

**Report of: Director of Communities and Environment**

**Report to: Executive Board**

**Date: 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

**Subject: A Strategic Approach to Migration in Leeds**

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

**Summary of main issues**

1. This report provides Executive Board with a progress update on migration activity being delivered in Leeds following the Executive Board report of 17<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at which approval was given for strengthening and developing a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to migration.
2. It further provides an overview of current activity to support migrant communities in Leeds, highlighting the opportunities and the challenges that are being addressed by services.

**Recommendations**

Members of Executive Board are recommended to:

1. Approve the continuation of the strengthened arrangements developed following the Citizens and Communities Scrutiny Board inquiry on migration for a more strategic, co-ordinated and inclusive approach to migration and endorse the current and future work that is planned.
2. Note the responsibility of the Director of Communities and Environment and the Executive Member for Communities for leading this work through the Council's Stronger Communities Breakthrough Programme and also note the responsibility of the Chief Officer Communities in leading the work of the Leeds Strategic Migration

Board.

3. To receive an update on progress in July 2019.

## **1. Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To provide Executive Board with an overview of migration activities being delivered both citywide and with supported migrant populations. This report builds upon the recommendations from the Executive Board meeting held in July 2017 and the Citizens and Communities Scrutiny Board held in September 2016 that proposed the need to establish a strategic, coordinated and inclusive approach to Migration in Leeds following a scrutiny inquiry on the matter.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Our ambition for Leeds is to be a compassionate city with a strong economy. Migrant communities are valuable contributors to the city's economy, culture and diversity and Leeds aspires to ensure people are welcomed and supported. Leeds has a long-held commitment to support asylum seekers and refugees and is dedicated to being a city of sanctuary. It is well known that many refugees play an active and invaluable role economically and whilst many asylum seekers are not permitted to work, many are active in their communities, participating in volunteering and so make a huge contribution to the civic and cultural life of the city.
- 2.2 The makeup of communities in Leeds continues to change; according to the 2011 census, the number of Leeds residents born outside of the UK equated to just over 11% of the population. Of those, more than 66% were born outside of the European Union, and just over half arrived at some point in the preceding ten years. Since 2011, the number of migrants settling in Leeds, particularly, from the European Union following the expansion of the European Economic Area (EEA) countries into Eastern Europe, has continued to rise. Migrants have settled in particular areas of the city where accommodation is inexpensive and easily accessible.
- 2.3 Leeds has one of the most diverse populations outside of London in terms of country of origin with over 170 different ethnic groups speaking over 104 different languages. This diversity provides both a richness of culture to Leeds as well as presenting a challenge for service providers in terms of service planning, due regard to equality and cultural sensitivity.
- 2.4 As previously reported migrants make up a significant proportion of the current labour force and some sectors have a stronger dependence on migrants to do particular types of job. The impact of changes such as Brexit on employment will not be known for some time. Although, regional figures have highlighted a reduction in those arriving from EU backgrounds and an increase in numbers leaving the UK.
- 2.5 For a number of years, Leeds has played an active role in the dispersal of people seeking asylum. The overall number of dispersed asylum seekers in the Yorkshire and Humber region as a whole was 5,693 in March 2018. The number of supported asylum seekers in Leeds is currently 851. Whilst numbers in Leeds have risen over the years, they are 23% below what they would be if dispersal was spread more evenly across the region with dispersals gravitating to areas of cheaper accommodation. It is anticipated that the numbers of asylum seekers coming to the region will increase throughout this year to meet previously forecasted population

targets and this increase will also lead to a rise in Leeds with a projection of 1060 asylum seekers in the city by January 2019.

- 2.6 Leeds continues to pride itself as a pioneering, diversely rich and vibrant city with international acclaim. Although, the city recognises the challenges in ensuring fair access for all in the city, we continue to strive to narrow the gap in existing inequalities through our strategic, coordinated and inclusive approach to migration. The voice of migrant communities is at the heart of the migration agenda for Leeds which places people at the centre of our decision making.

### 3. Main Issues and Progress

- 3.1 **The Leeds Strategic Migration Board** brings together partners from across the city and is chaired by the Chief Officer for Communities. The key objectives for this board are as follows:

- To provide a citywide partnership approach to the work of migration activity in Leeds;
- To determine key priorities to help meet the needs of new and existing migrant communities;
- To provide citywide leadership and governance to local arrangements;
- To understand national developments and their associated implications in Leeds.

