

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL DECISION RECORD VERSION 4. MARCH 2022

Officer Completing the Form: Melissa Fletcher

Lead Director: Dawn Adey

Subject: Homes for Ukraine: Independence Support Fund continuation and peer-to-peer support service contract

Details of Decision: *Please provide a brief explanation as to what decision was made, including any financial implications. This should be done in easy to understand, non-technical language - as this wording will appear on the website for the public to read. Also please remember all staff will be able to see this document.*

1. To extend the Homes for Ukraine Independence Support Fund financial support to Ukrainians on the Homes for Ukraine visa scheme to help them settle into their local community and adjust to life in the Winchester district and to allocate an additional £100,000 of HFU funding to this purpose.
2. To adopt the amended criteria for the Independence Support Fund as shown in appendix 1.
3. To enter a contract in accordance with the council's Contract Procedure Rules with the Olive Branch at a value of £29,600 to deliver a peer-to-peer support programme until March 2025.

Type of Decision: (please tick. see reverse for definitions)

- ☐ Key Decision (Executive) & Subject to Call-In (see section 2A on reverse of this form) Note, these decisions are published on winchester.gov.uk
- ☒ Significant Operational Decision (see section 2B (1) on reverse of this form). Note, these decisions are published on winchester.gov.uk
- ☐ Other Decisions to be Published (see section 2B (2) on reverse of this form) Note, these decisions are published on winchester.gov.uk
- ☐ Administrative Decision (see section 3 on reverse of this form)

Reason for the Decision: *A brief overview of your reasons for taking this course of action.*

Background

The Government-funded Homes for Ukraine (HFU) scheme includes an allocation of funding in 23/24 to support work over two years to support a move into independent accommodation and to aid integration into their new community.

Financial implications

An outline spending plan was set out in report CAB3383 (para 11.10) showing a number of broad areas in which it was anticipated this funding would be used. The plan in the report was based on an indicative sum of £566,000 but it has now been confirmed that the actual payment, based on actual numbers of guests arrived, will be £689,037. The financial commitments to date are summarised in the table below, leaving a total of £498,937 remaining to be allocated.

Breakdown of funding received:

22/23: £118,000
 23/24: £442,537
 24/25: £128,500
£689,037

Total budget allocation: £689,037	Actual spend	Commitments/ projected spend	Total
<u>Spend: 2022/2023</u>	£46,537		£46,537
<u>Spend to date in 2023/24:</u>			
Employment of support staff	£27,000		£27,000
Welcome guides	£9,500		£9,500
Support hubs	£5,000		£5,000
Community integration and cultural district events	£5,000		£5,000
Pilot peer to peer sessions with Olive Branch	£6,000		£6,000

Host celebration event – Winchester college	£3,200		£3,200
Establish Ukraine community group (resource: Community First)		£8,000	£8,000
Ukraine community group (supporting cultural events: Christmas celebration event, war anniversary, Independence Day, support for young people)		£11,000	£11,000
Winchester Sport & Leisure Park – free leisure passes		£2,500	£2,500
Christmas camps: activities for young children		£3,000	£3,000
Christmas pantomime tickets (contribution/match funding to HCC support)		£300	£300
<u>Spend associated with this decision record:</u>			
<i>HFU Independence Support Fund allocation</i>	<i>£43,000</i>	<i>£107,000</i>	<i>£150,000</i>
<i>Peer-to-peer support service (Olive Branch)</i>		<i>£29,600</i>	<i>£29,600</i>
Totals:	£145,237	£161,400	£306,637

The additional sums committed in this decision record total £129,600, leaving £382,400 remaining to spend (total funding £689,037, less £306,637) and means that 55% of the funding remains unspent to date.

Independence Support Fund

The Independence Support Fund was established in July 2023 with a first tranche of £50,000 (see administrative decision record 108 dated 19 July 2023). A total of £46,574 was allocated in the first four rounds of funding allocations, making the difference to 93 Ukrainian residents' integration, participation in community activities and digital inclusion. The next round of allocations has brought forward applications totaling approximately £32,000, so a further tranche of funding is required. It is recommended that a further £100,000 be made available, bringing the total for this fund to £150,000 and still well within the £350,000 which was indicated for financial year 23/24 in the January Cabinet report.

