

Review of Sponsor Refugees

May 2020

Review conducted by:

Mission, Membership & Governance

Subcommittee of Citizen UK

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Executive Summary

The review process has been a valuable trustee-led, deep dive into the Sponsor Refugees project and the community sponsorship sector. As an exercise in good governance it has been beneficial to have the degree of distance and fresh eyes of the trustees to look at this important question of the future structure of a core element of CUK’s work.

Evidence was gathered from 16 key stakeholders, Sponsor Refugee’s mission & business plan were examined and tested, and a detailed examination of the financial viability of the project undertaken. As the Mission, Membership & Governance (MMG) sub-committee carried out this review and spoke with key stakeholders, they were increasingly convinced by the mission alignment, the effectiveness of the CUK method and network, the responsibilities CUK has in this area and also the clear distinction between our vision for Sponsor Refugees and that of the proposed new body.

The Board voted unanimously to support the recommendation of MMG to reject the proposal to demerge and instead, redouble our efforts to pursue this important pillar of Citizens UK’s work, as well as engaging collaboratively with all players in the sector including any new organisation working for the benefit of refugees and community sponsors.

Review Briefing

Background of the Project– Sponsor Refugees

Citizens UK led the campaign that secured a commitment from the UK Government to resettle 20,000 refugees between 2015 and 2020. As part of that victory, the Home Office announced a Community Sponsorship Scheme (based on a Canadian model) which allows local communities to lead the resettlement of refugee families. Members of Citizens UK were early pioneers of the Community Sponsorship Scheme, especially in Wales. In 2017 Sponsor Refugees was founded to replicate the success in Wales, promote Community Sponsorship, and provide support to other Citizens UK members to take up the challenge of community sponsorship.

Why conduct a Review of Sponsor Refugees now?

Citizens UK's Trustees have undertaken a review of Sponsor Refugees in response to a proposal that came to them, unexpectedly in March 2020, advocating for a de-merger of Sponsor Refugees from Citizens UK. Sponsor Refugees staff and Citizens UK's Trustees had not intended to conduct a review of where the project sits as part of CUK or within the Community Sponsorship sector (least of all as a global pandemic was taking hold). They agreed to do so at the request of Neil Jameson, the former Chair of the Sponsor Refugees Advisory Council. Neil subsequently stepped down from this role in order to advocate for the proposed de-merger.

At the heart of this review is a desire to see the work of sponsoring refugees flourish and grow in the United Kingdom.

Citizens UK's Trustees conducted the review fully aware of their obligations to the current staff, participating CUK member institutions and chapters, and especially the local community sponsorship groups and their refugee families for whom Citizens UK is acting as Lead Sponsor.

In order for the Board to discharge its duties the Trustees are committed to a process and approach that is transparent, impartial, documented and as independent as possible. The review has been completed by Citizens UK's Trustees in advance of the self-set deadline of end of May 2020.

Guiding principles:

Citizens UK has 6 values that we strive for in all our work:

- i. Relational – we put trusting relationships at the heart of everything we do.
- ii. Integrity – we act with integrity towards each other, the organisation and ourselves.
- iii. Kindness – we are kind to each other and to ourselves.
- iv. Solidarity – we support each other and stand together in all we do.
- v. Courage – we are bold, radical and take risks.
- vi. Inclusion – we ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate fully.

Key facts and situational analysis:

What's happening on the ground:

In the early days of the scheme, CUK was approached by significant numbers of people from outside its membership motivated to do their bit to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis, which was a prominent news item throughout 2015-16. Since then, while the need for refugee resettlement has increased, the salience of the issue for the media and British public has reduced considerably, and we get few contacts from individuals from outside the Citizens UK network.

