
Report of the Head of Equality

Report to the Director of Communities and Environment

Date: 26th March 2018

Subject: Controlling Migration Fund – Learning English in Leeds Project

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issue

1. In February 2018 Leeds City Council received notification from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government that they had been successful in their bid to the Controlling Migration Fund for the development of a Learning English in Leeds Project.
2. The council will receive grant funding for 2018/19 and 2019/20.

Recommendations

1. The Director of Communities & Environment accept the grant funding from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government to develop and deliver the Learning English in Leeds Project

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The report sets out the background information and proposal for Leeds City Council to accept grant funding from the Ministry for Housing and Local Government Controlling Migration Fund to develop and deliver the Learning English in Leeds Project.
- 1.2 The funding will be used to:-
- Develop a City approach to Learning English and ESOL provision to help to develop an understanding of what is the current supply versus demand, are there any gaps and how do we fill these appropriately. This will also include the development and delivery of a Learning English Strategy for the City. This approach will encourage collaboration between providers and wider partners to deliver classes with support and guidance on progression pathways.
 - Use traditional and non-traditional learning routes for people who need to access learning English in a variety of settings. Some of these will be activity rather than classroom based, such as, Arts, Sports and Cultural venues/clubs etc. This approach recognises that not everyone is able to or wants to undertake learning English in a classroom environment. This will create informal learning opportunities in the heart of local communities that bring together migrants with the settled community engaging in activities that break down barriers and misunderstanding and creating opportunities for migrants to further develop their spoken English.
 - Develop and deliver a small grants programme which will support this work.
 - These activities will be available to all and so will improve the offer to the settled community, and support integration. These would complement the work already undertaken across the City

2. Background information

- 2.1 The Best Council Plan 2018 – 2021 sets out the vision for Leeds to be the best city in the UK: one that is compassionate with a strong economy, which tackles poverty and reduces the inequalities that still exist.
- 2.2 In the last decade the makeup of Leeds' communities has changed significantly and we now have residents from over 140 ethnic groups residing in Leeds' neighbourhoods. The city's economy has continued to prosper despite significant financial challenges, but some of our communities have not benefitted from this, with approximately 164,000 people living in areas ranked amongst the most deprived 10% nationally and 65,000 households living in poverty.
- 2.3 Leeds has one of the most diverse and changing cultural populations in the UK. The majority of our black and minority ethnic and newly arrived communities are concentrated in the inner city and less affluent areas. This has created some tension in communities where the impact of newcomers or changing demographics has been felt more keenly. These areas also often have high population density per hectare which increases the potential for issues to escalate quickly.
- 2.4 Newcomers often do not understand how Leeds 'works' and this puts additional pressures on services which in turn impacts on the settled communities ability to access these. This can inhibit the formation of strong, supportive and integrated communities. The council want to address real and perceived issues in order to build resilience and cohesion.

- 2.5 Migration work in Leeds takes place within the overarching 'Stronger communities benefiting from a strong city' Breakthrough Programme. This project aims to empower communities to connect with each other and to opportunities in Leeds and takes a longer-term view of communities. In order to understand their strengths, their vulnerabilities, preferences and what drives them. We want to enable communities to do more for themselves and develop a sense of pride and belonging in their local neighbourhood.
- 2.6 The Learning English in Leeds Project is based on the evidence which has been gathered, particularly over the last year looking at what the issues and challenges are for Leeds as a result of increased migration to the city. Whilst keen to ensure that we are a welcoming city, we also recognise the impact migration has on the settled communities, and our ability to deliver services. The evidence we have gathered shows the pressures on services, and communities and draws out concerns from settled communities. This proposal is therefore designed to counter identified gaps and co-ordination in learning English is met appropriately and will ensure that activities are delivered that bring together settled communities and newcomers with the aim of improving cohesion, reducing tensions and pressures on services.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The total value of the grant from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government will be over £250,000 requiring a key decision for the acceptance of this funding.
- 3.2 Funding provided by the Controlling Migration Fund will help to plug the gaps for those newcomers who are unable to participate in the existing activities because their limited English means they are unable to participate in existing activities because their limited English means they are unable to understand the City and access appropriate opportunities.
- 3.3 Local research has also identified that classroom based learning is not always appropriate to needs as some people don't relate to this type of learning environment because they may have had a bad experience or feel that opportunities to learn and practise English in a different environment is more beneficial to them. This will help to build networks and improve understanding across communities.
- 3.4 The proposal is to develop an approach for learning English in Leeds that would build on and compliment the work of the CMF funded MAP Plus Project. Improving English will result in a better understanding of the standards and expectations of newcomers when accessing services or living in the City.
- 3.5 The Learning English in Leeds Project will be managed by the Communities Team and delivery will take place through the creation of two posts who will develop and deliver the Learning English in Leeds Strategy and co-ordinate the work of the small grants programme to support informal learning opportunities in the heart of local communities. This programme is intended to bring together new migrant communities with the settled community engaging in activities which will help support them to become integrated into the city's civic and cultural life and its communities

