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Our ref: CLLRBL/LM/SVPRS

7 November 2016

RE: Newark and Sherwood's Resettlement Partnership – supporting Syrian Families

Dear {{INSERT}},

In recent years, headlines have been dominated by heart breaking images of the ongoing Syrian civil war, which is thought to have displaced around 9 million people since its outbreak in 2011 - 2.5 million of whom are now refugees in neighbouring countries, the largest refugee population in the world today.

The Government responded to this crisis by announcing last September the expansion of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (SVPRS) and pledged to bring 20,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees to new homes in the UK by 2020.

The SVPRS is a managed migration programme which is only open to the most vulnerable refugees housed in camps around the Syrian border - those who have suffered violence or torture, those with disabilities or other complex medical needs, those at risk of persecution or children whose safety is at risk. SVPRS refugees arrive on a five-year humanitarian protection visa.

The county of Nottinghamshire did not hesitate in committing as a whole to playing our part in this programme. During the past year, district and borough councils have come together, with their community and voluntary sector colleagues, to bring over 100 vulnerable Syrian refugee families to new homes within Nottinghamshire. This work has been praised by the National Audit Office for the positive results achieved through such strong partnership work.

Now, Newark and Sherwood District Council stands ready to join the Nottinghamshire response and lead the local community in offering these families a warm welcome – but it would be impossible to do this effectively without your support and assistance, and all our colleagues in the community and voluntary sectors.

As the scheme is grant-funded by the Home Office, we can make use of this to help build your resources and infrastructure to better enable your organisation support in the delivery of vital services which will make all the difference to our new arrivals' experience of resettlement, orientation and integration into our community - whether it be with donations of furniture, food, clothing; befriending and mentoring; conversational English practice or even redecorating and furnishing properties in readiness for habitation.

Our first arrivals under the programme will be arriving soon. So, I am inviting you to step forward and join us in this effort, to offer the support and assistance these families will need to rebuild their lives.

I hope you will be moved to carefully consider what role your organisation can play in supporting Newark and Sherwood's resettlement partnership and join us at a meeting to be held on **{{INSERT MTG and CONTACT DETAILS}}**

Yours sincerely,

Councillor B. Laughton
Homes and Communities Committee Chairman
Newark and Sherwood District Council