

THE EMERGENCY RESETTLEMENT OF PEOPLE FROM UKRAINE IN ARGYLL AND BUTE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The war in Ukraine has resulted in a humanitarian crisis with over 12 million Ukrainians having fled their homes. There are two sponsorship schemes operating to welcome and support Ukrainian Displaced People to gain safety and sanctuary and rebuild their lives in Scotland.
- 1.2 The UK Government's Homes for Ukraine scheme relies on individuals in the UK acting as a sponsor and matching with people displaced from Ukraine. The Ukrainian refugee matches with a sponsor before applying for a visa. The Scottish Government's Super Sponsor scheme works within the UK Government's Ukraine sponsorship scheme and removes the need for applicants to be matched prior to being given permission travel to the UK. By acting as 'Super Sponsor', rather than waiting for the UK Government's matching process, Scotland could provide safety and sanctuary and welcome significant numbers. The Scottish Government's scheme was paused in July 2022 and no further visas have been issued.
- 1.3 In Argyll and Bute we have welcomed Ukrainians through both sponsorship schemes. In spring of 2023 we invited researchers from the University of Glasgow to undertake a review of our resettlement support and hear first-hand the experiences of people from Ukraine who have resettled here. The report from Dr Esa Aldegheri and Dr Dan Fisher, appended, presents the main findings of this research for elected members' consideration.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- 2.1 Endorse the terms of the report, which sets out a positive picture in respect of resettlement of people from Ukraine in Argyll and Bute.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 In Argyll and Bute we are currently supporting over 300 displaced persons from Ukraine within our communities. The council's resettlement team and the wider multi agency partnership provide humanitarian support to recover from trauma, to resettle into a new community and to navigate the complexities of life in the UK.
- 3.2 Many of our Ukrainian refugees have come to Argyll and Bute through the Scottish Government's welcome accommodation, hotels, and been matched by the resettlement team to a host or been allocated social housing or sourced private rented properties. The Glasgow University researchers were able to interview Ukrainians living in communities across the authority, on both visa schemes and in different types of accommodation. Thus giving a wide picture of the resettlement programme and the support provided.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Glasgow University report provides an invaluable review of the Ukrainian programme and highlights a very positive response by the communities of Argyll and Bute in welcoming and supporting Ukrainians fleeing the war.
- 4.2 This report will be shared with representatives of both Scottish and UK Governments, CoSLA and Scottish Refugee Council and would, we hope, help inform current practice and any future humanitarian crisis.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy - No policy implications for Council. Resettlement support is provided aligned to the integrators of integration in New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy 2024 which is led jointly by Scottish Government, CoSLA and Scottish Refugee Council
- 5.2 Financial - Funding is received from both the UK and Scottish Government's and the current budget is fully committed with a contingency in place to deal with unexpected costs.
- 5.3 Legal - No implications
- 5.4 HR - A number of posts have been created on a temporary basis to support the resettlement team and funded by government funding.
- 5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: - No Fairer Scotland Duty implications
- 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics
- 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty
- 6.5.3 Islands
- 5.6 Climate Change - No climate change implications
- 5.7 Risk - No implications

- 5.8 Customer Service - Council services have access to interpreters and translators to ensure Ukrainians can access information and use local services.
- 5.9 The Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - by its very nature this work covers a significant number of the articles.

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Appendix 1: A Report on the Emergency Resettlement of People from Ukraine in Argyll and Bute by Dr Esa Aldegheri and Dr Dan Fisher, University of Glasgow