



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

8 January 2024

Report of the Director of Public Health

Resettlement Support Under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme

1. Divisions Affected

1.1 County-wide

2. Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

3. Purpose

3.1 To seek Cabinet Member approval for the extension to the provision of concessionary bus passes to Ukrainian guests until 31 July 2024.

4. Information and Analysis

4.1 Following the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the UK Government implemented the Home for Ukraine (H4U) resettlement scheme to provide homes for families fleeing the conflict. Under H4U refugees are given an initial three-year visa and are expected to live with host families for a minimum of six months. In practice, many of the hosting arrangements in Derbyshire have extended beyond this.

4.2 To date, just over 1,500 H4U guests have arrived in Derbyshire – the highest guest population in the region and one of the highest, per head of population, in the UK. The majority of our guests (approximately 60%) are hosted in the rural areas of High Peak and Derbyshire Dales. In December 2022, the Secretary of State for the Department of

Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DHLUC), announced that the scheme would accept new arrivals until the end of March 2024. An announcement on the future of the scheme beyond March 2024 is due in February 2024.

- 4.3 Under H4U, local authorities receive core funding of £10,500 to support each guest who arrived in 2022/23, dropping to £5,900 per guest for those arriving in 2023/24. The funding is provided to ensure that all guests have the support they need to re-build their lives and fully integrate into their new communities. Work undertaken so far includes supporting guests to access employment, education and training. It also includes housing related support such as re-matching guests into new host placements or supporting them to be able to live independently in their own properties, and the provision of support and funding to community groups to work with Ukrainian guests in their area.
- 4.4 Since June 2022, the Council has worked with Nottinghamshire County Council to provide free bus travel to Ukrainian guests. This has been developed jointly between both councils to enable all Ukrainian guests to benefit from free bus travel within both Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. This was previously approved at the Cabinet Member meeting on 3 July 2023.
- 4.5 The provision of the free bus pass has been an invaluable way for those living in rural areas of the county to access services such as job centres, health services and social activities. Around 50% of Ukrainian guests live in the Derbyshire Dales and High Peak areas of the county with many others in the rural parts of South Derbyshire and North-East Derbyshire. The free bus pass scheme has been a particularly useful way to support resettlement, especially given the high percentage of guests living in rural communities. Approval is sought to extend the current arrangement until 31 July 2024 in line with the proposals in Nottinghamshire. The cost of extending is estimated at £25,000, this can be met from the H4U grant. . This scheme will continue to be administered by the Public Transport team (PLACE).

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Consultation has been undertaken with other local authorities and the proposal mirrors schemes initiated by other Homes for Ukraine teams within the region.

6. Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 Do nothing. Ukrainian guests will no longer benefit from free bus travel which would make accessing services, employment and education very difficult for the large numbers in the rural areas of the county. There

may be an impact on health and wellbeing and feelings such as isolation could increase placing pressure on hosts to offer transport to guests.

- 6.2 The Council could offer funding, on a discretionary case by case basis, for applications by hosts in need of additional financial support. This is mean households/guests getting to crisis point before being offered support.

7. Implications

- 7.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 Report to Cabinet Member for Health and Communities 3 July 2023.

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1- Implications.

10. Recommendation(s)

That the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities:

- a) Approves the allocation of £25,000 from the H4U core grant to extend the provision of concessionary bus passes for Ukrainian guests until 31 July 2024.

11. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 11.1 Extending free concessionary bus travel will enable guests to continue to access a range of services in all areas of the county. This is of particular importance to those located in the more rural, isolated areas of the county who are not able to easily access services. This scheme is delivered in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council and the extension proposed would match that planned by Nottinghamshire County Council.

12. Is it necessary to waive the call in period?

12.1 No

Report Author: Christine Flinton

Contact details: christine.flinton@derbyshire.gov.uk

Implications

Financial

1.1 Costs can be met by the Homes for Ukraine Grant funding.

Legal

2.1 The proposals outlined in this report support the Council to meet its requirements under the national guidance document published by the Dept Levelling Up, Communities and Local Government.

Human Resources

3.1 There are no human resources implications through noting and agreeing the partnership principles of this report.

Information Technology

4.1 There are no information technology implications through noting and agreeing the partnership principles of this report.

Equalities Impact

5.1 None arising from this report

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

6.1 The recommendations link to the Council Plan priorities;

- Resilient, Healthy and Safe Communities
- High performing, value for money and resident focussed services
- Effective Early Help for Individuals and Communities

Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

7.1 None arising from this report.