**RAS Network Minutes – February 21, 2020**

Attending:

1. Jabo Butera (Pop+ Associate),
2. Cassie Roberts (Odils),
3. Jessica Dann (PCC),
4. David Feindouno (Red cross),
5. Gunel Ismikhanova

Apologies:

1. Rosie Brennam (Law school),
2. Sarah Medland (funding Office Big Lottery),
3. PC Jo Moss (dc police)
4. Isaac kelly (Start)

Visitors

1. Jakub Szukaj: Migrant Help UK
2. Moira Horries: Clear springs Homes

Chair of the Meeting: Jabo Butera (DBI)

Minute Taker: Mary Pilkington

Hosted by Diversity Business Incubator at HQ Building

1. **Updates on legal aid**

Rosie Brennam sent her update on the outcome of the legal sub committee on the urgent matter of lack of Legal aid support in Plymouth.

Report back on Legal advice subcommittee

1.       Meeting held in Jan which included John Facey Legal Aid Agency and Jo Wilding researcher

2.       Discussion re re-tender of legal aid contract - LAA want to re-tender with incentives in hope someone actually bids. Looking at office space - so far looked at Harbour (unsuitable), Quaker meeting house, Mutley. Discussion re Millfields (Jabo) and CA (David Tully) - ongoing - plan to resolve end of Feb

3.       Provision - NLS attended - indicated they are taking all referrals - but RB to raise concerns about whether this is feasible given feedback from DCRS and Red X

4.       Discussion ongoing with Public Law Project re strategic litigation given situation

5.       Jo Wilding circulated action plan to sub-committee - will be circulated with RAS minutes from this meeting.

**Jessica Dann** updated on the potential offer from Millfield trust on office space to be shared with MLP and any other legal firm joining on solving this crisis. The aim being to support these firms on their overhead as the sector is not economically viable.

Action: JD will contact MLP and find out if they are comfortable joining in the sharing office space

JD mentioned about an upcoming strategic meeting on national level to which Tracy Lee will be attending and presenting the case of Plymouth

**Migrant Community Fund**

Jabo and David attended a meeting at Ballard house where the conversation about this fund is still being designed. There is another meeting schedule for this week for clarifying the actions and partners to be involved.

Action: Jabo to follow up and update on next meeting

1. **Presentation from Migrant help**

**Jakub** introduced himself and explained in length the different services delivered by Migrant help.

* Migrant help has won a recent contract to continue supporting the Asylum seekers and Migrants
* The telephone line and online support (web chat) is being upgraded and staffs have been trained to be respond to the high demand and the long waiting time on the line
* The Eagle team is the task force to develop this and reduce the waiting time on the line
* Migrant help has an office or representation in all the accommodation centres across the country
* Emphasis on the support to vulnerable people who are in migration process/ UASC and European migrant support in place
* Move on program has been commissioned to them and this is being used in other cities. Jakub encouraged Plymouth to implement or use this service more as currently no one is using this in Plymouth and South west

Action : Jessica to follow up with organising an awareness and familiarisation of the Move on project to all front line agencies. Implementing the positive move on program within RAS agencies.

* Jakub to share information about positive move on to be shared across the sector and on the Pop + portal

**Moira** Clear spring was represented by Moira and she explained the different service offered.

* Requested to encourage the service users to have email accounts as clear spring struggles to get in touch with them due to frequent change of telephone numbers
* Suggested maybe Odils to introduce accessing to emails to all the newcomers when signposted to them,
* Clear spring delivers the decision from HO to all its tenant although the communication is still confusing sometimes
* The Aspen Cards are still challenging but Clear spring still delivers them, and the challenges is weekend when the cards cannot be activated, hence the use of destitution funds by front line agency is high.
* The difficult with Aspen cards and other support is mostly observed from those coming from Private landlord into clear spring houses
* Moira suggested if the organisation could hold blank and toped up cards to be used in emergency (conversation to continue with the HO)
* The challenge of cards being lost in post or not arriving is still there, and the challenge of individuals arriving at late night time,
* Cassie suggested for clear spring to stock food parcels at housings during weekend as measures to support late arrivals or weekend arrivals as emergency is on food most of the time. This has been the approach her church has been using
* Clear spring have currently 327 service users and have 75 properties on their portfolio, predominantly HMO and 75% are single users
* There is a service users survey that Migrant help is piloting and Clear spring will be taking part and use it as well to collect the outcome as method of improving service

1. **CMF:**

Jabo and David F. have been following up with the city council approach and there is good hope that RAS will be allocated some funds toward legal aid capacity support

1. **Trauma Focused**

Jessica will continue to champion with the follow up of the training around appreciative enquiry and trauma focused methodology to utilise within RAS.

David F. raised the issue of potential confusion between RAS and Trauma focused meetings as more members are attending the latter.

Cassie suggested to do pilot project this summer within Odils

1. Terms of Reference and membership

A lack of attendance to the meetings since last year was acknowledged. JD to lead on this to remind the members of RAS of their duties and importance of attending RAS meetings.

A review of the membership should take place and explore the conditions of making the participation to this forum more structured and imperative for the good performance of this organ.

A suggestion of having a vice chair of the organ was proposed and approved by all those present at the meeting as well as having a rotative leadership in the future.

JD suggested to always copy the trustees in the invitation emails to the RAS organisations members as this helps in encouraging them to attend.

1. AOB

David F. update on the red cross funding available to refugee communities and all communities for encouraging inclusion and community cohesion. This fund is managed by Pop+ and all the information are on their website

Request to add Global resettlement on the next agenda as well as the end of VPRS follow up

JD encourage members to participate on the Equality Objective Consultation to be found on the city council website and another reminder will be circulated to all members.

Next meeting to be on 24th April 2020 and venue will be confirmed

**Tam Martin** presented two projects on compassionate city and Hope in Heart that she has been funded to deliver in the city. Requesting organizations to share and signpost people

**David Feindouno**: jobs at Plymouth hope have received candidates and the process of recruitment is on the way, should be updated with new staffs on the next meeting

**Jabo Butera** Pop+ associate Cathy will be going on maternity leave soon but will put in a bid to the L&D funds through Esmee Fairbain second round to support the legal aid and the mapping. Organizations have been involved in collaborating and City of Sanctuary will lead on that

**Next Meeting to be on the 19th December 2019 at DBI office , HQ Building , 237 Union Street , Pl1 3HQ and this will be just a celebration time** .