

Report of Migration Programme Manager

Report to the Chief Officer of Communities

Date: November 2020

Subject: Strategies for Leeds: English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Migration

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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

1. Main issues

- The Council has developed two strategies for the city, in partnership with statutory and third sector organisations. Both have been adopted and approved by the Leeds Strategic Migration Board.
- The ESOL strategy has been shared at the most recent Executive Board (21 October 2020) as part of the annual update on migration.
- The Migration Strategy has been developed following the recommendations made by the then Citizens and Communities Scrutiny Board inquiry on migration for a more strategic, co-ordinated and inclusive approach to migration. This has been endorsed year on year by Executive Board.
- Both strategies have been approved by the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Communities.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- Our focus is to support communities, aid integration and build more cohesive and resilient communities whilst seeking to minimise any risk associated with changes to demography.

3. Resource Implications

- Initial development of the ESOL strategy was via grant funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The implementation of this strategy will continue in partnership with stakeholders.
- Both strategies contribute to bringing together a wealth of knowledge on migration in Leeds and in the most efficient and cost saving way to aid in reducing pressures on services.

Recommendations

- a) The Chief Officer for Communities is asked to formally approve both strategies following the approval by the Leeds Strategic Migration Board and reference to annual updates to Executive Board.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to formalise approval of the ESOL strategy and Strategic, Coordinated and Inclusive Approach to Migration strategy.

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 exist. We want Leeds to be a city, which enables people to prosper, with equal opportunities and where everyone has a fair chance. A city with safe, strong and resilient communities, where people from all backgrounds are able to take part in all aspects of community life. A city that is varied, vibrant and proud.
- 2.2 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. Leeds has continued to attract new arrivals from all over the world and as a result the city has a diverse and changing cultural population; home to over 169 nationalities speaking over 104 languages.
- 2.3 In 2011 the population was just over 750,000; 19% were from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (BME); and 11% of residents born outside the UK, with over two thirds born outside the European Union and just over half arriving at in the preceding ten years. The profile of the migrant community has changed significantly in the last 10 years with two thirds representing EU nationals. The local population was estimated to have grown to 789,200 in 2018 driven by a combination of natural population change and international migration.
- 2.4 The majority of our settled 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.
- 2.5 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.

- 2.6 English is a gateway to education, careers, inclusion and opportunity. The Leeds ESOL strategy outlines the forward approach to enable all Leeds adult residents, for whom English is not a first language, to have access to opportunities to develop English language skills. Developed collaboratively with ESOL providers, tutors and key stakeholders, this approach provides an overview of the current position in Leeds; key gaps and challenges; and how a cross-sector multidisciplinary response can improve outcomes for adult ESOL learners. The approach taken in developing the strategy was informed by the Harehills ESOL Needs Neighbourhood Audit (HENNA) project¹, the most recent significant piece of research on ESOL in Leeds which was carried out between November 2010 and May 2011. The HENNA project was funded by Leeds City Council and led by the School of Education, University of Leeds.
- 2.7 The ESOL strategy builds upon this approach to improve understanding of where challenges and vulnerabilities exist in meeting need, to inform how improvements can be made to learning English in Leeds.
- 2.8 The Leeds Strategic Migration Board, the governance arrangement in place that oversees migration in the city, carried out extensive research to develop the Strategic, Coordinated and Inclusive Approach to Migration in Leeds, to respond to the challenges experienced by new and settled communities.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The Leeds migration strategy core principles focus on an approach that is strategic, coordinated and inclusive. This strategy sets out our long-term direction on migration, which aims to ensure people who migrate to Leeds are able to establish their lives quickly and successfully.
 - 3.2 The Leeds Strategic Migration Board uses the strategy to align priorities with other services around migration and this helps to inform other strategies. The ESOL strategy was one that was clearly informed through this work, as needed for the city.
 - 3.3 The work contributing to the migration strategy has provided a rationale and brought in significant funding from national government to support our approach. This has helped to focus on priorities such as safety, housing, employment and skills and informed work across the council; an approach that is strategic, coordinated and inclusive to better supports migrants that ultimately benefit all in the city.
 - 3.4 The local co-ordination of adult ESOL is a challenge being felt nationally since the end of the Skills for Life policy and with the withdrawal of co-ordination of ESOL by the national government. The ESOL strategy for Leeds highlights the current position for adult ESOL and the presenting challenges, and identifies the priorities and key actions which are key to the city's development. The ESOL strategy builds upon the Strategic, Coordinated and Inclusive Approach to Migration strategy in Leeds priorities and aligns with city ambitions and drivers including the Inclusive Growth Strategy, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and the Leeds Adult Learning Plan.
 - 3.5 In Leeds the Migrant English Support Hub (MESH) provides a key role in the co-ordination of adult language education with national recognition as a model of good
-

