

## Minutes of the London Strategic Migration Partnership Board meeting

15 December 2009

City Hall

### LSMP meeting

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City Hall, CR2

GLA

### Present

#### Board members

RB	Richard Barnes	Deputy Mayor of London (chair)
HH	Hugh Harris	London First
MR	Mike Reed	Deputy Director, Migration Policy, Department of Communities and Local Government
KP	Kathy Prior	Job Centre Plus
DK	Davinder Kumar	MRAP
SA	Simin Azimi	MRAP
SF	Sharon Flannery	UKBA
AB	Arun Batra	LDA
DC	Donna Covey	Refugee Council
BP	Belinda Porich	London Regional Committee, National Housing Federation
VL	Val Lowman	Lend Lease Europe & BeOnsite Bovis Lend Lease LT
	Shirani Gunawardena	MPA
AP	Cll Anjana Patel	London Councils
JL	Jain Lemom	LC
NB	Natasha Brown	GOL
<b>Apologies:</b>		
LH	Laurie Heselden	SERTUC (South East Regional TUC)
CH	Chris Hayes	GOL
YT	Yeukai Taruvinga	MRAP
NA	Noeleen Adams	Third Sector Alliance
PL	Philippa Langton	LSC
	Chris Spencer	Association of Directors of Children's Services
	Lindsey Davies	NHS London
<b>GLA:</b>		
WL	Wayne Lawley	Deputy Mayor's Office
RS	Roudy Shafie	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

## Agenda - The London Strategic Migration Partnership (LSMP) meeting

15 December 09

City Hall

10 –12pm

CR2

1	Welcome and Apologies for absence	5 min
2	Minutes of the last meeting (attached) and Matters Arising	20 min
3.	Chair's Update	10 min
	3.1 Launch of London Enriched on 10 December at City Hall	
	3.2 Baseline assessment for London Enriched	
	3.3 Evidence base for the Integration Strategy for London	
	3.4 Launch of Mayor's Health inequality Strategy for public consultation.	
4	ESOL roundtable feedback	15 min
	<b>Roudy Shafie</b>	
5&6	Housing and rough sleeping	45 min
	The Mayor's Housing Strategy and refugees/rough sleeping	
	<b>Richard Blakeway</b> - Mayor's Advisor on Housing	
	Housing Link body and London Enriched actions on housing	
	<b>Belinda Porich</b> - London Region National Housing Federation	
7	New information	10 min
8.	AOB	10 min
	Independent Chief Inspector of UKBA	
	UKBA options for informing LSMP about UKBA activities	

## Minutes

### Agenda items' discussion

### Actions

#### 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

**RB** welcomed the board members to the meeting and noted the apologies.

He also welcomed the new members:

- Anjana Patel who had been confirmed as the London Councils representative on the Board.
- Shirani Gunawardena as the representative of the Metropolitan Police Authority
- James Merrick-Potter of UKBA will attend with Sharon Flannery
- Richard noted that Chris Spencer, Director of Children's Services in Hillingdon, had tentatively agreed to represent the Association of London Directors of Children's Services on the LSMP Board but was unable to attend this meeting.

#### 2. Minutes of the last meeting & Matter arising

**HH** asked whether Richard Barnes had met with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Assembly to discuss how the GLA was taking forward the findings of the LSE report on regularisation.

**RB** responded that the meeting hadn't yet taken place but was being arranged.

**Richard Barnes'  
office to follow  
up**

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

### **3. Chair's Update**

#### **3.1 Launch of London Enriched on 10 December at City Hall**

**RB** reported on the successful launch of London Enriched on 10 Dec, and thanked SA and SF who had spoken at the launch. He highlighted the considerable media coverage

#### **3.2 Baseline assessment for London Enriched**

**RB** reported that baseline survey was about to be commissioned, and that the GLA might ask MRAP members for assistance in contacting participants.

