



Scottish Strategic Co-ordination Group

August 28 2007

COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership
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COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership

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The meeting took place on **Tuesday 28 August 2008 at 11.00am in COSLA's Conference Centre, Rosebery House, Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh.**

AGENDA

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies (11.00-11.05)
2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising (11.05-11.10) Appended
3. Operations Group Minutes (11.10-11.15) Appended
4. A8 migration Research for GCC (11.15-11.25) Report
5. COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership Update (11.25-11.35) Update
6. Border and Immigration Agency Update (11.35-11.40) Report
7. Community Cohesion (11.40-11.55) Appended
8. ATLAS Research (11.55-12.05) Presentation
9. Information Sources (12.05-12.15) Appended
10. Next meeting: 28 November 2007

Minute of Meeting

Present:

Cllr Allan Noon	COSLA (Renfrewshire Council)
Cllr Jean Jones	COSLA (North Lanarkshire Council)
Cllr Harry McGuigan	COSLA (North Lanarkshire Council)
Derek Mitchell	COSLA Chair
Jim Mulholland	JobCentre Plus (Department for Work and Pensions)
Phil Taylor	Border and Immigration Agency Scotland
Val Thompson	Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland
Raymond Smith	The Angel Group
Gary Sweeney	Border and Immigration Agency
James Pinkerton	Association of Directors of Social Work
John Donaldson	Glasgow City Council
Lesley Irving	Scottish Executive
Sally Daghlian	Scottish Refugee Council
Allan Hogarth	CBI Scotland
Dave Moxham	Scottish Trade Union Congress
Maria Walker	Glasgow City Council
Jim Jarvie	YMCA Glasgow

In Attendance:

Mhoraig Green	COSLA minute
Lindsay McGregor	COSLA
Lorraine Cook	COSLA
Dawn Corbett	Glasgow City Council

Apologies:

Cllr Iain Linton	COSLA (East Ayrshire)
Cllr Margaret Toner	COSLA (South Ayrshire)
Hazel Evans	Border and Immigration Agency
Mike Canham	Border and Immigration Agency
Kenny Simpson	Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers

Item 1: Welcome and apologies

DM welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

Item 2: Minutes of previous meeting

Minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

Item 3: Minutes of Operations Subgroup meetings and Move On Working group

Minutes were agreed as an accurate record

Item 4: A8 migration Research for GCC

DC provided an overview of key findings of research conducted by Glasgow City Council into migration of A8 nationals into the authority area. They had been prompted by difficulties in one particular area and wanted to find out if problems were replicated across the board. They found that the problems were not widely replicated and that the experience and effect of migration from the EU was generally positive for host communities.

DC asked the group to consider three key implications:

1. The need for more accurate and readily available data about migrations.
2. The need for more resources for ESOL provision. DC welcomed recent investment by Scottish Executive but pointed out such investment had to be ongoing to meet demand.
3. Increased demand on interpreting services across Scotland and the need to look at the national picture and potentially develop shared services.

JP pointed out that the issues faced by Glasgow were replicated in Edinburgh, and they were facing particular pressures within schools. MW confirmed Glasgow schools were under pressure. JP also asked whether the information packs produced by GCC were well received and DC advised the evidence from surveys had been inconclusive though there was a lot of demand for the packs.

LI said that the Translation, Interpreting and Communication Support Services Implementation Group (TICSIG) set up by the Scottish Executive was now active again and they were looking at issues around shared interpreting and translation services. LM said it may also be useful to raise the interpreting services through COSLA's shared services route.

AH informed the group about a Polish magazine that provides support in learning English, which had seen a massive increase in demand. He also said there was a new resource centre about to open for Polish people in Leith, and that there was an existing centre in Dalry Road, Edinburgh.

DMoxham informed the group about a Health and Safety Executive (England and Wales) report to be published which identifies the need for coordination in relation to health and safety for migrant workers. He said STUC face challenges in this area because people are

working in sectors where unions often do not operate. Citizens Advice Bureaux are passing issues on to the unions.

Action:

1. **CSMP Officers to explore further opportunities for developing robust information on migration flows in Scotland and report back to future meetings.**
2. **CSMP Officers to explore opportunities for potential shared services in relation to interpreting and translation services.**

Item 5: COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership Update

DM provided an overview of the newly extended remit of the Strategic Migration Partnership (to include migrants as well as asylum seekers and refugees). He said that work in the new area was developing and the partnership would like to receive endorsement to facilitate better data collection about migration – about numbers, characteristics and intentions of migrants.

DM described the role of different representatives of members of the partnership in the BIA's new stakeholder engagement structures: Rory Mair, (COSLA's chief executive) will sit on the Migration Impacts forum; Jon Harris (COSLA's strategic director) and Sally Daghlian will sit on the National Migration Group; Pam Whittle (Scottish Executive) will sit on the Asylum Forum. When the Asylum Forum meets in Scotland, further Scottish representatives will be invited. DM emphasised the need to work together through the partnership to co-ordinate the flow of information to and from these people to make sure they are able to represent Scotland's interests.

SD said that it was disappointing that more Scottish representatives were not included in the groups. She pointed out that many organisations with a London remit only were included and said that while it was useful to be able to engage with the BIA regional director in Scotland, this should not exclude Scottish agencies from having a direct dialogue about policy with the Home Office at Westminster, since the regional office has no powers over policy.