- Nationally, as of November 2019, 397 refugee individuals have been welcomed to the UK via Community Sponsorship since the scheme began in 2016.
- Citizens UK and Sponsor Refugees have worked with groups that have welcomed around 40% of that total. The Home Office would like the Community Sponsorship scheme to expand significantly.
- Citizens UK's strategy has been to focus on encouraging and supporting new community sponsorship groups through the 500 member organisations in its 15 local chapters.
- There are 32 groups for whom Citizens UK is acting as Lead Sponsor, and CUK plan to continue increasing the integration cooperation between Sponsor Refugees and Citizens UK chapters to increase the potential pipeline of community sponsorship groups.
- Community sponsorship has been most successful in Citizens Cymru Wales, which has supported 16 groups in a range of urban and rural locations. There are also clusters of sponsorship groups in South London Citizens, TELCO, Thames Valley Citizens, Citizens Essex, Greater Manchester Citizens and Citizens UK Birmingham.
- CUK estimate that it is viable to develop 30 new community sponsorships across the Citizens UK network each year, representing 90% of our pipeline of community sponsorship groups.
- CUK has run an annual Sponsor Refugees Community Sponsorship Awards, celebrating outstanding contributions amongst refugees, community sponsor groups and partners.
- Citizens UK's campaigning ability was crucial to securing the 2015 commitment to resettle 20,000 refugees, and also to securing community sponsorship.
- In 2019, our 'Extend the Welcome' campaign brought together Citizens UK Chapters and Community Sponsorship Groups to pressure the UK Government to announce a one-year extension of the resettlement programme, including a major improvement to the Community Sponsorship scheme.

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis has been included to provide a contextual tool and to create an overall view of the current position of Sponsor Refugees (SR) within Citizens UK (CUK) at the time of the Review and to provide a framework for the Trustees' deliberations.

S (INTERNAL) STRENGTHS	
1	SR is associated with the outstanding work of CUK and vice versa
2	CUK has depth and breadth of experience in community organising and in campaigning around refugees in the UK
3	CUK is seen as a trusted partner for both sponsoring communities and the refugee families
4	CUK has a network of communities, employers, universities to approach as sponsors and supporters
5	CUK has a track record of influencing Govt in major campaigns and has links into No.10 and the Conservative Government

W (INTERNAL) WEAKNESSES	
1	The SR programme is funded almost solely by one funder with a limited funding pipeline
2	Patchy connection between Chapters and Sponsorship – good in some areas, weaker in others
3	Lack of definition about SR purpose – Lead sponsor / profile / campaign
4	Lack of clear business model and income generation
5	

O (EXTERNAL) OPPORTUNITIES	
1	Greater leverage of existing networks of communities, universities & employers
2	Government is committed to the scheme and has agreed that community sponsorship numbers will be in addition to wider resettlement scheme
3	Influence the narrative about the settlement of refugees in the UK
4	A campaign for specifying who is being sponsored (naming) could unlock greater energy and support

T (EXTERNAL) THREATS	
1	Covid-19 crisis has paused the scheme and could lead to a reduction in support for refugee resettlement
2	Sponsorship is a long and demanding process for volunteers and there may be other more immediate alternatives
3	Lack of attention in the media given Covid-19 / Brexit
4	

Objectives of the Review and Evaluation:

As previously stated, the Executive and Trustees of CUK had not intended to review the structure of Sponsor Refugees at this point in time. Following Neil Jameson's presentation of his proposal that Sponsor Refugees be demerged from CUK, and the indication that the primary funder Volant, would support this proposal, a review was initiated.

The aim of the review was to gather a body of qualitative and quantitative information in order to outline the comparative cases for retaining Sponsor Refugees within Citizens UK and for de-merging the project, to create a stand-alone organisation. The information was gathered by the Mission, Membership and Governance (MMG) subcommittee and presented to the full Board of Trustees in order for them to make an informed decision on one or other course of action.

Objectives

- i. To understand and critically examine the case for retaining Sponsor Refugees as a core project of CUK;
- ii. To understand and critically examine the case to de-merge Sponsor Refugees from CUK (including a submission by Neil Jameson in support of this option);
- iii. To identify the risks – financial, organisational, reputational, to CUK of either course of action;
- iv. To provide a body of evidence that would identify the key outcomes that would impact on the organisation in the case of a de-merger, and on which the Trustees are able to base an in-principal decision to retain or de-merge Sponsor Refugees.

Specific evaluation questions

- i. Are the activities of Sponsor Refugees consistent with the vision and mission of Citizens UK, and its charitable objectives?
- ii. Would a stand-alone Sponsor Refugees be more effective in these 3 areas: recruiting more Community Sponsorship groups, supporting Sponsorship Groups and campaigning for a better UK Community Sponsorship Scheme, compared to how they are currently being supported through Citizens UK?
- iii. If Sponsor Refugees remains in Citizens UK, are there ways in which it can become more effective in achieving its goals within the organisation?
- iv. Would de-merging Sponsor Refugees from Citizens UK benefit or harm Citizens UK reputationally and in fulfilling its vision, mission and charitable objectives?
- v. In the context of what we've spoken about, do you think that Sponsor Refugees should remain as a key project for Citizens UK and why?

