

To: Minister with Special Responsibility for Refugees from Ukraine

UKRAINE RESPONSE: CONTINGENCY PLANNING TO DEAL WITH SHORTAGE OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

Purpose

1. To advise you of our intention to engage Local Authority Resilience leads on their business continuity plans for accommodating displaced people from Ukraine.
2. To provide a draft note for you to send to the First Minister by way of an update on temporary accommodation provision

Priority

3. Urgent.

Current Situation in Temporary Accommodation

4. The situation in temporary accommodation remains extremely challenging. We currently have 1288 hotel rooms booked which, if maintained, would cost £7 million per month. The hotels are running at over 90% capacity, with a small contingency held for overnight arrivals.
5. Officials continue to work to secure more hotel and temporary accommodation, including universities, large scale private offers and public service providers. However, availability is greatly reduced by the summer season, and limited availability e.g. university accommodation is only available until the new academic term starts.
6. Officials are continuing to explore all options to ensure people are safely accommodated whilst the matching service is accelerated to meet the demand. Current data predicts that we need 600 – 750 additional hotel rooms in the next 4 weeks, unless the matching service begins to output at the same rate as arrivals. There is, therefore, a risk that we may find ourselves, at short notice, without accommodation for arrivals and incurring ongoing hotel costs of £10-£11 million per month.

Next Steps

7. Officials consider it timely to engage discreetly with Local Authority Resilience leads to ensure they are able and ready to step up business continuity measures if we reach a point where no accommodation is available for displaced people arriving. These business continuity measures are likely to be camp-beds in reception centres.

8. This would be led by Local Authorities through their local resilience partnerships to gain access to town halls, schools, churches etc. Edinburgh City Council's planning for this situation has already begun, with a number of camp-beds stored at the Welcome Hub.
9. Whilst it is hoped that these measures do not have to be used, it is prudent that local authorities are ready to react quickly, in order to ensure that all displaced people arriving are safely accommodated. It is expected that this would be a Scotland-wide ask, reducing pressure on already stretched local authorities.
10. This would be used as a last resort and every effort made to ensure that it was for the least amount of time possible.
11. All other options will be exhausted before contingency options such as reception centres are used. Scenario planning work is underway and the outputs from that will form more detailed advice on the best and worst case scenarios for the next 12 months, including what contingency measures may be needed, as well as the broader impact on public services. Further detailed advice will follow in July.
12. In addition to contingency options such as reception centres, following discussions on 29 June with Director EIHR and DG Communities, consideration is now being given to pausing the super sponsor scheme.

Recommendations

13. That you note our intent to engage Local Authority Resilience leads to ensure they are able and ready to step up business continuity measures.
14. That you provide the note at **Annex A** to the First Minister as an update.

[redacted – s38(1)(b)]
Deputy Director, Ukraine Response Team
30 June 2022

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness
Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development and Minister with special responsibility for refugees from Ukraine	X				
Permanent Secretary Director General Communities Alison Byrne Miriam Craven [redacted – s38(1)(b)]					

<p>[redacted – s38(1)(b)] [redacted – s38(1)(b)] [redacted – s38(1)(b)] [redacted – s38(1)(b)] [redacted – s38(1)(b)] Ukraine Welcome and Integration team Ukraine Longer Term Support team Ukraine Resettlement team Ukraine Warm Welcome Data team Jeanette Campbell (Special Advisor)</p>	
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ANNEX A – NOTE TO FIRST MINISTER

First Minister

Copy:

Deputy First Minister

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

[redacted – s29(1)(b) and 30(a)]

Neil Gray

Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development and Minister with special responsibility for Refugees from Ukraine

Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development – Meeting with Permanent Secretary

BACKGROUND

- As at the end of 3 July, 6,767 people with a Scottish sponsor have arrived in the UK: 4,160 super sponsor arrivals and 2,607 arrivals sponsored privately [information not in the public domain]. This is the highest per head of population of the four nations of the UK.
- The **rate of arrivals continues to increase**: we are now around 90 displaced people arriving every day under the Scottish super sponsorship scheme, compared to around 65 per day in late May.

WELCOME HUBS

- More than 3,500 people have been triaged at Welcome Hubs with 2,500 in short-term hotel accommodation. Across the hotel estate, we are regularly **exceeding 95% capacity**.
- Officials continue to work closely with local authorities to identify additional temporary accommodation. However, they are very concerned about availability of temporary accommodation as we move into the weekend of 9-10 July – there is a real possibility that capacity will be exceeded.
- The Minister will be aware of committed costs in the region of £35 million for short-term accommodation, with initial estimates for the financial year emerging in the region of at least a further £200 million in an optimistic ‘best case scenario’. As part of this, officials are actively exploring non-standard accommodation such as passenger ships in the region of £50 million.

NATIONAL MATCHING SERVICE

- Focus remains on matching guests to longer-term accommodation. As of 4 July, cases representing 1,537 people in hotels had been referred by local authorities to the national matching service. Of these, only around 13% (201 people) have gone on to be matched and settled into longer-term accommodation.
- The matching process is resource intensive **[redacted s30(b)(i)]**
- Displaced people are also refusing housing offers, where offers are not in their preferred locations. Work is ongoing to support empathetic but honest discussion with displaced people on longer-term housing options.
- You wrote to council leaders on 1 July. In addition to urging them to come forward with additional temporary accommodation, he set a deadline for completing checks on the initial cohort of volunteer hosts through best endeavours by mid-July and no later than the end of July. He also sought proposals for additional longer-term accommodation, reminding of SG’s offer to provide funding to support refurbishment of properties.

NEXT STEPS

Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development – Meeting with Permanent Secretary

- You wrote to the First Minister on 1 July proposing that the Super Sponsor scheme should be paused.
- The Welsh Government paused their own super sponsor scheme last month. However, if it must be remembered that any pause to the Scottish super sponsor scheme would not solve the immediate need for short term accommodation.
- Ultimately, pressures on temporary accommodation must be eased by accelerating the matching process to allow displaced people to move out of hotels and into longer-term accommodation.
- However, due to pressures to provide accommodation immediately on arrival, all options for short term accommodation must be “on the table”.
- Based on visas granted to date, we would anticipate that an additional 6000 people will arrive in Scotland beyond those already here. Rates of visa approval continue to increase, so that number will continue to grow exponentially.
- Urgent advice is being prepared for the First Minister on additional possibilities for making more temporary accommodation available. This includes the possibility of using non-standard accommodation such as passenger ships.
- Mr Gray will be meeting with the First Minister on Thursday 7 July to discuss the situation further.

Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development – Meeting with Permanent Secretary

ANNEX A

LATEST PUBLISHED VISA DATA:

Location	Sponsor	Number of visa applications	Number of visas issued	Number of arrivals in the UK by sponsor location
England	Sponsored by individuals	79,614	69,805	49,205
Northern Ireland	Sponsored by individuals	1,425	1,163	294
Scotland	Sponsored by individuals	4,255	3,748	2,470
	Sponsored by the Scottish Government	18,540	13,682	3,878
	Total	22,795	17,430	6,348
Wales	Sponsored by individuals	3,340	2,900	1,999
	Sponsored by the Welsh Government	4,898	4,135	1,275
	Total	8,238	7,035	3,274

SPONSORSHIP SCHEME – ARRIVAL SCENARIOS

