

RESERVE FUNDING FOR RESPONSE TO ONGOING CRISIS IN UKRAINE

1. Purpose of Report

To enable the Minister approve an allocation of £1,000,000 from the General Reserve - Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL), to the Jersey Overseas Aid (JOA) head of expenditure for the sole purpose of providing aid to respond to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. To also enable the Minister to approve an allocation of up to £250,000 from the General Reserve - Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) to the Office of the Chief Executive (OCE) head of expenditure for potential costs relating to the immigration of Ukraine nationals eligible for a visa through family connections to the Island.

2. Background

The recent Russian aggression in Ukraine has caused a humanitarian crisis, and the Government of Jersey has responded to support civilian victims. The Bailiff has established a Ukraine Appeal to accept donations from people in Jersey to support the Ukrainian people. Jersey Overseas Aid will ensure that these funds are directed to the agencies and locations where they will have the most impact.

In support of this appeal, the Minister, with the support of the Council of Ministers, is making available £1 million to support the humanitarian relief efforts in the Ukraine.

In addition, Russian intervention in Ukraine has displaced many thousands of people from their homes who are now seeking safety elsewhere in Europe. Some Ukrainian nationals that have been displaced may be eligible for a visa through family connections to the Island, and the Government is committed to supporting these families. This is a fluid situation, with an unknown number of individuals affected, and the circumstances of each family not yet known. However, to ensure that swift action can be taken, the Minister is approving an initial allocation to the OCE to allow costs across government of this initiative to be met swiftly and without delay, whilst more detailed costings are developed. This allocation must only be spent for applicable costs, agreed as proportionate responses by the Principal Accounting Officer and Treasurer of the States.

3. Recommendation

The Minister is recommended to approve the allocation of £1,000,000 from the General Reserve to the Jersey Overseas Aid (JOA) head of expenditure for the sole purpose of providing aid to respond to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Ukraine.

The Minister is recommended to approve the allocation of up to £250,000 from the General Reserve to the Office of the Chief Executive (OCE) head of expenditure for costs relating to the immigration of Ukraine nationals eligible for a visa through family connections to the Island.

4. Reason for Decision

Article 15(3) of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019 (the "Law") grants the Minister for Treasury and Resources the power to direct how an appropriation for a reserve head of expenditure may be spent. Article 30(2)(a)(ii) of the Law requires the Minister to issue a written statement to the States setting out the expected purposes or subjects on which the Minister may direct that such appropriations be spent.

The current Policy for Allocations from the Reserve, presented to the States Assembly as R.60/2021, sets the requirement that all allocations from the General Reserve are recommended for approval by the Treasurer of the States, taking into account comments from the Principal Accountable Officer (PAO), prior to submission to the Minister for approval. However, the Policy also states that 'where the Minister is satisfied that there is an urgent need to provide funding in the public interest, an allocation may be made by the Minister on the recommendation of the Treasurer.'

The Minister is satisfied that there is an urgent need to provide funding in the public interest. The Treasurer recommends that the Minister allocates funding from the General Reserve.

5. Resource Implications

The General Reserve (DEL) to decrease by up to £1,250,000, the Jersey Overseas Aid (JOA) head of expenditure to increase by £1,000,000 and the Office of the Chief Executive (OCE) head of expenditure to increase by up to £250,000.

This decision does not change the total amount of expenditure approved by the States in the Government Plan 2022-25.

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Quality Assurance / Review: Head of Investment Appraisal	