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 Over the last year work has taken place in Leeds to establish the evidence base for understanding need and issues which come with increased migration. This work, combined with high level discussions at Executive Board, Scrutiny Board (Citizens and Communities) and the Leeds Strategic Migration Board have given the strategic direction and focus for this bid. The Strategic Approach to Migration was approved by Executive Board in July 2017.
- 4.1.2 The development of this funding bid included consultation with a number of third sector organisations, which assisted in the identification of specific issues and proposed resolutions on how this funding could be used to assist the migrant community while mitigating their impact on the resident communities. This included members of the Leeds Strategic Migration Board.
- 4.1.3 Consultation has taken place with the Executive Board Member for Communities.
- 4.1.4 The funding bid was signed off by the council's section 151 Officer.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 The issue of migration clearly is a significant aspect of equality and cohesion and this will be carefully considered during the development of the project. Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken on specific pieces of work as required.

4.3 Council policies and best council plan

- 4.3.1 Leeds is a welcoming and compassionate city and the recommendations in this report support the Best Council Plan key aim of ' Building strong, cohesive communities, raising aspirations, reducing financial hardship' and underpin the Equality Improvement Priority to 'understand the context and impact of migration on Leeds'.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The resources to fund this project will be via grant funding from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government.
- 4.4.2 Increasing understanding of how newcomers to the City 'works' will help migrants access services in the most efficient and cost saving way with a view to reducing pressures on services.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 There are no specific legal implications with this report. The report is subject to call-in.
- 4.5.2 Details of the specific funding allocated to this project have been embargoed by the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government until after the elections in early May 2018.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 The development of this project will contribute to minimising the risk associated with changes to demography and the impact on services. As well as, minimising low level tensions in communities, aiding integration and resilience.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Commencement of the project is subject to agreement to accept the grant funding from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government.
- 5.2 The project recognises that migration brings many benefits to Leeds but there are also clear implications for neighbourhoods which result in intercultural tensions which need to be addressed. By empowering communities to work together for the benefit of all this project will assist in helping migrants to integrate better with the settled community.
- 5.3 Underpinning this overarching project is the need to create a comprehensive Learning English Strategy for Leeds to help save costs to the public services, unlock migrant capabilities and capacity and promote a more integrated and socially cohesive society.
- 5.3 The project will enable people from migrant communities to participate more fully in society, leading to greater integration and less opportunities for isolation. As well, as promoting physical and mental health and wellbeing by developing peoples language skills and confidence enabling parents from new communities to better support their children's education.
- 5.4 We take a firm stance that we welcome newcomers to Leeds, and will embrace and be respectful of cultural diversity but that inappropriate (and sometimes illegal) behaviour in Leeds will not be tolerated.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Director of Communities & Environment accepts the grant funding from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government to develop and deliver the Learning English in Leeds Project.

7. Background documents

- 7.1 The Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government Controlling Migration fund bid which is confidential in accordance with 9.2a of the access to information procedure rules.