



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

Clive Betts MP,  
Chair of the Levelling Up, Housing and  
Communities Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

**Jeremy Pocklington CB**  
*Permanent Secretary*

***Department for Levelling Up, Housing and  
Communities***

4th Floor, Fry Building  
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18 March 2022

Dear Clive,

**DLUHC's work on the Homes for Ukraine scheme and support to local authorities,  
including guidance on procurement**

During the 2020-2021 Annual Report and Accounts Committee hearing on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022, I committed to write to your committee with further information about the new sponsorship scheme 'Homes for Ukraine' and what we are doing to support local authorities who wish to end contracts with Russian companies, such as Gazprom.

**'Homes for Ukraine'**

The Homes for Ukraine scheme will allow people seeking sanctuary with no family ties to the UK to be sponsored by individuals or organisations who can offer them a home such as a spare room or unoccupied residential self-contained unit. The scheme will be uncapped, open to Ukrainian nationals and immediate family members of Ukrainian nationals, who will be able to live and work in the UK for up to three years and also access benefits, healthcare, employment and other support. Our aim, through this route, is to offer a safe, warm welcome to as many arrivals as possible, based on the number of sponsors.

We are asking that sponsors provide accommodation for a minimum of six months. We appreciate people's generosity and do know there will be costs associated with helping out – so we are offering an optional 'thank you' payment of £350 per month to people who can accommodate one or more household (subject to the accommodation they have) for up to 12 months. This thank you payment is limited to one payment per residential address. Our intention is that these payments will be tax free for individuals and will not affect benefit entitlement and will legislate if necessary. Sponsors should not charge rent. They will not be expected to cover the costs of food and living expenses, although they may wish to offer this philanthropically.

We want to minimise bureaucracy and make the process as straightforward as possible while ensuring the safety of all involved. Those arriving will therefore need to meet standard security checks. Sponsors and all adults in the sponsoring households will also be subject to security checks and may be subject to safeguarding checks too. We envisage that Homes for Ukraine will initially be used by those with known connections. Over time, we expect to see the scheme develop further, through our work with charities, faith groups and community groups, to ensure that prospective sponsors can be matched with beneficiaries whose needs correspond well with their ability to help.

Meanwhile, alongside the support routes described above, we are giving thought to longer-term interventions to ensure that incoming individuals receive the long-term support they need.

### **Local authority support**

I know that local authorities will want to play their part in supporting people who have been through so much to feel at home in the UK. In this we are learning from recent experience with the Afghan resettlement programme. I am committed to working with them to achieve this and also on efforts to provide a full wraparound service that also encompasses sponsors. As such, we will be providing funding at a rate of £10,500 per person, with an additional top-up for child education to enable them to provide much wider support to families to rebuild their lives and fully integrate into communities. Further details, including on allocation, will be shared shortly and guidance will be published in the coming days. We will continue to listen to feedback as we get this new scheme off the ground to ensure it works effectively for local authorities, sponsors and beneficiaries.

### **Local procurement rules**

As with other public bodies, local authorities are considering any contracts they may have with Russian owned companies. Some local authorities have already publicly set out their intention to terminate contracts with Gazprom UK. The department is encouraging all local authorities to scrutinise their contracts and determine their exposure to Russian and Belarusian owned companies. As independent bodies it is for each individual local authority to make their own decisions, which will be influenced by a range of factors such as cost, the term of contract left to run and alternative supply.

The department has been engaging with those councils that have exposure to Gazprom and is working closely with the LGA to gain as full an understanding as possible of the exposure of the sector, not only to Russian and Belarusian owned companies but to the spiralling energy prices. The Secretary of State has written to all local authorities and DLUHC is working across Government, including the Cabinet Office who hold the policy lead for procurement, to ensure that the right advice and support is provided to local authorities as soon as practically possible.

The challenge for any councils that wish to exit any Russian contracts, is that local authorities are subject to Section 17 of the Local Government Act 1988. This section prohibits councils from taking into account in their procurement decisions non-commercial considerations, including the location of any country or territory of the business activities or interests of contractors, or from terminating contracts for non-commercial reasons. The Department is taking advice and reviewing this restriction. I will update the Committee when this review has been completed.

Yours sincerely,



**JEREMY POCKLINGTON**