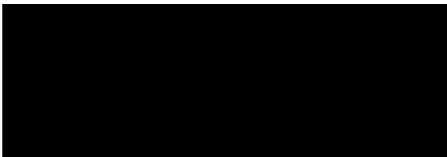
**ANY CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

*(conflict of interests of any executive member who is consulted by the officer which relates to the decision. A note of dispensation should be attached).*

N/A

**Signed**

(Decision maker)



**Designation: Leader of the Council**

## Fairer Pathway to Settlement: statement and accompanying consultation on earned settlement Survey Questions

### Background

1. Are you responding to this survey as an individual or as a representative of an organisation?

- Individual
- **Organisation**

2. [If organisation] Are you responding on behalf of an organisation based in the UK?

- **Yes**
- No

3. [If organisation] Which of the following best describes your type of organisation?

- Private sector
- Third sector / Voluntary
- **Public sector**
- Education provider
- Business representative organisation or trade union
- Think tank or research/policy organisation
- Other
- Don't know / prefer not to say

4. [If organisation] Does your organisation provide immigration advice or support services?

- **Yes**
- No
- Don't know / prefer not to say

5. [If organisation based in the UK] Has your organisation ever sponsored employees to work in the UK on a visa?

- **Yes – we currently sponsor employees**
- Yes – we have sponsored employees in the past
- No – we have never sponsored employees
- Don't know / prefer not to say

6. [If organisation based in the UK] Does your organisation intend to sponsor employees to work in the UK on a visa in the future?

- **Yes**
- No
- **Don't know / prefer not to say**

7. [If organisation based in the UK] How many people work for your organisation across the UK as a whole?

- Under 10
- 10-49
- **50-249**
- 250+
- Don't know / prefer not to say

8. [If organisation currently sponsors employees to work in the UK on a visa] How many employees are currently sponsored via a UK visa at your organisation?

- **Under 10**
- 10-49
- 50-249
- 250+

- Don't know / prefer not to say

**9. [If organisation] Which of the following best describes the industry sector your organisation operates in?**

- Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- Mining and quarrying
- Manufacturing
- Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply
- Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities
- Construction
- Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles
- Transportation and storage
- Accommodation and food service activities
- Information and Communication
- Financial and insurance activities
- Real estate activities
- Professional, scientific and technical activities
- Administrative and support service activities
- **Public administration and defence; compulsory social security**
- Education
- Human health and social work activities
- Arts, entertainment and recreation
- Other
- Don't know / prefer not to say

**10. [If organisation based in the UK] In which part of the UK is your organisation mainly based?**

- East of England
- East Midlands
- London or Greater London
- North East
- North West
- **South East (excluding London)**
- South West
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire and the Humber
- Scotland
- Wales
- Northern Ireland
- Other
- Don't know / prefer not to say

**11. [If individual] What is your current immigration or citizenship status in the UK?**

- ~~I am a British citizen~~
- ~~I have settled status (e.g. Indefinite Leave to Remain or EU settled status)~~
- ~~I currently hold a UK visa (e.g. work, study, family, or other route)~~
- ~~I am currently applying for UK immigration status or awaiting a decision~~
- ~~I have refugee status or humanitarian protection in the UK~~
- ~~I am an asylum seeker in the UK~~
- ~~None of the above~~

**12. [If individual] What is your age?**

- ~~Under 18~~

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75+
- Prefer not to say

**13. [If individual] What is your sex?**

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

**14. [If individual] Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

**15. [If individual] How would you describe your ethnicity?**

- White – English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British
- White – Irish
- White – Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- White – Roma
- White – Any other White background
- Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups – White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups – White and Black African
- Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups – White and Asian
- Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups – Any other Mixed or Multiple backgrounds
- Asian or Asian British – Indian
- Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British – Chinese
- Asian or Asian British – Any other Asian background
- Black, Black British, Caribbean or African – Caribbean
- Black, Black British, Caribbean or African – African background
- Black, Black British, Caribbean or African – Any other Black, Black British or Caribbean background
- Other ethnic group – Arab
- Other ethnic group – Any other ethnic group (please specify)

These options reflect the [agreed list of ethnic groups](#) to use when asking for someone's ethnicity.

