

**Minutes of the 17th Annual General Meeting of
Suffolk Refugee Support
Thursday 13th October at 7.00pm, Museum Street Methodist Church**

Attendees:

First name	Surname	Organisation
Ali	Al Hamadi	Member
Fatima	Al Hamadi	Member
Alan	Blackshaw	Trustee and Member
Marian	Carter	Trustee and Member
Catherine	Costello	SRS
Rebecca	Crerar	SRS
Sheila	Darwin	Ipswich Borough Council
David	Davis	CAB
Heidi	Dix	University of Suffolk Social work
Nick	Feldman	SRS Vice Chair and Treasurer and Member
Penny	Finn	Ipswich Vineyard Church
Alice	Firbank	Ipswich Borough Council
Mark	Fookes	University of Suffolk Social work
Michaela	Freeman	SRS
Mr	Freeman	
David	Goldsmith	Ipswich Borough Council
Michael	Green	Church Mission Society and Member
Cathie	Jeannot	Ipswich Vineyard Church
Hugh	Jolly	LD Rope and Member
Lucy	Kerry	
Fatima	Khan	SRS
Pauline	Lane	Trustee
Marian	Lanyon	Trustee
Christine	Laverock	Member
Karen	Lawson	SRS
Ray	LeCouteur	SRS volunteer and Member
Michael	Lumb	Member
Peter	Marjoram	UNITE (IS contact)
Sandy	Martin	Suffolk County Council
Jenny	Morcom	Trustee
Sophie	Meudec	Ipswich Borough Council
Kate	O'Driscoll	Trustee
Jodi	Peck	SRS
Verni	Robinson	SRS
Ginny	Shoesmith	Suffolk Constabulary
Martin	Simmonds	SRS
Alison	Smyth	Oyster Press
Al	Smyth	Oyster Press
Ian	Stewart	SRS Chair of Trustees and Member
Clem	Turner	SRS
Lee	Turner	SRS
Sally	Voelker	SRS volunteer
Marianne	Walker	SRS
Meg	White	SRS

	Thomson	
Liz	Wood	SRS
Tess	Wright	SRS
Suffolk Soul Singers		21 members

Apologies

First name	Surname	Organisation
Rev Nick	Atkins	St Matthew's Church
Adeela	Bainbridge	British Red Cross
Jonathon	Baker	TIP Translations
Judith	Barford	
Phoebe	Blagg	Formerly Job Centre
Joyce	Boorman	Soroptimist International Ipswich & District
Stephen	Boyd	Terrence Higgins Trust
David & Cynthia	Capey	
Rosie	Carter	SAFECIC
Annie	Chow	Translation and Interpreting Providers
Elizabeth	Combes	Rope Trust
Natasha	Etheridge	
Lady Clare	Euston	Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk
Sheila	Fox	Volunteer
David	Graham	Terrence Higgins Trust
Cllr Elizabeth	Harsant	Ipswich Borough Council
Tim	Heath	SRS
Anne	Hollis	
William	Kendall, DL	High Sheriff of Suffolk 2016
Izzy	Lane	
Sue	Liddell	
Jemma	Lynch	SRS
Hannah	Musa	Terrence Higgins Trust
Eva	Parkison	Befriending scheme
Cllr Edward	Phillips	Ipswich Borough Council
Andrea	Pittock	Suffolk Community Foundation
Lucinda	Rogers	SRS
Julie	Rose	Suffolk Community Foundation
Richard	Selwyn	Assistant Director Commissioning Children and Young People's Services
Cllr Jane	Storey	Suffolk County Council
Gosia	Strona	Senior Policy Officer – Strategic Migration Partnership
Saleem	Thabit	SRS
Andy	Turner	Terrence Higgins Trust
Rev Jeremy & Cynthia	Walsh	Members
Sue	Young	CAF supporter

There were 67 people present including members, volunteers, SRS staff, several organisations and 21 members of Suffolk Soul Singers. 37 apologies had been received.

Welcome

The Chair, Ian Stewart (IS), introduced himself; the Team Manager Rebecca Crerar (RC), the Treasurer (Nick Feldman (NF) and the Secretary Kate O'Driscoll (KO'D). He welcomed and thanked all present: staff, volunteers, funders, clients and supporters.

