

## Partnership Council Meeting - Minutes

**Date:** December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011

**Location:** Mary Ward ESL & LINC Centre - 44 Kelvinway Dr.

**Attendees:** Hanna Cabaj (TCDSB), Frank Chu (TCDSB), Jorge Silvestri (MNLCT), Karen Evans (TDSB), Glen Gifford (SHHC), Chris Brown (SHHC), Ping Gu (Resident), Jing He (Resident), Timothy Chan (Resident & Faith group leader), Esther Zhang (Chinese Family Services), Yvonne Ma (Chinese Family Services), Forough Bikmohammadi (CCS), Helena Huang (ACCES), Helen Yang (YMCA – NIC), Christopher Lawrence (Operation Springboard), Shawn Cadieu (TransCare), Gary Gomez (TPS), Isha Ahmed (CNIB Student), Gajany Sivalingam (CNIB Student), Ray Stephens (LEF & Fred Victor), Lindsay MacDougall (LEF & Fred Victor), Curtis Mokren (CIC), Mani Mahadeva (NWS LIP), Michelle Davis (NWS LIP)

### 1. Welcoming & Introduction

### 2. Project Update

- Mani reviews the agenda
- First discussion on the welcome package /service directory
- A lot of important information is available on the LIP website, but we need support from members to keep information current and relevant
- Outreach methods were identified that can be used to successfully engage newcomers,
- Can be used by all members but not necessary
- Mid-Term evaluation is completed. Results will be shared once it becomes available

### Education Roundtable

- Karen briefs participants on what took place
- Discussed the various programs available through the schools in attendance
- The pathways to education systems
- The effect of (Coordinated Language Assessment and Referral System (CLARS) will have on the various pathways
- Issues with training regarding language and culture of the Canadian workforce
- Ways to outreach and get information to potential students via information fairs, malls, various public spaces
- Participants agreed various types of educational institutes needs to gain more knowledge of all the services available
- Also the need for the correct guidance and support systems for potential students
- There will be a follow up discussion for the Education Roundtable
- There is a report on scams & fraud that the LIP is working on as an online resource tool
- The LIP is partnering with the Systemic Issues and Advocacy working committee of West Downtown LIP for Advocacy on scams & fraud targeting newcomers
- Vision is to work with OCASI to make this a widely circulated resource tool
- There is a Scarborough LIP coalition in order to work on other common priorities
- Currently working on connecting with job developers

### Priorities for Next Year 2012-2013:

- Priorities were decided at the last PC meeting and finalized through the MC
- There are 9 in total that will be worked on in the coming year, however some have already been started
- CIC cuts will reduce the number of LIP's from 17 to 4 independent and 1 City-wide LIP

- Questions of what will happen after April if the NWS LIP will no longer exist?
- This could be looked at as a Plan B, what will be if the LIP is still in existence
- This new structure can be applied regardless of how the LIP initiative moves forward
- Structure of the LIP will change (see handout)
- This structure will promote Shared Partnership Model

### 3. Ways to utilize NWS LIP Website as a Communication Tool & Evaluation

(See PowerPoint presentation)

- The evaluation questionnaire was sent to all partners previous to this meeting
- Results are being collected

### 4. "The Different Housing Needs of Immigrants living in northwest Scarborough" by Scarborough Housing Help Centre

Presentation by Glen Gifford & Chris Brown

Challenges faced by newcomers in respect to housing:

- Not knowing their tenant rights
- Lack of affordable housing
- Domestic violence, crowding, knowledge about leases, language
- Pressures to succeed

Procedure to rent:

- Recommended to have someone with you that has previous knowledge
- Ensure correct documents
- Meet with landlords
- Level of newcomer awareness
- Limited knowledge of rights, pride and language barriers

Hidden Homelessness:

- Effects many newcomers and CIC has created funding initiatives that focus on housing newcomers
- Hidden homelessness project is about information dissemination
- Educating both service providers and clients of the various issues

How SHHC assists clients:

- Settlement services
- Rent Bank & Utilities – provides loans for people that are back in their rent and utilities (need to have income)
- Customized housing plans
- Advocacy on behalf of clients

Partnerships:

- COSTI, Markham South Welcome Ctr., TESS – Cliffcrest Employment Ctr., Neighbour Information Post

Challenges faced by SHHC:

- Wait times
- Managing clients
- Lack of affordable housing
- Interpretation & translation
- Unwillingness to go to shelters (bad reputation)
- Lack of eligibility for programs

Changes that effect and impact SHHC:

- Demographics and the ever changing environment of communities
- Housing policy and processes

- Funding  
(See PowerPoint presentation)

Discussion:

- Funding is based on City of Toronto, CIC, United Way York region, United Way Greater Toronto, and Trillium depending on the type of program
- CIC funding a Renting & buying - accommodation education for newcomers (Financial Literacy) provided through the TCDSB- a pilot project

## 5. "A New Housing Program for Newcomers" by Fred Victor in partnership with Enrichment Foundation

Lindsey & Ray

- The partnership did a study on homeless and found that the majority of homeless were newcomers
- Also found that most settlement workers have a limited knowledge of the services available to the homeless
- Mobile with no specific catchment area
- Case management:
  - Step by step support
  - Follow up services
  - Informal, client centred, and partnership approach
  - Conducts outreach
- Types of housing:
  - Market rent – private housing
  - Subsidized – connections with TCHC
  - Alternative housing – co-op, supportive and specialized housing
  - Created a housing matrix that follows the pathways of client intake
- Housing hotline:
  - Available to the public or frontline staff
  - 24 hr response time
  - Users can be transitioned into clients
- Provide Workshops:
  - Information sessions for housing/settlement sector
  - Informal network
  - Interactive workshop that gives tour of services and housing providers
  - Will be conducting one in Scarborough shortly

Discussion:

- Provides info. sessions for community members
- Provides services for conventional refugees and permanent residents
- Need to educate newcomers/ tenants on their responsibilities on different aspects to make them accountable.
- There are homeless seniors and most of them are not newcomers.

## 7. Wrap Up

Next Partnership Council meeting will be February 14<sup>th</sup> 2012, location TBA