**16. [If individual] Where in the UK do you currently live?**

- East of England
- East Midlands
- London or Greater London
- North East
- North West
- South East (excluding London)
- South West
- West Midlands

- ~~Yorkshire and the Humber~~
- ~~Scotland~~
- ~~Wales~~
- ~~Northern Ireland~~
- ~~Other~~
- ~~Don't know / prefer not to say~~

**17. [If individual] which of the following best describes your current or most recent occupation?**

- ~~A – Higher managerial, administrative, or professional (e.g. company director, senior official)~~
- ~~B – Intermediate managerial, administrative, or professional (e.g. teacher, nurse, police officer)~~
- ~~C1 – Supervisory, clerical, and junior managerial (e.g. office supervisor, junior manager)~~
- ~~C2 – Skilled manual workers (e.g. electrician, plumber, mechanic)~~
- ~~D – Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers (e.g. factory worker, cleaner)~~
- ~~E – Casual workers, pensioners, unemployed (e.g. unemployed, retired, student)~~
- ~~Don't know / prefer not to say~~

**Earned Settlement**

In this section, we invite your views on the proposed Earned Settlement framework, including how clearly the changes are explained. Before continuing, please take a moment to review the proposed reforms as outlined in this Paper.

‘Earned settlement’ is a principle that recognises the value of long-term contribution to the UK. Rather than granting settlement automatically after a fixed period, this approach requires individuals to demonstrate sustained commitment (through work, community involvement, or other meaningful contributions) before being granted permanent status.

The proposed framework sets a starting point of 10 years before settlement can be obtained. This duration may be reduced based on positive indicators (e.g. contributing to the Exchequer by earning a certain salary) or extended based on negative indicators (e.g. reliance on public funds).

**1. Overall, how clear do you find the proposed changes to the settlement framework?**

- Very clear
- Somewhat clear
- Neither clear nor unclear
- **Somewhat unclear**
- Very unclear
- Don't know / prefer not to say

**2. [If unclear] Which aspects of the proposed changes to settlement are not clear?**

- The concept of earned settlement
- The overall purpose
- Which groups may be eligible for exemptions from the 10-year qualifying period
- How reductions to the qualifying period will be applied
- How extensions to the qualifying period will be applied
- How reductions and/or extensions will be applied if applicants meet multiple criteria
- How the proposed changes will apply to dependants and children
- **Other (please specify): There needs to be a clear definition of what constitutes a ‘contribution’ and how it will be evidenced. The roles and responsibilities for carrying out eligibility checks should be clearly assigned between local authorities and voluntary and community sector organisations to avoid confusion. In addition, the status of dependent**

children under these proposals must be clarified. The financial payments required from employers and employees to renew sponsorship/visas are not clear.

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**3. Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes to the settlement framework?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

**Character**

This question focuses on 'Character', the first of the four core pillars designed to ensure that applicants make a meaningful contribution to UK society and meet clear, measurable standards. To be eligible for settlement, applicants will need to meet the suitability requirements set out in the existing Immigration Rules ([Part Suitability](#)).

This reformed system will, as now, provide for the refusal of applications where core requirements relating to their character and conduct (for example, having a criminal conviction, non-compliance with immigration requirements and considerations pertaining to the public good). It will be mandatory to meet such requirements and there will be no ability to trade with other considerations to determine the qualifying period.

**1. Do you have any comments on how 'Character' should be considered in relation to settlement? (200 words)**

- **Blank**

**Integration**

This section focuses on 'Integration'. To be eligible for settlement applicants will need to demonstrate meaningful engagement with British society. This includes passing a Life in the UK test and speaking English at an upper intermediate level (B2 standard under the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

Under the proposed reforms, applicants who can demonstrate advanced English language ability (at C1 standard) will be able to reduce their route to settlement by one year. C1 level under the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages means the user is proficient and able to perform complex tasks related to social, academic, and professional situations.

