

Welcome

to our bulletin – a brief overview of our current work.

Much has changed since our last bulletin. Most obviously the election of a new coalition government has a number of implications for our work.

There will be new approaches towards migration in terms of policy. For instance the review of the policy of detaining children, the placing of limits on numbers of skilled migrants entering the UK and tougher requirements for English language for people coming into the UK to join family. We will be working to shape those changes to the benefit of local areas.

Cuts to public sector funding will impact on the work that we're able to do. We're already seeing reductions in budgets for some areas of our work, and we expect to continue working with Government to identify opportunities to deliver even more efficiently.

Some of the changes will be challenging, but there is also an exciting opportunity to refocus how we work and really think through how we can add value.

Supporting local migration services

One of the most fundamental changes that the new government has signalled is a shift in terms of the relationship of local, regional and national government structures. What will this mean for the Regional Migration Partnership?

The new government has made clear that it expects to see more decisions made locally, less regulation by central government, and a radical overhaul of the existing structures at regional level. Bob Neill, the new Communities and Local Government minister, has defined the three key priorities for his Department as being 'localism, localism and localism'. We are already seeing a radical shake up of regional bodies with powers returning to local authorities.

This emphasis on the local echoes the Partnership's ambition to have a much clearer connection with local areas. Our key focus for the last year has been about moving away from process and structures and being much more about supporting and enabling local delivery.

It is our job to be a resource for partners who are delivering in local

communities – providing the information and support they need to do their job effectively. If the work we do doesn't help local delivery in some way then, quite simply, we shouldn't be doing it.

This has been seen with our work on local authority level data, work supporting delivery of government contracts for asylum accommodation and refugee integration, and our work supporting local delivery of Migration Impacts Fund supported projects.

This is what has made the Partnership so effective over the years – the way it brings local authorities and other partners together in a structure which helps them to deliver services at a local level. We will continue to look at how we tangibly add real value to the work of partners at local level, both in terms of our strategic and our delivery work.

Policy and research

Have you benefited from receiving a Local Migration Profile from us?

We want to know how our work on migration data has helped our regional partners with planning and delivering services, and how this project could be improved.

If you have an example of where the data has helped your service plan, please get in touch with Pip Tyler at pip.tyler@migrationyorkshire.org.uk

www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/closedconsultations

The next local profiles will include complete datasets for 2009, more information on nationalities of migrant workers and revised migration estimates from the Office for National Statistics.

We have also contributed to the UK Border Agency (UKBA) review into ending the detention of children for immigration purposes, and to the Department of Health review of access to the NHS. Read our responses to these reviews at the link below.

Integration and RIES

Our Refugee Integration 2010 event in July was attended by 63 people. We looked at refugee integration in recent years, and future challenges. There were three outstanding finalists for 'Refugee of the Year 2010' - the winner was presented with her award, as was the winner of the new award 'Young Refugee of the Year'. More details on our website in August.

The Refugee Integration and Employment Service (RIES) is changing. Unfortunately reductions in UKBA funding have meant that mentoring is no longer part of RIES, and the employment strand has been reduced. The remaining elements will be slightly different and we will confirm the details shortly.

Migration Impacts Fund

Central Government has confirmed a further six months' funding for Migration Impacts Fund projects (April to September), rather than the full 12 months originally indicated. We will be organising a meeting with projects in the near future to talk through the implications that an early exit from this programme will have on them.

Following our successful Migration and Employment workshop in May, we intend to run an ESOL themed event in early autumn.

Please contact us if you'd like a copy of the text of this bulletin in large print.

Asylum seeker accommodation contract

The numbers of people seeking asylum are currently very low. This means that the region has more 'initial accommodation' than it needs. This overcapacity, coupled with pressure on finances, has led UKBA to end the public sector contract for providing initial accommodation (IA). This basically means that the region's two local authority run IA centres in Barnsley and Leeds will close by the end of September. Whilst we do understand the

financial pressures that UKBA faces, it is clearly disappointing to lose such high quality provision that staff in both centres have provided for many years.

We're still waiting to hear UKBA's decision on whether they intend to go forward with the delayed programme to procure asylum services later this year (the COMPASS process). We expect to obtain some clarification on this by the end of July.

And finally...

Website news Average use of the website for the period April-June 2010 was over 1,390 visits and 5,610 page views per month. Highlights this quarter include a new section about welcome information for new migrants in the region: find this at www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/welcome



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