Evidence gathered

The MMG subcommittee and Trustees considered the following submissions and information as part of the review, and evidence and quotes from these sources can be found over the coming pages:

1. Context: A summary of CUK’s track record of retaining and/or spinning off social change projects that CUK has initiated, and the associated rationale
2. Comparative Analysis of options to de-merge the project (information from Neil Jameson) or to retain the project within CUK
3. Sponsor Refugees Business Plan – January 2020
4. Stakeholder Interviews (see below for list of consultee institutions)
5. Financial and Risk analysis

1. Citizens UK’s approach to retaining or spinning off projects

As a basis for consideration of the proposal to demerge Sponsor Refugees from CUK, the Reviewers looked at CUK’s history of building social justice change projects as a core part of the work and, at a pivotal point in the life of the project, making a decision whether or not to retain the project or spin it off to create a stand-alone organisation.

The table below sets out 4 successful examples; 2 of projects being retained and 2 where, for the benefit of the project, they were spun off. The key questions and principles when considering whether a project fits best inside or outside Citizens UK include: a) ensuring the mission of the project aligns with that of Citizens UK; and b) whether the regulatory and risk profile is coherent.

Projects CUK have retained and why	Projects CUK have set up separately or de-merged
<p>Living Wage Foundation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission alignment: develop leaders, strengthen institutions & social impact. • Mutually beneficial relationship where Chapter power and local organising fuels political support and accreditation, and Living Wage Foundation boosts impact, funding and compliance of campaign. • Coherent risk profile – with additional mitigation needed around reputational risk and compliance. 	<p>Community Land Trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some overlap of mission but the core function of housing development is too different from CUK mission. • Incoherent financial model involving substantial spikes in borrowing and selling. • Different regulatory environment. • Incompatible risk profile involving health & safety, financial.
<p>PACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission alignment: develop leaders, strengthen institutions & social impact. • Mutually beneficial relationship where community organising enables institution support and tackle social determinants, and PACT enables local, relational partnership to deliver outcomes. • Coherent risk profile – with additional mitigation needed around safeguarding. 	<p>Safe Passage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverging mission with no focus on developing leaders or strengthening institutions – shift to case work & legal. • Increasing international focus away from mandate of CUK membership. • Different regulatory environment including immigration advice. • Incompatible risk profile including international work with vulnerable minors.

2. Comparative analysis of options – to demerge and to continue as a project of CUK

MMG requested that cases for support be submitted for the two options presently on the table; the case to retain Sponsor Refugees as a project of CUK (based on the existing business plan and prepared by staff) and the case to demerge and develop an independent body within the Community Sponsorship sector, submitted by Neil Jameson (the information is quoted directly from the case provided by Neil).

