



LRSNG Minutes 29th March 2018, The Bell Inn.

Present: Jan Broom, Terry Faull, David Rogerson, Ruth Christine, Philip Modland, Joe Thomas, Georgy Bellam, Trevor Cook, Karen Farrington (from 7:45), Janet Rogerson (Treasurer), Roger CO (vice-chair), Jain Ritchie (minute taker)

Apologies: Bill Glen (Secretary), Frances Tippet (Chair), Elspeth Nicholson

Minutes of previous (22nd Feb) meeting – all matters arising dealt with below

A. Chair's report (read by RCO):

A1. Launceston Rotary have kindly made a donation of £1,000 towards costs of supporting the first refugee family coming to Launceston under the resettlement scheme. I attended Rotary on the 26th Feb as requested as a guest speaker and they contacted me subsequently saying they would like to make the donation. I have collected the cheque but have not had the chance to bank it. I will do so on Friday.

A2. International Organisation for Migration training provided via Cornwall Council. Georgy Bellem, Sylvia Wright and myself attended this training day on 27th March. A very helpful session indeed giving many insights into life in Syria pre and post conflict, issues faced by refugees and much food for thought for planning the support we can offer. (see also feedback from Georgy below)

A3. Update from Serena Collins, Cornwall Council. Council members have signed off on proposed plans for Cornwall to take additional families in agreed sites across Cornwall under the local authority scheme. These plans includes two families in Launceston using a hybrid support model, as we discussed when Serena came to speak with us. Serena is progressing the application for the first family to come to Launceston for this summer. She has also updated us that the Government has told the Council it will be stopping the scheme after 2019, so we need to ensure that we plan to have the second family arrive before December 2019. Please can we discuss what lobbying we can do to show our dismay at how few families Britain is accepting and this decision to stop the scheme at the end of next year, despite no end to the conflict in Syria being in sight.

A discussion about possible lobbying activities took place:

- prime target is clearly our MP Scott Mann for both letters and personal representations at surgeries.
- individual constituent response carry more weight than group responses, but group responses are often valued for more detail – we should do both a formal LRSNG representation and also encourage and help individuals to write.

- individual responses need to be personal, not a form letter. Request for a series of bullet point suggestions that individuals could use
- need to fact check what Serena reported and be sure we have the correct information
- possibility of requesting Scott Mann to come and explain (and justify!) exactly what the government proposes and listen to our concerns at a public meeting

ACTIONS

- Roger and Frances to discuss and draft a LRSB response.
- Anyone with specific knowledge or ideas for points to include in individual letters please send to info@lrsg.org.uk and we will collate and share them.

A4. The Year 9 presentation at Launceston College (which we were invited to) was postponed due to the snow. We have a new date of the 4th May. I will be attending to share what we doing.

B. Secretary's Report (read by RCO)

B1. 'Benefit Gig' now on Saturday 30th June at the Town Hall. Lionhat are booked, for travelling expenses (they are Falmouth based). The Town Hall PA will be good enough for music; cost is apparently £10. We now need more musicians, perhaps a DJ, and plenty of supporters!

ACTIONS

- General call out for anyone who, or who knows someone who might be, able to suggest possible support acts and MC to contact Bill (secretary@lrsg.org.uk)
- RCO to put date on Launceston 2020 diary
- JoeT to create event on Facebook
- Anyone interested in helping with the event to contact Bill

B2. No new news of the Charity status; I have spoken to the Charity Commission. Their response on March 8th: 'Your application is currently with a case officer, having passed the initial stage. We are experiencing high demand, but the officer will be in touch when she has completed her work' Since then, nothing I'm afraid.

B3. Crowdfunder: this has not gone as far as I'd hoped. I have started to build a campaign, but have stalled when it has come to 'rewards'. If the meeting can suggest any inexpensive rewards for say donations of: £10; £25; £50; £100 I would be very grateful!

A discussion about possible rewards came up with the following suggestions

- for a small reward a simple thank-you letter or scroll
- for a small reward your name on a roll-of-thanks on website
- for a larger reward (say £50) a option of a free t-shirt (these can be procured for about £8 each
- for a medium reward a set of Karen's cards (if we have some left)
- possible voucher for a free coffee at one of the independent coffee shops in town (in conjunction with the shop! For a larger reward include a piece of cake
- for a larger business donation inclusion of business name and logo as a sponsor on publicity material, website, social media, and a certificate of thanks to frame for the office/shop wall.

ACTIONS

- Joe and Roger both need images of the cards for facebook and website. RCO needs a set of cards to scan from whoever has them

C. Vice-chair report (Roger). Following note from last meeting website has been updated so that Facebook feed now appears on the home page. Roger suggested that the website should be more static and that Facebook was better for newsy items.

Other suggestions discussed.

