

## Agenda item 5

For decision - To transfer the £15,000 funds raised for refugees to Frome Rotary Club for distribution

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Further to my paper on the position of the Frome Welcomes Refugees Advisory Committee (FWRAC) in March last year, you may recall that there is still the matter of £15,900 held by Frome Town Council, which was being held in case of further incidents of incoming refugees. This is the balance of the Just Giving fundraising activity conducted at the start of the Ukraine/Russia war.

We have not been required to assist with the funding of Ukrainian refugees further in Rabka, Poland and therefore the proposal is that the £15,000 in question should be managed in future, by the FWRAC with the funds held by Frome Rotary on its behalf, for administration purposes.

This £15k is currently held separately by FTC from the £9k fund the Frome Rotary had collected on behalf of Frome Welcomes Refugees following the Just Giving project and now reduced to £6k.

### By means of an update

#### Refugee community

During 2024, the number of refugees in Frome and district fluctuated but the following figures show the situation at the end of 2024.

- 53 families are in Frome and district from Ukraine, Syria, Eritrea, Kurdistan, Afghanistan, Turkey and Honduras representing 154 individuals.
- 11 families are still in hosted accommodation, 2 families are in dispersal accommodation, with the remainder living independently.
- Of the approximately 87 adults about 63 are working and contributing to the Frome community.

#### Finance

Examples of the type of purpose for which small grants have been given are as follows.

Small cash payments to new arrivals to help with initial essentials including:

- Help with school uniforms.
- Winter coats and footwear.
- Help with some items when moving into rented accommodation for the first time.
- Activities to retain cultural and social links.

At the beginning of 2024, the fund collected and held by Rotary stood at £9,145.22 with a closing balance of £6,403.17 at the end of the year.

We have in our possession an email from Rabka, who were the original intended recipients of the Just Giving fund, that they are no longer in need of further funds and would be happy for it to be used locally for any refugees / displaced persons that we see fit.

The Frome Rotary Club will manage the funds, in keeping with the current financial management situation, and the FWR Advisory Group are best placed to decide on the most appropriate action to take in response to requests from any refugees or displaced persons.

**Recommendation**

To authorise Frome Town Council to transfer the balance in the EMR 328 Ukraine Appeal £15, 900.06 to Frome Rotary Club for allocation by FWRAG.