	Case to Retain Sponsor Refugees	Case to demerge Sponsor Refugees
Perceived advantages	<p>1. Pipeline for New Groups: Access to 500 potential community sponsors through our member institutions. This is especially important as we are no longer operating in a context where thousands of people are approaching us keen to support refugees (as was the case in 2015/16) - every new group has to be created from scratch.</p> <p>2. Expert Staff: We have Community Organisers with social networks in 15 locations across the UK who are ideally placed to identify and recruit new groups, alongside experienced technical staff in the Sponsor Refugees team who can support those groups through to successfully resettle a family.</p> <p>3. Political Clout: Citizens UK is a recognised leader in achieving positive change for refugees and migrants - ending the detention of children for immigration purposes, regularising thousands through the Strangers into Citizens campaign, securing the commitment of the UK Government to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees between 2015 and 2020, and successfully lobbying for improvements to the Community Sponsorship Scheme (for example, making it additional, rather than part of the existing Home Office quota).</p>	<p>We are proposing that SRF becomes a membership organisation of Sponsors and their families that drives and supports the Sponsorship Movement across the UK. CUK is a broad based multi issue alliance - so the fit is no longer coherent. SRF needs professional Organisers not project workers. The SRF Organisers need to be totally evangelical about Sponsorship and work from Regional bases in the four nations with tough targets and outcomes. The opportunity is that there is no Organisation for Sponsors or their families at the moment so we should make the most of this opportunity and the time is ripe. The evidence of doing nothing or business as usual is alarming since the numbers of new Sponsors started to plateau in 2019 and there is still very little growth in several regions and two nations of the UK.</p>
Aims & means	<p>1. Consolidate Sponsor Refugees as a leading organisation promoting and supporting Community Sponsorship in the UK with a clear mission and a sustainable funding model.</p> <p>2. Increase the number of Community Sponsorship Groups through better integration into the Citizens UK network and the development of external partnerships. 3. Streamline the supported journey of Community Sponsorship Groups for whom we are Lead Sponsor. In the same document we set out some ambitious goals for Sponsor Refugees' work, setting a target of being able to resettle 250 people through 50 groups per year by 2025, a goal of finding 100 people a year who could become the basis of a new community sponsorship group, and win extensions to which refugees can be community sponsored to come to the UK so that a wider range of refugees can be</p>	<p>The big difference would be membership - SRF would be a single issue voice for Sponsors and their families to argue for and promote Sponsorship across the UK; would relate directly to the Home Office and Home Secretary; would have authority to encourage all the main faith organisations to lead on Sponsorship not just pilot or play with it. At the moment SRF is a small project fairly low down on CUK's agenda and hardly even part of the impressive broad-based portfolio. Also, apart from Citizens Wales no other Chapter and few Organisers have shown significant strategic interest or recognition of the potential of Community Sponsorship to revitalise their membership and neighbourhoods. After three years of piloting this vital work, a change of administration in Westminster, Brexit Britain and Coronavirus/Climate crisis - plus still no great active interest by CUK members and most staff - suggests we need to demerge,</p>

	<p>resettled. Sponsor Refugees operates through a mix of Community Organising via Citizens UK chapters (to find new groups and support them through the lengthy and rigorous application process; and campaigning for improvements to the scheme) and technical and promotional support provided by specialists project staff working in the Sponsor Refugees team.</p>	<p>increase our aims and ambition and raise the funding and interest to take Sponsorship much further than is possible at the moment.</p>
<p>Role as a lead sponsor</p>	<p>There are 32 groups in this category for whom Citizens UK is acting as Lead Sponsor, and families have already arrived in the case of 14 of those groups. The support we provide is as follows: i) information and training to support groups to explore the concept of community sponsorship; ii) community organising training to build a sustainable team and mentoring from staff; iii) support to complete the rigorous application process (including raising £9,000, finding a house, and gaining local council consent); iv) provision of benefits of our charitable status (which shortens and simplifies the Home Office process, and benefits such as being able to claim gift aid); v) acting as legal guarantor to the local group; vi) support for the group as the family arrives; vii) ongoing learning and advice for the group, and participation in monitoring visits; viii) offer DBS processing, safeguarding support, insurance and access to 24 hour counselling support through the Employee Assistance Programme. This support is delivered by a mix of Sponsor Refugees staff (who provide technical support) and Citizens UK Community Organisers. SR staff also provide a website and an application portal, represent CSGs to the Home Office and Reset, manage a team of volunteer ambassadors to advise local groups, run weekly webinars, and organise the Sponsor Refugees Awards to provide recognition for the work of local groups.</p> <p>Unless you are Catholic church, Salvation Army corps, or based in the Devon or Somerset, then Citizens UK/Sponsor Refugees is likely to be your only option as Lead Sponsor. It is possible to register your own group as a charity, but this is time consuming, halts momentum, and depletes the local group's resources. There are groups that chose to seek charitable status in Wales who have still not had their application approved by the Home Office, while others that started at the same time, or even afterwards, have already welcome their family because they didn't have to waste time seeking their own charitable status. At least 5 of the groups for whom we are Lead Sponsor have said they would not have completed the application process if they had not been able to find a Lead Sponsor.</p>	<p>This is a key point so far as governance is concerned and is a responsibility we recognise we must take seriously. The Shadow Board has already agreed to invite and welcome these same groups to transfer to become members of SRF. We believe could offer the same support and much more power for the ex- CUK groups until the two year legal relationship is up. Then we would hope the same groups would stay in active membership of SRF sharing their experience and acting as Ambassadors for SRF. On reflection and in hindsight, I think it was a mistake for CUK to absorb quite so many disparate and diverse groups to 'affiliate with Citizens through a Memo of Understanding. That was never the original plan. By so doing CUK has let other more local potential Sponsors like Anglican Diocese or local CVS off the challenge and responsibility of 'legal' Sponsorship and Safeguarding. CUK is presently potentially exposed to serious reputational and safeguarding risks if this continues to grow unchecked and unquestioningly.</p> <p>We appreciate that an independent SRF with the same groups in 'membership' would be exposed to the same risks which is why the Shadow Board might not continue to also be a Lead Sponsor in the future but rather help new groups find a much more local charity who can genuinely know what is happening with the group and their family.</p> <p>There is a possibility that the excellent group of Sponsor Groups in Wales may not chose to transfer to SRF for their support and Safeguarding protection since they seem to be much more integrated into generic Citizens Wales actions than other Sponsor Groups in England - which is fine. However we still would like them to become 'members' of SRF and to welcome their voice and experience round the table with the Home Office and others.</p>