**1. What do you think about a 1-year reduction for applications who can demonstrate advanced English language ability (at C1 standard)?**

- The reduction doesn't go far enough (it should be longer than 1 year)
- **The reduction is about right**
- The reduction goes too far (it should be shorter than 1 year)
- There should be no reduction for these applicants
- Don't know / prefer not to say

**2. How do you think integration should be assessed? (please select all that apply)**

- Through a formal test (such a revised Life in the UK Test)
- Through gathered ongoing evidence (such as participation in certified English- Language education or employment/volunteering evidence)
- Through completing a cultural orientation course once arrived in the UK
- Through character references from public services professional and British Nationals

- Through evidence of learning and participation within the wider community (including testimonies from relevant organisations/groups)
- **In another way (please specify):** Integration should be assessed in a more flexible and holistic way that reflects ongoing participation in community life, learning and engagement. Formal tests can create barriers, particularly for lower-paid workers, carers, or those with health conditions. A broader, more supportive approach that recognises different forms of contribution and involvement would be more appropriate.
- **Don't know / prefer not to say**

**3. Do you have any further comments on how 'Integration' should be considered in relation to settlement?** **Access to English language learning should be improved, and pathways to achieving B2 level should be realistic to avoid disadvantaging lower-paid workers and individuals with health conditions or caring responsibilities. Evidence of integration should be straightforward and should not place an excessive administrative burden on local voluntary and community sector organisations. Standardised, light-touch templates for community testimonies and acceptance of employer or education records would help streamline the process. When setting expectations, it is important to consider regional disparities in language provision and transport costs, particularly in the South East. Integration should not rely solely on formal tests; ongoing participation in employment, education, and community activities should also be recognised.**

### Contribution

This section focuses on 'Contribution'. This reinforces the principle that settlement should be earned through active participation in the economy and wider society. To be eligible for settlement applicants must:

- Have contributed to the Exchequer by having annual earnings above £12,570 for a minimum of 3 to 5 years (subject to this consultation), in line with the current thresholds for paying income tax and National Insurance Contributions (NICs), or an alternative amount of income. Please note, however, that these income-related thresholds would not track future changes to the tax system.
- Have no outstanding litigation, NHS, tax or other government debt.

**1. Do you think the following groups should be exempt from the requirement to have earned above £12,750 for at least 3 to 5 years?**

	Yes	No	Don't know / prefer not to say
<b>Those on maternity leave or long-term illness/disability</b>			x
<b>Those in certain occupations with different pay arrangements (e.g. Ministers of Religion)</b>			x

**2. Are there any other groups that you think should be exempt from the requirement to have earned above £12,750 for at least 3 to 5 years?**

- **Don't know / prefer not to say**

**3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that migrants who have worked in an occupation below RQF level 6 should have their standard qualifying period for settlement set at 15 years?**

Occupations skilled to RQF level 6 are those which require a qualification equivalent to degree level or higher. You can read more about what kind of qualifications this includes [here](#).

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

**4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that applicants who earn a taxable income above £50,270 should be eligible for a reduction in their time to settlement?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree - they will be paying tax and they are skilled and valuable. We as an employer could be affected as well.
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

Under the proposed reforms, applicants who earn a taxable income above a certain threshold for 3 years prior to applying for settlement may qualify for settlement sooner.

