

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
Report to:	Executive Committee
Date:	16 September 2019
Subject:	Croeso Menai's bid to the Home Office to become Community Sponsors to resettle a family of refugees from Syria
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Alun Mummery
Head of Service:	Ned Michael
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Local Members:	Councillor Alun Mummery, Councillor Robin Williams and Councillor Meirion Jones

A –Recommendation/s and reason/s
<p>It is recommended that the Executive Committee approves:</p> <p>A1 Moving forward to support Croeso Menai's bid to the Home Office to become Community Sponsors to resettle a family of refugees from Syria should they be placed in Anglesey.</p> <p>Reasons</p> <p>1.0 Background</p> <p>In April 2016, the Executive Committee agreed to receive 30 individuals or 5 families as part of a scheme to resettle vulnerable people from Syria.</p> <p>Since then, we have welcomed 5 vulnerable families from Syria and we continue to provide them with support through our Programme Co-ordinator.</p> <p>By now, the Croeso Menai Group has been established which includes 12 members with expertise in various areas who are working hard to put together an application to the Home Offices in order to become a Community Sponsor so that another vulnerable family from Syria may be resettled in the Menai area.</p> <p>As the Group has not identified a suitable home for the family and that the property could be</p>

either side of the Menai Straits, the Group requires the support of the Isle of Anglesey County Council and Cyngor Gwynedd in order to present their application to the Home Office.

As part of the process of identifying a suitable property, the group will work closely with the Police in order to ensure that the location is suitable for a vulnerable family and that there are no risks with regard to dangerous or racist individuals who could create problems for the family. The Council will also be expected to ensure that the property meets the required standards for any rented property which is offered to the family.

Croeso Menai are sponsored by Citizens Cymru which is part of Citizens UK and Citizens Cymru will act as a guarantor for Croeso Menai should the group fail to deliver in the future.

2.0 Home Office Requirements with regard to Community Sponsors

As part of the process of preparing a bid to become community sponsors, any group must have £9,000 available to support a vulnerable family from Syria during their first year.

The community sponsor will be expected to provide support for the family for at least one year following their arrival in the UK and to provide a home for at least two years following their arrival in the UK.

Croeso Menai have provided evidence that they have this money and they have also provided Financial Forecasts regarding the action they will take in order to support the family.

Any group will be expected to have a Safeguarding Policy and a Complaints Policy and every volunteer must have a current DBS check in place.

As part of their bid, Croeso Menai have also provided evidence that they have everything in place to satisfy the Home Office's requirements.

Croeso Menai will be responsible for:-

- i. Finding a suitable property for the family
- ii. Providing the family with intensive support during their first weeks
- iii. Providing the family with money during their first weeks until they receive any benefits for which they are eligible
- iv. Registering children with a school
- v. Registering with a GP
- vi. Providing translators
- vii. Protecting the family from any media coverage

3.0 The Role of Citizens Cymru as a Guarantor

We are aware that Citizens Cymru is supporting another group of Community Sponsors in Wales and that two families have been resettled in Caernarfon by a group of community sponsors.

Should the community group for whatever reason be unable to operate in the future, Citizens Cymru would take over the role of supporting any families which were receiving support from the community sponsors.

4.0 The Role of the Local Authorities

The Local Authority must support any bid to the Home Office to become Community Sponsors.

Local Authorities can refuse to support a bid on the following grounds:-

- Lack of capacity to provide vital local services in the area in which they intend to resettle a family, for example, shortage of places in local schools
- Concerns regarding community tensions in the area in which they intend to resettle the family
- Concerns regarding the ability of the community sponsors to provide the support required by the family

Following approval by the Home Office for the group to become community sponsors, the Home Office would provide information to the Group and the Local Authority regarding the family they intend to resettle, including the family's medical notes and details regarding any specific needs.

Before the commencement of the arrangement, the Local Authority and the Group would have to agree to accept the family based on the information received from the Home Office. Key partners such as the Health Service, the Social Services, the Education Service would have to be consulted in order to ensure that the needs of the family can be met.

Local Authorities can refuse to accept a family on the following grounds:-

- Medical conditions which require specific treatment which is not available within a reasonable distance
- Shortage of places in schools within a reasonable distance
- Other specific needs which cannot be met within the local area

5.0 Funding Package

The Sponsor Group would be expected to fund all the support required during the first year.

Local Authorities may bid for available funding for years 2-5 and bids will be approved on an individual basis by the Home Office should the community sponsors be unable to provide funding after the first year or during the first year should the community sponsors be unable to provide the required support.

Local Authorities may apply for funding during the first year to cover Education costs: £4,500 for children aged 5 – 18 and £2,250 for children aged 3 – 4.

After the first year, the Local Authority would have to apply to the Home Office for funding towards education costs which is agreed on a case by case basis.

B – What other options did you consider and why did you reject them and/or opt for this option?

Irrelevant

C – Why is this a decision for the Executive?

D – Is this decision consistent with policy approved by the full Council?

DD – Is this decision within the budget approved by the Council?

E – Who did you consult?		What did they say?
1	Chief Executive / Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) (mandatory)	Supportive to the application.
2	Finance / Section 151 (mandatory)	Supportive to the application.
3	Legal / Monitoring Officer (mandatory)	Supportive to the application.
5	Human Resources (HR)	N/A

6	Property	N/A
7	Information Communication Technology (ICT)	N/A
8	Scrutiny	
9	Local Members	
10	Any external bodies / other/s	

F – Risks and any mitigation (if relevant)		
1	Economic	
2	Anti-poverty	
3	Crime and Disorder	
4	Environmental	
5	Equalities	
6	Outcome Agreements	
7	Other	

FF - Appendices:
Community Sponsorship Guide for Local Authorities

G - Background papers (please contact the author of the Report for any further information):