

## Summary of the Leeds Strategic Migration Board - 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Service	Members	Attended	Apologies
<b>Stronger Safer Communities</b>	<b>Paul Money (PM)</b> – Chief Officer for Safer Stronger Communities (Chair)	✓	
	<b>Pria Bhabra (PB)</b> - Migration Programme Manager (Coordinator)	✓	
	<b>Nadeem Siddique (NS)</b> – Head of Community Relations and Cohesion	✓	
	<b>Samantha Powell (SP)</b> - Third Sector and Migration Partnership Manager	✓	
	<b>Cath Dearlove (CD)</b> - Resettlement Programme Manager	✓	
	<b>Jennifer Jennings (JJ)</b> – Migration Project Officer (note taker)	✓	
<b>Elected Members</b>	<b>Councillor Mary Harland</b> – Executive Board Member for Communities	✓	
<b>Customer Contact</b>	<b>Lee Hemsworth (LH)</b> – Chief Officer for Community Hubs, Welfare and Business Support	✓	
<b>Housing</b>	<b>Mark Ireland (MI)</b> - Private Rented Sector Service Manager	✓	
	<b>Philip Windle (PW)</b> – Leeds Housing Options Manager	✓	
<b>Employment and Skills</b>	<b>Hannah Kirkham (HK)</b> – Employment and Skills Senior Manager		✓
<b>City Development</b>	<b>Dawn Hall (DH)</b> – Executive Manager of Employment and Skills	✓	
<b>Children and Families</b>	<b>Jonathan Nevill (JN)</b> –Service Delivery Manager	✓	
<b>Adults and Health</b>	<b>Sibi Hanif (SH)</b> - Service Delivery Manager		✓
	<b>Catherine Ward (CW)</b> - Health Improvement Principal		✓
	<b>Anthony Cooke (AC)</b> - Chief Officer Health Partnerships		✓
<b>NHS Leeds CCG</b>	<b>Deborah McCartney (DM)</b> - Head of Primary Care	✓	
	<b>Martin Earnshaw (ME)</b> – Pathway Integration Leader		✓
<b>DWP</b>	<b>Francesca Strachan (FS)</b> – Senior Partnership Manager	✓	
	<b>Chris Joyce (CJ)</b> - Job Centre Plus		✓
<b>Migration Yorkshire</b>	<b>Adam Atack (AA)</b> - Refugee Integration Service Manager	✓	
	<b>Rawand Ahmed</b> – Refugee and Migration participation Officer	✓	
<b>West Yorkshire Police</b>	<b>Lucy Leadbeater (LL)</b> – Chief Inspector	✓	
<b>Leeds Migration Partnership</b>	<b>Karen Pearse (KP)</b> – Director of PAFRAS <b>Roger Nyantou (RN)</b> – Director of RETAS	✓	✓
<b>Migrant Help</b>	<b>Tesfay Waldemichael (TW)</b> - Head of Regional Service	✓	
<b>Mears</b>	<b>Sophie Hepworth (SH)</b>	✓	

### Summary of Actions

Lee Hemsworth will share the March 2023 [cost-of-living update report](#) to the Executive Board. It includes; the [cost-of-living dashboard](#); the [Leeds Strategic Cost-of-Living plan](#), and the [State of the City 2022 report](#).

**Action:** Sam will speak to members of the [Leeds Migration Partnership](#) to see how organisations can support people to have voice and influence.

**Action:** Pria worked with Rawand from Migration Yorkshire, and colleagues working on this agenda, to develop a proposal outlining ways people with lived experience can represent, able to influence this board. Pria will share the follow up at the next meeting.

**Action:** Francesca will share the Social Justice referral process with the board.

**Action:** To help build strong partnerships, Phil Windle (Housing Options), Cath Dearlove (Resettlement), Roger Nyantou (Leeds Migration Partnership representative), Samantha Powell (Third Sector), Pria Bhabra (Migration), and Lee Hemsworth (Customer Access) will arrange to meet with Francesca Strachan (Email: [francesca.strachan@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:francesca.strachan@dwp.gov.uk))

**Action:** Sam will share the [Ethnic Diversity of the City 1 page report](#).

**Action:** 2021 Census Data will be added to future board meeting agendas and Sam will share further updates of the data, after working with Richard Haslet to better understand the needs of the communities.

