

APPG for London

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 28 March 2022

Parliamentarians in attendance:

Bob Blackman MP
Sir Bob Neill MP
Catherine West MP
Feryal Clark MP (chairing)
Florence Eshalomi MP
Fleur Anderson MP
Lord Graham Tope

Also in attendance:

Officers from the Secretariat at London Councils
Sam Robins, senior parliamentary assistant to Bob Neill MP

Item 1) Briefing on the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme:

Clive Grimshaw, London Councils' Strategic Lead for Health & Care, delivered a presentation on the Homes for Ukraine scheme and boroughs' work supporting Ukrainian refugees arriving in the capital.

Boroughs' role includes: supporting the initial reception of refugees; provision of subsistence payment; community integration; housing support; and arranging school places.

Boroughs will also carry out safeguarding and accommodation checks. Sponsors and all adults in sponsors' households will also be subject to initial Police National Computer (PNC), criminal records and Warning Index checks by the Home Office. Safeguarding checks should be conducted by councils as soon as possible after the council has been alerted that a visa application has been made from DLUHC. As soon as boroughs receive the data on the Ukrainian arrivals, they are expected to conduct an accommodation check (preferably before the family arrive).

The pressures on services and local resource concerns were discussed.

ACTION: It was agreed that the presentation should be circulated among London MPs as soon as possible and that the APPG should arrange a follow-up briefing for MPs, as well as potentially share concerns with the government.

Item 2) Election of officers:

After confirming that the meeting was quorate, the chair suggested starting the election of officers.

The chair announced that shadow ministerial duties mean she is stepping down as co-chair of the APPG. She thanked the group for its work over the past year. She then nominated Florence Eshalomi to replace her as co-chair (this was seconded by Bob Neill).

Florence was duly elected co-chair of the APPG.

All other existing officers were re-nominated for their APPG roles. This was carried without any objections.

The chair nominated Bob Blackman to become a vice-chair of the group. This was agreed.

The officers of the APPG for London for 2022/23 are therefore:

Sir Bob Neill MP, co-chair
Florence Eshalomi MP, co-chair
Catherine West MP, secretary
Lord Graham Tope, vice-chair
Feryal Clark MP, vice-chair
Bob Blackman MP, vice-chair
David Simmonds MP, vice-chair
Rupa Huq MP, vice-chair

ACTION: The secretariat will arrange re-registration of the APPG with the parliamentary authorities.

Item 3) Planning future business:

Sir Bob Neill took over as chair of the meeting and asked for suggested future business for the APPG. The following ideas were discussed:

- **Homes for Ukraine.** It was agreed that the group should revisit this issue in the near future and give more London MPs the chance to receive a briefing. The aim would be to understand issues of concern that should be passed to the government, but also to share ideas on how best to welcome Ukrainian refugees into communities.
- **Post-Covid economic recovery in the capital.** Florence Eshalomi requested more work on this important issue, especially the on-going impact of the pandemic on London's tourism, hospitality and cultural sectors.

- **Health and social care.** Catherine West proposed a meeting on London's specific health and social care challenges (including issues around staff recruitment and retention and integration), plus the potential impact of the health and social care bill on the capital.
- **Temporary accommodation and out-of-borough placements.** Fleur Anderson called for a meeting on this topic, promoted by concerns about families in temporary accommodation needing to travel significant distances across London to take children to school.

ACTION: These ideas were noted and it was agreed that the co-chairs would work with the APPG secretariat to plan a programme of events.

The meeting was brought to a close.