<p>Influence on policy</p>	<p>Citizens UK's campaigning ability was crucial to securing the 2015 commitment to resettle 20,000 refugees, and also to securing community sponsorship. In 2019, our 'Extend the Welcome' campaign brought together Citizens UK Chapters and Community Sponsorship Groups to pressure the UK Government to announce a one-year extension of the resettlement programme. The Immigration Minister announced the new policy at a Citizens UK member institution. CUK is working with Kings College London, to lead negotiations with the Home Office to adjust the processes so that universities can sponsor families. Many of the local community sponsorship groups and the other Lead Sponsors/sector groups look to us to lead campaigning. This has been notable since the Coronavirus lockdown, when our weekly Friday lunchtime Zoom calls have brought together dozens of the main groups across the UK, in which the latest campaign developments have been planned and coordinated.</p>	<p>We believe it follows that a membership Organisation made up (eventually) of hundreds of trained and organised Sponsors who are active, engaged and critical to the whole programme would have much greater power on Sponsorship policy and issues than a generic multi issued alliance like CUK. We propose to build in a three day residential annual Sponsors Convention for as many groups and their families to attend, mix up, train and learn together and on the last day meet with whoever is Home Secretary at that time (this would depend on extra funding).</p>
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3. Sponsor Refugees Business Plan 2020-21 (available on request)

4. List of Stakeholders Interviewed (see extracted quotes in section below)

Interviewee	Organisation
Sector	Home Office
Sector	Reset
Groups for whom CUK is lead sponsor	Croeso Menai
Groups for whom CUK is lead sponsor	Herne Hill Welcomes Refugees
Sponsor groups / partners	Kings College London
Sponsor groups / partners	Charis (Sector)
Advisory Group member	Raynes Park Community Church (Salvation Army) (Sector)
Advisory Group member	Liberal Judaism
Experts	Unbound Philanthropy
Experts	Ex-Director of Sponsor Refugees
Staff member	CUK Birmingham Organiser
Staff member	Sponsor Refugees
Staff member	Sponsor Refugees
Staff member	Sponsor Refugees

Trustee's Decision

The Review was carried out by the Mission Membership & Governance (MMG) subcommittee over a three-week period, which included information gathering, stakeholder interviews, as well as regular meetings with the Trustees. At the Trustee Board meeting in the first week of May, the Trustees voted unanimously to support the recommendation of MMG that Sponsor Refugees should not be demerged from CUK.

The decision not to demerge Sponsor Refugees is based on evidence of the following:

1. Mission alignment
2. Effectiveness and relevance of Citizens UK method, network and knowledge
3. Financial capacity
4. Lead Sponsor responsibilities
5. Differences in approach to the proposed independent organisation

1. Mission alignment

- There is unequivocal evidence from the interviews with the range of Stakeholders that Sponsor Refugees is closely aligned with Citizens UK's mission to develop leaders, strengthen institutions and make social change.
- Sponsor Refugees is a key part of a longer history of Citizens UK's work in the asylum and refugee field dating back to 2005.

What consultees said:

Stakeholders interviewed unanimously agreed that Sponsor Refugees work is “really in tune with Citizens UK’s Mission”; stating that the work is “clearly about community building”, “helps people to participate in public life” and “develops leaders”.

One consultee stated that “refugee sponsorship is community organising at heart” and that “building alliances from the grassroots up is an important part of the work that Sponsor Refugees does.”