#### **3.3 Evidence base for the Integration Strategy for London**

**RB** also reported that the evidence base for the Mayor's Integration Strategy was also being commissioned.

#### **3.4 Launch of Mayor's Health inequality Strategy for public consultation**

**RB** encouraged Board members to respond to the consultation on the Mayor's Health Inequalities Strategy by 10 January 2010.

### **4. ESOL roundtable feedback**

**RB** commented that it had been a very useful event and the first time key stakeholders had been brought together to co-ordinate a better delivery of ESOL. He added that it was an excellent opportunity to examine the barriers and challenges facing ESOL delivery and suggest solutions to enable migrants accessing ESOL as a vital step for integration. He invited comments from other participants.

**SA** reported that it had been a good discussion.

**RB** introduced RS, GLA Senior Policy Officer to present the findings of the ESOL roundtable.

**RS** presented the action plan and concluded by asking Board members to volunteer as champions for key actions. She informed the members that she discussed the plan with LSEB, who agreed to support the plan as indicated in the document.

**AP** noted that there were very many funders of ESOL provision and suggested there was a need to map funders and commissioners, and then coordinate commissioning. She said a single body needed to be accountable as in other countries. She suggested obligatory ESOL for all new arrivals.

**RB** responded that these suggestions would require changes to national policy. He noted that £133m million was spent annually on ESOL in London, but that there were very many providers.

**SF** suggested that there is a potential for using volunteer ESOL instructors.

**SA** noted that Refugee Women Association had been delivering ESOL for 16 years with extensive use of volunteers, but cautioned that volunteers do not always fit the requirements in term of necessary qualifications or availability and that re-qualification is also a challenge.

**DC** pointed out that there is a lot of good ESOL volunteer-led initiatives that helped deliver different approaches for different people and different needs, some of which were lost due to lack of funding. She mentioned that the challenge is to map and support this. She also mentioned that LORECA directory contained a lot of ESOL providers and asked whether it could it be maintained?

**AB** replied that funding for LORECA had ended but the LDA was trying to

maintain a skeleton service, including the directory, but didn't have the capacity to update it. He asked how the LSMP could control and own the ESOL agenda, what are the deliverables and is there a target for the number of people learning English? He emphasised that the Board needs to be clear about what could be achieved and when, and to address funding issues.

**RS** noted that 90% of funding for ESOL was from LSC but is not currently based on outcomes. The LSMP can try to influence this by creating a better model that can also support community provision and the use of volunteers.

She explained that value for money could be achieved through improved quality of ESOL based on London priorities and needs. She suggested that a quality framework needed to be developed, to which delivery agencies would be expected to subscribe.

**AB** agreed that made sense, but wasn't clear how we do it, i.e. influencing FE colleges.

**RS** replied that we could bring about change to the funding model – the LDA currently funds on the basis of outcomes. She also pointed out the need for a quality assurance framework, but the bigger question was what to fund, i.e. what are the priorities for London – getting people into work, access to health care, etc.

**RB** suggested that we needed both short and long term objectives, the long term aim being to influence policy and legislations, the mid-term is to achieve changes through the Mayor's powers and strategies working with LAs, private sector and colleges and the short –term is to identify what is there and what has been done.

He cited the new borough based funding arrangements, which raised cross-borough issues so that we need to look across borough boundaries.

**AB** asked whether there is national standard for ESOL.

**RB** replied that providers are inspected but there is no standard.

**SA** said there were some accrediting bodies such as Cambridge University which have standards, and that standards were part of Skills for Life, but pointed out that different standards made it hard for both providers and funders.

**AB** noted that this was a highly complex area.

**RS** pointed out that the second proposed action addresses this.

**SF** offered to help with the action plan assisting in accessing government policy teams, as they are looking for ways to do what the LSMP is trying to do.

**RB** concurred that this needed to happen.

**DK** commented that course content may not necessary be culturally relevant to learners' needs and suggested to include an action on ESOL content.