**5. What do you think about the proposed reductions for applicants based on their annual taxable income?**

	The reduction doesn't go far enough (it should be longer)	The reduction is about right	The reduction goes too far (it should be shorter)	There should be no reduction for these applicants	Don't know / prefer not to say
7-year reduction for applicants who earn a taxable income above £125,140					x
5-year reduction for applicants who earn a taxable income above £50,270					x

**6. Do you think those employed in a public service occupation (i.e. health and education occupations where going rates are based on national pay scales) should be eligible for a reduction in their qualifying period to settlement?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know / prefer not to say

Under the proposed reforms, applicants who claim public funds (e.g. benefits and housing assistance) would face a penalty depending on the length of time they claimed public funds during their route to settlement.

The Home Office recognises that some applicants (such as those from vulnerable groups) may have extenuating circumstances to claim public funds. Later questions will explore whether specific groups should be exempt from the proposed reforms.

### 7. What do you think about the proposed penalties for applicants claiming public funds?

Ensuring that the UK can remain compliant with its international obligations, these penalties would exclude migrants covered by Trade Continuity Agreements and Social Security Coordination Agreements.

	The penalty doesn't go far enough (it should be longer)	The penalty is about right	The penalty goes too far (it should be shorter)	There should be no penalty for these applicants	Don't know / prefer not to say
5-year penalty for applicants who claim public funds for less than 12 months during their route to settlement					x
10-year penalty for applicants who claim public funds for more than 12 months during their route to settlement					x

### 8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that once someone has been granted settlement in the UK they should be eligible to claim public funds (e.g. benefits and housing assistance)?

Ensuring that the UK can remain compliant with its international obligations, any change would need to take account of migrants covered by Trade Continuity Agreements, Social Security Coordination Agreements and other international obligations.

- Strongly agree
- **Agree - HM should accelerate integration**
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

The Home Office recognises the vital role that volunteers play in delivering positive change to their communities, the environment and the lives of others. Volunteers, including those who are migrants, are a valued part of British life and their contributions enrich communities across the country. The Home Office is considering whether giving back to the local community, for example, through volunteering, should be recognised as a form of contribution towards earned settlement.

**9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that giving back to the local community (e.g. by volunteering) should be considered as a contribution that can reduce the length of time required to qualify for settlement?**

- Strongly agree
- **Agree**
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

**10. [If organisation] Does your organisation currently accept or manage volunteers?**

- Yes
- **No**
- Don't know / prefer not to say

~~**11. [If organisation with volunteers] How easy or difficult do you think it would be for applicants to provide evidence of giving back to the community?**~~

- ~~• Very easy~~
- ~~• Somewhat easy~~
- ~~• Neither easy nor difficult~~
- ~~• Somewhat difficult~~
- ~~• Very difficult~~
- ~~• Don't know / prefer not to say~~

~~**12. [If organisation with volunteers] Considering any potential benefits or challenges, what would be the overall impact of recognising giving back to the community as a contribution towards settlement for your organisation? Would this have...**~~

- ~~• A very positive impact~~
- ~~• A somewhat positive impact~~
- ~~• No impact~~
- ~~• A somewhat negative impact~~
- ~~• A very negative impact~~

**13. Do you have any further comments on how 'Contributions' should be considered in relation to settlement, including any potential benefits or challenges of recognising giving back to the community as a contribution towards settlement? 200 words**

**Clear guidance is needed on what qualifies as volunteering for the purpose of contributing towards settlement. This should include specific criteria such as the number of hours, weeks, or months required. Without clear parameters, the system could be open to abuse and difficult to evidence, creating challenges for both applicants and organisations responsible for verification.**

## Residence

This section focuses on 'Residence'. This pillar aims to recognise lawful, continuous residence in the UK. In order to meet the qualifying period for settlement, applicants will need to have spent the required time in the UK on a route, or routes, that leads to settlement as set out in the existing [Immigration Rules](#).

Under the proposed reforms, a person's pathway to settlement will also depend on their history of compliance with immigration laws. Applicants who arrived in the UK illegally (e.g. via a small boat), arrived in the UK on a visit visa, or who have overstayed their visa for 6 months or more, will have additional time added to their standard qualifying period for settlement, or prevented from settling in the UK altogether.

