

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**CITY OF SANCTUARY WORKING GROUP**  
**VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**  
**MONDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**PRESENT**

Councillors Phil Gillam (Chairman) & Kate Halliday & Julian Dean

Helen Ball (Town Clerk) – Shrewsbury Town Council

Amanda Jones – Shropshire Supports Refugees

**07/23 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Kevin Pardy and Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk).

**08/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Those twin-hatted Councillors declared an interest as Shropshire Council in the event matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with the unitary council were discussed.

**09/23 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

It was agreed that the minutes of the last meeting held on 7 August 2023 previously circulated were an accurate account of proceedings. The Chairman said it had been a really productive meeting and paved a way forward.

**10/23 CITY OF SANCTUARY REGISTRATION**

It was reported that the Deputy Town Clerk had registered the Town Council's interest in seeking Town of Sanctuary status.

**11/23 CITY OF SANCTUARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

Councillor Gillam & the Town Clerk reported on the Town Council Networking Meeting session facilitated by the City of Sanctuary. Sevenoaks Town Council in particular had some very interesting ideas that could potentially be replicated by Shrewsbury including designing a flag, utilising the Mayor for inviting individuals to Council Events and discounting Council activities.

## 12/23 TOWN OF SANCTUARY ACTION PLAN

The Town Clerk updated the meeting on the following actions:

1. A letter was to be created welcoming asylum seekers to the town – this would be added to various websites and social media pages (PG)  
Update: Drafted and circulated by PG for comment
2. The letter would be translated into various relevant languages (AJ)  
Update: AJ had managed to translate the letter into Arabic, Ukrainian & Chinese which was a good start as this covered the majority of individuals settling in the town
3. Appropriate training for councillors and officers would be investigated further (RD)  
Update: RD was not at the meeting so no progress update was received. AJ would make enquiries.
4. A visit to some of the current occupants of the Lion Hotel would be explored and coordinated (AJ/PG)  
Update: AJ reported that a visit to the Hotel might be problematic. She suggested that a visit could take place at Shropshire Supports Refugees new base in Mardol. PG agreed to provide some possible dates.
5. The possibility of automatic translating from the Town Council website would be investigated (AS)  
Update: This has been investigated by AS and is fully possible via Google Translate
6. The application process for accreditation would be commenced (AS)  
Update: AS has now registered Shrewsbury as a CoS
7. Comments on the draft Strategy and Action Plan would be returned to AS (All)  
Update: AS had circulated the draft Strategy by no comments had yet been received. All were encouraged to feedback comments to AS.
8. The Myth Busting information publicised by Newcastle City Council would be investigated (AS)  
Update: AS has not been able to locate this. The Newcastle City of Sanctuary Strategy is available in the e-folder for circulation with the agenda
9. A Powerpoint presentation on current struggles would be created (AJ)  
Update: AJ had not yet managed to prepare the presentation
10. The Sevenoaks assessment would be shared with AS (MFR)  
Update: MFR had circulated the Sevenoaks assessment to AS
11. Involvement in the process would be discussed with the BID (HB)  
Update: HB had briefly mentioned the process to the BID; they were supportive of all community initiatives. Once more detail was available HB would discuss it further.

### **13/23 DRAFT STRATEGY**

It was reported that AS had circulated the Draft Strategy for comments. All were encouraged to forward any comments to her.

### **14/23 FUTURE MEETING DATES**

It was agreed that the future working group meeting dates would be:

- Monday 30 October at 2.00pm
- Monday 4 December at 2.00pm