

**MINUTES OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE SUB REGIONAL MIGRATION GROUP  
MEETING THAT TOOK PLACE ON WEDNESDAY 22 MAY 2018**

**Attendees**

Lorna Gledhill	Migration Yorkshire
Hiron Miah	Bradford MDC
Tahira Iqbal	Calderdale MBC
David Smyth	G4S
Liana Khachatryan	Migrant Help
Cllr Graham Turner (Chair)	Kirklees Council
Warren Ellis	Kirklees Council
Baksho Uppal	Leeds City Council
Jon Beech	LASSN
Aidan Hallett	Migration Yorkshire
Sarah Botterill	Migration Yorkshire
Liz Maddocks	Migration Yorkshire
Amria Khatun	
Vicky Ledwidge	St Augustine's Centre
Rachel Payling	Wakefield MDC

**Apologies**

Cllr Olivia Rowley	Chair of Migration Yorkshire/Wakefield MDC
Karen Raven-Hill	Home Office
Lee-Ann Prince	Home Office
Sarah Mitchell	Kirklees Council
Cllr Debra Coupar	Leeds City Council
Jo Richmond	Calderdale MBC
Cl Michael Rutter	West Yorkshire Police
Ian Day	Bradford MDC
Gillian West	Calderdale MBC
Gill Newman	Freedom From Torture
Zeraslasie Shiker	British Red Cross

**1. Welcome Introductions and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and the apologies were noted.

**2. Minutes of the Last Meeting – 23 January 2018**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate Record.

### **3. Matters Arising**

Matters arising from the previous meeting were updated and noted.

### **4. Summary of Local Issues**

Members noted the update.

### **5. Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper**

Amria Khatun gave an overview of the Green Paper for the group:

- The paper is a consultation on the government's vision for building strong integrated communities, and actions proposed to deliver this.
- The paper has taken nearly two years and is based on a series of reviews
- The paper was launched in February 2018
- It identifies seven factors that contribute to migration
- There will be five local authorities that will be the first Integration Areas: Blackburn with Darwen, Bradford, Peterborough, Walsall, and Waltham Forest
- Government departments have made 72 commitments
- This is an England-wide strategy
- The deadline for the consultation is 5th June 2018

As part of the section on migration, the government has made a commitment to review some policies:

- The impact of English Language on Visa applications, the potential of how to do more regarding English Language skills and Visa application
- How to identify those who need additional support to integrate
- A package of support for new migrants.

The fact that a lot of the suggestions the paper makes have already been done locally was raised. For local authorities that are already carrying out this work, what would be the incentive or benefits of this strategy? Especially when it has felt as though local authorities in the region have not been listened to on previous consultations. This has left a low level of trust in the region. Leadership on implementing this would be welcomed, but the initiative needs to go deeper and be strengthened in line with elected member standards.

It was mentioned that there is also a wide variation between areas where Universal Credit has been rolled out and those where it hasn't yet. There have been more vulnerable people (particularly women) asking for help in areas with Universal Credit.

A question was asked about what the aim of the paper is if there is no real funding to back it up. Amria explained that there would be some additional funding for the five selected areas, but this is still an unknown amount. Unfortunately there is no funding available for other non-focus cities.

The issue of education barriers was raised, such as digital exclusion as libraries which allow free public access are closing. Additionally, there are barriers to work that are not widely discussed such as cost-prohibitive driving licenses. How will the paper address these barriers to integration?

Members felt the paper was unclear on where the changes should be implemented and who will lead them. Is it national government, local government, or the community? Amria explained that the changes should come from all levels, however it doesn't discuss community development.

Members also discussed how the paper is at odds with the 'hostile environment' and current immigration policy.

The time scale of the paper was raised, with members expressing that for a longer term impact, there needs to be a longer term plan. The reason for it only being set for two years is that the next parliamentary session will take place at that time. Nonetheless, the expectation is that at a local level, there will be plans made for longer term impact.

It was also questioned as to how any meaningful evaluation of work happening under this strategy would be carried out beyond the five chosen focus areas. And, that there are more policies other than the 72 commitments that the region would like to see reviewed.

**Please note:** discussion in this meeting will not count as formal feedback for the official consultation. Please submit your feedback using the online system. The consultation will close on 5 June 2018:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/integrated-communities-strategy-green-paper>

## 6. Home Office Update

An update was not given.