### Key Theme

**People with Lived Experience: what does it mean? How can representation benefit this board? What do we need to consider?**

Rawand Ahmed, from Migration Yorkshire, shared a presentation with the board. The key highlights include:

- Migration Yorkshire use the [Spectrum of Public Participation model](#), which was developed by the [International Association for Public Participation](#), by informing, consulting, involving, collaborating, and empowering people with lived experience.
- Migration Yorkshire have recently set up the [Refugee Integration Forum](#), as part of the [Yorkshire and Humber Refugee Integration Strategy](#), and developed a [Refugee Participation Toolkit](#).
- Meaningful influence, of those with lived experience, is defined as ‘...*sustained influence*’.
- [Refugee Action](#), [City of Sanctuary](#), and [Refugee Council](#) are organisations adopting best practice, to ensure the voice of people with lived experience of seeking sanctuary are being heard.
- Colleagues can contact Rawand Ahmed for more information about refugee participation: [Rawand.Ahmed@migrationyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:Rawand.Ahmed@migrationyorkshire.org.uk)

### Discussion comments:

- A key benefit of public participation means services can be tailored to the specific needs of communities.
- People with lived experience often want to share their stories, and they bring a wealth of skills and experience to showcase their personal and collective experiences.
- Housing Leeds recently met with grass roots organisations to engage with people with lived experience. The team used case studies to gather honest feedback on the Homeless and Rough Sleeping strategy.
- When inviting people with lived experience to share their feedback, they need to feel they are equal participants within the forums. Leeds City Council commissioned a project called [Leeds Poverty Truth Commission](#), to ensure people with lived experience influence services.

- Having a separate board for people with lived experience to feed into strategic boards is beneficial.
- The Integrated Care Service support 13 Population and Care Boards. To ensure people with lived experience have voice and influence at these boards, several involvement groups have been set up to share feedback and hold the boards to account. Case studies are used to gain feedback from members of the involvement groups.
- Clarifying participants roles and managing their expectations is key, to help people feel comfortable to contribute.
- The Community Relations and Cohesion team are currently working on developing a programme of activity to tackle anti-Muslim prejudice. A cross-section representation of Muslims is working on this agenda and an independent chair will represent the group at strategic boards. The migration agenda would benefit from cross-section representatives who will share feedback on, not just their own experience, but the experiences of sanctuary seekers as a collective group.
- Case studies used to be shared with this board in the past and third sector partners have developed trusted relationships with people with lived experience.
- Leeds City Council is applying to become an awarded member of the City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network. Part of the award criteria requires local authorities to create an action plan that will outline how those with lived experience of seeking sanctuary influence policies and commissioning within the council. To develop the action-plan, the council are looking to set up a steering group to support this work.

**Action:** Sam will speak to members of the [Leeds Migration Partnership](#) to see how organisations can support people to have voice and influence.

**Action:** Pria to work with Rawand from Migration Yorkshire, and colleagues working on this agenda, to develop a proposal outlining ways people with lived experience can represent, able to influence this board. Pria will share the follow up at the next meeting.

### **Work and Money: Access to Benefits and Employment**

Francesca Strachan from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) shared a presentation with the board. The key highlights include:

- The DWP have several specialist teams providing additional help to people needing support to access employment.
- The Resettlement Programme work with the Local Authority and the Home Office to support refugees on the Resettlement programmes, by helping them access benefits and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) provision.

#### **Questions:**

- RETAS are seeing quite a few people have their benefits sanctioned. **Response:** When applying for universal credit, a claimant will meet with a job coach and the discussion will inform the 'claimant commitment' (this is a contract of arrangements which the claimant will agree to). If people are struggling with the arrangements for their universal credit claim, referrals can be made to the Social Justice team. The Social Justice team support the most vulnerable with multi-disadvantages.

**Action:** Francesca will share the Social Justice referral process with the board.

**Action:** To help build strong partnerships, Phil Windle (Housing Options), Cath Dearlove (Resettlement), Roger Nyantou (Leeds Migration Partnership representative), Samantha Powell (Third

Sector), Pria Bhabra (Migration), and Lee Hemsworth (Customer Access) will arrange to meet with Francesca Strachan (Email: [francesca.strachan@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:francesca.strachan@dwp.gov.uk))

### National, Regional and Local Updates

#### Migration Yorkshire

The [latest migration statistics from the Home Office](#) and ONS provide data up to the end of December 2022. Here are some highlights from the statistics:

- There were 74,751 asylum applications. This is the highest figure since 2003.
- 110,171 people were supported in the asylum support estate. This is 30% higher than the previous year. There remains no updated data on support type at a local level.
- 208,389 visas were granted under the Ukraine Schemes. (Source: Gov.uk)
- Studying remains the number one reason for coming to the UK with 485,758 study visas granted in 2022. 267,670 work visas and 48,107 family -related visa grants were also issued in 2022.

