

**Cumbrian Martyrs' Parish
Syrian Refugee Family Sponsorship Group**

Meeting of 6/8/19

Present: David Carrick, Margaret Day, Ged Feeney, Andrew Heath (minutes), Teresa Heath, Donald Hitch, Mandy Howes, Eleanor McGarry, Joe McGarry (chair)

Meeting started with prayers (led by Joe) at about 7:50pm.

Apologies for absence Zuzanna, Gianni, Maureen D, Kathleen, Maureen B.

Previous minutes were agreed.

Project Management

Report (by Teresa) Before the Plan can be submitted, proof that the £9000 is available will be needed, probably in the form of a letter or statement. A safeguarding statement will also be needed, but according to Joe it is as yet unclear whether this will come from Caritas or the Diocese. Once the Plan has been granted approval in principle, she will pass it to the Council and seek their consent. She has been in touch with the Police, as Sean had said she should do, even though we have no house in mind yet. The man she spoke to asked that she contact him again once we have a possible house lined up.

Teresa went through the Plan, section by section, explaining the changes she has made as a result of comments from Sean and Liz of Caritas.

Regarding conversational English practise, Caritas recommended that this be formalised so that it ties in with what the Family member has been learning recently in their ESOL classes. Also, the topics covered, and progress, should ideally be recorded. Don agreed that he will endeavor to provide this as requested.

Provision of a computer and broadband for the family was mentioned. Margaret has a 12-year old laptop available, and Ged believes there is a spare laptop at St Edmund's. Ged offered that his son could 'clean up' the laptop to remove any personal data.

On the subject of interpreters, Gianni had passed on a message about the Tunisian couple who had offered their services as volunteer interpreters. The man is still available, but unfortunately the woman will now not be, as her arrival in the UK has been delayed by at least a year. Teresa is concerned that volunteer interpreters will need to be DBS checked and that this will put them off. Joe confirmed that they **will** need to be DBS checked.

Teresa has been in touch with a company in Carlisle that provides interpreters, but their hourly rates are very high. She is hoping to meet them to further discuss their services, and perhaps negotiate more affordable charges. Ged agreed to attend too. It is hoped that this local company could overall still be cheaper than the Manchester-based company that is under consideration, as this levies high charges for travelling expenses. David said he will ask his police contact who they use for interpreters.

Teresa referred to an e-mail she had received from Liz (Caritas), inviting us to two events that are taking place in October. She will forward the e-mail to everyone in the Group.

Finally, Teresa reported that she and Margaret had attended the Syrian Film Night, which took place yesterday.

Questions/Discussion Mandy reported that it is now even more difficult to find an NHS dentist that is taking new patients.

Andrew made a number of suggestions for improvements and corrections to the revised Plan.

Teresa is keen to get the revised Plan sent out to Sean as soon as possible, but still has a lot of work to do to further research provision of interpreters. She anticipates that because of the delay in getting the Plan submitted to the Home Office, it might not be until the beginning of next year that the family arrive.

Safeguarding

Report (by Joe) Safeguarding training will now comprise of two parts. The first will be in the form of a 3-hour session, probably here, delivered by Caritas and/or the Diocese. Joe asked that the members of the Group notify him of any dates that they will **not** be available, so that a date for the training session can be chosen that is convenient for all. The second part of the training will be a one-day session delivered locally, probably with members of the St Augustine's Group attending too. Joe has told Sean (Caritas) that the earliest possible date that the family might arrive is November, so that Sean knows that the safeguarding training will have to be scheduled for before then.

Joe is assuming that all members of the Group (other than Andrew) will be having contact with the Family. For DBS checks Joe strongly encourages that this is done online, as this will be much quicker than sending paper documents.

Finally, Joe said that although the online safeguarding course is no longer obligatory, he would still encourage Group members to undertake it, as he feels it will be beneficial.

Questions/Discussion Mandy reminded Joe that she has colleagues who are still interested in being involved, and asked about safeguarding training for them. Joe said that it is possible that the training they have done as part of their NHS employment will be acceptable, but otherwise they will have to attend the courses organised by Caritas and the Diocese.

Accommodation

Report (by Joe) Has been in touch with Cumbrian Properties and been told that a two-bedroomed house should be available towards the end of the year. They say availability is best then. Joe also mentioned that a parishioner had offered some furniture, and that a parishioner of Christ the King has a houseful of furniture to be cleared. The problem in both cases is that the furniture would have to go into storage.

(NB Maureen D had e-mailed Andrew to say that she had nothing new to report about accommodation).

Questions/Discussion None.

Benefits/employment

Report Nothing to report.

Questions/Discussion None.

Welfare/Health

Report (By Mandy) Nothing to report other than what she mentioned earlier.

Questions/Discussion None.

Education/ESOL/Interpretation

Report (By Ged) Nothing to report other than what he mentioned earlier.

Questions/Discussion None.

Finance/Fundraising

Report David read from a written report (which he passed to Andrew afterwards for inclusion in the minutes), as follows:

<i>Donations received and banked to 17 June 2019</i>	£8740.00
<i>Gift Aid (£2200 X 25%) received</i>	£550.00
<i>In hand</i>	£9290.00

<i>Pledges made</i>	£190.00
<i>Gift Aid (£100 X 25%)</i>	£25.00

<i>Total</i>	£9505.00
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Questions/Discussion None.

Any Other Business

Margaret has already prepared part of appendix 3 of the Plan (the welcome pack), and Eleanor will be assisting.

Next meeting

Joe suggested end of September/early October. Tuesday 1st October at the usual time (7:45pm) was agreed.

Meeting ended with prayers (led by Joe) at about 9:10pm.