**RS** agreed this was a valid issue and needs to be addressed as part of any standards – people are learning English in order to do things with the language.

**NB** commented that trainees pay to gain teaching qualification, which may discourage volunteers to become ESOL teachers in view of the need for more teachers.

**RB** responded that this was a question for central government

**VL** cited the need to acknowledge the employer's perspective and shared her experience of workplace ESOL as an upskilling tool for the workforce.

**RS to update the document to reflect discussion**

She said health and safety was a concern for employers and said ESOL needed to be put into the workplace. She offered to champion this. **MR** commented that this was a useful and detailed piece of work that required a detailed specification and timescales with short, medium and long-term objectives as described by RB to add credibility to the document. He cited the need to talk to Bruce Pope at BIS. He also noted successful projects on employment and health that were funded by the Migration Impacts Fund.

**RB** emphasised that the LSMP needed to approach central government with a strong case and proposed approaching BIS by the end of January.

**RS** responded that goals could be added to the action plan and suggested a 6-month timeline starting in January. More time is needed to come up with a definition of quality. With a 6-month timescale for actions, more would be achieved on some than others. The Mayor can influence the ESF funding round in April, which would represent a 'quick win'.

**RB** pointed out that the funding situation means we have to achieve more with less, which might mean fewer people learning English better.

**HH** asked about local authority plans.

**RS** replied that the new approach to ESOL commissioning required local authorities to identify local priority group and come up with a plan.

**SA** commented that the process is unsatisfactory and reported that Hackney was now going through it, with a January deadline. She stated that needs could be identified locally but might need to be delivered regionally. She mentioned that this could be an opportunity to influence the cross-borough boundaries and sub-regional co-ordination as colleges' learners come from different boroughs.

**RS** pointed out that the new process was not a panacea, with a short timeline and no funding, but that Pathfinder councils such as Ealing have found it useful. She asked whether London Council could collate the outcome of the LAs' plans, which will give the LSMP better understanding of the London needs and help co-ordination across London.

**AP** requested more discussion on the action plan before London Councils agree to champion.

**AP** asked for an explanation of the first action, noting that London Councils was named as a champion.

**RS** replied that plans needed to be collated so that priorities could then be identified and hard choices made about what to commission.

**RB** asked that the action plan be taken as agreed.

**KP and AP** said the actions needed to be discussed and timelines set.

**RS** agreed to have further discussion and explained that she will be working on the proposals during January/February. She welcomed practical solutions during this period and will re-convene the roundtable in six months time.

**RS to amend document as suggested**

**Roudy RS to follow up**

## **5. Housing**

5.1 **RB** introduced **Simon Cribbens** of the GLA Housing Team to cover the London Housing Strategy and refugees and the London Delivery Board for Rough Sleeping and the contribution of the LSMP to tackling rough sleeping by migrants appearing on behalf of Richard Blakeway, the Mayor's Housing Advisor, who had been invited but was held up.

Simon presented on the London Housing Strategy (LHS) and its

**RS** to have further discussion with proposed champions

implications for refugees and rough sleeping.

5.2 **RB introduced Belinda Porich** - London Regional Committee, National Housing Federation to give an overview of the London Enriched actions on housing and the Housing link body.

**RB** invited questions on the presentations and asked what work needed to be done on getting the necessary information and who needs it.

**BP** responded that the Link Body needed to get the right people around the table and listen to what they had to say.

**RB** commented that people feedback that they do not understand the system for allocating social housing.

**BP** agreed and noted that this was a national policy issue.

**AP** commented that provision does not match needs, particularly for large families.

**BP** noted that the London Housing Strategy is important in addressing that issue.

**RB** asked whether the statistics on rough sleeping was gathered only in central London.

**SC** replied that the last statistics involved 14 LAs, where the rough sleeping was concentrated.

**RB** asked how the HAs ensure that the information provision meet the need of people on how information should be provided.