### 1. Which of the following penalties do you think should be applied to each of the following applicants?

	A penalty of 20 years	A penalty of 10 years	A penalty of 5 years	There should be no penalty for these applicants	Don't know / prefer not to say
Applicants who arrived in the UK illegally					x
Applicants who initially entered the UK on a temporary visit visa (typically this visa permits stays of up to 6 months for tourism, visiting family or friends or short- term business activities)					x
Applicants who have overstayed their original visa by 6 months or more					x

### 2. Do you have any further comments on how 'Residence' should be considered in relation to settlement? 200 words.

Responsibility for carrying out eligibility checks should be clearly defined to avoid confusion and duplication of effort. The proposed changes must take into account the additional safeguarding responsibilities that local authorities may face, as well as the potential administrative burden on voluntary and community sector organisations. There is a significant risk of homelessness and crime if residence penalties or adjustments are applied without appropriate safeguards. Furthermore, health and disability needs should be fully considered, including the challenges refugees and asylum seekers face in accessing healthcare services.

## Eligibility and Equalities

This section focuses on whether specific groups (including potentially vulnerable groups) should be exempt from, or receive reductions to, the proposed earned settlement reforms.

### 1. ~~Where the standard qualifying period is proposed to increase from 5 to 10 years, which option for you think should apply to each of the following visa holder groups?~~

The government remains steadfast in its support for members of the Hong Kong community in the UK and is fully committed to the BN(O) route, which will continue to welcome Hong Kongers. We fully recognise the significant contribution that Hong Kongers have already made to the UK, and the role they will continue to play in the years ahead. That is why those on the BN(O) visa route will continue to be able to settle in the UK after living here for five years.

We want to continue to attract the brightest and best exceptional talent that attracts investment, creates jobs, accelerates productivity and promotes growth through our targeted immigration routes: Global Talent for the most talented leaders and potential leaders and Innovator Founder for the most talented entrepreneurs.

	<b>Reduction (of 5 or 7 years from the standard qualifying period of 10 years)</b>	<b>Apply full change (standard qualifying period of 10 years)</b>	<b>Don't know / prefer not to say</b>
<b>Applicants who currently require 3 years continuous residence under the Global Talent route</b>			
<b>Applicants who currently require 5 continuous years residence under the Global Talent route</b>			
<b>Applicants who currently require 3 continuous years residence under the Innovator Founder route</b>			
<b>Applicants on humanitarian visa routes (e.g. Syrian, Afghan)</b>			

### 2. ~~To what extent do you agree or disagree that dependants of migrants who hold Global Talent or Innovator Founder visa status should retain their current 5 year path to settlement?~~

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

### 3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that there should not be transitional arrangements for those already on a pathway to settlement?

Transitional arrangements refer to temporary measures which are designed to ease the impact of the new rules for those already in the UK and on an existing pathway to settlement.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- **Disagree – We are concerned about the lack of transitional protections for individuals already part-way through their settlement route. Applying new requirements retrospectively would be unfair and could penalise individuals who have made long-term decisions in good faith under the existing framework. In addition, as an employer, we have paid the 5-year Immigration Skills Charge (ISC) of £5,000 upfront at the beginning of the sponsorship arrangement. If this is going to increase to 10 years, this would add financial burdens upon us; it is also not clear what employers would be expected to do at the end of the current 5 years period. The Home Office should consider waiving the ISC to enable employers to sponsor for prolonged periods.**
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

The current immigration system includes provisions that protect the most vulnerable in society by allowing them to settle in the UK.

For example, a person on the family route whose relationship ends because they are a victim of domestic abuse can settle immediately. Similarly, a person on the family route whose partner dies can also settle immediately.

There are special arrangements for children and young adults who have grown up in the UK without an immigration status, allowing them to settle 5 years after regularising their status. Please note references to children and young adults in this section does not mean children in care or care leavers, for which separate targeted will take in place in due course.

