

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

**Date:** 18 January 2023

**Decision Type:** Non-Urgent                      Non-Executive                      Non-Key

**Title:** **HOMES FOR UKRAINE**

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

**Ward:** All Wards

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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 report is the second of the update reports.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

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

- 2.1 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



## 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
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## Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
  2. Making Bromley Even Better Priorities:
    - (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.
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## Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated Cost: N/A
  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
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## Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 10.5 FTE
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: 0
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## Legal

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

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not applicable
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## Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: N/A
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## Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: N/A
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### Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected): 820
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### 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 2022 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 On the 14 December 2022, the Government announced that over 100,000 Ukrainian guests are now safe in the United Kingdom. 37,500 more have valid visas and may choose to travel to the United Kingdom.
- 3.4 The Government has also announced that the £350 'thank you' payments, will be extended from 12 months to a maximum duration of two years. The UK Government will also increase the minimum 'thank you' payments for hosts from £350 per month to £500 per month, once a guest has been here in the UK for 12 months. This additional financial support is aimed at helping existing hosts to continue with their sponsorship, as well as new hosts who come forward to offer a home to a Ukrainian individual or family.
- 3.5 Guests will be able to live and work in the UK for up to 3 years and access benefits, healthcare, employment, and other support.
- 3.6 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 monthly 'thank you' payment.
- 3.7 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**

- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 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.

3.10 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.

3.11 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.

3.12 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

### Service Profile / Data Analysis

- 3.13 There are currently 607 guests (318 families) 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.
- 3.14 The Council has been receiving £10,500 quarterly in arrears for every guest, providing the above checks have been undertaken and are satisfactory. The Government announced on the 14 December that the council tariff will reduce to £5,900 per person for arrivals entering the UK from 1 January 2023. This funding 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.
- 3.15 Latest projections indicate approximately 300 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.
- 3.16 The table below shows the number of households who have approached for homelessness advice and how many households have gone into temporary accommodation.

	Homes for Ukraine Scheme	Ukraine Family Scheme
Homeless Approaches	41	36
Households in Temporary Accommodation	14	11
Households in Private Rented Sector Accommodation	5	1

- 3.17 300 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.
- 3.18 Education receive a separate grant to support the additional school placement costs:  
 Early years (2-4) £3,000  
 Primary (5-11) - £6,580  
 Secondary (11-18) £8,755
- 3.19 Cautious decisions are continuing to be made in terms of spend and there has been a strong focus on utilising volunteers wherever possible.

## 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 and approximately 40 people attend each meet up session.

## **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 In the previous report to the Executive, it was agreed that a level of funding up to £1,171k, mainly for staffing, be approved. This covered the main grant element and the Education element.
- 6.2 Since that report further costs have been identified and officers are quantifying these and these will be brought back to the Executive in due course. These include costs for temporary accommodation due to sponsor/guest breakdown, social worker costs and other sundry costs across a range of Council services. To cover this eventuality, delegated authority was sought and agreed when the last report came to the Executive in June.
- 6.3 All costs relating to this scheme will be covered off by the grants so will be cost neutral in the short term. As mentioned in the main body of the report the grant for each new guest will reduce from £10,500 to £5,900 from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023. Despite this reduction it is expected that the total grant will still cover the costs incurred by the Council.
- 6.4 Officers are currently in discussion with DLUHC regarding the ability to carry over and unspent grant into the following financial year.
- 6.5 Government have also announced that the 'thank you' payment will increase to £500 per month once a guest has been in the UK for 12 months. The 'thank you' payments are cost neutral and are in effect and 'in and out' for the Council as they are paid to the sponsor and the Council reimbursed by the Government.

## **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 This Committee and the Executive are requested to note and comment on the information contained within this report as to the progress of the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Members will

be aware this is a Government sponsored scheme and the Council operates under the Guidance issued and within the conditions attached to the payment of the Government grant.

8.2 The Council's Constitution, at Part 4 – Rules of Procedure, provides the terms of reference for the Executive, Resources and Contracts Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee as it relates to the Executive and the Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management Portfolio. Under these terms of reference, this Committee is responsible for receiving reports and making recommendations on performance monitoring of services falling within the remit of this portfolio.

## 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 Four guests from the Homes for Ukraine scheme have been employed by Bromley Council and are working in both the Homes for Ukraine team and the wider Housing Team.

11.3 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

11.4 By virtue of sponsors offering a home and also the meet up sessions enabled 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

<b>Non-Applicable Headings:</b>	9, 10
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Not Applicable