**BP** informed the meeting that G15 (the major Housing Associations) have a meeting on January to look at information provision.

**DK** reported the views expressed at MRAP and objected to the use of high levels of criminality in connection with migrants; there had to be evidence of this. He further commented that information on housing options may be available, but when people applied the accommodation was already gone. He said that these people are vulnerable and mentioned that there is an issue about the lack of information about housing allocation for refugees and migrants.

**BP** acknowledged this point.

**DC** said that Refugee Council supports DK point on criminality especial if these assumptions appear in publication. She added that people might be driven to steal to eat or get arrested in order to get shelter.

**DC** also commented on issues affecting asylum seekers and refugees, pointing out that case resolution was an issue. Case resolution clients are not covered by the RIES and many drift back to London from the dispersal areas. She highlighted the 28 day period of transition from asylum seeker to refugee as a challenge, based on the experience of the Refugee Integration and Employment Service in London. She added that destitution among asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers put pressure on communities. She suggested a dialogue between GLA, UKBA and communities on how to resolve this issue. She also reported that 7 boroughs had refused to put newly recognised refugees on waiting lists because they did not have Indefinite Leave to Remain (those granted refugee status are currently given leave to remain for 5 years which then needs to be reviewed – formerly refugees were given Indefinite Leave to Remain).

**DC** also reported that the Refugee Council was working with the EHRC on guidance on housing.

**RB** suggested sending the names of the boroughs to the GLA so that the GLA could speak directly to boroughs on this issue.

**DC to send the names to GLA**

**AP** raised concerns about the Bogus colleges and commented noting that students who had been issued visas were now going to gurkhanas for food and could end up sleeping rough.

**RB** asked what would happen if the target for ending rough sleeping was not met.

**SC** assured him that there was engagement and that the target would be achieved.

## **6. AOB**

6.1 **RB** reported that he would be meeting with the Independent Chief Inspector of the UKBA, John Vine.

**SF** informed members that UKBA had only recently been introduced an inspectorate regime. She has also invited John Vine to visit the new London Local Immigration Teams.

6.2 **RB** invited **SF** to briefly introduce the UKBA organisation structures in London and discuss options for providing LSMP members with information on UKBA activities.

**SF** noted that Local Immigration Teams had gone into operation on 14 September 2009 and distributed UKBA organisational charts and offered to provide an organisational chart for the UKBA as a whole.

She asked for indications of what LSMP members needed to know about UKBA, offering to discuss 2 topics per LSMP meeting and provide statistics. She briefly summarised UKBA responsibilities on asylum, enforcement activities (including the power to arrest) and the Points Based System, noting that UKBA wanted to promote economic activity but also weed out bogus colleges and block certain paths into the UK. She also said that UKBA could provide workshops and invited LSMP members to meet LITs. She offered to suggest appropriate means by which the LSMP could influence UKBA policy and practice.

**DK** suggested that she presents on detention centres and asked for a contact for information on detention.

**SA** asked about information on asylum seekers and refugees as well as policies. She said it would be useful to get information on new UKBA policies.

**SA** mentioned that the communities are concerned that UKBA requests that GPs provide information on their patients and asked **SF** to clarify this issue.

**SF** replied that UKBA is an enforcement agency, which responsible for re-enforcing the law. She also mentioned that a lot of agencies share information to improve their work.

**RB** said that the GLA would meet with UKBA and agree a way forward.

**DK** invited **SF** to attend MRAP.

**AP** asked how UKBA deals with bogus colleges, as this issue is a problem in some boroughs and asked for a contact for someone dealing with Harrow to come in as the police were saying that they had nothing to do with colleges. She had been in touch with Tanup Gahlia of the Points Based System and said lots of students were complaining.

**RB** thanked the members for their contribution and closed the meeting. He reminded the members that the next meeting is on 25 March 2010 at 10 -12noon.

**SF to put AP in touch with the relevant department**