

Decision Maker: **EXECUTIVE**
For pre-decision scrutiny by the Executive, Resources and Contracts
Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 29th June 2022

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Key

Title: **HOMES FOR UKRAINE**

Contact Officer: Tracey Wilson, Head of Compliance & Strategy
Tel: 020 8313 4515 E-mail: Tracey.Wilson@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Sara Bowrey, Director, Housing, Planning & Regeneration

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for decision/report and options

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Homes for Ukraine response by the Council and approach going forward.
- 1.2 An update on the Homes for Ukraine scheme will be provided to Executive quarterly, this is report is the first of the updates.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The Executive, Resources and Contracts Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the content of this report which details the work undertaken to date to support households arriving in Bromley under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

The Executive is requested to:

- 2.2 Review and note the contents of this report in relation to the current activities under the Homes for Ukraine scheme

- 2.3 Approve the use of £1,171k funds to manage staffing and associated expenses with the ability to step up or reduce the number of staff according to the level of casework required.
- 2.4 Agree that any other future changes in allocation or expenditure of funding are delegated to the Director of Housing, Planning & Regeneration and the Director of Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: Summary of Impact: The support will assist families with community integration, education, and employment opportunities
-

Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
 2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority:
 - (1) For children and young people to grow up, thrive and have the best life chances in families who flourish and are happy to call Bromley home.
 - (2) For adults and older people to enjoy fulfilled and successful lives in Bromley, ageing well, retaining independence and making choices.
 - (3) For people to make their homes in Bromley and for business, enterprise and the third sector to prosper.
 - (5) To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated Cost: £1,171k
 2. Ongoing costs: N/A
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Operational Housing
 4. Total current budget for this head: £net zero
 5. Source of funding: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities/DfE
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 11.8 FTE
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: 0
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory
 2. Call-in: Applicable
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not applicable
-

Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: N/A
-

Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: N/A
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected): 822
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Homes for Ukraine Scheme was launched on 14 March 22 by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities.
- 3.2 The number of people who can access this scheme is uncapped and is dependent on the capacity of the sponsors who come forward.
- 3.3 Guests will be able to live and work in the UK for up to 3 years and access benefits, healthcare, employment, and other support.
- 3.4 There is also the Ukraine Family Scheme, the main differences between the two schemes are that the households entering the UK on a Ukraine Family scheme visa will not be entitled to the £200 interim payment and the sponsor household (family member) will not be able to access the £350 monthly 'thank you' payment.
- 3.5 Bromley has a reasonable-sized Ukrainian Community already, with approximately 560 households residing in Bromley. It is assumed that many of these households will have housed family members from Ukraine, which may not be sustainable in the longer term due to overcrowding, leading to homelessness approaches to the Council.

Summary of Business Case

- 3.5 A dedicated team is in place to coordinate the work ensuring all statutory requirements are fulfilled to hosts and sponsors. There is a strong focus on utilising volunteers wherever possible.
- 3.6 In order to meet the funding conditions a number of checks are required to be undertaken and inputted into Foundry the Government Portal for accessing Homes for Ukraine cases, these checks are;
1. Residential Address Exists
 2. Accommodation Visited and Suitable
 3. DBS initiated
 4. Safeguarding Checks Completed
 5. Group Arrived in Accommodation

The Local Authority is expected to carry out Home Visits to every sponsor address prior to arrival of the Guest household (where practicable) to ensure it is suitable to accommodate the guest household. The accommodation should;

- be kept clean and in a reasonable state;
- have adequate kitchen and bathroom space;
- have access to drinking water;
- have a working smoke detector on each floor of the property and other fire safety precautions suitable for the building e.g. fire doors or escape routes as appropriate
- have a working carbon monoxide detector in any room containing a solid fuel burning appliance (e.g. a coal fire, wood burning stove);
- have sufficient heating to keep the property at a comfortable temperature;
- have safe gas appliances and fittings and flues; you should consider whether a Gas Safety check is needed;
- have safe and working electrics, which a qualified electrician can help with if you are unsure;
- be reasonably free from damp or mould;
- have doors and windows at entry level that lock properly;
- be easy and safe to move around in, without excessively steep staircases that may cause harm.

