

Modbury Parish Council

Homes for Ukraine Support Team Meeting

Memorial Hall, 23 May 2022, 1900hrs

MINUTES

Present: **Support Team:** Chris Birch (CB), Jeff Booth (JB), Laura Denning (LD), Barbara Price (BP), Phil Smith (PS) (Chair), Richard Taylor(RiT), Peter Watts (PW), Brian Weeks (BW).

Sponsors: Chris Duff (CD), Anne Franklin (AF), Simon Franklin (SF), Kathy Milthorpe (KM), Andy Rathbone (AR), Charlotte Rathbone (CR), Rachel Taylor (RaT).

<u>Minute</u>		<u>Action</u>
1.0	<u>Introductions</u>	
1.1	All present introduced themselves.	
2.0	<u>Apologies for absence</u>	
2.1	Boony Bower (BB), Rachel Carter (RC), Helen Nathanson (HN).	
3.0	<u>Minutes of the last meeting on 9 May 2022</u>	
3.1	The minutes, circulated before the meeting, were accepted as a true and accurate record.	
4.0	<u>Matters arising</u>	
4.1	Minute 3.3: BP reported that she had spoken with both the DBS service and CVS, neither of whom were able to confirm whether a DBS check would be necessary for Support Team members. After discussion it was agreed that it would be for the Support Team to decide based on the risk assessment.	
4.2	Minute 3.4: PS confirmed he had ascertained that six members of the team had been previously DBS checked and that three had current enhanced	

certificates. It was noted, however, not all of these covered children.

- 4.3 Minute 4.4: PS has circulated the appropriate link to Government advice on setting up bank accounts for refugees.
- 4.4 Minute 4.5: BP has spoken to the school and playgroup and given them details of the Support Team.
- 4.5 Minute 4.8: PS confirmed that the Support Team's Terms of Reference had been amended, agreed by members and passed to the Parish Clerk.
- 4.6 Minute 5.1: PS confirmed that the sharing of contact details had been agreed by all team members and details had since been circulated. BW advised that he has now purchased a smart phone and will let PS have details to update the contact list as soon as he has set it up. **BW**
- 4.7 Minute 5.2: PS confirmed the WhatsApp group is now up and running and BW will be added as soon as his phone has been set up.
- 4.8 Minute 6.2: PS confirmed that invitations had been sent out to all known potential sponsors for the current meeting. One other potential sponsor has decided not to proceed, one is known to be proceeding but will do so without assistance at this stage and one further potential sponsor has not responded to invitations.
- 4.9 Minute 6.3: PS confirmed that the initial procedure note was drafted, agreed by members and forwarded to the Parish Clerk.
- 4.10 Minute 7.2: PS reported that Modbury Caring had not undertaken a risk assessment but noted that they had good procedures. He had therefore selected a risk assessment template from the voluntary sector on the internet and produced a revised assessment for consideration on the current meeting's agenda.
- 4.11 Minute 8.2: PW confirmed the amendment to the Council's Volunteer Policy was made.
- 4.12 Minute 8.4: PS confirmed that the revised Volunteer Policy had been circulated to all members, along with the registration form.

5.0 Meeting with sponsors

- 5.1 PS thanked the sponsors for attending the meeting and explained that the

Team wished to hear about their concerns and suggestions as to how the team could best support them going forward.