- 3.2 Over the last year this board has supported the delivery of workshops for services on the Immigration Act; work on addressing the implications of changes to NHS charges amendment; support to access national funding schemes to enhance delivery of local activities such as ESOL, volunteering and asylum accommodation; and has focussed on a research project to inform the development of a Leeds migration strategy, which will be completed and launched during autumn 2018.

- 3.3 The **research findings** confirmed the needs of migrant communities to be no different to those of established and existing communities. However, the challenges and level of support required differs and knowledge is variable according to life circumstances. Broadly, the needs identified are to access housing; work and money; health and wellbeing; education and language; advocacy, advice and legal provision; safety, belonging and support networks; as well as support to meet basic needs to sustain times of hardship.

- 3.4 During the research, evidence emerged which acknowledges the strengths within migrant communities to successfully meet their own needs with a wealth of provision within communities to support each other. The contributions made by community groups, the voluntary sector and services was also acknowledged as being invaluable.

- 3.5 Over the last eighteen months, Leeds City Council has successfully bid to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government for over a million pounds of funding. This **Controlling Migration Funding** is aimed at alleviating pressures on settled communities through the delivery of projects that build community and service capacity to support new migrant communities. A further funding round has been announced and Leeds will be seeking to access this funding again.

- 3.6 There are a range of challenges and a series of activities in progress across the migration agenda, some of which are being addressed by national policy and others

that have been identified locally. The following sections outline some of those challenges that were addressed over the past year and reports on associated activities.

- 3.7 The **National Health Service (Charges to Overseas Visitors Amendment) - Regulations 2017** became fully effective from October 2017. The amendments expanded the number of bodies required to make and recover charges from overseas visitors to include non-NHS providers of relevant services, with strict guidance suggesting proof of stay prior to treatment. The 2017 amendment regulations also removed the exemption for relevant services provided outside a hospital or by its staff. As a result, some services provided in the community are now chargeable to overseas visitors who are not exempt from these charges.
- 3.8 Concerns were expressed that the amendment regulations were likely to impact negatively on some of our most vulnerable groups. Leeds, through its Health and Wellbeing Board and the Leeds Strategic Migration Board approved the establishing of a local Migrant Health Board to better understand the impact on services and individuals and more importantly, to ensure communities are not deterred from accessing health services.
- 3.9 The increase in new communities into Leeds has brought advantages in terms of the diversity and the vibrancy of the school population. It has also brought challenges for some schools in some areas that are not in a position to cope with additional place demands and challenges to ensure that all children do well at learning.
- 3.10 The pressure for school places has been felt more in the inner city areas and this pressure is evidenced through data from education and in our migration heat map (looks at data post the 2011 census based on numbers of registering for national insurance), showing significant increases during 2016/17. The Council in responding to an upturn in numbers of primary school aged children in the inner east of the city have put in place enhanced provision within Shakespeare Primary School from 315 pupils on the role to 630 places with interim temporary arrangements having been provided with Bridge Community Church.
- 3.11 To help alleviate tensions and pressures on services our migration team have been involved in regular discussions with the Home Office and G4S to establish a local agreement that includes widening housing procurement and the dispersal of families with school age children to other parts of the city. We have through local partnership activity been involving education admissions team, community safety colleagues, and housing and health officers to assemble an evidence based narrative to better inform their future decision making. The draft protocol agreement states 'due regard will be had by the accommodation provider to Annex 2 (a map highlighting hotspot areas for school places) when placing Service Users. Alongside this agreement we are developing a communication plan to share with the accommodation provider that gives them the contact details of relevant officers to consult prior to future allocations.
- 3.12 Local authorities have been informed recently that there has been not successful compliant bid for **new asylum contracts** for the Yorkshire and Humber region. The full implications of this lack of success are not yet known and a response from our region to the Home Office outlining our concerns is being developed at the time of

writing this report. Potential risks include an increase in homelessness as a consequence of delays in procurement and new contracts being of a low standard.