- David felt that it was important to keep the website with live information as an alternative to the social media for those not using social media
- Joe offered to do a weekly summary blog post of the Facebook activity
- David also suggested a FAQ (frequently asked questions) section as a way of explaining what LRSO is about

ACTIONS

- Roger to add both Joe and David as admin/editors on the website

A further discussion about the issue of how to handle negative comments on Facebook was raised by Joe. The general feeling was that any inflammatory material should be deleted and the poster reported and blocked. There was a feeling that responding to all arguments could become very time consuming, but that in the first instance a polite response was a good idea. Joe should be able to call on others to respond as needed. Clearly the situation needs monitoring and a publicly stated policy might be required.

D. Treasurer's Report (Janet)

Current account contains £6778.75 not including the £1000 from Rotary

Monthly standing order donations are running at £130 – we need to increase this.

Ad hoc donations during March took the month total up to just over £200

Leaflet has been produced (A5 double sided) with details of LRSO on one side and bank details on the other. Available from Janet.

In discussion it was agreed that a direct online method of donation was important – Joe suggested that at least one payment gateway (?BT???) offered a free service to charities. This needs to be done as soon as Charity status is confirmed.

E. Update from Trevor regarding aid collections. Rob has provided two new lists of items required for Greece (Lesbos and Athens) and a new list for Northern France is coming shortly. This will be circulated and posted online asap.

Note that for Greece the focus is on SMALL clothes – nothing larger than Medium size. Childrens clothes and underwear – especially new items. Some non-perishable food items. Menswear and larger sizes are not required.

Call for volunteers for new rota for the collection point from April 17th. Contact Trevor

F. Fundraising

F1. Georgy's Walk. Sat.19th May 12:00 for 12:30 depart. A 4.5m loop from Crackington Haven via St.Genny's church where there will be a break for sandwiches and talk from Terry on the history and back via coastal path to Crackington where a talk on the geology of the area is planned. Agreed that this sounded an excellent plan. Pre-registrations to help assess numbers are requested but not required. Entry cost £10 on registration. Numbers may be limited by availability of walk leaders – currently 2, more may be required. Walkers may also collect sponsorship.

Flyers and sponsorship forms were distributed and will be available via Facebook and Website shortly.

ACTIONS

- Georgy/Terry to send electronic copy of flyer and forms to Roger and Joe for use online.
- Roger/Joe to look at ways of registering online (ideally with online payment)
- Roger to add as event on Launceston 2020
- Georgy to take flyer (A4) 3 copies to Town Hall to be put on town noticeboards 2 weeks before event. Also Finlays newsagent window, and elsewhere

F2 Possible event in Methodist Hall requested by Rob. Trevor has identified possible dates but not heard back from Rob; currently 7th April or 19th May.

7th April now felt to be too short notice and 19th May would clash with walk.

ACTION

- Trevor to investigate other dates and liaise with Rob

F3 Joe has plan to run a small music night at No8 with share of door and bar profit for LRSB. Details not yet confirmed but likely to be during April.

AGREED that Joe can go ahead and organise this. Details will be circulated as soon as available (watch Facebook)

F4 Possible event in July on Parade Ground or using parade ground as base. Agreed that a small coordinating group would be needed to pull this together.

ACTION

- Anyone interested in helping with this to contact info@lrsb.org.uk and if at least 3 or 4 people come forward they will be put in touch with each other.

G. General Discussions

G1. Sub-groups. Agreed that in general specific events and/or actions need small sub-groups to run them and simply report progress to the monthly meeting (or the core committee between meetings).

G2. Concerns expressed over the time scale for getting ready to host a family in "the summer" – feeling that a lot of work needs to be done and more clarity needed on exactly

what will be required. Need input from Cornwall (via Frances) and also Bude and Tavistock experiences and START student group from Plymouth.

Agreed that it would be a good idea to have a specific meeting to develop an action plan – provisionally in 2 weeks subject to Frances availability (essential for Cornwall input). This would be a single agenda item meeting in addition to the next monthly meeting.

ACTION

- Roger to set date with Frances and circulate it.

G3. Need for a volunteer recruitment event, to build a bigger practical support network – anecdotal reports from Bude and Tavistock suggest that a significant level of continuing personal support is needed and vital for successful settlement.

Possibilities suggested included a stall at the monthly market in the square or an event with speakers from other groups/START.

G4. Georgy gave a fuller report on the IOM meeting she attended with Frances and Sylvia. Much useful information about the impact of cultural differences and how these need to be addressed including some specific pointers. Also information about the typical background experiences of families arriving – both in camps and in Syria. Important difference between those from urban and rural backgrounds.

Full details and copies of the handouts are available from Frances and Georgy will be available to talk more at the next monthly meeting

Next monthly meeting

Thursday 26th April 7:30pm at The Bell.

Details of any intermediate meetings will be circulated by email and on website and facebook.