Since the Fund was established in July 2023, we have seen a small number of enquiries from Ukrainians who originally settled with guests in other districts, but who have since relocated to Winchester. The original scheme criteria limited support to "Guests on the Homes for Ukraine visa scheme whose host lived in the Winchester district when the guest arrived to the UK" but it is felt that individuals who have since relocated to Winchester district should be able to access funding from the scheme to help them continue their integration into their new community. The proposed criteria for the scheme have therefore been amended slightly, as highlighted in yellow in the new criteria in appendix 1.

Peer-to-peer wellbeing support

The Cabinet report detailed the need to address health and wellbeing so we worked with the Olive Branch counselling service on a Ukrainian-led peer-to-peer wellbeing support pilot over a period of months. The pilot was very successful due to the native language speaking and the fact that the facilitators are familiar with the traumas that the Ukrainians are finding themselves having to deal with. We will therefore enter into a contract with the Olive Branch until the end of March 2025 (should the HFU funding continue/allow us to do so)

A [PSED](#) impact assessment has been carried out, this expenditure positively impacts on a number of protected groups that could be affected or disadvantaged in terms of accessing employment and everyday activities. This support will positively impact vulnerable people who are on low incomes.

Alternative Options Considered & Rejected: *All alternative options considered need to be outlined here. Please include detail of any representations received. This will include your response to any alternatives suggested by those making representation and the reasons why these alternatives were rejected.*

The HFU funding is intended to address a broad range of interventions and the establishment of this scheme doesn't preclude any of the other interventions coming forward.

With regards to the Olive Branch Peer to Peer support contract – we considered other options however, it was established that the Olive Branch were in a unique position of being able to work directly with Ukrainian facilitators. This arrangement is unique and preferable for the service user as demonstrated through our initial pilot programme. A formal contract setting out deliverables will be in place and monitored against thus supporting best value for all stakeholders.

Supporting Information: *If your decision relates to delegated authority derived from a specific Committee resolution, please confirm the name of the Committee, the date of the meeting and paste the resolution into this box.*

The HFU spending plans are detailed in both CAB3340 & CAB3383, as agreed by Cabinet:

[Cabinet 22 June 2022 CAB3340](#)
[Cabinet 25 January 2023 CAB3383](#)

Delegated authority has been given to the Service Lead Communities and Wellbeing and Service Lead Strategic Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community, to amend the 2023-2025 spending plan as the needs and requirements of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme change. The proposals in this paper were discussed with, and agreed by, the Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement via telephone conversation on 20 December 2023.

Declared Officer and/or Member interests: *List any conflict of interest declared by any Cabinet Member who was consulted by the officer which relates to the decision and, in respect of any declared conflict of interest, any note of dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer.*

No conflict of interest to record.

Departmental Review			
Legal review:	<i>Tick this box to confirm legal team have reviewed proposed decision</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fiona Sutherland
Finance review:	<i>Tick this box to confirm finance team have reviewed proposed decision</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dick Johnson
Procurement review:	<i>Tick this box to confirm procurement team have reviewed proposed decision</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Julie Mahoney
Housing review:	<i>Tick this box to confirm housing team have reviewed proposed decision</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Karen Thorburn
Public Sector Equality Duty:	<i>Tick this box to confirm you have considered the PSED requirements (see section 4 on reverse of this form)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steve Lincoln

Are the details of the decision open or exempt?

☒ Open

☐ Part Exempt. Please expand

☐ Exempt. Please expand

Decision Taker (name): *This needs to be the specific Officer or Cabinet Member who holds the delegation within the constitution/or referred to by a committee*

**Decision Taker
(Signature):**

Date:

Susan Robbins,
Corporate Head of Economy and Community



20 December 2023

Call In dates (key decisions only) and Implementation date:

Commencement of call in: (date)	Click here to enter a date. <i>(Please refer to Dem Services for this)</i>
Last date for call in: (date)	Click here to enter a date. <i>(Please refer to Dem Services for this)</i>
Planned Implementation Date:	Click here to enter a date.



