

Report to Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth and Economy

Subject: Homes for Ukraine Scheme – Housing and Homelessness Prevention Fund

Date: 5 August 2025

Author: Assistant Director – Housing and Resettlement

Wards Affected

All Wards

Purpose

- To seek approval to enter into a further agreement with Nottinghamshire County Council for the provision of funding to prevent relationship breakdown between Sponsors and the Homes for Ukraine guests and deal with potential homelessness cases. Portfolio Holder approval is sought in accordance with paragraph 7.2 of Section 25 (Financial Regulations) of the Constitution.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

THAT the Portfolio Holder:

- 1) Agrees to enter into a further agreement with Nottinghamshire County Council for the receipt and administration of the Nottinghamshire Homes for Ukraine Scheme Fund (previously the Nottinghamshire Homes for Ukraine Housing and Homelessness Reduction Fund)
- 2) Agrees that's the Director responsible for Housing Options (Homelessness) should continue to have delegated authority to determine how the fund is spent.

1 Background

- 1.1 The Homes for Ukraine Scheme (the Scheme) was launched on 14 March 2022 by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and was open to Ukrainian nationals who were resident in Ukraine prior to 1 January 2022 and their immediate family members who may be of other nationalities. The Scheme allows individuals in the UK (“sponsor(s)”) to sponsor named people from Ukraine (“guest(s)”) to come to the UK.
- 1.2 Homes for Ukraine guests can live and work in the UK for up to 18 months post arrival (changed from 3 years for new arrivals as of 19 February 2024) and access benefits, healthcare, employment, and other support. The number of people who can access this scheme is not limited and is dependent on the capacity of the sponsors who come forward.
- 1.3 The Government pay the County Council £10,500 per guest under the scheme to fund administration of the scheme (this excludes funding for education). In December 2022 the Government announced that this funding would continue but for arrivals on or after the 1st of January 2023, including new arrivals the 18-month Homes for Ukraine visa (following the visa changes announced on 19th February 2024) at a reduced rate of £5,900 per guest (excluding unaccompanied minors who will still receive £10,500).
- 1.4 The County Council receives data from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Community about sponsors/guests who have applied for visas in the County. The data is stored in the Foundry case management system. Districts also have access to Foundry. The County Council are responsible for undertaking initial DBS checks on the sponsors/guests within the County,
- 1.5 Since the scheme was introduced, the County Council have been responsible for providing payment to sponsors. Until 1 April 2025, sponsors/hosts were eligible to receive thank you payments of £350 per household during the first 12 months of a guest’s arrival in the UK, which increased to £500 a month once guests have been in the UK for 12 months. After 1 April 2025, sponsors/hosts will now be eligible to receive £350 a month per household, irrespective of how long guests have been in the UK.
- 1.6 District Councils continue to be responsible for undertaking checks on the sponsor’s property prior to the guests’ arrival to ensure accommodation is suitable, this involves checking on size and identifying potential hazards. Districts are then responsible for undertaking a second check once the guests have arrived at the property. This check is to again assess suitability of the accommodation with guests in situ, as well as identifying any welfare

issues. Finally, Districts are required to undertake a third check of properties once guests have resided there for 6 months. This third check has recently been taken on by Districts and again, ensures any welfare issues are identified as well as providing an opportunity to engage with sponsors to establish whether they intend to continue hosting beyond the initial 6 months.

The results of all checks are reported to the County Council.

New Funding Agreement

- 1.7 The end dates for the initial minimum 6-month periods for hosting have now been reached and exceeded by many sponsors. Feedback from hosts suggests that many wish their Homes for Ukraine guest to move on at the end of this period but feel unable to assist them with the difficulties of obtaining follow-on accommodation. Additionally, many Homes for Ukraine Guests have also expressed the desire to move into private rented sector housing when they feel ready, which may come before the end of the 6-month period.

In response to this feedback, Nottinghamshire County Council have expanded the priorities which the Scheme seeks to address (see para 1.8 below) and have commissioned third-party Housing and Employment Services, to support guests currently living with hosts or in temporary accommodation to find employment and independent housing. Nottinghamshire County Council requires District Councils under the Scheme to co-operate and share information with its third-party service providers, to facilitate identifying and securing follow-on accommodation. The new funding agreement reflects these changes to the Scheme. Districts can use the check visits to provide advice to guests around housing where the sponsors do not intend to continue hosting or sign post them to the Councils Housing Options team.

- 1.8 The District Councils have a role to play in the welcoming of guests to the area and signposting to appropriate voluntary groups or facilities, they also feed into the weekly newsletter/email which is circulated to sponsors/guests/stakeholders updating them on the scheme as well as any initiatives/benefits to which they may be entitled, including funding opportunities for community groups. Districts also have a statutory duty in respect of homelessness and as such, the County Council allocated a payment of the equivalent of £1,000 per sponsor household to the Districts in order for Districts to provide help and support to guests under the Scheme so that guests can find alternative accommodation when their sponsor arrangements ends, and wherever possible prevent guests becoming homeless once their sponsor withdraws.

This payment is the Nottinghamshire Homes for Ukraine Scheme Fund (“the Fund”) and the County require the districts to enter into a further agreement committing to spend the Fund to support guests in the following ways:

- Prevent relationship breakdown between Sponsor and Guest(s) and deal with potential homelessness cases
- Protecting people from harm and tackling vulnerability
- Reducing homelessness
- Helping and supporting Guests having arrived under the Homes for Ukraine scheme to secure private rented or social housing accommodation
- Working with Nottinghamshire County Council and associated housing services to proactively secure follow-on accommodation for the Homes for Ukraine Guest once the initial 6 months with a host has ended.

