
Decision Maker:	EXECUTIVE For decision scrutiny by the Executive, Resources and Contracts Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee		
Date:	20 September 2023		
Decision Type:	Non-Urgent	Non-Executive	Non-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 report is the third of the update reports.

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): 8 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): 1162
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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 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 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 residing 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 Ukrainian individual for 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 a second scheme, called 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 has been 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 798 guests (411 families this includes 246 children) 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 350 children arriving under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.
- 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 for both January and the numbers as they stand in August, this will include the numbers shown in January.

	Homes for Ukraine Scheme	Homes for Ukraine Scheme	Ukraine Family Scheme	Ukraine Family Scheme
	January 2023	August 2023	January 2023	August 2023
Homeless Approaches	41	88	36	45
Households in Temporary Accommodation	12	14	8	7
Households in Private Rented Sector Accommodation	5	5	1	3

- 3.16 300 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.
- 3.17 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

- 3.18 The Homes for Ukraine – Additional Support Request Form has been extended to the academic year 2023-24, supporting our schools in further facilitating community inclusion and cohesion within their school communities for our Ukrainian guests. For example, this may include interventions such as cultural input to the weekly school menu with Ukrainian dishes or healthy snacks. It does not replace existing support for our children and young people through our other teams and services, such as special educational needs or social, emotional, and/or mental health and concerns in relation to attendance. The team can be contacted on Ukraine.Education@bromley.gov.uk for any queries.
- 3.18 A successful training day was held for school colleagues in Bromley before the end of the last academic year, with a focus on English for conference for schools which will provide practical information and training about the English as an Additional Language (EAL) support on offer to all Bromley schools.
- 3.19 The Family Learning Programme has a total of 11 schools working with the team this year to deliver structured ESOL courses to our pupils and their parents, delivered by tutors from the Bromley Adult Education College.
- 3.20 Bishop Justus School is also working with the team and is hosting support for their pupils with volunteers from the Rotary Club offering English lessons on site.
- 3.21 Informal English Lessons are available to all young people aged 11-16 years old at the Hope Church Bromley (near Norman Park).
- 3.22 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 30 people, some of whom return weekly.

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 a 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 1st 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.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This is an update report on how the Homes for Ukraine initiative has been progressing. 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 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

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