1) Minutes of 2015 AGM

The minutes of the last AGM were agreed as a correct record.

2) Annual Report 2015-2016 Chair and Team Manager

Chair's report can be found on p.9 of the Annual Report.

IS outlined the history of SRS, originally set up when Ipswich became a dispersal area for asylum seekers. IS provided an overview of the global refugee crisis and recent UK Government programmes including the Syrian resettlement programme and unaccompanied asylum seekers programmes, informing attendees that SRS is currently delivering the Syrian resettlement programme in Suffolk. The contract for this is due to an end in March 2017 and SRS is currently retendering for the contract.

IS highlighted some of the key figures and achievements in his report and reflected on the increasing needs of asylum seekers and refugees living in Suffolk.

IS stated that the team of staff has grown significantly. He thanked the Team Manager Rebecca for her continued excellent work and acknowledged her 10th anniversary of joining the organisation. He thanked all present: staff, volunteers, funders, clients, members and supporters.

IS informed attendees that there are currently 11 trustees and one vacancy.

Team Manager's report can be found on p.10 of the Annual report.

RC thanked all attending, in particular the Chair for his continued support and advice and the staff for their energy and commitment. RC gave a special thank you to a volunteer, Fatima Al Hamadi and recognised her for her kindness, and staff member Liz Wood for her strong support in the office. RC thanked the wide range of funders who enable SRS to do the work it does, and in particular those who provide unrestricted funding. RC thanked Marianne Walker the Administrative Officer for organising the AGM so effectively.

RC noted that SRS is currently going through a transition period and that the organisation is experiencing a time of uncertainty while it awaits the outcome of the application for funding from the Big Lottery due to be announced in December 2016.

RC referred attendees to her report and echoed the points outlined by IS regarding an increasing number of Government programmes affecting asylum seekers and refugees, as well as increasing needs.

3) Report of the Treasurer see p.11.

The treasurer Nick Feldman thanked his predecessor Hilda Ridge for her excellent work, funders for their support and the monthly Finance committee.

NF presented the Annual Accounts for 2014 -15 and invited questions. He outlined the role of the Committee of Trustees and highlighted the successes of the financial year, in particular the increased level of individual donations and increased membership. He noted

the risks for the organisation in the event of not being successful in its application to the Big Lottery fund.

NF outlined the changes to the membership scheme.

- Clive Mees was reappointed as independent examiner – 12 votes recorded.
- The Annual Accounts 2014-15 were accepted – 12 votes recorded.

4) Election of Trustees to the Committee

The following new trustees were elected:

- Danielle Waller – 12 votes recorded
- Marian Lanyon – 12 votes recorded
- Pauline Lane – 12 votes recorded

5) Re-election of existing Trustees

Nick Feldman had been nominated as treasurer for a further three year term and was re-elected – 12 votes recorded

6) Introducing the staff

All staff present introduced themselves and their role at SRS to attendees.

7) Update on Syrian Resettlement in Ipswich

Jodi Peck (JP) Syrian Resettlement Programme Coordinator gave a presentation on the Syrian Resettlement Service that SRS delivers, informing attendees that Suffolk has committed to taking 200 Syrians over five years.

8) Questions from the floor

Sally Voelker asked what immigration status Syrians who come to Suffolk under the programme are granted. JT responded that such clients are granted five years Humanitarian Protection.

Michaela Freeman asked whether there are any tensions regarding the level of support that Syrian clients receive from SRS in comparison with other clients of SRS. RC responded that the aim of the programme is to move Syrian clients into SRS mainstream services and support them towards independence, as with all clients.

Cllr Sophie Meudec asked whether staff at SRS know if Syrian clients have been victims of hate crime. JT responded that she had initial concerns about this but is not aware that this has happened. JT noted that SRS does awareness raising sessions about hate crime with clients and has an organisation protocol in place should such a situation arise.

9) Suffolk Soul Singers

RC introduced the Suffolk Soul Singers who had previously organised a fundraising event with all proceeds going towards SRS.

Attendees enjoyed songs from the Suffolk Soul Sisters chosen to reflect asylum seeker and refugee experiences. The Choir were thanked for the wonderful close to the AGM and their fundraising contributions.

10) Any Other Business

There were no items under AOB.

11) Refreshments kindly cooked and prepared by SRS clients, staff and volunteers.