On 26 November 2024, the Government announced further details regarding the Ukrainian Permission Extension scheme (UPE). The UPE opened to applications on 04 February 2025 and allows eligible Homes for Ukraine Guests to extend their stay in the UK by 18 months. Homes for Ukraine Guests can apply to the UPE in the last 28 days of their current visa and those under the UPE scheme will be entitled to the same levels of access and support as those under the Homes for Ukraine.

As of June 2025, the requirements of the Scheme have shifted towards proactive homeless prevention, requiring all local authorities to work with guests in building independence as soon as possible. This means assisting guests into the private rented sector as soon as they are able, and utilising funding to alleviate barriers to this goal, e.g. deposits, first month’s rent.

The expectation of this funding is to provide this proactive service in tandem with Nottinghamshire County Council and any associated housing services procured by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The contents of the new agreement also apply to any Homes for Ukraine Guest who transitions to the UPE.

The County Council have an established working group with representation from the districts. The group meet to discuss how the fund will be administered and establish ongoing best practice.

- 1.9 The Fund is administered by the districts at their discretion, subject to compliance with the agreement with the County to spend the Fund in the ways outlined above. It should also be noted that the Fund can be used to provide resource to the district to support those at risk of homelessness under the Scheme.
- 1.10 As of 14th May 2025, there had been 141 matched sponsors within the Borough from the commencement of the Scheme. Environmental Health officers had undertaken 133 first property checks, 112 second welfare checks and 75 third welfare checks.

32 properties currently have guests living with them containing 50 individuals.

Since the commencement of the scheme: -

19 households have returned to Ukraine

30 households have moved out of County

15 households have moved into private rented accommodation

8 households have been re-matched within the Borough

4 households have been re-matched outside of the Borough

13 households have moved but the whereabouts of their move on address is unknown.

- 1.11 It is recognised that circumstances for guests will differ and must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Some guests may need financial support with deposits if moving to private rented property, others may need temporary accommodation until they are re-matched through the scheme or until alternative accommodation is available. Decisions in respect of the application of the funds to specific circumstances often need to be made quickly to avoid losing opportunities for guests in alternative accommodation. As such, delegations in relation to spending of the Fund are being sought.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Portfolio Holder agrees to enter into a further funding agreement with Nottinghamshire County Council to enable access to the Fund
- 2.2 It is proposed that authority continues to be given to the Director responsible for the Housing Options team to determine how the "Fund" will

be spent on a case-by-case basis, always thought ensuring the spend is in accordance with the terms of the agreement in that it is spent with the following aims:

- Prevent relationship breakdown between Sponsor and Guest(s) and deal with potential homelessness cases
- Protecting people from harm and tackling vulnerability
- Reducing homelessness
- Helping and supporting Guests having arrived under the Homes for Ukraine scheme to secure private rented or social housing accommodation

It should be noted that the agreement with the County requires monitoring of spend of the Fund and as such, clear records and audit trails of spend and decision will be maintained.

- 2.3 It is proposed that a representative from Gedling continues to attend the District and County Group established, so that Gedling can utilise support from other districts in administering the fund effectively.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 The district could determine not to enter into the Agreement and accept the funding. This is not advisable as the Fund provides vital financial support to the district to prevent homelessness for guests which would otherwise have to be funded by the districts. In addition, given the often-urgent circumstances in which decision in respect of spending the Fund must be made, a delegation to Director is considered to be the most expedient way to ensure swift action can be taken. A continued presence from Gedling's Housing Options Team at the County/District group will ensure that there is alignment on how funds are administered across the County.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The initial funding allocated following the introduction of the scheme in 2022 was equivalent to £1,000 per sponsor/host household for Gedling. The total funding allocated to date is £95,000.

Since the commencement of the scheme the authority has spent £21,894 as of the 31st of March 2025.

Financial Year	Scheme Spend	Housing Options Post *	Total
2022-23	£ 1,080		£ 1,080
2023-24	£ 3,251		£ 3,251
2024-25	£ 4,091	£ 13,472	£ 17,563
Total	£ 8,422	£ 13,472	£ 21,894

***50% contribution**

Part of the grant funding has been used to secure, and part fund a temporary 2-year Housing Options post that supports refugee and asylum-seeking homeless clients.

It is intended to fund the post in 2025-26 which will be approx. £20,900

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Council have a statutory duty in respect of Homelessness which applies to guests under the Scheme. This Fund aims to reduce the financial burden of exercising this duty in relation to guests under the Scheme. This arrangement with Nottinghamshire County Council constitutes a Partnership under paragraph 7.2 of Section 25 (Financial Regulations) of the Constitution.

The terms of the new funding agreement have been reviewed and assessed as acceptable. Data Sharing Agreements will be put in place between Gedling Borough Council and any third-party service providers commissioned by Nottinghamshire County Council under the Scheme before any Personal Data is shared. The relevant department will need to ensure that they obtain consent from individuals participating in the Scheme to share their Personal Data with such third parties for these purposes.

6 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment can be found at Appendix 2

7 Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications

- 7.1 There are no carbon reduction/sustainability implications arising from this report.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 – Revised Homes for Ukraine Scheme Housing & Homelessness Prevention Agreement

8.2 Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment

9 Background Papers

9.1 None

10 Reasons for Recommendations

10.1 To ensure funding is provided to support guests who may have housing needs including the risk of becoming homeless, arising from the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

10.2 To ensure that decisions in respect of those needs can be taken swiftly without overburdening the Executive.

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Monitoring Officer