

London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership Settlement Sub-council Friday, February 19, 2010

Present: Mohamed Al-Adeimi, Fadela Ahmed, Maria del Pilar Silva, Mayssa Elsayegh, Marel Fielding, Rifat Hussein, Lily Johnson, Ramona Lucan, Gaston Mabaya, Valy Marochko, Tharcisse Ntakibirora, Jean-Baptiste Ntakoma, Mersija Nuric, Nancy Santos, Sunduz Shubbar, Jill Tansley, Denise Taylor-Edwards, Mary Yanful;

Regrets: Brian Rhoden.

Facilitator: Mohamed Al-Adeimi.

SUMMARY

Welcome and Introductions

Mohamed Al-Adeimi was introduced as the facilitator for the first meeting of the Settlement Sub-council until a Chair is selected. The group was asked to go around the table and introduce themselves and share bit about their backgrounds

Terms of Reference

The group was given a few minutes to review the Roles & Responsibilities of the Sub-Council (page 3-4 of the Terms of Reference). Mohamed provided a summary on the Roles & Responsibilities as well as a summary of how the Terms of Reference were endorsed by the community during the November 18, 2009 Community Strategy Meeting. It was noted that the deadline for completing the Strategic Plan has been extended to June 30, 2010. Each of the six sub-councils will be responsible for creating a thematic strategy (i.e. Settlement) which will be one piece in the London and Middlesex Local Immigration partnership Strategic Plan (LMLIP)

The role of the Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI) at the University of Western Ontario in relation to the LMLIP was also highlighted. Dr Victoria Esses is the Co-director of the Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) project involving 16 universities. The LMLIP is very fortunate to have her on the Central Council representing the research arm.

Role of Project Staff

Nina Hamou was introduced as the Project Assistant on the LMLIP. She will be providing administrative support to the settlement sub-council and the Chair and Co-Chair by taking notes, distributing them, booking meeting space and communication. Nina's role will involve clarifying or responding to some questions, as needed.

Review of Gaps and Priority Setting Results

The sub-council spent some time analyzing the Sub-council meeting minutes from February 2, 2010. Some clarification and elaboration was provided to the following points including:

- Clarification was asked for regarding the CIC Modernization Approach which was explained as a new way for streamlining settlement services.
- More elaboration was needed on point number 7 found in the Settlement report. The discussion was regarding the education process and how the mainstream immigration is a bonus to society rather than a heavy burden.
- The role of this Sub-council as a settlement body should be on the Agenda for the next meeting.
- Collectivist vs. Individualistic Societies: immigrants that arrive in Canada may come from collectivist society. We need to implement a way of understanding society at the beginning for immigrants. This is challenging for immigrants and settlement agencies.

ACTION: The sub-council agreed that the issue of individuals coming from a collectivist society into an individualistic one is a gap.

- Affordable Childcare: daycare is very expensive, specifically in Ontario. The cost is the same as what someone would pay for education or career change. When immigrants send their children back to third world country because of lack of affordable childcare, there is a problem. Also, with fulltime Junior Kindergarten being offered, cost of daycare will increase.
- Youth and seniors: Need to look at best practices of Seniors Wrap Around program.

A point of clarification was raised with regards to a point in the Community Capacity and Needs Report (page 8 of the Settlement Report). The use of the word "acculturation" means to lose ones culture. Rather we want to facilitate "Cultural Integration".

Interpretation into French

Although interpretation is not needed, there was agreement that all final documentation should be translated into French. This includes all the Settlement Sub-council Meeting Minutes. Any community events or consultations will require interpretation.

Process:

a. Selection of a Chair

The following individuals had put forth their names to Chair:

- Marel Fielding
- Mohamed Al-Adeimi
- Gaston Mabaya
- Sundoz Shubbar

Marel Fielding, Gaston Mabaya and Sundoz Shubbar all withdrew the names. Mohamed was asked to continue in the role of Chair. Rifat Hussein was nominated and selected as the co-chair.

b. Meeting Times:

The following meeting times were selected by the Sub-Council:

- Monday, March 1st : 9:30-11:30
- Monday, March 22nd: 9:30-11:30
- Thursday, April 8th 9:30-11:30
- Thursday, April 22nd 9:30-11:30

The group collectively agreed that they liked the Central Library for meeting space. However meetings are not to go over 2 hours so that individuals can validate their parking.

ACTION: Nina to create name tags.

Next Steps:

ACTION: Nina to take the gaps in the Settlement Report and the gaps mentioned in today's meeting and insert them into the template.

Next meeting:

March 1, 9:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m.

Central Library, Stevenson & Hunt Room B

Regrets to nhamou@uwlondon.on.ca