Winchester
City Council

**HFU Independence Support Fund
2023/2024
POLICIES AND CRITERIA**

Homes for Ukraine Independence Support Fund 2023/2024

Introduction

Winchester City Council is offering financial support to Ukrainians on the Homes for Ukraine visa scheme, to help them settle into their local community and adjust to life in the Winchester district.

Individuals can apply for small grants of up to **£500** to help with specific and individual needs.

Examples of activities that could be funded include:

- a bespoke vocational language course to help with employment
- acquiring a qualification which may lead to increased employment opportunities
- purchase of a phone or laptop to improve digital connectivity and help towards becoming more independent part of the local community*
- short-term help for children and young people to mix and meet with others in the local community by pursuing a hobby or joining a local club

* Note that the Council accepts no liability for any ongoing cost associated with these equipment purchases.

Applicants may apply for a support grant for themselves and/or for their child. If you need support for an adult and for child(ren) please make a separate application for each person.

There is a limit of one grant per person per year and grants will be allocated and awarded at the discretion of the city council.

If you require any help with completing the form or would like to discuss your application, please contact the Community Liaison Officer for Ukraine:

Julia Karabut, jkarabut@winchester.gov.uk, Tel: 01962 848061.

Who can apply?

Guests on the Homes for Ukraine visa scheme whose host lived in the Winchester district when the guest arrived to the UK **and/or who** currently lives in the district. Please see our [Ward Map](#) for more information about the area this covers.

Please note: the Council may ask for proof of immigration status, **proof of address and or evidence of a local work connection**.

What can you apply for?

Here are some examples of the types of activities/items that could be funded:

- Vocational or additional English classes
- Professional business advisers
- Funds to cover a test to prove professional skills or knowledge, including English
- Bus pass provision in order to access educational courses or work
- Funds to apply for a certificate of work comparability
- Laptop or phone if it is deemed necessary for work or educational purposes
- Driving familiarisation lessons should that contribute to independence and integration
- Leisure activities passes
- Community activities passes
- Tutoring and educational activities for children (outside of the statutory provision)
- Emergency childcare in exceptional circumstances where that is related to work or education

Funding Themes

Individuals applying for funds to support their independence and adjusting to life in the UK should explain how this support contributes towards the following funding themes:

- Employment
- Removing the language barriers
- Access to transport
- Access to community activities
- Supporting children and young people to adjust to life in the UK

We are unable to fund:

Applicants	Types of ineligible support
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individuals not on HFU visa scheme• Individuals whose hosts are non-Winchester residents• Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A need which occurs outside the United Kingdom• Personal expenses• Tickets to entertainment and cultural events• Medical services/items which can be provided free of charge by the NHS• Essential white goods or items of furniture, any kind of furnishings (refer to Housing support)• Any kind of direct financial support: debt, investments, insolvency costs, rent, repairs costs, taxes• Car and insurance related expenses• Day to day / everyday childcare• Retrospective funding of services/activities already undertaken or incurred

Application

To apply please follow this link to an online form: [Flexigrant online application form](#).

You will need to create an account to login to the system. You will then be able to start an application. Please make sure you complete all sections of the application form and upload all the documents requested. Further evidence may be requested to support the application if necessary.

Each application will be assessed against the grant eligibility and criteria.

Funding decisions are delegated to Winchester City Council's Town Centre and Community Manager and Communities and Wellbeing Service Lead. The initial assessment is undertaken by the Community Liaison Officer (Ukraine) based on the application and evidence provided.

Should it be necessary, you may be invited for a brief discussion about your application. Applications will be approved or declined **within 15 working days** from the date of submitting the application.

The council's decisions with regards to funding are discretionary and therefore there is no appeals process.

Method of payment

The council's payment preference will be to make the payment direct to the applicant upon the provision of a receipt in respect of the agreed item(s)/services paid for or alternatively where deemed appropriate direct to the supplier.

