

**London Strategic Migration Partnership**

Minutes of the London Strategic Migration Partnership meeting

**28 Sept 2011**

10am –12pm

City Hall

CR2

**Minutes**

**Present**

Chair	Richard Barnes	Deputy Mayor of London
HH	Hugh Harris	London First
SA	Simin Azimi	MRAP
LH	Laurie Heselden,	SERTUC
VL	Val Lowman	BeOnsite
DH	Derek Harvey	Group Partnership Manager in the Office of the Director for London and Home Counties.
RBe	Richard Bell	Head of Accounts, Skills Funding Agency
SF	Sharon Flannery	UKBA
MH	Mubin Haq	London Funders
JO	Joseph Oladosu	MRAP
SW	Commander Stephen Watson	MPS

**Apologies:**

MP	Cllr Marie Pye	London Councils
ST	Simon Tanner	Regional Public Health Group, NHS London
PP	Paul Plant	NHS London
JA	Jennette Arnold	MPA
ST	Sindi Tepzda	MRAP
DC	Donna Covey	Refugee Council
BR	Beryl Randall	Third Sector Alliance

**GLA:**

WL	Wayne Lawley	Deputy Mayor's Office
JL	James Lee	Senior Policy Officer, Immigration and Asylum
DW	Dick Williams	Senior Policy Officer, Immigration and Asylum
AM	Amna Mahmoud	Project & Policy Officer, Diversity and Social Policy

**In attendance**

EC	Emma Churchill	Head of Asylum Policy, UKBA
RBau	Rebecca Baumgartner	Deputy Director, Border Agency West London
PI	Philip Ishola,	London Borough of Harrow
DG	Dave Garratt	Refugee Action
RJ	Rick Jones	Refugee Action
SD	Super Intendent Stuart Dark	MPS
LB	Lynne Barams,	MPA
TS	Tom Shakhli	Third Sector Alliance

## **Draft Minutes**

### **1. Welcome and apologies**

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

### **2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

2.1 Minutes of the last meeting of 21 June 2011 agreed as an accurate record.

2.2 The Chair updated on matters arising:

**Action 1:** Circulate British Council Open Cities report to members (GLA) - The report was not posted online. Officers will send it to members as soon as it is made available.

**Action 2:** GLA to consider roundtable on making the most of reduced ESOL resources (GLA)

**RB** reported that James Lee recently took over as maternity cover for Roudy and will be considering the possibility of a roundtable and how it would best support actions on ESOL. He will report back at December meeting.

**Action 3:** A meeting was requested between Derek Harvey and members of LSMP on the refugee marker – the meeting has been arranged for 11 October.

**Outstanding action from March meeting:** explore possibility of getting Call for Action on London Congress agenda in Nov (Chair, Jennette Arnold)

**RB** reported that it was decided to support actions on key challenges rather than produce full Call for Action. This meant that the congress is no longer an appropriate forum. GLA officers to pursue other ways of securing support from boroughs in meeting key challenges.

### **3. Chair's update**

3.1 **RB** reported that he was invited to speak at the Global Policy Forum in Yaroslavl in Russia. He spoke on the role of big cities in the development of modern states as part of a discussion on "The rich and poor: where is justice?". Citing the Mayor's work on apprentices, the London Living Wage, Diversity Works and other initiatives, he concluded that we have made significant progress. He also added that London has capitalised on its immense diversity and how to ensure that it continues to evolve as a peaceful, fair and tolerant society.

**RB** highlighted London's history, the importance of equalities legislation, the Mayor's equalities framework and continuing challenges in education. He emphasised the importance of community engagement and community receptions, and highlighted *London Enriched* and *Inclusion London* as specific strategies.

3.2 **RB** reported that he is hosting the Brighter Futures event in the evening. He encouraged members to attend or view the exhibition, which is at City Hall.

3.3 **RB** informed members that he re-scheduled his meeting with Andrew Green of Migration Watch due to the riots in London.