3.7 A basic DBS (disclosure and barring service) check must be requested for every sponsor household member over the age of 16 and if the guest household contains a child or a vulnerable adult, then an enhanced DBS check should be requested. In addition to the above Welfare Checks, checks are carried out with Social Care colleagues to ensure that sponsor households are not vulnerable, this also includes checking with Early Intervention.

3.8 Sponsors are required to:

- Meet the eligibility and suitability requirements to be approved as a sponsor.
- Provide suitable accommodation for a minimum of 6 months. Accommodation needs to be free from serious health and safety hazards ensuring the property is safe for guests and in a suitable condition
- Check their mortgage lenders website for further guidance.
- Notify their insurers that they will be hosting guests from Ukraine, prior to their arrival.
- Homeowners in the UK who want to temporarily house people from Ukraine who have been displaced from the conflict in Ukraine as non-paying guests with them in their primary residence do not need to inform their insurer and their cover will remain the same. Sponsors should be aware of any existing terms that might apply to non-paying guests within their insurance policy and contact their insurer if they wish to discuss their cover or other changes in circumstances.
- Stay in regular contact with their guests prior to their arrival to help organise and coordinate their arrival in the UK, meet them on arrival, and provide their guests with instructions on how to reach their accommodation if they are unable to meet them.
- Support and help guests to adapt to life in the UK, initially checking if they have enough food and supplies, along with checking if they have access to a mobile phone and internet to stay in touch with family members.
- Sponsors should help direct their guests to public services for example, registering with a GP or NHS dentist.

3.9 Guests receive the following from the Council at their Welcome Visit:

- Information pack in Ukrainian (available in Russian if required) - containing Welcome Letter, ESOL information, Safeguarding Flyer, NHS information, pre-paid card acceptance form, guide to living in the UK
- Pre-Paid Card per guest household with £200 per individual. The pre-paid cards gives the most flexibility and independence as guests can withdraw money from any cashpoint without the need for a bank account and they are also able to use it in any shop to purchase items
- Essential Toiletries Pack per household - shampoo, conditioner, toothbrush(es), toothpaste, shower gel, deodorant, wipes, tissues and sanitary towels
- Essential furniture/bedding - if required such as; bed, mattress, cot, wardrobe, hanging rail, chest of drawers, stair gates, bedding
- Carbon Monoxide detectors available if required
- Smoke Detectors available if required
- Travel Assistance – one-off payment to existing pre-paid card for £89.50 per adult and £15 for all Ukrainian Guest children over the age of 10 years to cover the administrative fee at the Post Office for the Zip Card

There are currently 311 guests that have arrived under the Homes for Ukraine scheme to date and it is assumed that many, in addition have also arrived to live with existing family members. The current working assumption is that there will be 822 guests and this is what the costs and grant levels have been calculated on.

The Council will receive £10,500 quarterly in arrears for every guest, providing the above checks have been undertaken and are satisfactory. The £10,500 is provided to enable the Council to provide support to families to settle in. Funding is going direct to those with visas under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and to fund staffing and other costs, outlined in the financials.

Latest projections indicate approximately 300 of children arriving under Homes for Homes for Ukraine. The service has also seen significant numbers of children arriving under the family placement scheme, for whom grant funding is not received.

300 children arriving through the Homes for Ukraine is anticipated to attract £2.1m Education grant, based on an assumption of the age breakdown. On this basis, each additional 100 children arriving would attract c£720k of Education grant.