practice by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Learning and Work Institute. MESH was set up following the HENNA project which identified a need for ESOL provision to be less fragmented and better coordinated. The Learning English in Leeds (LEL) website established in 2014 was the first initiative of its kind under the umbrella of MESH. The website expansion in September 2019 has seen LEL superseded by the regional resource Learning English in Yorkshire and Humberside (LEYH). The online platform was redesigned to simplify use and enhance accessibility. Development workers engaged with local providers to re-map provision in the city and across the region.

- 3.6 The website aims to provide a comprehensive coordinating hub for English language provision in Leeds, by listing all existing English language education providers and their classes. The resource assists potential learners and those who support them, language education providers and other advisors to identify and connect with available ESOL and English language learning opportunities.
- 3.7 Involving ESOL providers and key stakeholders more effectively to address the challenges collaboratively, facilitates the construction of innovative and more sustainable solutions.
- 3.8 Both strategies have brought together stakeholders and ensured linking in work and continued support for projects such as the Migrant Access Programme and Community Connectors Project.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 A city consultation event took place in January 2020 which brought together ESOL providers, tutors, volunteers and learners with stakeholders from a wide range of sectors including the Department of Work and Pensions, Housing, Health, Employment and Skills, Children's Services, Digital Inclusion, the migrant third sector, voluntary and faith organisations, the University of Leeds, Leeds Beckett University, advocacy and advice services, to collectively explore how the city can better respond to learning English need.
- 4.1.2 A multiagency ESOL strategy steering group will be established to oversee the delivery of the ESOL strategy and strands of work; aligning with the priorities of the Strategic, Coordinated and Inclusive Approach to Migration in Leeds, and reporting in to the Leeds Strategic Migration Board. Sub group working arrangements will be established to address key strands of work as outlined in the key deliverables with a focus to enhance availability and accessibility; improve co-ordination; increase financial management, develop citywide data and intelligence, improve quality teaching and resources, and enable clearer progression pathways and routes into employment, vocational, further and higher education.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 During the past year, it has become clearer that COVID-19 is disproportionately impacting on certain parts of our communities. This has been further discussed in the annual update to Executive Board in October 2020. By developing such strategies as

ESOL and Migration support the city and services are better able to plan and address barriers to access and support.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The migration work takes into account equality and diversity as core components and a Migration Equality Improvement Priority was approved by Executive Board in July 2018 to improve the approach to migration in Leeds through improving access to services; changing attitudes and behaviours; increasing awareness and understanding; strengthening resilience and building capacity; and building and creating cooperative partnerships.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 There is no direct impact on the Climate Emergency arising from this update report.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 The resources to research and develop these strategies were via grant funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- 4.4.2 The strategies increase understanding for both services and migrant communities of the council and city's offer to 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 This report is not subject to call in.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 The development of these strategies 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 New and emerging communities contribute to the richness of the city, and these strategies are important to help the council achieve its ambition of being a welcoming and compassionate city. They help to aid integration as new communities better understand their roles and responsibilities; and that respond to alleviating pressure on public services.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Chief Officer for Communities is asked to formally approve both strategies following the approval by the Leeds Strategic Migration Board and reference to annual updates to Executive Board.

7. **Background documents²**

7.1 None.