Where applicable other methods of payment might be considered at the discretion of the council.

Winchester City Council reserves the right to fund less than the amount requested in the application form.

Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for consideration, applicants must comply with all the following criteria:

1. Individuals applying for funding must be a Ukrainian on the Homes for Ukraine Scheme (whose host lived in the Winchester district upon the guest's arrival into to the UK) **and/or be** currently living in the district.
2. The purpose of the funding must be able to support at least one of our funding themes.
3. This grant is means tested and **won't be granted should the applicant have savings over £6,000.**
4. Item(s)/services **cannot be applied for or funded retrospectively** (applicants must wait for a formal decision and offer of their award before making a purchase)

Applicants should always try to satisfy their need via existing support and provide detailed reasons as to why the funding is required.

Notes.

1) Why record officer decisions?

The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 require local authorities to produce a written statement of an executive decision made by an officer as soon as is reasonably practicable after the decision is taken (see Paragraph 13). This written statement must include the information requested in the questions of the pro forma on the previous page.

2) What sort of decisions are there?

- a) **Key decisions.** A key decision is defined by Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 as being an executive decision which is likely:
 - i. To result in the local authority incurring expenditure, which is or the making of savings which are significant having regard to the local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; **(For Winchester City Council, the financial limit above which a decision is regarded as significant is £250,000 per year), or;**
 - ii. To be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the local authority.

A decision taker may only make a key decision in accordance with the requirements of the Cabinet Procedure Rules, Access to Information Procedure Rules (Part 4) and the Officer Scheme of Delegation (Part 3) of this Constitution.

- b) **Non-Key Decisions.** Officers will usually take non-key executive decisions. A non-key decision is an executive decision that does not meet either criterion of a key decision as laid out above. These decisions are divided into significant operational decisions and administrative decisions.
 - 1. **Significant Operational (Non-Key) Decisions.** This is a decision in relation to a Council or executive function which is not a key decision and results in one of the following:
 - i. Revenue expenditure or making savings (including the receipt or loss of income) between £100,000 and £250,000 per year;
 - ii. Capital expenditure (i.e. if they involve entering into new commitments and/or making savings) and/or contract awards of between £100,000 and £250,000
 - iii. When, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, the Section 151 Officer or Monitoring Officer, a published record of the decision is required to provide openness and transparency.
 - iv. A significant decision should be recorded in order to comply with Regulation 13 (Recording of executive decisions made by individuals) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 (No. 2089).
 - 2. **"Other" Decision.** Regulation 7 of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulation 2014 requires a written record to be produced as soon as reasonably practicable after an officer has made a decision under delegation which a) grants a permission or licence or b) affects the rights of an individual.
 - 3. **Administrative Decision:** *(these do not require recording on this form unless one or more of the following applies)*
 - i. There is a financial implication;
 - ii. It is in conflict with the Budget and Policy Framework or other approved policies approved by full Council; and
 - iii. It raises new issues of policy.

3) Which officer decisions need to be recorded on this form?

Officers need to record:

- 1) any key decision, i.e., decisions that have a significant effect on 2 or more divisions, or have a cost/saving of £250,000 or more. (see 2A above)
- 2) any Significant Operational Decisions. (see 2B (1) above)
- 3) "Other" officer decisions regarding the granting of a permission or licence or that affect the rights of an individual (see 2B (2) above)
- 4) Administrative decisions for which there is a financial implication.

4) What are the relevant processes to be followed?

For all decisions, the report author needs to complete the Forthcoming Decisions record in Sharepoint.

Establish which type of decision it is (see 2 A and 2B above.)

Most officer decisions require to be recorded on this form (see 3 above) Once completed, please ensure that it is reviewed by legal, finance and the relevant Director prior to signing. Once approved, the form should be forwarded to Democratic Services for adding to the Council's website where it can be viewed by members of the public on the decisions page (unless it is an Administrative decision).

Public Sector Equality Duty. Contact your Corporate Head of Service should you require any clarification regarding the council's Public Sector Equality, including whether you may need to complete an impact assessment as part of this decision record.