Minutes of the Community Sponsorship Council

Wednesday 25th March 2020, 10am-12pm
Zoom call

ATTENDEES

Present (Council members)
Fr Gareth Jones, Refugee Welcome Dagenham (Chair)
Monika Kruesmann, Reset (Secretariat)
Hannah Feldman, Citizens UK
Neil Jameson, Citizens UK
Bob Goldsmith, Muswell Hill Methodist Church
Domenica Pecoraro, Canterbury Welcomes Refugees
Mark Wiggin, Caritas Social Action Network
Lisa Westlake, CHARIS
Nick Coke, Salvation Army
Emmeline Skinner Cassidy, Reset

Apologies (Council members)
Simon Cook, King’s Armes Project

Present (non-members)
Jane Kennedy, Home Office
Giulio Di Blasi, GRSI

OVERVIEW OF PROCEEDINGS

Community Sponsorship (CS) Assembly 2020
In-person CS Assembly to be cancelled due to Covid-19. Further discussions on this topic to take place between Council members.

Sustaining CS during the Covid-19 outbreak
All members expressed desire to work collaboratively to keep the CS movement going. The Council’s 2 main concerns were: how to support Groups to support refugee families; and how Groups can be enabled to support the national Covid-19 response. Reset, Sponsor Refugees and CHARIS will be organising Zoom calls to enable CS Groups to share learning. They will coordinate efforts so that the calls complement one another. Reset will continue to reach out to Groups, paying particular attention to Groups that have recently welcomed families. Reset will also engage the Lead Sponsor Network to: identify Groups with a high proportion of vulnerable volunteers; and to consult Lead Sponsors on how to engage with the national Covid-19 response.

Sustaining CS after the Covid-19 outbreak
Council members noted the likelihood of a period of significant economic difficulty following the Covid-19 crisis and that this represents a risk to Community Sponsorship. All Council members agreed to look for and publicise stories from across the UK that can highlight the benefits of welcoming refugees. Ideally these stories will be linked to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Council membership
Gareth Jones (Chair) proposed that Council membership be extended until such time as elections for new members can safely take place. The Council unanimously agreed and Reset will draft an amendment to the Council’s Terms of Reference.

If you have any questions about these minutes, please contact the Chair of the Council, Fr Gareth Jones: refugeeecoordinator@chelmsford.anglican.org