



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

21 October 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 to increase expenditure for the provision of concessionary bus passes to Ukrainian guests.

4. Information and Analysis

4.1 Following the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the UK Government implemented the Homes for Ukraine resettlement scheme to provide homes for families fleeing the conflict. Under Homes for Ukraine, 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 1,600 Homes for Ukraine 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.

- 4.3 Under the 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 from 2023/24 onwards. 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 hosts placements and 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.
- 4.5 The provision of the free bus pass has been an invaluable way for those living in the 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. This has been a particularly useful way to support resettlement, especially given the high percentage of guests living in rural communities.
- 4.6 Approval was given for £67,000 of expenditure to cover the costs associated with providing the bus passes until 31st March 2025 at the Cabinet meeting held on 4th July 2024. Further approval is sought to increase the expenditure by a further £0.179m to cover additional, unforeseen costs and to enable the bus passes to continue to be provided until their current end date of 31st March 2025.
- 4.7 The additional expenditure is due to a number of factors, including bus operator price rises, which came into effect in August 2024 which average a 30% increase in fares plus some unforeseen additional backdated costs, due to late issuing of invoices by a provider.

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. Without the additional expenditure being approved, the bus passes would have to be withdrawn prior to the previously agreed expiration date of 31 March 2025. 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.

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.
Report to Cabinet Member for Health and Communities 8 January 2024
Report to Cabinet 4 July 2024

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1- Implications.

10. Recommendation(s)

That the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities:

- a) Approves the allocation of £0.179m from the Homes For Ukraine core grant to meet the additional expenditure required to extend the provision of concessionary bus passes for Ukrainian guests.

11. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 11.1 Without the additional expenditure being approved, the bus passes would have to be withdrawn prior to the previously agreed expiration date of 31 March 2025. 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. In addition to this, to withdraw a previously agreed benefit from Ukrainian guests could lead to reputational damage for the 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 The additional expenditure is fully funded from the Homes for Ukraine Core 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, thriving and green communities which share responsibility for improving their areas and supporting each other.
 - Happy, safe and healthy people, with solid networks of support, who feel in control of their personal circumstances and aspirations.
 - Great places to live, work and visit with high performing schools, diverse cultural opportunities, transport connections that keep things moving and a healthy and sustainable environment for all.
 - High quality public services that work together alongside communities to deliver services that meet people's needs.

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

7.1 None arising from this report.