Education receive a separate grant to support the additional school placement costs:

Early years (2-4) £3K

Primary (5-11) - £6,580

Secondary (11-18) £8,755

Health – separate funding is being arranged

Cautious decisions are being made in terms of spend and there is a strong focus on utilising volunteers wherever possible. In relation to the £10,500 payment, it is not known if any further funding will be provided after 12 months and there is a strong possibility that many families will require alternative accommodation after 6 months which will increase the pressure on the requirement for temporary accommodation as well as high costs to secure accommodation.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 The support will assist families with community integration, education, and employment opportunities
- 4.2 Weekly Ukraine Support Hub in place, providing support from range of internal and external organisations for example: Housing, DWP, Education, Social Care, Public Health, Bromley Y, HR Recruitment etc. This has proved to be really helpful for guests and sponsors alike, with each hub attended by at least 50 people, some of whom return weekly
- 4.3 Fortnightly meet up sessions take place at Bromley Central Library to provide guests and sponsors with a space to meet other people from their local community and make connections, this has been very well received with 175 people attending the first meet up session and 85 people attending the second meet up session. A third meet up session is due to take place Saturday 11th June

5. TRANSFORMATION/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities has set out the guidance, outlining the role of Councils.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The costs of the proposals in this report relating to the Homes for Ukraine scheme for 2022/23 are estimated at £1,171k covering both the main grant element and the Education element.
- 6.2 The costs will be covered from the two grants streams as detailed in the report. This assumes 822 guests of which 300 are children.
- 6.3 As the scheme continues and numbers increase there will be further costs and one-off funding available and this report seeks delegated authority to allocate any further funding.
- 6.4 It is important to note that the Government has provided one-off funding and have not provided any ongoing commitment to future funding at this stage. Some of the costs identified will continue beyond the current financial year and there will be further costs which could include, for example, medium term housing costs, social care support as well as other service support costs that may be required. Given the availability of one-off funding, the utilisation of these grants need to be managed within the context of ongoing costs beyond 2022/23.
- 6.4 Further detailed analysis of the financials is contained within appendix 1.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 No outsourcing or TUPE required
- 7.2 One agency member of staff (formerly Bromley Council Officer)

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Government launched the Homes for Ukraine scheme on the 14th of March 2022. The scheme is open to Ukrainian nationals who were residents in Ukraine prior to 1 January 2022 and also to their immediate family, to come to the UK by way of a Sponsor. There must therefore be a Sponsor and Applicants can apply to the Government to be accepted on to scheme.
- 8.2 The number of people who can access this scheme is uncapped and is dependent on the capacity of the Sponsors who come forward. Guests will be able to live and work in the UK for up to 3 years and access benefits, healthcare, employment, and other support.
- 8.3 The Government have issued Guidance to Councils on how the Scheme operates and what is expected of Council's in playing their part under the Scheme. A tariff Grant is payable to the Council which is intended to cover the number of individuals located within the Council area together with the administration of 'thank you' payments to Sponsors. Conditions will be attached to payment of the Grant. These conditions are likely to be acceptable to the Council on the basis of the draft conditions set out in the Guidance.
- 8.4 Under its various housing, public health, education, children, and adult care powers the Council has the legal power to carry out the activities anticipated under the Grant (as explained elsewhere in this report and the Guidance) together with the Council's general Power of Competence to do anything that an individual can lawfully do under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. The Guidance makes it clear that the Council's general duties towards relevant individuals and homes must be performed as usual which will include duties towards children and adults under the Care Act 2014 (including care and support and safeguarding) and Children Act 1989 and Housing including where relevant homelessness and overcrowding duties.

8.5 The tariff Grant is not ringfenced and any reconciled surplus must be paid back to the Government. Further general support grants should be available in relation to education and health as mentioned elsewhere in this report and the Guidance issued so far.

9. PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable

10. PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Not applicable

11. CARBON REDUCTION/SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Homes for Ukraine scheme will add social value and benefit the local economy as many of the guests arriving are skilled professionals looking for work.

11.2 The support being offered by the Council is incredibly important as a preventative measure to support both sponsors and guests to avoid potential problems and relationship breakdown leading to homelessness

11.3 By virtue of sponsors offering a home and also the meet up sessions enable by the Council, this helps to meet the Tackling Loneliness Strategy.

12 CUSTOMER IMPACT

Homes for Ukraine is a sponsorship scheme that allows people and organisations in the UK to offer Ukrainians fleeing the war a home.

13 WARD COUNCILLOR VIEWS

Not applicable

Non-Applicable Headings:	[List any of headings 4 to 13 that do not apply.]
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	[Title of document and date]