

Leicester City of Sanctuary - Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

at the Holy Cross Centre, Wellington Street, 10.00am

Saturday 14th May 2016

Present: Ali Agayev, Ajay Aggarwal, Haniyeh Aghvami, Mariam Alipoor, Sabina Agayev, Anju Baroj, Robert Blow, Amanuel Brhane, Shali Bullough, David Clark, Jafor Chowdury, Hilary Comfort, Amanubi Demas, Richard Fynes, Jackie Hall, Pete Hobson, Pam Inder, Sam Javid, Jim Matthews, Annie Merton Eileen McKellican, Colleen Molloy, Ambrose Musiyiwa, Dinah Scott, John Ssenkindu, Michael Tully, Mick Walker, Jenny Westmoreland, Biniyamia Wolde, Katherine Wolfe.

Apologies: Uday Al Alussi, Elisabeth Burleigh, Bessie Hayes, Veronica Matthew, Hilary McNeil, Indira Nath, Helen Playdon,

1. Welcome

Pete Hobson, Chair of Trustees welcomed everybody to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 9th May 2015

Requested that the date be put on the minutes of the 2015 AGM.

The Minutes were passed as a true record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the last AGM

A new Trustee body has been elected and has proposed changes to the Constitution.

4. Amendments to the Constitution

The last amendment to the Constitution took place on the 25/8/2010. Our status was as an unincorporated association. Any financial liability would have to be borne by individuals personally. The trustees have looked at a new incorporated constitution. Pete Hobson thanked Rob Blow in particular for his work on the new constitution.

The new incorporated constitution has been agreed by the Steering Group.

Pete Hobson asked Rob Blow to speak about the new constitution. Rob Blow advised that this will make the organisation more corporate. No longer will any financial losses have to be borne by an individual, now the organisation as a whole would be liable. The new constitution also makes it clear that we are now a membership body and also enables us to employ staff.

Colleen Molloy proposed to adopt the new constitution,
Seconded by Shali Bullough, carried.

5. **Annual Report 2015-16**

Trustees are the legally responsible body for Leicester City of Sanctuary who meet four times a year, the Steering Group co-ordinate the day to day work.

Trustees of Leicester City of Sanctuary are:

Rob Blow, Rev Peter Hobson, Pam Inder, Sam Javid, Annie Merton, Golden Ngwenya and John Ssenkindu (inadvertently excluded from the Annual Report).

Mick Walker highlighted Leicester City of Sanctuary achievements including:

- i) Following the photograph of Aylan Kurdi there had been mass support for refugees and a public meeting was held at the Cathedral in September 2015 where over 250 people came to show their concern and offer support.
- ii) Leicester City of Sanctuary put a bid in for the people's lottery and won £50,000. We came first in the East Midlands region, and 18th out of 95, showing that there is still massive support for refugees, and that many people do not agree with what governments are doing in their name.

- iii) Volunteers at Leicester City of Sanctuary, cook, clean, tidy up and help out at the drop in, they form informal networks and friendships to help others with their problems in housing, neighbours, health care, etc. They go to solicitors offices and MPs with clients and provide an invaluable informal source of support.

Mick Walker (Chair of Leicester City of Sanctuary) warned that the capacity of the organisation is limited. We would like to increase this capacity but we cannot burn people out. We have committed ourselves to some very big projects in the year ahead. We will need new people to take on roles and responsibilities to ensure that we are going to be here in the future.

Pete Hobson gave a formal vote of thanks to Mick Walker.

Ambrose Musiyiwa raised the issue of needs analysis and Pete Hobson replied that we would look into this in the future.

6. Draft Strategic Plan

Over the coming three years we will focus on the maintenance and development (as appropriate) of three successful areas of existing work, and one area for development.

Activities

The Drop-In – for social inter-action, meeting new arrivals, and as a central point of information sharing. Takes place currently at Holy Cross hall, with related activity sessions in Booth Hall at St. Martins House.