## 7. Controlling Migration Fund- updates

Local authority representatives present gave brief updates.

### Wakefield

The project is going well and is focusing on youth outreach, environment, volunteering and ESOL.

### Kirklees

The planning process is ongoing. Looking at how to bridge gaps.

### Calderdale

Calderdale is now in its second year of the project. The ESOL element is coming to an end but the environmental work is ongoing. Feedback for ESOL so far has been positive. There has been good cohesion and community engagement.

### Leeds

There has been further funding granted for Pre-Entry level conversational ESOL, which is less formal to help those prepare for beginning formal ESOL classes. There is now work to be done around coordinating ESOL providers. The buddying program 'In Communities' is now towards the end of the first year.

### Bradford

There is work continuing with Bradford and Shipley College to deliver ESOL. Bradford haven't recruited a LAASLO yet but are doing so now.

In general it has been found that the reporting on CMF has been quite relaxed. Leeds received a visit to see the work being carried out, and found it to be a positive visit.

## **8. G4S COMPASS Update**

Members noted the update.

The update in the papers was missing the full figures for families in S95 and S4 accommodation. A corrected updated version will be circulated after the meeting.

IA's are currently operating at close to capacity. The TDA figures are also higher than expected due to follow-on accommodation issues. It was agreed that there needs to be better communication between G4S and IAs around the breakdown of TDA numbers. The process of communication will be reviewed and discussed with IAs.

G4S have produced their migration forecast for the year. This will feed in to distribution and widening dispersal. Currently, there is work being done to widen dispersal in the West Midlands and the North East of England.

Sarah Botterill

David Smyth

Issues around GDPR were raised by the group. David Smyth confirmed that data sharing protocol needs updating and will be looked at. Other G4S policies are also being updated to ensure that they are compliant with GDPR. It was agreed by the members that as this is happening it would be useful to have more information provided about how clients can find out what information is being held by G4S, what it is being used for, how long it will be kept and how they can access it. There needs to be a clear pathway for this to happen.

There was also the questions raised as to whether body cameras are compliant with GDPR, or if protocol of body cameras will need to change.

## **9. Voluntary Sector Update**

### Migrant Help

There are now four outreach locations in Yorkshire; Bradford, Rotherham, Sheffield and Doncaster. The aim of these drop-ins (which are being held fortnightly) are to deal with more complex cases. Additionally there are now referral forms available for agencies to complete and these can be submitted via email. The referral form and the criteria for complex cases will be circulated.

The recent changes to Migrant Help services was discussed by the group. It was reiterated that there is a lot a disappointment in the way the consultation around the changes was carried out. Local authorities do not feel that they had the opportunity to feed in to the consultation, and that there are now gaps in provision. Local authorities would also like more information on why the four outreach areas were chosen over other areas such as Calderdale.

### British Red Cross

An update was provided by Zeraslasie Shiker, Service Manager, Refugee Support for West Yorkshire:

“Due to our limited capacity and resources the British Red Cross has decided to withdraw the provision of vouchers in Huddersfield. We provided vouchers to Huddersfield service users until 4th of May 2018.

We will continue with the delivery of the Sunlight Orientation service on Thursdays from the Mission in Huddersfield. Please also find the contact details of the Red Cross coordinators for Family Reunion Travel Assistance (Emily Edwards, EmilyEdwards@redcross.org.uk) and International Family Tracing (David Hunter, DavidHunter@redcross.org.uk) to be passed to organisations to refer service users for help with family reunion travel assistance and tracing.

Liana  
Khachatryan

I have checked the attached Service Directory for refugees and asylum seekers in Kirklees which I received from Sarah Mitchell. We understand that there are enough organisations that can provide advice and advocacy to refugees and asylum seekers in the area. We have now started referring enquiries from Kirklees to these organisations for advice and support.”

#### St Augustine's

This year is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary for St Augustine's. There is an exhibition in the Piece Hall.

The women's group being run and co-designed by members from St Augustine's is now a registered charity and has received an UNHCR award.

#### **10. For information: Statistics, Policy and Research update-March 2017**

Members noted the update.

Migration Yorkshire will keep members up to date as changes to policy come in to action.

Sarah Botterill, Migration Yorkshire  
28 June 2018