- 3.13 **UASC (Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children)** - A task Group led by colleagues in Children Services was set up to provide support to UASCs. Leeds has been at the forefront of welcoming UASCs. Initially, to support pressures in Kent and now as required by the Immigration Act. The Act requires all local authorities to accept UASCs up to a maximum of 0.07% of the local authorities' children and young people's population, which equates to 112 in Leeds. Current figures show that Leeds is supporting 60 UASC under the age of 18 and 75 young people aged 18+ as care leavers.
- 3.14 Leeds has received a further £320,000 from The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, for a project to develop services and improve integration of UASC over the next 2 years; in addition, Leeds was awarded £188,000 one-off payment for **capacity building for UASC**. This was in recognition of the relatively high number of UASC in the city and to support Leeds' continued participation in the National Transfer Scheme. Leeds will also benefit from regional Controlling Migration Fund award of £560,000 to recruit foster carers for UASC, offer training to frontline staff and carers and undertake research with UASC and their carers to inform decisions about support packages and placements. Leeds continues to participate in regional UASC networks and lead the way in terms of services and support for UASC.
- 3.15 **Syrian Resettlement Programme** – In September 2015 the Government announced the UK would resettle 20,000 refugees from Syria by 2020 through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement programme in response to the refugee crisis. Our commitment from Leeds was to support 225 over two years (2016/2017). Leeds met its pledge and has welcomed 239 individuals to date including new cases where there was a local family connection.
- 3.16 The Home Office are currently consulting Local Authorities across the country on increasing commitments for a further eighteen months to 2 years. In terms of what is sustainable, the feedback from across the region is for about 50 – 75% of the population settled so far. For our region, this would equate to between 275- 425 per year. With this proposal it would mean a further 60 – 90 individuals. The programme in Leeds has well established arrangements in place which to date have been delivered through Migration Yorkshire. There are plans to transfer operational responsibility to the Communities Team now that we have established a strategic migration capacity.
- 3.17 **The Leeds Migrant Access Programme** (MAP and MAP 'Plus') consists of two strands. Firstly, the Migrant Access Project aims to alleviate pressures on services where there is the impact of migration and new arrivals to the city, and in addition, it helps new migrants to settle in Leeds. Part of the project is to train Migrant Community Networkers (MCNs) who are from different national, ethnic or language backgrounds so that they can share with new arrivals within their communities about life in Leeds. The second strand named Migrant Access Project 'Plus' extends the work from inner east to wider inner city areas with a focus on improving health access in Armley and working with private landlords in Holbeck to improve housing. Discussions are taking place on a further three satellite areas for year 2 of

this initiative. The funding for MAP 'Plus' was a successful bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

- 3.18 **The Leeds Refugee Transition Guide** – This guide will provide information for services and new refugees on where and how to access support in Leeds. This project was commissioned using funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to be delivered by a third sector organisation. It is nearing completion.
- 3.19 **Connecting Opportunities** – this 2 year project aimed at supporting 'vulnerable new migrants' to improve confidence and skills and increase employability started in 2017 and will end in July 2019. Up to 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2018 (end of Quarter 1), 93 individuals from Leeds have been supported through this programme.
- 3.20 **The Immigration Act 2016** – brought about significant changes to immigration law and practice. The full implications of this were unclear and guidance was expected in autumn 2017. The Act is anticipated to impact on areas which include housing, social welfare, employment and community cohesion. Of concern are: the restrictions/limitations in support for refused asylum seekers; unaccompanied asylum seeking children; migrant families with children under the age of 18; and the limiting of the Local Authority's duty of care to many families and young people in this context. There are also a number of concerns regarding the potential for a rise in destitution; increased pressures on public and third sector services contributing to capacity and sustainability concerns; amplified confusion amongst people seeking asylum and services; and reduced resilience amongst some communities in the city.
- 3.21 Officers ran several sessions during 2017 to increase the awareness of the Immigration Act 2016 across directorates whilst we awaited further guidance from government. Over 80 numbers of staff attended and were asked to consider how their services might support those impacted going forward.
- 3.22 **Local Authority Asylum Support Liaison Officer Scheme** – this scheme is the result of another successful funding application to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Leeds received funding from the controlling migration fund to deliver a 2 year pilot initiative aimed at supporting asylum seekers who received a positive decision from the Home Office to settle in the city. Two officers have been recruited within the Leeds Housing Options service. These post holders will be working closely with G4S to help meet their accommodation needs.
- 3.23 The challenge of providing housing advice/support to people who have received a negative asylum decision is a significant one. Not least because people will not be eligible for housing assistance/allocation. The work in partnership with key third sector organisations such as PAFRAS/RETAS and Red Cross is essential to ensure that people continue to feel supported.
- 3.24 **English Learning Programme** – this programme is also the result of a successful bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to develop a citywide strategy on ESOL and support communities to build their language skills through activity utilising a grants process. Recruitment for two post holders is currently taking place and the project will be delivered over a 2 year period from July 18 – July 2020.