Concerns were raised that this could be lost, should Sponsor Refugees be de-merged, “if it becomes a separate entity then the risk is you lose the distinctive mission and values of CUK, and the history of campaigning to create the scheme.”

2. Effectiveness and relevance of Citizens UK method, network and knowledge

- There was clear evidence that what Citizens UK has to offer is effective and relevant to the work of community sponsorship. Specifically, the community organising method helps build groups; the 500-strong membership provide a pipeline of new possible sponsor groups; there is a track record of influencing refugee policy; and the accumulated knowledge and staff expertise in the Sponsor Refugees team.
- While it was clear that the growth in new sponsor groups coming through has been slow, there was consensus amongst stakeholders that this was largely due to reduced public attention and the challenges in the scheme, particularly the time commitment for volunteers. It was clear that CUK is a highly regarded leader with political clout and national reach in the sector. There may be a risk to the sector as well as to CUK if such a major player withdraws from this work.

What consultees said:

Most, but not all, consultees felt that being a part of a Citizens alliance was crucial to the development of local sponsorship groups and in “bringing groups to the table”.

The value of CUK's network of chapters was repeatedly mentioned as an advantage in recruiting new groups, as most groups hear about the scheme through "word of mouth" and "Organisers are key in identifying leaders and maintaining the relationships and confidence that enable successful sponsorship."

Once set up, sponsor groups are seen to "benefit hugely from Sponsor Refugees and Citizens UK through resources, staff support and the relationship built with people met through the network".

CUK "has real purchase on politics and campaigning" and is "really brilliant at beating the drum for community sponsorship".

Consultees described Citizens UK as the "strongest independent voice" in the UK for community sponsorship. It would be better for the project to remain within Citizens UK where it fits alongside a "strong track record of organising on migrant community issues – e.g. Child Citizenship, ESOL, Amnesty for undocumented migrants etc."

One consultee also pointed out that "once a family has arrived and done the early bits of integration, they face wider social justice challenges of employment, housing, poor ESOL provision, the benefits system etc – and that a being part of Citizens UK can help [overcome these]."

3. Financial capacity

- It was clear from budget and funding pipeline analysis that the likely reduction or withdrawal of funding from the primary funder would require a reduction in budget and a reduction in staffing, at least in the near term.
- With some internal reallocation of other funds, the Trustees are comfortable that a smaller but still sufficient, dedicated staff team working in a focused way can effectively pursue the goals set out in the Business Plan, including a concerted effort to diversify the funding base.
- The time taken to secure further funding and so increase staff capacity may in any case coincide with the period that the scheme is paused during this COVID-19 crisis.

What consultees said:

One consultee expressed fears that Sponsor Refugees would be at risk outside of Citizens UK as "in areas of finance, communications, campaigning, networking, IT, HR, legal etc, Sponsor Refugees relies heavily on Citizens UK."

Consultees felt that the support of the chapter network is a "way to get funding" for the project.

4. Lead sponsor responsibilities

- Citizens UK has very tangible responsibilities as lead sponsor (in 14 communities where refugees have arrived and for 18 groups with refugee arrivals in the pipeline).
- As part of the risk analysis, there were significant concerns as to whether these responsibilities would be put at risk as part of a de-merger, whether they were transferred or retained.
- MMG did scrutinise this chosen role as a lead sponsor and considered the counter argument that this role was not crucial to support the settlement of refugee families. On balance, MMG concluded that largely because of the difficulty that some local groups find in being able to secure local charities to take on this role, the role of lead sponsor is best served by being part of Sponsor Refugees with the weight of CUK behind it.
- Participation in Citizen's alliances provides significant added value for the local community to extend their network, enhance integration and find more local support.

What consultees said:

CUK's role as biggest lead sponsor was described as "crucial" and consultees thought a de-merger would be harmful to this, "if Sponsor Refugees were to be stand-alone, how would it provide the Lead Sponsor function effectively to a group like mine, without the skills and reach of Citizens UK?"

Capacity to support sponsor groups is a key factor "...we feel strongly about this. Wherever the lead sponsor responsibility goes, this role is vital. It takes time to build trust. Stuff can be improved... our joint services are highly rated."

Another sees CUK's role as a Lead Sponsor as "very important", due to both the size of CUK and "the support CUK is able to give to a larger number of groups across numerous geographies."