3.4 **RB** reported that he is meeting with John Hayes, Minister for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, to discuss ESOL provision on 17 October 2011.

3.5 **RB** reported that the RIES (Refugee Integration and Employment Service) is being discontinued at the end of September. This service was funded by the UK Border Agency and delivered in London by the Refugee Council. He thanked the Refugee Council for the contribution this service has made to refugee integration in London.

#### **4. London Enriched progress report**

**DW** gave an overview of the progress made in the delivery of London Enriched during the period of April to June 2011.

Members made the following comments:

- **RBe** informed members that there is a change on the eligibility for ESOL. Colleges now have discretion to remit fees for those on wider range of benefit taking training to help towards employment
- Members welcomed the move but pointed out that the change happened in September after the colleges have recruited learners.
- **SA** asked how many MRCOs received funding from both Team London grants programmes.
- **LH** recommended developing dialogue with SERTUC on workers in the hospitality sector.
- **HH** informed members of the government consultation with five regulatory bodies. He cited a role for the Mayor.

#### **5. Child Trafficking Toolkit**

Phil Ishola, of London Borough of Harrow presented the Child Trafficking Toolkit. He informed members that a multi-agency intervention was adopted to address trafficking. London is a hotspot for trafficking to other part of the country. A monitoring group was set up. Local multi-agency support and partnership work were crucial in developing the Toolkit. London Enriched and other government strategies against trafficking were embedded into the kit. The Toolkit was launched. Since July 2010 12 local authorities have engaged with the toolkit and 56 victims were identified.

Members commented as follows:

- The Kit should include force marriages and FGM.
- Members were interested on the outcome for children.

**PI** responded that it is early for the pilot to predict outcomes but highlighted the importance of safe accommodation. There are two projects in London and that a specific package for foster parents was developed.

- Members asked about the number of children who had gone missing.

**PI** responded that seven children have gone missing but three were recovered. However, children often remain in contact with the traffickers.

- Members questioned the level of public awareness of child trafficking.

**PI** responded that there is a need to raise awareness among general public, LAs, NGOs and Eurostar staff on human trafficking. However, training is difficult due to capacity issues.

**SF** commented that there are specialised teams at Heathrow who liaise with social services. However children were well briefed by the traffickers.

- Members cited using the media as crucial factors in addressing trafficking issues.

#### **6. Assisted Voluntary Returns Programme**

6.1 Dave Garratt and Rick Jones presented the Assisted Voluntary Return scheme and the Refugee Action Choices service and commented that they run 3 programmes for:

- Asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers
- Irregular migrants such as visa overstayers
- Families with children and unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

They emphasised the principle of non-directive advice where clients make decisions. The programmes help with documentation, practical challenges during the process and re-integration process in the country of origin, including financial assistance. They are expected to assist around 5,000 a year.

6.2 Members raised the following issues:

- Support in countries of origin and guarantee of safety e.g. in Iran
- Monitoring support mechanisms in the countries where there are no NGOs with national coverage e.g. Sri Lanka.
- The availability of information within the asylum process.
- Source and availability of credible information about the countries of origin.

**RJ** acknowledged that there are challenges and that the process is a complex. He responded that they use independent sources to gather information about the countries of origin.

**SF** explained that the options refused asylum seekers have are:

- Enforced return
- Voluntary and supported return
- Remain in the UK and risk being destitute as they have no legal status.

She added that they run a pilot in Liverpool testing out the outcome of giving the information early in the asylum process.

**SF** suggested that an enforcement officer talk to MRAP members.

## **7. MRAP matters for LSMP consideration**

**SA** suggested an update on ESOL.

## **8. AOB**

**RB** informed members that the findings of BIS ESOL Equalities Impact Assessment were published in July.

**DH** updated on the re-structuring of JCP.

**LB** informed members of the Human Trafficking and 2012 meeting on 24 October.

**Action 1: LB** to provide update on the Human Trafficking and London 2012 Network.

**LH** informed members that TUC is conducting a snap review on legal advice capacity in London

**Action 2: LH** to send information for circulation