

London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership

Central Council Meeting

Tuesday, April 13, 2010

Present: Elisabeth White, Kelly McManus, Mohamed Al-Adeimi, Munira Ahmed, Salah Badawi, Henri Boyi, Jean-Pierre Cantin, Vicki Esses, Anne Langille, Lauren Touchant, Debbie Turnbull, Estela Quintero-Weldon, Naeem Qureshi, Huda Hussein and Nina Hamou.

Regrets: Asma Ahmed, German Gutierrez, Trevor Hinds, Jo-Ann Hutchinson and Dev Sainani.

SUMMARY

Welcome and Introductions

Kelly McManus, LMLIP Co-chair, welcomed and thanked members of the Central Council for their commitment and attendance. Estela Quintero-Weldon, co-chair of Inclusion and Civic Engagement, attended the meeting on behalf of German. Members introduced themselves.

Co-Chair Remarks

Elisabeth White, Co-chair, announced that the Welcoming Communities Imitative Action Research session on the Local Immigration Partnerships will be held on April 30- May1. Discussion will be focused on what makes a good LIP, the structure and best practices. Elisabeth and Huda will attend.

Elisabeth also announced that the London & Middlesex Immigration Portal has received additional funding to expand its work. This is especially important because it is the communication tool for the LMLIP.

Anne Langille added that the Portal will be undergoing updates and edits surrounding issues of communication. Several strategies have come in the Employment Sub-council regarding the Immigration Portal.

ACTION: Elisabeth and Anne will touch base with Jill Tansley at the City of London discuss suggestions brought forth by the Sub-councils regarding the Portal.

This Council will continue to work towards the Community Strategy Meeting on May 26, 2010, for which the invitations have now gone out. The goal for this Council is to have the draft strategic plan by May 12, 2010, for community feedback on May 26.

Sub-Council Reports

Health & Wellbeing Sub-council, Debbie Turnbull, Chair

The Sub-council has finished identifying gaps and at the previous meeting the group weighed in on various strategies by placing stickers beside the ones they perceived to be most important. This allowed for consensus on the major strategies for every area. A sub-group has been formed to work on the rationale. The final product will be sent to the Sub-council for review.

Inclusion & Civic Engagement, Estela Quintero-Weldon, Co-chair

The Sub-council finished discussing priorities and began discussing strategies promoting information and encouraging newcomers to get involved at various levels. A sub-group has been struck to gather information on the rationale. There is a lot of overlap and the group will need to work hard at the last meeting to narrow in on the strategies and rationale.

Settlement Sub-council, Mohamed Al-Adeimi, Chair

The sub-council worked on summarizing the priorities and discussing strategies. Strategies have been developed and links have been made between existing community initiatives such as the Neighborhood Strategy.

The group will collect information for the rationale and come prepared to discuss at the next meeting.

Employment Sub-Council, Anne Langille, Chair

The Sub-council has completed the strategies and rationale for the first two priorities. The group will continue to work on the last priority dealing with systemic issues.

With regards to the gap in administration mentioned at the previous meeting, it has been captured in the 'Systemic/Technical Issues' priority.

Henri mentioned that, in terms of systemic barriers, we should try to capture what is national, provincial and local.

Education Sub-council, Jean-Pierre Cantin, Chair

The group continues to discuss the priorities and dig into each subject. Due to the time constraint, members will be tasked to work on the rationale piece via email.

The group took the Central Councils' advice and reexamined the issue of the curriculum. The curriculum needs to be rich enough to create global citizens.

Justice & Protection Services, Nina on behalf of Trevor Hinds, Co-Chair

The Sub-council has finished drafting the strategies and will finalize the rationale at the next meeting. The group has been asked to come prepared with information for the rationale so it will only be a matter of synthesizing and editing.

Meeting Minutes Approval

Minutes were reviewed and approved by the Council.

Update from Welcoming Community Initiatives

WCI research continues to grow with a new study with Skills International. Surveys will be sent to users of Skills International and those who do not use it.

The Welcoming Communities Action Research on the LIPs meeting was initially planned for 30 participants and has grown to about 80. A French Panel is expected to attend along with

representation from federal, provincial and municipal governments. Observers from other provinces are also attending. There has been a parliamentary report prepared on the LIPs which shows support for the initiative.

Another research project underway is surveying London opinion leaders, both government and non government, on their perceptions of how welcoming the community is and their perception of immigration.

The WCI report Characteristics of a Welcoming Community has been released. It is a literature review which gives us a structure to do systematic work to move forward.

Elisabeth commented that the partnership with WCI has given this LMLIP Council an opportunity to continue to move forward.

It was reiterated from several members of the group that there is still a gap between expectations of the immigrant and reality. It is important that there be a mechanism in place that prepares people before their arrival, such as having their degrees accredited before arrival, this will alleviate pressure off the system. Mohamed mentioned that the Modernized CIC Approach is currently doing pilot project on this subject in three countries.

Strategic Plan- Preliminary Discussion

The Central Council reviewed the priorities for each Sub-council. It was mentioned that the groups should continue to move away from negative language and that acronyms be removed to increase clarity.

The Council discussed following re-occurring themes:

Communication

- Between the service providers
- Community: awareness, perceptions and promotion
- Information on how to navigate the system

Support for Immigrants

- Child care
- Education
- Emotional/counseling
- Employment
- Families
- Navigation support

Systemic Barriers

- Civic engagement
- Housing
- Perception vs. reality

Accessibility and Accountability

- Information and services

- Shared responsibility between the service provider and the immigrant
- Transportation, childcare, stigma

Cultural sensitivity

- Acceptance
- Training
- Using the media to benefit the immigrant

The group is encouraged to continue to revisit the terms of reference and consider the role of Middlesex County moving forward.

There was consensus that poverty touches all the sub-councils and that these strategies are tools to support the outcome of reduced poverty.

Next Steps

ACTION: Staff to build on today's discussion to incorporate across Sub-council themes.

Next meeting:

Tuesday, April 27, 2010

5:00p.m. -7:00 p.m.

Kinsmen Recreation Centre, Room 2a

Regards to nhamou@uwlondon.on.ca

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