



Scottish Strategic Co-ordination Group

Thursday 28th August 2008

COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership

Scottish Strategic Co-ordination Group

The meeting will take place on **Thursday 28th August 2008 at 11.00am in Edinburgh City Chambers, Dunedin Room, High Street, Edinburgh.** Lunch will be provided.

AGENDA

Welcome, introductions and apologies

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies (11.00 – 11.05)
2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising (11.05 – 11.10) Appended
3. Operation Sub-group Minutes (11.10 – 11.15) Appended
4. The Citizenship Agenda in Scotland (11.15-11.30) Appended
5. Medical Foundation for the
Care of Victims of Torture (11.30 – 11.45) Presentation
6. UK Border Agency Update (11.45 – 11.55) Appended
7. Scottish Government Update (11.55 – 12.05) Appended
8. CSMP Update (12.05-12.15) Appended
9. Preventing Destitution amongst
Asylum Seekers & Refugees (12.15 – 12.25) Appended
10. Alternatives to detention (12.25 – 12.35) Appended
11. Simplification of Legislation (12.35 – 12.45) Appended
12. Housing loophole (12.45 – 12.55) Update
13. A.O.C.B (12.55 – 13.00)
14. Next meeting Friday 28th November 2008 at Rosebery House

Item 1 – Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Item 2 – Minutes of Previous Meetings and Matters Arising

Members are invited to review and agree the minute of the Scottish Strategic Co-ordination Group Meeting held on 21 May 2008 (appended).

Item 3 - Operations Sub-Group Minute

Members are asked to note the minute from the meetings that took place on 8 May 2008. Members are also asked to note the minute from the meetings of the move on working group, established by the Operations Sub-group, that took place on 13 May 2008, and 13 June 2008.

Item 4 - The Citizenship Agenda in Scotland

Members are invited to discuss:

- The key responses to earned citizenship in the draft (partial) Immigration and Citizenship Bill.
- The recommendation that a Scottish strategy is necessary in order to respond effectively to local and national citizenship issues.
- The need for a forum and infrastructure for pursuing the citizenship agenda in Scotland.
- The need for Scottish focused research, which will explore and evaluate the current citizenship arrangements.
- The proposal to establish a trust to promote and develop active and participating citizenship in Scotland.

Item 5 - Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture

Norma McKinnon, Manager of the Medical Foundation Scotland, will attend to inform members about her organisation's work. In Scotland Medical Foundation work mainly with asylum seekers and refugees and offer a holistic assessment ensuring survivors of torture can access and receive the services they need, with internal or external referral when required. They also prepare medico-legal reports for use as evidence in the Immigration Tribunal system.

Item 6 - UK Border Agency Update

Members are asked to note the attached update from UK Border Agency for this meeting.

Item 7 - Scottish Government Update

Members are asked to note the attached update from Scottish Government for this meeting.

Item 8 – COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership Update

Members are asked to note the attached update from the COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership. This is the first time CSMP have brought a paper updating on the work they have undertaken across the board since the last meeting of the SSCG. Feedback on whether this is a useful approach is welcome.

Item 9 – Preventing Destitution amongst Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Scottish Refugee Council brought a paper to the May 2008 meeting of the SSCG on Preventing Destitution. It was agreed to refer the paper to the Operations for further discussion. This paper presents a response to the Scottish Refugee Council's paper, highlighting where their recommendations are already being undertaken by the Partnership and proposing some new courses of action.

Members of the SSCG are invited to:

- i. Support a continuing partnership approach to preventing destitution of asylum seekers

- ii. Note the areas of work the Strategic Migration Partnership is already undertaking, which address recommendations
- iii. Support the activities outlined in this paper which build upon existing partnership work to preventing destitution in Scotland

Item 10 – Alternatives to Detention

The purpose of this paper is to inform members of the Strategic Migration Partnership of work underway in Scotland to encourage voluntary return of refused asylum seekers and to minimise the use of detention and enforced removals for this group.

Members of SSCG are invited to:

- i. Note the partnership working focused on promoting voluntary return of refused asylum seekers
- ii. Support voluntary return as the best option for returning refused asylum seekers
- iii. Support the development of the Alternative to Detention pilot by Glasgow City Council in partnership with other members of COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership
- iv. Lobby for recognition and support of Scottish initiatives to promote voluntary return of refused asylum seekers and reduce the need for detention at a UK level
- v. Welcome ongoing updates on the progress of the pilot and the evaluation through the Strategic Group meetings

Item 11 – Simplification of Legislation

In July 2008 the UK Government published the Draft (partial) Immigration and Citizenship Bill, which is the next step in their ambitious project to 'Simplify' UK Immigration Law. This paper outlines key areas of concern for COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership and highlights opportunities for stakeholders to contribute to the development of the legislation.

Item 12 – Housing Loophole

The housing loophole which allowed migrants from the Accession States to access housing services in Scotland on different terms compared to elsewhere in Scotland. Following joint lobbying by agencies in Scotland this loophole has been closed. CSMP will provide a verbal update on the implications of this.

Item 13 – A.O.C.B.

Item 14 – Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 28 November 2008 at COSLA, Rosebery House, Haymarket, Edinburgh.