

	Meeting (No)	Community & Environment (1)
	Date	11 June 2024
	Document	Ref No
	Summer Support Sessions for Ukrainian Refugees	CE1/13

Background

In summer 2023 a request was made to support the continuation of summer sessions for Ukrainian refugees over the summer period as sessions were only funded during term time. The C&E Committee provided £1,115 from budget 4363 (community donations) to ensure continuation of the sessions. Feedback from the project can be found here: [Neston Town Council Supports Ukrainian Refugees](#)

Current Request

Having been approached by the same organisers to ask whether further funding might be available this year, I explained that previous support was no guarantee of future funding but agreed to put a written request to Committee for consideration. The emailed request is copied below.

Audrey Duncan
Community & Environment Manager

Dear Audrey,

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me recently with regard to my proposed plan to offer some much needed support for our local Ukrainian Refugees.

As promised, here is some more information and a breakdown of costs.

As you know, I am a qualified ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Teacher and have been supporting the Ukrainian Refugees since they arrived in Neston when they first fled from the war.

The Ukrainian refugees were receiving ESOL lessons in Neston twice a week during term time. However, they were concerned that the support they were receiving was going to stop over the summer period but thanks to Neston Town Council we were able to provide a holistic course focussing on language and wellbeing needs to bridge the gap. This was a great success – we received a lot of excellent feedback highlighting the bespoke nature of the support we were able to offer.

The provider of the ESOL sessions in Neston unfortunately had to stop the classes several months ago due to dwindling numbers. However, I am aware that some of the Ukrainians who had gone back home have now returned to

Neston and there are also some new members of the Ukrainian community here.

Having organised a couple of meetings with some of the community, I have been informed how much they have missed their ESOL sessions. They were offered classes in Chester and although they tried to attend, they found them difficult to access due to issues connected with transport/health conditions/childcare etc. Due to this, some of the refugees have had no or few face-to-face ESOL lessons. Some reported a loss of motivation and all discussed how their confidence had dropped which is obviously a concern for people's mental health and wellbeing.

The support needs of many of these individuals have now changed. They not only need English Conversation classes but also support navigating various processes such as completing forms, looking into housing options/furnishing properties now they are no longer living with their host families. I would be able to signpost to relevant departments and with the help of a translator, we could hopefully make these processes simpler.

The majority said they would also benefit from sessions on a Saturday which I am able to offer. Some were concerned that they may have to bring their children on occasion so I have been in touch with Neston Library who have said they have a suitable space to hire – this is ideal as any children could play/read in the children's area adjacent to where their parents would be.

It must be a very daunting process to move to, not only a new town but a new country after such a traumatic experience. We have the opportunity to help and make a difference by providing the proposed support. I am hoping that through these sessions I will be able to bring people together, increase their confidence and help them to feel a part of the community.

Since the needs of the Ukrainians have changed, the cost of providing this support is half that of the previous application. Please see costings below.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Kind regards

Liz Hignett

Staffing - 1 teacher and translator x 6 sessions = £405.00

Refreshments: £5 per session x 6 = £30

Supplies / activities: £5 per session x 6 = £30

Room hire £15 per session = £90

Total = £555.00