

# Partnership bulletin

Summer 2010

## Welcome

to our bulletin - a brief overview of our work in the region.

Spring has been a busy time for the Partnership. We've seen new political structures being established, worked with the UK Border Agency to host a ministerial debate on migration in the region, and responded flexibly to the falling demand for asylum bed spaces in the region.

Responding to change quickly, positively and flexibly forms a key theme in our business plan 2010-11.

The plan identifies how we'll deliver through challenging times: maintaining a high standard of delivery whilst reducing costs; handling the reducing scale of the accommodation contract; and thinking about the shape of the future delivery of asylum services as we move towards the procurement of new contracts.

We know that 2010 will be a year of change. Our business plan provides a 'roadmap' showing how we can be proactive in meeting that change, whilst continuing to deliver the high quality work of which we are rightly proud.

## New political leadership

March saw the first meeting of the region's new Local Authority Commission on Asylum and Migration (LACAM).

The Commission, which brings together elected members from all of the regional local authorities, has been established as part of a broader set of changes and improvements to our structures.

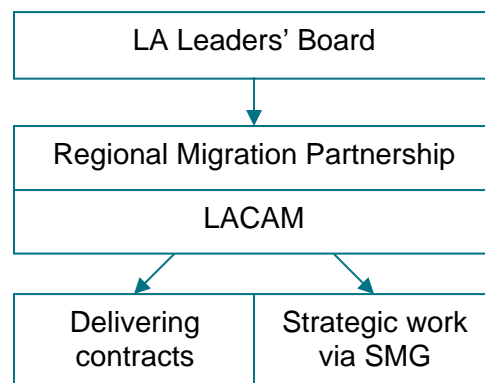
These changes were driven by a desire from our main funders to see clearer political engagement and leadership in our work, and acknowledgement within the region that local government was uniquely placed to provide leadership and accountability – for both our strategic and contractual work.

The region's Local Authority Leaders' Board decided to establish the group to work on behalf of leaders.

The Leaders' Board itself will receive twice yearly updates on the work of the Partnership, and will have sign off of our business plan.

This is not about local authorities 'taking over'. Our Strategic Migration Group (SMG) remains the key place where local government gets together with partners from other sectors to discuss migration issues. But it does recognise the different roles of local government and other partners.

Taken together these changes will provide robust political leadership for all of our work, providing a firm foundation as we move forward into 2010-11.



## Policy and research

We've now launched Local Migration Profiles for local authority areas in the region.

We're working to maximise the use of these profiles across different agencies that deliver migrant services, through presenting this new work at a range of meetings and events. For example, it should assist health and social care professionals to include migrant groups within their Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which identifies

local health needs. It will also be useful to Local Strategic Partnerships considering the direction of their Migration Impacts Fund projects.

We're working with the regional Health subgroup to consider a Department of Health consultation paper 'Review of access to the NHS by foreign nationals' - about how migrants access health services - and to develop a submission by June 2010.

## Integration and RIES

The Refugee Integration Conference 2010 will be held on Friday 11 June. We'll be reviewing all aspects of refugee integration in the region, one year on from the launch of the integration strategy - and discussing refugee integration at a time of recession with cuts to budgets and services.

The Refugee Integration and Employment Service (RIES) has been running for a year and a half and achievements include 177 refugees supported into employment. UKBA have slightly tightened the eligibility for RIES this year, so slightly fewer refugees will be able to access the service.

## Delivering the accommodation contract

Home Office terminations of UK Border Agency [UKBA] asylum support have begun to gather momentum over the last three months, impacting upon all regional accommodation providers' contractual numbers.

This is a result of quicker decisions being made by caseworkers on current and legacy cases. We've recently also seen a much lower number of asylum clients

coming into the region compared to previous years.

We're holding workshops and meetings with local authorities and other regional asylum organisations, to discuss what a new contract model might look like, so that we're ready to engage with the UKBA re-tendering process for asylum support provision, which is due to commence in July 2010.

## Migration Impacts Fund

A report to the Department of Communities and Local Government on the first year of MIF funding in the region highlights four key emerging priorities, on which we'll focus our attention over the coming 12 months: ESOL, Roma, homelessness / destitution and employers / rogue employers.

We'll be running a workshop on employment issues in May, with speakers from the Health and Safety Executive, Gangmasters Licensing Authority and National Minimum Wage.

## And finally...

**New staff** Nicola Baylis has joined the team as Executive Services Officer, and will be working Wednesdays-Fridays: you can contact her by phone on 0113 395 2449, or by email [nicola.baylis@migrationyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:nicola.baylis@migrationyorkshire.org.uk)

**Website news** Average use of our website for the period Jan-March 2010 was 1,915 visits and 8,550 page views per month. Highlights this month include our new business plan: find this at [www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/publications](http://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/publications)

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

