

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

Meeting of 18/6/19

Present: Margaret Day, Ged Feeney, Andrew Heath (minutes), Teresa Heath, Donald Hitch, Eleanor McGarry, Joe McGarry (chair), Gianni Minervini.

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

Apologies for absence Fr Jim, David, Kathleen, Maureen D, Zuzanna, Mandy.

Previous minutes were agreed.

Project Management

Report Teresa explained that she intends to send the draft Plan to Sean Ryan for review. Then, once he has agreed its contents, she will seek consent from our local authority, and get policies for safeguarding and complaints incorporated. She will also request evidence that we have the required £9000 of funds. She will then send the draft Plan to the Home Office. Once they (hopefully) grant approval in principle, the Group can then get accomodation organised.

Teresa drew attention to the need to have a list or rota for volunteers. She also feels that there needs to be a mechanism for communication between all the volunteers, so that everyone involved knows about planned visits to the family, what has been done, what needs to be done etc.

Regarding the part of the Plan that details the support personnel, it was mentioned that an entry for Mandy is still outstanding, as Mandy has yet to provide the information that Teresa requested.

Finally Teresa mentioned that she has received an invitation from Liz Hibberd (Caritas) for her and up to two members of the Group to attend a half-day session in Salford, to meet members of other Community Sponsorship groups. (Those present expressed little interest in attending).

Questions/Discussion For communication between the volunteers directly involved with the family, 'WhatsApp' was suggested, but unfortunately Teresa does not have a smartphone, so it was agreed that probably the solution will be to use group e-mails.

Ged suggested that a copy of the 'timeline' produced by Teresa be included with the Plan. Teresa agreed that this would be a good idea. He further suggested that the 'timeline' should show which named individuals are responsible for each action. If not possible to indicate named individuals, a category could be shown, e.g. interpreter. Andrew suggested that it would be better to prepare the project plan/timeline on a computer using a project management program, rather than paper, as this would make it very much easier to make changes. Joe will ask around his contacts for recommendations for suitable software.

Andrew suggested that Don be included in the 'support personnel' section of the Plan, as he has offered help with conversational English. Teresa agreed to do so and will ask Don

for details of his relevant experience etc. Andrew also made suggestions for minor improvements and corrections to the Plan.

There was some discussion about when the safeguarding course will be required.

No one else had any suggestions for changes to the Plan.

Accommodation

Report Maureen D had e-mailed a report to Andrew, which he read out, as follows:
Enquiries into the rental of a property two months before the refugee family arrives: Estate agent Adrian Mason said we could put the property in our company name and change it once we had the family's details. We would be responsible for the property in line with the tenancy agreement even when it is empty. We would not be required to have a contents insurance but it would be our choice whether to have it or not. Utility companies _ We will need to contact the present supplier for the property to open an account. It can be set up in the group's name but all members of the group will need to be aware of the security questions required so it would probably be better if it was in one person's name for the account billing. When the family arrives a change of occupancy, in effect will take place, a bill will be produced for the time it was held by our group and a new account will be created for the named family, this will only take 24 hrs to complete. A tenancy insurance would be advised for the new family which would cover their belongings. The buildings insurance is the responsibility of the landlord. The family are not required to provide a credit history to the utility company.

Questions/Discussion There was some discussion about what we could use as a 'company name' in the tenancy agreement. Joe thinks that we could just put 'Caritas', perhaps with our Group's name appended. Joe thinks it would be useful to send e-mails to the estate agents we've previously been in touch with, to make them aware of developments, and so that we maintain the links.

Benefits/employment

Report Eleanor had nothing to report.

Questions/Discussion None.

Welfare/Health

Report (by Teresa) Mandy had relayed to her information indicating that some local dentists are taking new patients. However, when Teresa researched availability she was unable to find any dentists taking new patients.

Questions/Discussion Some of those present told Teresa that they are aware of dentists that are accepting new patients, and passed on the practice names to her.

Education/ESOL/Interpretation

Report Ged had nothing to report.

Questions/Discussion None.

Finance/Fundraising

Report David had e-mailed a report to Andrew, which Andrew read out as follows:

<i>Donations received and banked to 17 June 2019</i>	<i>£8,735.00</i>
<i>Gift Aid (£2,200 x 25%) Claimed</i>	<i>£550.00</i>
<i>Pledges made</i>	<i>£190.00</i>
<i>Gift aid (£100 x 25%)</i>	<i>£25.00</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>£9,500.00</i>

Questions/Discussion None.

Safeguarding

Report Joe described the three aspects of safeguarding:

The first aspect is training. There are two levels; the first level is the basic one and is an online course, and is intended to provide a general awareness. Joe feels that we should all undertake this training, including those who will not have direct contact with the family. An e-mail address is required to register for the online course. (Eleanor has completed the course and reckons it takes 5 to 6 hours). The second level of training is a one-day course that will be provided locally by 'Relent' [?name] (part of the Home Office). Everyone who is to have direct contact with the family must attend this course. It is expected that members of other local Community Sponsorship groups will also attend this course. The date has yet to be arranged.

The second aspect is that the Catholic Church requires that all volunteers get two references, and if the person is in employment one of those references must be from their employer. Joe proposes that each member of the Group will get the required reference(s) from other members of the Group, with the proviso that if the person is in employment one of the two references must be from their employer. Joe added that the Church requires application forms to be submitted, and suggested that the forms completed by potential Group members last year would suffice. (Andrew confirmed that he has some of the forms, and believes that David has the forms in which financial pledges were made). Each volunteer should then receive a job description.

The third aspect is the enhanced DBS check. This is required for all who will have direct contact with the family. If an individual already has one, and it was done in the last five-years this is acceptable, and all that is needed is to give the reference number to Joe. If the DBS check was done more than five-years ago a new one will be required.

Questions/Discussion Questions were raised about how Don and Maureen Boyle will undertake the online course as Don does not have a computer, Maureen probably does not, and neither of them has an e-mail address. Joe thought that they could use someone else's e-mail address. Andrew suggested that alternatively it would be fairly straightforward to create an e-mail address for each of them, which could be deleted once they have finished the online course.

Andrew sought clarification whether it is necessary for him to attend the training course and undertake a DBS check, as he has concluded that since his role in the Group is only ever going to be as secretary he will not be having any direct contact with the family. Joe confirmed that if there is no direct contact with the family it is not necessary to have a DBS check or attend the one-day course. Therefore Andrew will opt out of the one-day course and DBS check. However, he will undertake the online course as he accepts Joe's argument that this will provide a useful general awareness when communicating with other Group members.

Any Other Business

None.

Next meeting

Joe suggested September but a number of those present felt that this was too far off, and early August was preferred. It was therefore agreed that the next meeting will be on Tuesday 6th August at the usual time of 7:45pm.

Meeting ended with prayers (led by Joe) at about 9:20pm.