- 5.2 CR and AR were concerned about the suitability of accommodation and there was a short discussion around the Government guidance. It was noted that as long as the guests had private bedroom(s), access to bathing and kitchen facilities and the ability to come and go as they pleased this would be deemed acceptable. All accommodation will be subject to checks by SHDC.
- 5.3 KM expressed concern about what would happen at the end of the six months period or if the relationship broke down before then. It was noted that the housing authority (SHDC) would need to be informed and they would assist the guest to find alternative accommodation. This could be through a re-matching service, assistance to find their own private accommodation or through a homelessness application. LD wondered whether we should consult with SHDC about the general housing needs situation and SF asked whether we should be more proactive and ask for their plans for follow-on housing solutions.
- 5.4 RiT was also concerned about respite arrangements and sponsors' holiday arrangements and SF suggested that ensuring that hosting arrangements were sustainable was something the community at large could help with. He wondered whether the Parish Council should advertise for residents willing to provide back-up accommodation.
- 5.5 CD was concerned at the isolation which guests at Moorview might experience, especially in the winter and if they did not have their own transport. He wondered whether the one or two lodges available at Moorview would be better reserved for respite or follow-on use.
- 5.6 AR was concerned about the process of matching because they had heard nothing further since registering on the Government's website. SF suggested that applying through the Exeter Diocese might make the process smoother. Applicants do not have to be churchgoers. He advised that the process was being managed by the Archdeacon of Exeter Cathedral and to date they had processed 211 applications for sponsors and 35 for guests through their partners in Poland, completed 17 matches and achieved 9 visa approvals although so far there had been no arrivals.
- 5.7 SF also mentioned that some sponsors are being matched in groups with extended families.
- 5.8 KM asked about transport arrangements when the guests arrive in the country. PS advised that help and support is provided at the port of entry by the relevant local authority and guests then benefit from free public transport to their destination.

- 5.9 LD mentioned that it will be important to provide cultural facilities and self-help opportunities for guests once they are here. This would also potentially require some language support. KM confirmed that there is a Russian/Ukrainian interpreter living in Ermington and PS is aware of a Ukrainian speaker in Ivybridge.
- 5.10 LD thought it was important that we attempt to learn from others' experiences. It is thought that support groups are emerging in South Brent and Kingsbridge. BW also added that everyone's individual needs will be different so one approach is unlikely to fit all.
- 5.11 A common concern was the readiness or otherwise of DCC/SHDC to undertake their roles in the process, particularly in relation to DBS and property checks and arrangements for when the sponsor/guest relationship ends. It was agreed that PS should make further contact with Neil Hawke at SHDC to discuss. **PS**
- 5.12 It was also agreed that it was important to liaise with other agencies. BP agreed to speak to the Refugee Council about our plans and PW suggested that Exeter Diocese should be advised of the Support Team's role in Modbury. **BP**
- 5.13 Throughout the discussion there was an indication that more help will be needed as guests arrived. PW considered that it would be possible to increase the size of the team if needed – some 125 persons volunteered when asked about helping with the Covid response for instance. CB suggested that are several residents who have counselling and psychological skills which could prove useful. PW suggested that local businesses could help with the provision of weekly meals to reduce the impact on sponsors.
- 5.14 LD suggested that a welcome pack may be a useful tool for sponsors and the Support Team to use.
- 5.15 PS described how the Support Team is currently set up to operate. As soon as a guest is known to be arriving, the sponsor should contact either PS or BP who will meet the sponsor and agree on the make-up of a small (3-4) sub team to be allocated to support the sponsor. It will then mobilise in time for the guests' arrival.
- 5.16 In conclusion, SF agreed to put a list of issues together which the team should consider addressing. **SF**

The sponsors left the meeting at 2030hrs

6.0 Risk assessment

6.1 PS advised that the draft risk assessment circulated with the agenda had been based on a template used in the voluntary sector. He had received comments from three members, the most extensive from BP.

6.2 There was a lengthy discussion about the appropriate response to reduce the risks of inappropriate contact with vulnerable adults and children. In line with comments made earlier in the meeting it was agreed that DBS checks must feature in the mitigation actions. It was noted that Sian McAllister is a safeguarding consultant who is working with St Georges Church to advise on, and process, their DBS response and RiT agreed to speak with her about doing the same with the Support Team.

RiT

6.3 BP has also suggested that lone working advice should be offered to volunteers, that there should be additional wording for the data protection risks and a new risk associated with infectious diseases such as Covid.

6.4 PS agreed to revise and circulate for final agreement of Support Team members and then review the procedure note as necessary.

PS

7.0 Any other business

7.1 There was no other business to record.

The meeting closed at 2100hrs

**P Smith
V2.0
29 May 2022**