

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
FULL COUNCIL
18 MARCH 2024

Officer: Amanda Spencer – Deputy Town Clerk

Purpose of Report

To update Full Council on activities and the application for City (Town) of Sanctuary.

Introduction

Along with Shropshire Supports Refugees, Shrewsbury Town Council resolved to apply for City (Town) of Sanctuary Accreditation. As a result, a Working Group was established, Chaired by Councillor Phil Gillam to oversee both the application process and to support and encourage activities in order to support the asylum seeker and refugees community in Shrewsbury.

Town of Sanctuary

City (Town) of Sanctuary is a mainstream, grassroots movement. It works by creating opportunities for relationship between local people and those seeking sanctuary, and by offering a positive vision of a culture of hospitality and practical assistance for those in need of safety.

Shrewsbury Town of Sanctuary as part of this organisation, will be made up of different people and organisations who work in different ways to make the town a place of welcome and safety for people seeking sanctuary from violence, war and persecution. In support of this work it builds on practical experience of welcoming asylum seekers and refugees to Shrewsbury for many years.

Activity to date

A number of activities have taken place which will contribute to the Town Council's City (Town) of Sanctuary. This includes:

- A Town of Sanctuary Strategy and Action Plan have been created.
- A welcome letter for asylum seekers and refugees has been created and translated into Arabic, Mandarin, Russian and Ukrainian.
- A number of opportunities to meet local asylum seekers and refugees have taken place.

City (Town) of Sanctuary Application Process

As part of the Town Council's commitment towards City (Town) of Sanctuary status we need to demonstrate how it has embedded the concept of welcome and inclusion at all levels of the organisation. This should show how the local authority will continue to develop and sustain a culture

of welcome beyond the award and across all council services. Members are therefore asked to make sure they are aware of the commitment and that they promote these wherever possible. A presentation will be made to Full Council in order to ensure everyone is aware of ongoing activities and the reasons behind the application.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) The report be noted.**
- (ii) That the Town of Sanctuary Strategy and Action Plan be adopted.**