

4th July 2022**Agenda Item:2****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES****LOCAL COMMUNITIES FUND SUPPORT FOR THE HOMES FOR UKRAINE
SCHEME****Purpose of the Report****1. To seek approval to:**

- Establish a Homes for Ukraine (HFU) grant programme as part of the Local Communities Fund to provide financial support to voluntary and community groups to assist Homes for Ukraine refugees settle in Nottinghamshire.
- Allocate £100,000 from the total monies received from government for the Homes for Ukraine scheme to support this initiative.

Information

2. The Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched on 14 March 2022 by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The scheme allows individuals resident in the UK to sponsor named Ukrainian guests. 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. Those arriving need to meet standard security checks prior to being issued with a visa. Sponsors and all adults in sponsors' households will also be subject to initial Police National Computer, criminal records and Warnings Index checks by the Home Office.
4. The number of people who can access this scheme is not limited and is dependent on the capacity of the sponsors who come forward. As at, 23rd June 2022, the data on actual matches for Nottinghamshire, is 1170 people in 815 groups are expected being hosted by 539 sponsors.
5. It is expected that this number will increase due to the current number of Nottinghamshire sponsors who have expressed an interest in hosting guests being far higher than those who have already been matched.
6. Funding to support the scheme will be provided by Government, paid to upper tier Councils dependent on how many HFU guests are hosted in the area. The grant amount is £10,500 per guest. Currently, based on the numbers of guests

anticipated to come to Nottinghamshire, the Council will receive c£12 million to support the delivery of the scheme. There is also additional funding to provide 'thank you' payment funding to sponsors (£350 per month, per sponsor) and for school places where appropriate (to fund education places for children on a per pupil basis, per annum basis, dependant on age, ranging from £3,000 to £8,755.)

7. Councils have a range of important functions in supporting the Homes for Ukraine scheme including accommodation, safeguarding and welfare checks for sponsors and hosts.
8. Councils are also expected to play a key role in supporting the integration of Ukrainian families into their local communities. This support includes:
 - working with local voluntary sector organisations and faith groups to help signpost advice and support
 - the organisation of community events
 - the use of community champions and interfaith networks
 - increasing local authority contact/interaction with Ukrainians, and
 - access to translation services
9. This is a fast-moving situation with communities across Nottinghamshire welcoming Ukrainian refugees, wanting to help integrate our guests into everyday life. The Council is working with local voluntary sector organisations and faith groups and wants to support those which provide essential services; help meet need and supports integration within the wider community.
10. It is proposed that an allocation of £100,000 from the HFU Scheme funding received from the government is earmarked to support this initiative. This proposed allocation is proportionate, in that it aims to support local community projects and activities to welcome and integrate refugees arriving in Nottinghamshire as part of this scheme.

Design and Parameters of the proposed HFU Grant Programme

11. The Council recognises the huge contribution that the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) makes to the lives of Nottinghamshire residents and in doing so has established the Local Communities Fund (LCF).
12. A focussed HFU grant programme, established as part of the Council's Local Communities Fund is proposed to support emerging projects and activities that meet the identified additional needs of Ukraine refugees and the communities helping them.
13. The detail of the programme is being developed in consultation with partners and will be reported to the Cabinet Member for approval. The detail would include, for example, funding to help with:
 - Costs associated with supporting English language classes
 - Costs associated with running job clubs

- Advice and support on financial matters
- Tackling loneliness and isolation through for example befriending schemes and support networks
- Promoting health and well-being
- Organising community events
- Supporting and encouraging volunteering

14. The parameters of the HFU grant programme, would reflect the key features of the LCF and include:

- A Member-led approach with the approval of grants made by the Cabinet Member for Communities
- A rolling programme of applications throughout the year
- A maximum of £5,000 can be applied for per project/activity
- A simple application and assessment process

15. It is recommended that this new programme, if approved, is opened for applications on 18th July 2022 and these are encouraged, received, assessed and approved as part a rolling programme.

Other Options Considered

16. That a new grant programme is not established.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

17. To provide financial support to voluntary and community organisations working with HFU scheme refugees.

Statutory and Policy Implications

18. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability, and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

19. The government is providing funding at a rate of £10,500 per person to councils to enable them to provide support to families to rebuild their lives and fully integrate into communities. Based on the numbers of guests anticipated to come to Nottinghamshire, the Council will receive c£12 million for this purpose. This report proposes to reserve £100k of the £12m received from the government to create the grant programme proposed in the report.

20. Funding for the education of refugee children and funding to provide thank-you payments to hosts of refugees is also provided by the government in addition.

Public Sector Equality Duty Implications

21. The HFU Scheme allows Ukrainians (and their immediate family members) with no family ties to the UK to be sponsored by individuals or organisations who can offer them a home such as a spare room or unoccupied residential self-contained unit.
22. Upper tier Councils have been given a range of responsibilities and are required to carry out accommodation, safeguarding, and welfare-checks to ensure that homes are of a suitable standard and that guests arriving in the UK are safe.
23. The Council wants to help new arrivals to settle in Nottinghamshire and support communities who wish to help our guests fleeing the conflict in Ukraine. Building on our expertise and that of our partners, practical interventions and support to the voluntary and community can inform the development and delivery of support including helping guests settle into their communities and access public services.
24. The proposals set out in this report will, as part of larger package help to support the integration of our guests into local communities with many of our guests being women, children and older people.
25. Allocating discretionary funding will enable local voluntary and community groups to continue to work with Ukraine refugees coming to Nottinghamshire through the HFU Scheme. In making funding available, consideration of broader equality matters which support HFU scheme sponsors and guests including those with protected characteristics will be included in the criteria of the fund.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Approves the design and establishment of a HFU grant programme and that the detail of this is reported back to the Cabinet Member for Communities for approval
- 2) Approves the allocation of £100,000 from funding provided by the government to support this initiative.
- 3) Approves that once the scheme is established, the approval of grants awarded to be made by the Cabinet Member for Communities.

Derek Higton
Service Director, Place and Communities

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Mark Walker, Group Manager, Trading Standards and Communities, 0115 977 2173

Constitutional Comments (CEH 28.06.2022)

26. The report and recommendations fall within the remit of the Cabinet Member for Communities.

Financial Comments (RWK 06/06/2022)

27. The government is providing funding at a rate of £10,500 per person to councils to enable them to provide support to families to rebuild their lives and fully integrate into communities. The report proposed that £100,000 of the total funding received by the County Council is used to establish a Home's for Ukraine grant programme as part of the Local Communities Fund. As the funding is through additional government grant there are no additional costs to be funded by the County Council.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 'None'

Electoral Divisions

ALL