Finally, adults with long-term care needs can join a close relative in the UK and settle where the care they require is not available or affordable in their home country.

**4. Do you think the following vulnerable groups should retain their current arrangements and be exempt from the proposed settlement changes?**

	Yes	No	Don't know / prefer not to say
<b>Victims of domestic violence and abuse</b>	X		
<b>Bereaved partners</b>	X		
<b>Children and young adults who grew up in the UK without immigration status</b>	X		
<b>Adults with long-term care needs</b>	X		

**5. Are there any other vulnerable groups that you think should be considered as part of this consultation? (List up to five)**

- **Individuals with health and disability needs, including those experiencing mental and physical health issues.**
- **People who have limited access to healthcare services.**

- **Members of the Commonwealth Armed Forces and Gurkhas, where clarification on their inclusion is required.**

The Armed Forces Covenant is a national commitment to ensure that those who serve or have served in HM Armed Forces are not disadvantaged because of their service.

Individuals who have completed the minimum term of service (4 years), or who were medically discharged from service, can apply for settlement immediately upon leaving the Armed Forces. This provision also extends to their immediate family members, including partners and children. The government is committed to at least maintaining the current time periods to settlement for HM Armed Forces and their immediate family members.

**6. Do you think the following Armed Forces groups should retain their current time period to settlement or should further reductions be available to this group?**

	<b>Retain current arrangements</b>	<b>Further reductions should be applied</b>	<b>Don't know / prefer not to say</b>
<b>Members of HM Armed Forces</b>	x		
<b>Immediate family members of HM Armed Forces</b>	x		

Currently, most dependant partners of migrants can settle at the same time as the main applicant without meeting any additional conditions. Dependant partners of economic migrants who benefit from accelerated settlement do not themselves benefit from a reduced settlement period. Under the proposed reforms, dependant partners will have their own qualifying period based on their individual circumstances.

For children, it is recognised that they cannot meet certain requirements under the earned settlement proposals, such as National Insurance Contributions (NICs). The Home Office intends to keep a window for those admitted as dependants under 18 to settle at the same time as their parents, while considering an age cut-off after which they would need to follow their own route to qualify for settlement.

**7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that dependant partners of migrants should earn settlement in their own right?**

- Strongly agree
- **Agree**
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

- Don't know / prefer not to say

**8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that dependant children of migrants should earn settlement in their own right? (with employment-related requirements waived if they were admitted as a dependant under 18)**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- **Don't know / prefer not to say – It is not mandatory to answer this question, but treating everyone equally seems appropriate. If children on work visas are required to demonstrate contributions, it would be reasonable for children of refugees to do the same.**

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**9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that resettled refugees should have a 10-year route to settlement?**

Resettled refugees are those who have been granted protection and moved to the UK through official resettlement programmes.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- **Don't know / prefer not to say - It is not mandatory to answer this question, but treating everyone equally seems appropriate. However, it is important to consider that after the first five years, the entire family may need to extend their leave annually, which could result in significant costs amounting to thousands of pounds.**

**10. [If organisation providing immigration advice or support services] As an organisation which provides immigration advice or support services, are there any migrant groups in particular that you think will face barriers in demonstrating their eligibility or meeting new requirements for settlement?**

- **Groups employed in lower-paid jobs.**
- **Groups consisting of individuals with health and disability needs.**
- **Groups experiencing language barriers.**
- **Some women and older people**
- **Groups of homeless individuals, specifically rough sleepers.**
- **Groups who have been trafficked. - not enough space (only 5 allowed)**
- **Groups at risk of domestic abuse – not enough space (only 5 allowed)**

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**11. [If organisation providing immigration advice or support services] What are the main barriers that you think this group / these groups will face? (please select all that apply)**

- **Lack of documentation**
- **Complexity of requirements**
- **Language barriers**
- **Financial barriers**
- **Health-related barriers**

- Limited access to advice/support
- Other (please specify)- cultural barriers and limited knowledge or access to information held by other services, such as the Home Office, which is essential for providing effective support.

