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The Rt Hon Anna Turley MP
Minister of State for Border Security and Asylum
Home Office
By Email

Dear Anna,

I am writing further to the debate during the Immigration and Asylum Bill Committee on 20 October in relation to Part 3 of the Bill and the proposed new Core Protection model. I appreciated the extra information you were able to provide regarding the model, in particular, that the burden of proof will be on the Home Office to demonstrate that an individual is no longer in need of protection.

I have some further questions about that process, especially in light of the further information contained in the Government's response to the Earned Settlement consultation, which I hope you can provide further answers to.

During the debate, you said that: "reviews will be targeted based on objective country information and any new information that comes to light," and that the: "approach to reviewing status will be efficient and targeted." That has also been a key part of the Home Office's response to concerns about the impact the multiple reviews will have on the Department's resources.

However, all refugees who remain on Core Protection will have to apply to have their leave extended and that application will have to be processed by someone. While in some circumstances those safe return reviews can be relatively straightforward – for example where a refugee has fled a war such as that in Sudan – it is not clear that this will be the case where protection has been granted on a much more individual basis.

The decision to now apply the changes to those who applied for asylum before 2 March 2026 will only add to the pressure on the Home Office. The Refugee Council estimates it will mean over 200,000 refugees who have already been recognised will now have to apply for their leave to be extended every 30 months for several years.

Given that this policy has been in force for over six months, and that a significant policy change has now been made, what estimate has the Home Office made how many reviews will need to be conducted each year, and what proportion of those would be expected to be straightforward?

I am also concerned about how quickly the Home Office will be able to process reviews. Under the changes to the Immigration Rules made in March 2026, people will only be able to apply to have their leave extended within the last 28 days before that leave expires. The Home Office will then need to process that application. If this isn't all completed within the

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28 days, this will leave the refugee in limbo, potentially impacting employment contracts, rental agreements and other arrangements.

The current situation being experienced by Syrian refugees, who have faced two years of delays in applying for ILR since the fall of the Assad regime, highlights both the complexities of safe return reviews and the impact they can have on individuals.

Will there be clear timelines in place for the Home Office to process applications for leave to be extended, including safe return reviews?

You will also be aware that, earlier this year, the Department made the welcome and sensible step of allowing Ukrainians to apply to have their leave extended, through the Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme, within the last 90 days of their current leave. That has allowed applicants to have made assurance about their future in the UK and give the Home Office more time to process the applications before the existing leave expires.

Has the Home Office considered allowing refugees with Core Protection to apply for their leave to be extended within 90 days of their leave expiring, rather than 28 days?

The debate also touched on the new protection work and study route. This, according to reports, will give refugees access to more entitlements and allow them to 'earn down' their route to settlement. It is disappointing that the details of this route aren't available yet, particularly as the Home Office has already started implementing the Core Protection model. Following the response to the Earned Settlement Consultation, this will also impact those who applied for asylum prior to 2 March 2026, including those already with refugee status.

When will those refugees who had previously been granted leave for five years and those now receiving 30 months of leave be told about the eligibility requirements for the protection work and study route, and will they be able to apply to switch onto it before their current, or initial, period of leave expires?

It was also welcome that those on the protection work and study route won't be subject to safe return reviews when their status is being extended.

Will refugees on the protection work and study route be given five years leave to remain, to give them extra stability, rather than continued grants of 30 months?

Overall, the piecemeal approach to the implement of Core Protection is disappointing as it is leaving many refugees in a state of great uncertainty. This has been exacerbated by the decision to now apply Core Protection to those who applied for refugee status prior to 2 March 2026. Until 2 November, those refugees believed they were on a five-year route to settlement, but now face that being extended by a further 25-years.

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What information will be provided to those refugees who already have status about their settlement pathway?

Lastly, there is a great deal of evidence regarding the barriers that refugees face when seeking employment or opportunities to study, including the shortage of ESOL and employment support. Charities supporting refugees have told me time and again that the problem with these issues that are vital to successful integration is not a lack of incentives, but it is the lack of support.

Alongside the work being done by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on the social cohesion strategy, will the Home Office be working with local authorities and the voluntary sector to increase the levels of integration support available to refugees?

This would support the Government's goal of having people transition from Core Protection onto the work and study protection route.

I look forward to your responses to these questions.

Yours sincerely,



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