

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 14 May 2024

Ukraine Support Service – Grant Awards for continuation of services under Urgency Provisions for Feniks Counselling, Personal Development and Support Services Ltd and Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (Edinburgh Branch)

Executive/Routine
Wards

Routine
All

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee notes:
- 1.1.1 That the following grants were awarded as an urgent decision, in accordance with section 4.1 of the Council's Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Functions, by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Convenor:
 - 1.1.1.1 Continuation of Mental Health provision and support provided to displaced Ukrainian nationals from Feniks Counselling, Personal Development and Support Services Ltd, and
 - 1.1.1.2 Continuation of services to provide youth work provided by the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (Edinburgh Branch).
 - 1.1.2 That this arrangement covers the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2026, to the value of £371,264.89.

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Executive Director of Place

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2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report updates Committee on the approval given under urgency provisions, to award ringfenced Ukraine Support grant funding for the continuation of Mental Health provision and support provided to displaced Ukrainian nationals by Feniks Counselling, Personal Development and Support Services Ltd, and for the continuation of youth work services provided by the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (Edinburgh Branch).
- 2.2 These grants were awarded and approved under urgency provisions to ensure ongoing services to displaced Ukrainian nationals using ringfenced UK Government Homes for Ukraine Tariff Grant Funding. Failure to award these grants to ensure ongoing provision of these services would place already vulnerable individuals at further risk.

3. Background

- 3.1 In March 2022, the Council established a project team to manage Edinburgh's response to the humanitarian crisis resulting from the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The response has encompassed activity at international, national and local levels and involved the deployment of significant resource by the Council and partners across the public, private and third sectors.
- 3.2 One of the first actions in the city's response, and at the request of the Scottish Government, was to set up a Welcome Hub for arrivals to Edinburgh. Originally envisaged as one of four equal Welcome Hubs across Scotland, Edinburgh quickly became the main arrival point for Scotland.
- 3.3 To date, Edinburgh's Welcome Hub has triaged 11,500 Ukrainian Displaced Persons, with an estimated 3,000 individuals now residing in the city in either

temporary hotel and apartment welcome accommodation; host arrangements; social and mid-market housing, and private rental.

- 3.4 There are three main funding sources supporting the Council's Ukraine response:
- Warm Scottish Welcome Funding (provided by the Scottish Government);
 - Homes for Ukraine Local Authority UK Government Tariff Funding; and
 - UK Government Department for Education Tariff Funding.
- 3.5 A four year funding strategy was developed using year one funds. This allows the Council to continue to support those residing in Edinburgh until the current visa schemes are due to end in 2026.
- 3.6 Many partner organisations had received national funding to provide support services to those residing in Edinburgh from April 2022 up until April 2024.
- 3.7 Within the four year Council funding strategy, a proportion of funding was allocated to continue this provision in years three and four, with the option of this being extended further if required.

4. Main Report

- 4.1 This report notes the approval to continue service provision via Ukraine Support grant funding for the continuation of Mental Health provision and support provided to displaced Ukrainian nationals from Feniks Counselling, Personal Development and Support Services Ltd, and continuation of services to provide youth work provided by the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (Edinburgh Branch).
- 4.2 This grant award will allow these organisations to continue to support displaced Ukrainian Nationals in Edinburgh and will cover the period up to 31 March 2026.
- 4.3 The specifics of support for Ukrainian Displaced Persons are outlined in funding instructions issued by the UK Home Office. These instructions offer a framework for support which is consistent with the principles of the Scottish Government's New Scots strategy and a template to which all support for refugees, asylum seekers and displaced people aspires albeit within different contexts of rights, eligibility and funding dependant on immigration status.

Feniks Counselling, Personal Development and Support Services Ltd

- 4.4 Feniks have been at the forefront of the mental health support network from the first few months of the war given their previous experiences in this sector and have led in this field on behalf of the Edinburgh 3rd Sector interface.
- 4.5 Without the service that they have provided in the city, many local GP practices would have been overwhelmed and they have played a key role in the Council's safeguarding strategy.
- 4.6 In September 2022, Feniks Counselling commissioned their Mental health needs of Ukrainian refugees in Scotland [report](#), which was published in April 2023. The report has helped organisations providing support to refugees to better understand

the needs of the Ukrainian community, and to focus on priority areas to support their mental health needs.

- 4.7 With the support of funding from the Scottish Government in 2022/23 and 2023/24, Feniks created a Ukrainian Community Mental Health Project to respond to the integration and mental health needs of displaced Ukrainians. A Ukrainian Community Development Worker (UCDW) was recruited to create strong links with the Ukrainian community in partnership with the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain and other Edinburgh charities contributing to the third sector's response to the crisis.
- 4.8 Feniks' role has been to identify the long-term needs of displaced Ukrainians as well as respond to the immediate problems affecting Ukrainian settlement in Edinburgh. They mobilised 10 refugee mental health practitioners to establish the Ukrainian Community Mental Health service, and employed two Ukrainian Mental Health Workers in April 2023, each working 10 hours a week. They run two support groups and offer individual mental health sessions and, through volunteers, stay involved in the Ukrainian Community Mental Health project and support other Feniks services to ensure they are welcoming to the community.
- 4.9 Within the first year of the project, Feniks supported over 300 Ukrainian refugees and continues to support over 40 individuals per week.

Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (AUGB Edinburgh Branch)

- 4.10 Since the start of the war against Ukraine and the arrival of displaced Ukrainians in Edinburgh, AUGB Edinburgh has focussed on developing its capacity as an organisation to support the increased size of community.
- 4.11 Working with partners including EVOC and Volunteer Edinburgh AUGB recruited two members of staff to develop the activities and support available at the Ukrainian community centre. One area of focus was the provision of Ukrainian language youth work, working to reduce social isolation for young people. AUGB Edinburgh has also worked closely with Lothian Association of Youth Clubs (LAYC) and Youth Scotland to plan and deliver youth work activities since August 2022
- 4.12 AUGB have delivered a range of youth specific activities including cultural events, a Ukrainian homework club and have developed a weekend Ukrainian school.
- 4.13 Identifying the need to support children and young people, AUGB Edinburgh has developed a children's programme within the Ukrainian Community Centre and partnered with Mission of Innocents and Hibernian Community Foundation to facilitate two further youth work hubs.
- 4.14 Across both the hub at the Ukrainian Community Centre, and the hubs based at Easter Road Stadium and the Wee Hub in Ocean Terminal, the youth work programme of delivery is varied and looks to support a variety of interests of Ukrainian children and young people. The programme across the three hubs regularly supports over 50 Ukrainian children and it is expected that this number will increase as the Ukrainian community settles across Edinburgh.

5. Next Steps

5.1 Officers will continue to liaise with partners and monitor demand for services.

6. Financial impact

6.1 The grant award is for a total value of £371,264.89 as set out in the table below:

Provider	Grant Award Value
Feniks Counselling, Personal Development and Support Services Ltd.	£195,375
Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (Edinburgh Branch)	£175,889.89

6.2 The funding arrangements for this are summarised in paragraphs 3.4 – 4.1.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

7.1 Ukraine Displaced Persons are at risk of socio-economic disadvantage through a range of factors that include unfamiliarity with language and culture, disrupted education and career development and physical or mental trauma associated with their status. The goal of resettlement as a process is to mitigate these risks to the fullest extent possible and enable people to live full, independent lives. Continuing with this funding allows ongoing service provision in line with the visa scheme.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

8.1 All Resettlement services seek to mitigate climate impacts arising from its activities in the following ways:

- Encouraging use of public transport through supporting applications for bus passes for all eligible clients; and
- Encouraging active travel through referrals to Bikes for Refugees.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

9.1 Resettlement is managed with regard to potential for impacts on good community relations. Refugees resettled have reported a small number of negative community experiences, but these have been rare and generally linked to periods of broader community tension (e.g. international conflict or reported terrorist attacks). In evaluation data returned to the Home Office in December 2023 for resettled refugees, the overwhelming majority of adults resettled (95%) reported they either

definitely agreed (71.5%) or tended to agree (23.5%) that their local community is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

- 9.2 The city's Housing emergency is a material risk in terms of all resettlement operations as, due to the various schemes operating for refugees and the availability and affordability of accommodation in Edinburgh, any issues that may increase the risk of homelessness will have a long term social and financial impact.
- 9.3 The lack of strategic coherence between the different humanitarian responses for refugees and asylum seekers has led to increasing competition for local service capacity that exacerbates key pre-existing pressures. COSLA is progressing work to highlight this lack of coherence to the UK and Scottish Governments and seek better coordination.
- 9.4 At local level, following a one-day event in November 2023 (facilitated by the Council in collaboration with Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council (EVOC) and Hibernian Community Foundation) reflecting on the last seven years' experience of resettlement in the city, work has started on development of an Edinburgh strategy for support to asylum seekers, refugees and displaced people. This development is being taken forward on a partnership basis with the aim of linking to the Scottish Government's New Scots strategy. When complete, the strategy will provide an operational framework for Edinburgh and facilitate services that are better coordinated and more resilient. The work is at an early stage, but it has been agreed that Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee will receive six-monthly updates as the work progresses.
- 9.5 This strategy development work builds on the existing city-level communication and coordination of the Edinburgh New Scots Steering Group. Facilitated by colleagues working for and with Scottish Faith Action for Refugees, the group is open to all organisations working with refugees, displaced people and asylum seekers in the city.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [City of Edinburgh Council, 17 March 2022, Motion: Russian Invasion of Ukraine](#)
- 10.2 [New Scots Strategy](#)
- 10.3 [Homes for Ukraine Scheme \(2023-24\) local authority tariff payment grant determination No. 50/ 50/DLUHC17FN240101-32 \(Scotland\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

11. Appendices

- 11.1 None