- 

**12. Do you have any further comments on how specific should be considered in relation to settlement? We particularly welcome views on how the proposed changes could affect children in the UK. 200 words.**

- There are outstanding questions regarding what will happen to children and other groups entering the UK as dependants. Access to English language learning remains a significant challenge, and the proposed B2 requirement is particularly high. The cost of housing may require some migrants to claim Universal Credit even if they earn above £12,000, meaning many may struggle to manage economically without support. The proposed changes could lead to additional safeguarding responsibilities and increased burdens on the voluntary sector, and there is currently no clarity on who will be responsible for carrying out eligibility checks. If access to support is restricted, there is a heightened risk of homelessness and crime. Health and disability needs, including mental health, must also be considered due to the high prevalence of these issues and the limited access to healthcare among affected groups.
- We are concerned about the lack of transitional protections for individuals already part-way through their settlement route. Applying new requirements retrospectively would be unfair and could penalise individuals who have made long-term decisions in good faith under the existing framework.

### Impact on organisations

This section focuses on how the proposed earned settlement reforms may impact your organisation.

**1. [If organisation] To what extent, if at all, do you think the proposed reforms will impact your organisation in the following ways?**

	Very positive impact	Somewhat positive impact	No impact	Somewhat negative impact	Very negative impact	Not applicable	Don't know / prefer not to say
Ability to attract suitable candidates				X			
Ability to retain existing migrant workers					X		
Workforce planning				X			
Administrative burden				X			

**2. [If organisation with intention to sponsor in future] To what extent, if at all, do you think the proposed reforms will affect your organisation's plans to sponsor employees to work in the UK on a visa in the future?**

- Much more likely to sponsor
- Slightly more likely to sponsor
- No change
- Slightly less likely to sponsor
- **Much less likely to sponsor**
- Don't know / prefer not to say

**3. ~~[If education provider organisation with intention to sponsor in future] To what extent, if at all, do you think the proposed reforms will affect your organisation's plans to sponsor students to study in the UK on a visa in the future?~~**

- ~~Much more likely to sponsor~~
- ~~Slightly more likely to sponsor~~
- ~~No change~~
- ~~Slightly less likely to sponsor~~
- ~~Much less likely to sponsor~~
- ~~Don't know / prefer not to say~~

**4. [If organisation with intention to sponsor in future] To what extent, if at all, do you think the proposed reforms will affect your organisation's plans to sponsor refugees and displaced people to work in the UK on a visa in the future? (e.g. such as visa a community sponsorship scheme)**

- Much more likely to sponsor
- Slightly more likely to sponsor
- No change
- Slightly less likely to sponsor
- Much less likely to sponsor
- **Not applicable**
- Don't know / prefer not to say

**5. [If organisation] Please provide any evidence you may have on whether the proposed changes might influence visa applicants' or visa holders' decisions to come to or remain in the UK.**

*No Evidence.*

**6. [If organisation] Do you have any further comments on the potential impacts on your organisation in relation to the proposed changes to settlement?**

**Administrative burden:** HR teams will face increased compliance checks, documentation, and ongoing monitoring, placing an additional strain on resources.

**Workforce planning challenges:** Extended settlement timelines may affect retention strategies and succession planning, particularly for hard-to-fill roles.

**Equity concerns:** Higher income thresholds and stricter integration requirements could disproportionately impact lower-paid roles, undermining diversity and inclusion efforts.

**Reputational impact:** Perceived barriers to settlement may make local government less attractive compared to other sectors with simpler pathways.

**Reduction in eligible households able to access housing support services.** Whilst this reduces the burden in our current two tier government set up, in a post LGR world where we are a unitary council, the burden will remain with the council, because households who are not eligible but need housing support, are often referred to social care. And the responsibility then shifts, and burdens vary, especially if the household includes children.