

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

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 continue and extend the Homes for Ukraine Independence Support Fund financial support to Ukrainians on the Homes for Ukraine visa scheme with a second phase, and to allocate an additional £150,000 of HFU funding to this purpose.
2. To adopt the amended criteria for the Independence Support Fund as shown in appendix 1.

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

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Key Decision (Executive) & Subject to Call-In (see section 2A on reverse of this form) Note, these decisions are published on winchester.gov.uk |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Significant Operational Decision (see section 2B (1) on reverse of this form). Note, these decisions are published on winchester.gov.uk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Decisions to be Published (see section 2B (2) on reverse of this form) Note, these decisions are published on winchester.gov.uk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 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 included 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, is £689,037. This funding has been received over three financial years.

	New funding received	Funding spent / committed	Underspent balance at year end
22/23	£118,000	£46,537	£71,463 (transferred to reserve)
23/24	final payment for 22/23 - £442,537	£157,101	£413,936 (awaiting c/f to 24/25)
	£128,500		
24/25	0	£275,296	£138,640
	£689,037	£478,934	

The financial commitments to date during 2024/25 are summarised in the table below. This leaves a total of £210,103; comprising £138,640 unspent at the end of 2023/24 and £71,463 in the HFU reserve.

	Actual spend	Commitments/ projected spend	Total
Spend / commitments to date in 2024/25:			
Ukrainian community photography exhibition - Nutshell May 2025	£455	£1,545	£2,000
Employment support workshops - 6 weeks workshops x 2		£10,000	£10,000
Incuhive: business support		£7,000	£7,000
Qualifications comparability bundle		£1,000	£1,000
Art classes = to end of March 2025 (age 5-11)		£5,000	£5,000
Independence Day cultural cohesion event - August 2024		£8,000	£8,000
WUCA - community support grant		£3,000	£3,000
Active me - holiday camps - to end March 2025		£6,000	£6,000
Wellbeing support: age 11-16 (Youth Counselling)		£10,000	£10,000
Peer-to-peer support service (Olive Branch) to end March 2025	£7,400	£18,500	£25,900
Hall Hire : Independent support forum hall hire - May 2024	£49	£800	£849
<i>HFU Independence Support Fund phase 1</i>	£12,163	£34,384	£46,547
	£20,067	£105,229	£125,296
Spend associated with this decision record:			
<i>HFU Independence Support Fund phase 2</i>		£150,000	£150,000
Totals:	£20,067	£255,229	£275,296

The additional sums committed in this decision record total £150,000, leaving £210,103 remaining to spend (total funding £689,037, less £478,934) and means that 30% of the funding remains uncommitted to date.

It has recently been confirmed that the HFU scheme will be extended further, until the end of March 2026, and the remaining uncommitted sum of £210,103 will be sufficient to deliver an appropriate programme of support for the extended period.

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). Then another £100,000 was allocated (see significant operational decision record dated 20 December 2023). The £150,000 committed to date has made a difference to 236 Ukrainian residents' integration, participation in community activities and digital inclusion. Payments have been made totaling £103,453 in 23/24 and £12,163 in 24/25, with a further £22,128 awarded but not yet claimed. This leaves £12,256 of the allocated £150,000 yet to be allocated.

Through our recent survey and general feedback received from approximately 70 applicants they have said that grant awards have helped them with their English studies, access to community activities, digital connectivity and social integration. We will continue to ensure that all those people who are on the scheme have the opportunity to access this targeted financial support.

The applications continue coming in and we would like to offer guests the opportunity to apply for a second time. The Fund has been extremely popular amongst guests and continues to be well subscribed, so it is recommended that a further £150,000 be made available, bringing the total for this fund over the life of the HFU scheme to £300,000. This conforms with the work plan detailed in the January 2023 Cabinet report.

The applicants who have already received funding in 2023/24 financial year will be able to apply again in 2024/25 financial year with minimum 4 months between the applications. To make the fund equitable to all, the funding will remain open for first time applicants as well. The proposed criteria for the scheme has therefore been amended slightly, as highlighted in yellow in the new criteria in appendix 1.

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 community support interventions and the establishment of this scheme doesn't preclude any of the other interventions coming forward.

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 an online meeting on 15 April 2024.

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"/>	Kevin Harlow
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?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open
<input type="checkbox"/> Part Exempt. Please expand
<input type="checkbox"/> 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:
16 June 2024



Susan Robbins,
 Corporate Head of Economy and Community

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

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



Homes for Ukraine Independence Support Fund 2024/2025

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 financial year and grants will be allocated and awarded at the discretion of the city council. If you have received funding in 23/24 financial year and would like to apply again in 24/25 financial year it should be at least 4 months between the previous award payment date and new application. Please note if anyone in your family applied for a digital device – new application should meet other funding theme.

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 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• Non-district residents (you need to be consistently living at least 6 month to become a resident in Winchester district for this grant purposes)• 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. The receipt should have the name of the applicant, agreed item and costings.

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 living in the district for at least 6 months.
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:
- 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;
 - 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:
 - Revenue expenditure or making savings (including the receipt or loss of income) between £100,000 and £250,000 per year;
 - 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
 - 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.
 - 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*)
 - There is a financial implication;
 - It is in conflict with the Budget and Policy Framework or other approved policies approved by full Council; and
 - 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.