



## REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION TO CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS

Contract Standing Orders (CSOs) requires certain steps to be followed when carrying out procurement exercises. Exemptions to CSOs can be authorised by Council / Cabinet upon report and separately by officers with the approval of certain senior officers. An exemption can only be relied upon in certain circumstances (as detailed in CSOs Rules 3.1 – 3.5) but in any event cannot be used where the EU Procedure applies.

This form is intended to be used by officers to obtain an exemption to using CSOs.

Name: John Golding	Date: 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2022
Service: Housing, Health & Environment	Team: Community Engagement
	Total contract value: £32,000

Background (including product and supplier details, costs etc):

Government has stated that we (local authorities) need to provide 'wraparound support' for both Ukrainian refugees arriving in East Devon under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and their host/sponsor families. They have given minimal guidance on what this should be in practice. In most other local authority areas this is being provided by their Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) or a local group ready and able to deliver the service. We are in the unfortunate position in East Devon of being the only district in Devon without a CVS so have had to spend time researching what could be / should be provided, and by who.

As of mid-May I am aware of 95 sponsor households have offered accommodation and to be hosts, which we estimate could accommodate circa. 300 Ukrainian Refugees. We have inspected 66 properties with a further 25 visits booked. We have made 67 subsistence payments to 28 households, and 22 hosts have applied for monthly payments.

We anticipate being able to access the Government promised £10,500 per refugee fund to finance the wraparound support proposed below, once this is available, and on this basis have proceeded to commission the service 'at risk'.

I have relied upon delegated authority to initiate the following package:

- Commission the East Devon Citizens Advice to provide wraparound support for a 6 month period – Total commitment for service: £32,000 initially
- Provide the Ukraine café in Exeter with a grant to support their work – Total commitment for service: £5,000
- Commission Devon Communities Together to provide further wraparound support to compliment the work they currently do – Total commitment: £5,600

Total financial request = £42,600

East Devon Citizens Advice to provide a wraparound support service for Ukrainian refugees and host/sponsor households.

A Service Level Agreement has been prepared for the commissioned service (copy attached). The cost for the initial six month period of service is £32,000.

The support package includes two other elements detailed below:

**Devon for Ukraine / Community Conversations Café – more social, wellbeing and informal side of support**

Devon for Ukraine are a new group that have set up within the last few weeks to provide support. They are a group of Ukrainian nationals / Russian speakers from the Ukrainian community within Exeter.

They have set up a Ukraine Café in Paris Street, Exeter, which is providing basic advice and peer to peer support from people that speak the Ukrainian language and know the culture, that have already been living here a while, and will be running social events for both host families and Ukrainian refugees.

As the majority of our host families are coming forward from Cranbrook, Exmouth and Honiton, all of which have good public transport links into Exeter, we intend signposting people to the Ukraine Café for the more social / peer to peer side of support that they would find incredibly useful. This could help reduce relationship break down between refugees and hosts, reduce social isolation, reduce mental health issues, and could prevent demand on statutory services in the future.

They currently have only one paid worker, and the remainder of support is provided by volunteers. They are currently being given the physical space they use by Princesshay for free on a month to month basis until they can gather in grants to help contribute towards the costs of the facility.

They are only just setting up the group formally and have only just established a bank account. We would like to offer them some support to get together their data protection, safeguarding and whatever else they might need to get going more formally. This support could be provided by Devon Communities Together, as it is the kind of thing they do frequently. However, DCT would want funding support to provide this service.

I am proposing that we offer the Ukraine Café a small amount of funding for providing this service for our refugees once they have safeguarding, data protection etc. in place, at least initially until they get established. We suggest a grant of around £5,000 and then we could consider giving them further support again in 6 months' time once we have seen what has developed, how much funding they have gathered in from other sources, what their costs are, and how useful it has been. We can specify exactly what this grant could be spent on, as we would want to make sure it is a facility that East Devon refugees and host families would use, bearing in mind the services proposed to be provided by East Devon Citizen's Advice. We will specify things like having Ukrainian nationals present in the Café to provide informal peer to peer support, and funding social events.

**Devon Communities Together**

In our discussions with potential support providers and developing vision we envisage a role for Devon Communities Together (DCT) to support this scheme and provide resilience.

There are currently two gaps that we have asked DCT to put a proposal together to fill:

- As discussed in item 2 above, Devon for Ukraine and their Ukraine Café are very new and do not as yet have a full range of policies / procedures etc. in place. Helping voluntary groups set up properly is something that DCT do regularly. DCT have stated that they require £2,800 to provide this service.
- Gathering information on what quality support is being offered by other voluntary groups throughout East Devon, for example Ottery Refugee Group, Sid Valley Lions etc. EDCA can then use this information for signposting purposes if necessary and links can be made where appropriate. DCT have indicated that a further £2,800 would be the cost of this service.

Business Reasons for an Exemption:

Although the following are justifiably accepted as valid reasons for an exemption to Contract Standing Orders, they are closely monitored and should be applied only in cases where a full procurement exercise is not a viable option. (Tick appropriate boxes)

	✓	Which CSO rule?
An Emergency	✓	3.2
Goods or Services to existing systems or kit		
Purchase or repair of patented or proprietary articles sold only at a fixed price		
Effective competition is prevented by government control		
Goods and/or Services recommended by a Central Government Department		
Extension to an existing contract for the purpose of achieving Best Value		
Purchase or Sale by Auction		

Where the Contract is with a Public Utility Company or other organisation which will assume liability for the works on completion e.g. sewer adoption		
Other Reasons (please provide details)		

Business Benefits for an Exemption:

There is an urgent need and expectation to provide a support service for Ukrainian refugees and host/sponsor households. Some refugees have arrived in the district and this service is essential for their welcome, integration and wellbeing. Host or sponsor families are also needing advice and support on aspects of their refugee households stay, welfare etc.

What are the implications to the following:

Finance: The cost will be recovered from the government funding.

Human Resources:

ICT:

Asset Management:

Strategic and/or Operational Objectives:

Risk Assessment:

Detail risks here: There is a risk that the service is overwhelmed with demand. Numbers known are currently manageable and the SLA is scalable, but will involve additional cost. DCC has agreed to underwrite 50% of the cost if there is a problem with government funding. The SLA includes requirements around safeguarding and data protection.

Or attach print from the RM system

Signature of line manager or service head

Supporting signature of Strategic Lead - Finance

Supporting signature of Strategic Lead – Governance and Licensing

PLEASE NOTE:

Where the Contract value is £20,001 or above then Rule 3.2 requires you to prepare a report for Cabinet to note their support for the action taken.

The Council is required to keep a Register of Exemptions. **Please ensure that a signed copy of this form is provided to the S.151 Officer.**