5. Differences in approach of proposed independent organisation to that of Sponsor Refugees

Trustees considered carefully the case for an independent body as outlined by Neil Jameson, comparing this to the mission & business plan for Sponsor Refugees and the evidence from stakeholders about the distinctive role that CUK plays in the sector. (see pg.7 for *Comparative Analysis*)

The following is a summary of their understanding and conclusion:

- The MMG subcommittee and the Trustees understand from the case for support submitted by Neil Jameson that the proposed independent organisation would be a single-issue, membership body of sponsor groups, campaigning on their behalf, seeking to be the 'Voice for Sponsors'.
- They concluded that this is a different approach to that of Sponsor Refugees (as set out in the 2020-21 Mission & Business Plan) which is to recruit more sponsors (including with Citizens UK as Lead Sponsor), support them to succeed, and integrate these groups into broad-based alliances campaigning for improvements to the sponsorship scheme alongside a range of other social justice concerns. As noted in point 2 above, the responses from interviews with local community sponsorship groups and external stakeholders, reaffirmed the value of Sponsor Refugees mission and approach, sitting within CUK.
- MMG felt that some of the responses set out in Neil Jameson's original Case for Support for the demerger, did not provide sufficient evidence to show that a single issue organisation would recruit more sponsor groups, be more effective in shifting policy and could be certain that sponsor groups would pay the membership fee. As a follow up, MMG sent additional questions to Neil Jameson asking him to provide further evidence and an analysis of the risks and mitigating factors. Neil responded in an email (4 May 2020) "I am afraid that the overall reaction to the MMG's most recent list of questions is inconclusive".
- MMG noted from their interviews with stakeholders that there are a range of organisations already active in the sector, competing for clarity of role and limited funds. The point was made that any new body ought to have a clear and distinctive purpose and bring additional resource to the sector.

What consultees said:

Interviewees said that an independent, single issue organisation would look very different to Sponsor Refugees as part of CUK. One consultee raised the concern that "Groups could feel that a new single-issue group is just there to sell a service and wouldn't have the credibility [of CUK]."

One or two consultees recognised that "an independent body could be free to recruit differently, more digitally, in new geographies, new institutions with different values."

Based on the evidence presented and the robust discussions that took place both during and at the conclusion of the Review, the Trustees were unanimous in agreement to support the recommendation of MMG that Sponsor Refugees is not demerged from CUK.

What next?

The Trustees recognise that by accepting the recommendation of MMG, that Sponsor Refugees is not demerged from CUK, there are several important next steps that must be addressed in the coming weeks:

1. Communicating with all relevant stakeholders the results of this review in a transparent, evidence-based manner and continuing to listen attentively to wider perspectives.
2. Engage with all stakeholders to discuss the outcome of the CUK Review and to work in the best interests of community sponsorship in this time of change.
3. Ensuring we are led by our values as we hold the refugees and community's interests at the fore, support our staff, and engage collaboratively with stakeholders and players across the community sponsorship sector.
4. Continue to develop the Sponsor Refugees purpose, strategy and funding, considering how it is working in the context of the Covid-19 crisis and a changing sector.
5. Critique and recommendations offered by consultees during the interview process are reviewed and considered for CUK's learning.

Thanks

This Review was made possible by the large number of stakeholders who spoke with us willingly and frankly. They share the vision of the many organisations active in the Community Sponsorship sector who are committed to families being sponsored to settle in the UK, supported by incredible institutions and individuals. We are grateful to them all.

Thank you:

To all those who submitted cases for support, financial information and carried out risk analyses. Also, thank you to those who gave up their time to be interviewed, for their insights, opinions and giving us all a deeper understanding of the sector and the potential within it.

To the members of MMG who set up and implemented the review in the spirit of understanding, fairness and open heartedness. Noeleen Cohen, Karen Rooms, Lindsay Driscoll, Ranjit Sondhi.

To the members of the CUK Executive, who supported the process professionally and purposefully. and worked methodically to conclude the Review in as short a period as possible.

To the Trustees who contributed to the process at every stage; respectively and collegiately and with an even-handed approach. Thank you to CUK Chair, Kaneez Shaid and each of the Trustees for considering, scrutinising and evaluating the evidence, for asking the probing, difficult questions and for acting in the best interests of CUK, Sponsor Refugees and the families who have become members of our larger British community.