- 3.25 **EUROCITIES** – is a network which represents 130 cities across Europe. The network aims to improve quality of life by sharing knowledge and good practice between cities across Europe. The Council are the lead and joint members with the University of Leeds and Leeds Beckett. As part of being members of the Roma Inclusion working group, Leeds is hosting the next meeting on 24-25 September 2018 and will welcome many European delegates to the city. This event will give Leeds the opportunity to showcase our work on Roma inclusion and also explore with European cities some of the challenges we face that mirror other cities, and to develop joint solutions.
- 3.26 **Introduction to Migration Training** – over the last two years Migration Yorkshire commissioned by Leeds City Council delivered 22 one day training sessions. 474 participants attended of which 22 were from the voluntary sector, 20 were elected members and the remainder were staff from across the council's directorates. Feedback has been really positive with requests from those that attended for further sessions for their colleagues. A further session has been arranged for September 2018 and consultation on future sessions is currently underway with members of the Leeds Migration Board.
- 3.27 **Windrush** – this issue is recent, has been fast moving and changing continuously. Leeds City Council is the only local authority in the region that has proactively responded to ensuring a compassionate approach to supporting individuals affected by the issues arising from their nationalities. Leeds has produced a briefing paper and guidance that provides information to services and local residents on where to seek support in Leeds. This guidance has been put together following feedback from key services and consulted on widely. It is being maintained as a live document that will be regularly reviewed and updated.

## **4. Corporate considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 Consultation and engagement continues to be at the heart of developing the strategic, co-ordinated and inclusive approach to migration for Leeds. This has involved working with Citizens and Communities Scrutiny Board, Leeds Strategic Migration Board and Leeds Migration Partnership and continued engagement and activity with partners in the city including migrant communities, people working with migrant communities, other public bodies (such as universities and the further education sector) and the private sector.

### **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 4.2.1 Migration is recognised as a dimension of equality and consideration has been given to ensure due regard to wider equality issues and is incorporated within all work undertaken. In addition, an equality screening has been undertaken to support development of the proposed strategic, co-ordinated and inclusive approach. Our equality improvement priority is to understand the context and impact of migration in Leeds.

### **4.3 Council policies and Best Council plan**

- 4.3.1 The approach to migration in Leeds articulated in this paper will help Leeds to achieve its ambition to be a compassionate city with a strong economy, which tackles poverty and reduces the inequalities that exist. It supports the council's ambition for Leeds to be the Best City in the UK and underpins the 'Strong

Communities Benefiting from a Strong City' breakthrough programme by focussing on the people who are new to Leeds, and ensuring that their interests and contributions are included in all aspects of city life.

- 4.3.2. The recommendations in this report support the delivery of the Best Council Plan. In addition, it aims to keep people safe, aid integration, build more cohesive and resilient communities whilst seeking to minimise the risk associated with changes to demography, service impact and low level community tensions.

#### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

- 4.4.1 An approach to migration in Leeds provides opportunities to build upon, and create effective partnerships and responses to changing needs and to target our work more effectively based on evidence.

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

- 4.5.1. Although, there are no legal implications or access to information issues within the work articulated in this paper there will be implications arising from national changes such as the Immigration Act 2016 and Brexit. As yet the full impact of these regulations is not known and guidance is pending. The present report is subject to call-in.

#### **4.6 Risk management**

- 4.6.1 There is significant risk involved if we do not have a coherent and strategic approach to work with our partners in this area of work or if we do not fully understand the nature of the changes to demography, need and impact on mainstream and non-mainstream services. The approach outlined seeks to minimise the risk.
- 4.6.2 Officers are keeping information updated on national changes whilst we await further guidance from government and anticipate rolling out the awareness-raising of the potential implications to community committees when the guidance is available.

### **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 The proposed strategic, co-ordinated and inclusive approach to migration in Leeds will bring much needed direction to the Council's work with its partners, harnessing the work and activities that take place in the city, galvanising improved collaborative action to drive improvements and strengthen the offer to migrant communities living in Leeds. It will contribute to our ambition to be a compassionate city with a strong economy, which tackles poverty and reduces inequalities for all.

### **6. Recommendations**

Executive Board are requested to:

- 6.1 Approve the continuation of the strengthened arrangements developed following the Citizen's and Communities Scrutiny Board inquiry on migration for a more strategic, co-ordinated and inclusive approach to migration and endorse the current and future work that is planned.
- 6.2 Note the responsibility of the Director of Communities and Environments' and the Executive Member for Communities for leading this work through the Council's Stronger Communities Breakthrough Programme and also note the responsibility of



the Chief Officer Communities in leading the work of the Strategic Migration Board

6.3 To receive an update on progress in July 2019.

## **7. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None.

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.