English Language classes – covering a range of abilities from beginners to advanced. Recently relocated to University of Leicester premises, but also working out of St. Martins House.

New Evidence Search Team (NEST) – Centrally organised, but meeting clients in a range of safe locations across the city.

Routes into Life – In addition we intend, in partnership with the Red Cross, to develop a new piece of work under this working title. This

will focus on support for those who have obtained their Leave to Remain, and need help addressing the many issues that follow on from that.

Support

In order to support all the above work we will maintain and develop the following services:

- Volunteer support and management
- Administrative, including effective IT and web presence
- Financial management, including administration of hardship fund and fare support.
- Fundraising – including grant seeking.

7. Financial Report – Presented by Sabina Agayev

The Financial Report was presented for the period 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016. The £50,000 lottery win received on 6th May 2016 will be shown in next years financial statement. Our balance at the time of the report was £30,958.15.

Leicester City of Sanctuary has changed to the Yorkshire Bank and anybody wishing to contribute by cheque or direct debit should see Sabina for the new details of the bank. The accounts are not yet audited. The meeting agreed to receive the accounts.

Pete Hobson gave a vote of thanks to Sabina Agayev who has been our Treasurer for the past three years.

There are three separate roles for the Treasurer:

- i) Cash Clerk, to travel to and from the bank with petty cash.
- ii) Administration of the bookkeeping and accounts.
- iii) Strategic Treasurer who can report to the board and charity commission. Mike Alexander is expected to be welcomed to this position by the Trustees.

Bus Fares

Mick Walker added that we have had to change our bus fare policy several times and we may have to change it again in future. We are committed to contributing towards bus fares as for people who do not have access to public transport this can be a lifeline. The price of bus tickets in the city mean an asylum seeker would have to pay 90% of their daily income if they want to come into the city by bus.

Colleen Molloy highlighted that issue of 56 new asylum seekers who are going to be housed in South Wigston where there is no access to services and it is 90 minute walk into town. Mick has talked to Arriva about providing public transport for asylum seekers but no progress has been made.

8. Election of Officers

Co-Ordinator : Mick Walker

Proposed by Pete Hobson. Carried.

Deputy Co-Ordinators: Shali Bullough and Jenny Westmoreland

Proposed by Mick Walker. Carried.

Treasurer : Mike Alexander

Proposed by Pete Hobson. Carried.

The accepted role of the Steering Group is that it is responsible for the day to day management of the organisation.

The Steering Group needs new officers for :

- i) Social media administration;
- ii) Overlooking the media;
- iii) Writing grant applications;
- iv) Links with schools and colleges.

9. What Leicester City of Sanctuary Means to Me

Former asylum seeker John Ssenkindu spoke to the meeting about life as an asylum seeker when he came to Leicester and before he was granted status and his work as the founder member of *Pride Without Borders*.

Shali Bullough read out a statement from Ismail Naeem, an asylum seeker from Sri Lanka about the positive help Leicester City of Sanctuary had given to him and his family when he came to the UK.

10. Any Other Business

Colleen Molloy is the Development Officer for the National City of Sanctuary. She said that she works with 70 groups in the country but that Leicester City of Sanctuary is the largest in terms of what we deliver. The Asylum Bill which has just received royal assent will make life much harder for asylum seekers.

Colleen said that Tariq, a former asylum seeker with Leicester City of Sanctuary had brought in £80 as a donation to the hardship fund in thanks for the help he received from CofS when he was an asylum seeker.

Rites of Passage

Thursday 19th May. Tickets £10.00. Colleen Molloy secured a special discount. Quote *Leicester City of Sanctuary* when you call, you will receive two tickets for £10.

Cycle City Active

Cycle City Active will be in Leicester on Thursday 19th May. Their motto, "Getting people who are on the margins of society mobile". Michael Tully is going to attend as this is a good opportunity to show what our bike scheme does for asylum seekers.