

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**CITY OF SANCTUARY WORKING GROUP**  
**VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**  
**MONDAY 22 JANUARY 2024**

**PRESENT**

Councillors Phil Gillam (Chair) and Kevin Pardy.

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Andy Hall (Youth and Community Manager) and Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk) – Shrewsbury Town Council

Craig Bethel, Chris Child and Amanda Jones – Shropshire Supports Refugees

**23/23 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Kate Halliday, Maggie Filipova-Rivers and Robert Douglas.

**24/23 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.

**25/23 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

It was agreed that the minutes of the last meeting held on 30 October 2023 previously circulated were an accurate account of proceedings.

**26/23 CITY OF SANCTUARY TOWN APPLICATION**

AS reported that the drafting of this was now underway and reminded the group to let her have details of any events or activities that might be included in the application form.

The Chair told the group that, along with other Town Councillors, he had attended another meeting with a group of refugees at the Shropshire Supports Refugees headquarters and that they would be continuing to do this. He added that this was proving very successful in building relationships with those individuals and finding out about any issues that might be affecting them. AJ added that the High Sheriff had also recently visited the building.

AJ said that they would like to organise a formal opening for the building shortly and would like to invite the Mayor to attend this. She would confirm to the group when a date had been scheduled. AS suggested that a press release might be useful at this point.

AJ reported that Lora Arkhypanko, a Ukrainian refugee living in Shrewsbury, had recently released a short film that she had made entitled 'Women'. The initial screening had sold out and a new screening was being scheduled to take place in the Old Market Hall.

AJ also reported that Katy Rink had offered a couple of hours of time a week to Shropshire Supports Refugees to assist with marketing.

CC was then made a presentation on the activities involving the refugees housed at the Lion Hotel. He was visiting the hotel a couple of times a week and had been able to build relationships with both the refugees and the hotel management as well as Serco. CC had managed to arrange a number of activities for the group including recreational facilities. He was however looking for volunteers to support the group.

AJ notified the group that she would like to organise a gathering in the Quarry on 24 February in order to recognise the anniversary of the beginning of the war. AS said that she would check to see if the Quarry was available and let AJ know.

AJ suggested that she and AH met separately to talk about young refugees and how they might be supported.

AS suggested that she circulate the draft application form to the group for comment. She would also remind also staff and councillors about using the City of Sanctuary logo now registration for the scheme was complete.

## **27/23 CITY OF SANCTUARY ACTION PLAN**

The Chair noted that there were few actions outstanding:

- i) **Letters:** AS reported that all four translated letters (Arabic, Mandarin, Russian and Ukrainian) had now been formatted and were ready for distribution. AJ said that she would soon be distributing these electronically to ensure that they reached as many people as possible.
- ii) **Training for Councillors:** CB reported that Robert Douglas had sent him a list of potentially relevant training courses. He would share these with AS after the meeting.
- iii) **Strategy and Action Plan:** AS reported that this action was now complete.
- iv) **Powerpoint presentation:** AJ explained that she was struggling to pull together something appropriate for councillors. She had a number of presentations available but wasn't quite sure what information she should include. AS suggested that she could help with preparing an appropriate presentation if AJ sent these to her and the AJ could then attend Full Council on 18 March 2024 to present this.
- v) **Working the BID:** HB reported that the BID had said that they were happy to support the initiative.

## **28/23 FUTURE MEETING DATES**

It was noted that this was to be arranged by the working group.