[The government published its Illegal Migration Bill](#). If passed into law it would enable government to remove people arriving in the UK via irregular routes such as crossing the Channel in small boats, without allowing them to first make an asylum claim. The Bill has already passed its second reading in Parliament and is at the report stage. (Sources: UK Parliament)

[A new report estimates that more than 190,000 people could be detained or become destitute](#) if the Illegal Migration Bill is passed. (Source: Refugee Council).

The Home Office published details of a [new fast track process](#) called **Streamlined Asylum Processing** to help clear the backlog of outstanding asylum claims. Up to 12,000 claims from the top 5 grant nationalities (Afghanistan, Eritrea, Libya, Syria, and Yemen) could be fast tracked for decision without a full interview. The Home Office will instead ask asylum seekers to complete a questionnaire within 20 days or risk their claim being withdrawn. (Source: Home Office)

The government [announced new efforts to support with moving resettled Afghans out of bridging hotels](#) and into long-term accommodation. This includes an expansion of the Local Authority Housing Fund and a new £35m fund to support local authorities.

#### Leeds Migration Partnership (LMP)

- The next LMP strategy group will be held this Thursday (20<sup>th</sup> April 2023). The meeting theme is Modern Slavery.
- The Leeds Migration Partnership will be further discussing action to take to improve access to legal representation (for those seeking asylum).

#### Partner updates and LSMB forward plan

**Migrant Health Board** - item deferred to the next board meeting.

#### Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASCs):

- Over the last 3 months, the number of UASCs arriving in Leeds has reduced but there is an expectation that numbers will increase with better weather.
- The Social Work team receive an average of 1-2 referrals each week from hotel staff concerned over people deemed adults by the Home Office, in hotel accommodation.
- Work is planned to consider how the Streamlined Asylum Process will impact UASCs.
- The team continue to receive UASC referrals from the police.
- The Social Care Service are currently recruiting, as teams are working at a stretched capacity.

**No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) Panel:**

- The NRPF panel sits every month.
- During the pandemic, the number of referrals each month was quite high, but the panel are now receiving fewer referrals.

**Leeds Multi-Agency Asylum Partnership:**

- Statutory services have been meeting for the last 18 months to better understand how asylum policy impacts council and city services.
- The membership of this group is now being extended to invite third sector representatives, Migration Yorkshire, and Migrant Help, to create a multi-agency partnership which will be chaired by Nadeem Siddique (Head of Community Relations and Cohesion). Further discussions will take place on this asylum specific partnership and will feed into this board.

**Cross Partner Discussions: Contingency Accommodation Support**

- The Leeds Private Sector Housing team met with PAFRAS, since the last board meeting, and they plan to meet with other key stakeholders to gain a better understanding of the needs and challenges faced by asylum seekers living in asylum accommodation.
- Mark Ireland (Private Sector Housing) and Phil Windle (Leeds Housing Options) are planning to deliver a session at the LMP operations meeting to raise awareness of how to report issues with landlords and how to access social and private sector housing.
- Leeds Housing Options have started a weekly surgery at the Compton Centre Community Hub, to help people access private sector housing.

**2021 Census Data**

Samantha Powell (Third Sector and Migration Partnership Manager) shared a presentation with the board. The key highlights include:

- 2021 census data shows the population of Leeds is over 811,000.
- 26% of the population are from 287 unique ethnic minority groups, representing 69 nationalities, from 56 different countries.
- 15% of the population were born outside of the UK.
- Over 11,000 people in Leeds arrived in the UK during the preceding year (2020).
- There are over 100 languages spoken in Leeds.
- The census data is compared with National Insurance (NI) data (the DWP list of people who have rights to work or claim benefits in the UK).
- The top 3 nationalities represented in Leeds are; India, Nigeria, and China.

**Action:** Sam will share the [Ethnic Diversity of the City 1 page report](#).

**Action:** 2021 Census Data will be added to future board meeting agendas and Sam will share further updates of the data, after working with Richard Haslet to better understand the needs of the communities.

**Forward Plan**

Next meeting theme: Legal Advice and Representation

**Any Other Business**

**Refugee Week** is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year (19th - 25th June 2023).

The theme for the week is **Compassion**. Leeds Refugee Forum will coordinate events to celebrate what compassion looks like in action, through arts and cultural activities.

**Councillor Harland** thanked all partners for their work on this important agenda. Councillor Harland fully supports Leeds applying to become an awarded member of the City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network.

#### **Close and Future Meetings**

Paul thanked all for their contribution to the meeting, particularly those who presented agenda items.

#### **Future meetings:**

- Tuesday 18th July 2023 2-4pm (Microsoft Teams)
- Tuesday 10th October 2023 2pm-4pm (Microsoft Teams)