

Council Response to the War in Ukraine

To: Communities, Social Mobility, and Inclusion Committee

Meeting Date: 14 April 2022

From: Interim Service Director: Communities and Partnerships, Paul Fox

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable

Outcome: To provide this Committee with an update of the reaction of the Council in relation to the war in Ukraine, in particular in relation to responsibilities and responses regarding the arrival of refugees.

Recommendation: The Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee is asked to note and endorse the actions set out in this paper and the verbal update that will be given to the meeting.

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Member contacts:

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1. Background

- 1.1 The Russian invasion of Ukraine has led to significant numbers of people fleeing the country, predominantly women and children.
- 1.2 The UK Government response to the war in, and support to, Ukraine has taken several forms. This report predominantly relates to the provision of a haven for refugees and the resulting implications for Cambridgeshire County Council and its partners.
- 1.3 In addition to the above:
 - 1.3.1 A letter from Cambridgeshire leaders to the Home Secretary called for the Prime Minister and the UK Government to showing greater compassion for those in the greatest and most immediate need, see below:

[Letter to the Home Office regarding conflict in Ukraine from leaders in Cambridgeshire - Cambridgeshire County Council website](#)

- 1.3.2 On 15th March, Councillor Stephen Ferguson, the Chair of the Council, gave a statement gave an address which was unanimously supported by Full Council, see below:

[Chair of Full Council's statement regarding Ukraine - Cambridgeshire County Council website](#)

- 1.3.3 At the time of writing, the Council continues to demonstrate solidarity with the people of Ukraine by flying the Ukrainian national flag at New Shire Hall.
 - 1.3.4 Information for the public on how they can support the people of the Ukraine is set out on the Council's website at:

[Standing with Ukraine - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 The main issues in this paper relate to the Council's response to the arrival of refugees from Ukraine under the two government schemes: the Family Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.
- 2.2 This is a rapidly developing policy area and the timelines for committee reports mean that any detail provided is likely to become rapidly out of date.
- 2.3 For the latest detail on the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, Members are directed to:

[Homes for Ukraine: Guidance for Councils - www.gov.uk](#)

- 2.4 For the latest details on the Ukraine Family Scheme members are directed to:

[Apply for a Ukraine Family Scheme visa www.gov.uk](#)

- 2.5 The establishment of the countywide 'Local Resilience Forum' has been requested to formerly secure the cross-partnership emergency planning process and formally oversee strategic and tactical response.
- 2.6 A Cambridgeshire Ukraine Response Group has been established to bring together a system-wide partnership response. Attendees include representatives from all district and city councils, Think Communities, Library Services, Early Help, Education, Public Health, CCG and Community Voluntary Sector representatives. The group is following a similar approach to that provided by the Afghanistan Refugee Programme, as many support requirements are similar in nature, except for sourcing accommodation.
- 2.7 Under the leadership of the County Council, the group meets at least weekly to:
- Collate and review government data on arrivals;
 - Co-ordinate the local response, including safeguarding and accommodation checks;
 - Prepare welcome packs for arrivals, which include signposting for immediate welfare needs;
 - Discuss and address any emerging cohesion / welfare or local community support needs;
 - Bring about a joined up, system wide response that uses all relevant resources;
 - Co-ordinate internal and external communications, ensuring that residents and staff are aware of what is happening, and how they can help support the work of services and community groups.
- 2.8 District councils are using government guidance available to form their own local tasking groups which the County Council, health, and community voluntary services will link with to ensure a consistent, but local, response.
- 2.9 The County Council has allocated project management resource to support the countywide Response Group, as well as ensure robust oversight of information sharing, operating procedures, and data reporting to the government.
- 2.9.1 As the guidance, information and response will evolve between the time of drafting and the date of the Committee, the Committee will receive a presentation/ verbal update of the issues current at the time of the meeting.

3. Alignment with corporate priorities

3.1 Communities at the heart of everything we do

Our response should and will put communities at its centre. The Ukraine response group has representation from the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and our Think Communities Service will play a key role in linking County, district and VCS wraparound offers.

3.2 A good quality of life for everyone

The aim of our response is to support the resettlement of this group in the most inclusive way possible, responding to both specific needs and universal services to provide 'wrap around' support to those arriving under these schemes

3.3 Helping our children learn, develop and live life to the full

Our multi-agency, cross-sectoral approach will include consideration of the needs of children and young people.

3.4 Cambridgeshire: a well-connected, safe, clean, green environment

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.5 Protecting and caring for those who need us

Our multi-agency, cross-sectoral approach will include consideration of the most vulnerable and in need.

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

The impact on Council services is difficult to estimate given the numbers arriving under these schemes cannot be estimated in advance. However, we are seeking to use data available to us to estimate changes in demand for our services. The government has indicated that there will be a £10,500 allocation to local authorities per individual in year one of the scheme. There are no commitments for similar funding for future years, although the government has indicated this will be kept under review. Further guidance on the use of this funding is awaited at the time of writing, although it appears that the money will be paid to upper-tier local authorities. The proportion to be allocated to lower tier local authorities will be a matter for local determination.

In addition, the government is also providing additional funding to councils to provide education services for children from families arriving from Ukraine under this scheme. The Department for Education (DfE) will allocate funding on a per pupil basis for the three phases of education at the following annual rates:

- Early years (ages 2 to 4) - £3,000
- Primary (ages 5 -11) - £6,580
- Secondary (ages 11-18) - £8,755

These tariffs include support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

None

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

The implications for checking the DBS status of both sponsors and guests under the scheme are unclear at the time of writing.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

This is a response to a specific group identified by their status as refugees eligible for travel to the UK under a defined UK Government scheme.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

The significant engagement and communications issues arising from these schemes will be considered through membership of the relevant groups set up to take forward the work in this area. There is a communications strategy and group established.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

Community engagement and VCS involvement sits at the heart of our response to this issue. Member involvement should and will play a key part in this, but should recognise the relative roles and responsibilities of the Council and its partners.

4.7 Public Health Implications

Support will be needed to enable refugees to access appropriate health services for their physical, emotional, and mental health needs as well as any prevention, screening, and vaccination needs.

4.8 Environment and Climate Change Implications on Priority Areas:

4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.

Neutral Status:

4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.

Neutral Status:

4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats, and land management.

Neutral Status:

4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.

Neutral Status:

4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability, and management:

Neutral Status:

4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.

Neutral Status:

4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure, and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.

Neutral Status:

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Martin Wade

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the Head of Procurement? N/A

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law? Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes

Name of Officer: Paul Fox Interim Director of Communities and Partnerships.

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications? Yes

Name of Officer: Amanda Rose

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes

Name of Officer: Paul Fox, Interim Director of Communities and Partnerships.

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health? Yes

Name of Officer: Val Thomas

5. Source documents guidance

5.1 Source documents

As per substantive report

5.2 Location

As per substantive report