VT said that ACPOS have written to the Home Office about issue of Scottish representation and have thus far received no reply.

PT confirmed that there had been discussions within BIA about representation on the fora – he has had discussions with Jane Farmley (RD Wales and South West) – and said that there may be some movement in the future.

Action: It was agreed that Scotland's representation within the stakeholder fora was inadequate and that the incoming chair would write formally to Mathew Coats, Phil Taylor and Jeremy Oppenheim outlining the group's concerns.

Item 6: Border and Immigration Agency Update

PT had included an update report with the meeting's papers. He outlined recent work on improving stakeholder engagement and stated they were attempting to develop a more sophisticated approach.

The Migration Impact Forums has a new chair from the Department of Communities and Local Government. The membership of the National Migration Group and the National Asylum Forum are currently under review.

Section 4 applications are to be processed regionally at Brand Street.

Legacy

PT updated the group about the legacy review process and said that there were 1,100 families in the legacy cohort and he anticipated that many of them would be granted some form of status. He said that BIA are currently working with partners to ensure that people have suitable services. The review will focus on families first, then singles, then non-asylum cases. PT said that there would be an increase in enforcement activity at the same time, because not all cases would receive a positive decision.

JD pointed out to the group that it was important to manage the process carefully to ensure that people received the support and services they need post-decision. GCC, Cosla and others have been taking a partnership approach to this through the Move-On Working Group.

JP asked for clarification on how this would affect asylum seekers in Edinburgh and other areas outside Glasgow. PT confirmed that there are less than 100 asylum seekers who may be affected in Edinburgh and smaller numbers elsewhere.

SD asked whether there was a strategic group looking at issues around housing, GHA's demolition programme etc. JD and DM confirmed there was a commitment to looking at the issues strategically and meetings had been held/would be arranged with GHA, Scottish Executive Homelessness Team and Border and Immigration Agency.

Action: DM to convene a strategic meeting with BIA/Job Centre Plus/GHA/GCC/Scottish Executive.

Local Area Agreements

PT outlined arrangements that BIA is setting up in England for resettling refugees and migrants and targeting fraudulent and illegal activity by migrants. He said that the Scottish Executive, Scottish Local Authorities and SUNRISE (through SRC) were already delivering strongly on the first element.

PT went on to talk about how partners could work towards targeting fraudulent and illegal activity by migrants. BIA had a role to play in helping employers understand the benefits employing foreign national can bring, but also to ensure they do not exploit their workers.

LM said a sophisticated approach to this was needed since there was a threat of people becoming victims. She asked what BIA sees as the extent of these problems and asked them to consider the unintended consequences of their actions, particularly information sharing. PT responded by saying although they are not sure of the scale of illegality amongst migrant communities it is on the increase. BIA hope to glean intelligence from the legacy process.

DM asked BIA to bring a paper to the next meeting outlining their proposals in more detail. PT said that in order to do this it would be useful to form a working group with partners who may have information to share.

Action:

- 1. BIA to produce a paper in advance of the November meeting outlining their proposal for partnership working ‘Local Area Agreements (Regeneration Outcome Agreements in Scotland)’ around integration and targeting fraudulent behaviour.**
- 2. PT to convene an initial meeting to discuss issues further with Cosla and GCC.**

Item 7: Community Cohesion

MG presented a paper on community cohesion (appended) and asked members to endorse the recommendations. This paper will go to COSLA’s Community, Wellbeing and Safety Executive Group and will be distributed in advance of the next Migration Impacts Forum to ensure members are aware of the Scottish dimension to the community cohesion agenda.

SD pointed out that some of the fieldwork for the Commission on Integration and Community Cohesion had taken place in Scotland. MG acknowledged that *One Scotland, Many Cultures* had been cited as an example of best practice.

AH questioned whether there was a contradiction in the recommendations in terms of asking for funds in Scotland to mirror funds available in England, while also arguing that money may need to be used in a different way in the Scottish context. He also pointed out that it was questionable to state that ‘British’ identity did not have resonance for many Scottish people.

VT stated that Scotland’s work on community cohesion was further advanced than the paper perhaps suggested, and that Scotland was ahead of England and Wales. She said that significant money was available to support this area of work and the reaction to the attack at Glasgow airport was testament to what community cohesion work had achieved in Scotland.

LI provided an overview of the work in Scotland under different banners, which could be equated with community cohesion work whilst stating there was still a need for further work in the area. LI advised the group that a report on citizenship produced by Lord Bolton was also about to become available.

JD said that integration work should not be equated with anti-terrorist work. Different groups have different needs in terms of integration and Polish migrants, for example do not pose a terrorist threat.

SD agreed that it was important to recognise what ‘community cohesion’ work had already been done in Scotland – SRIF, Scottish Executive’s partnership working and the police’s work in relation particularly to community safety. She said that the equalities, social justice and citizenship agendas need to be taken into consideration, and that taken in conjunction with each other they function as a community cohesion strategy. SD questioned the need for another label. She also said that the ABNI Scotland board had decided that while a focus on British citizenship may be divisive in Scotland, a focus on citizenship and how citizens contribute to communities was more useful.

Action: MG to consider members comments in a redrafted version of the paper.

Item 8: ATLAS Research

MG presented an overview of recent research conducted into the funding of services for asylum seekers and refugees. The research focused on Home Office, SRIF, ATLAS and Integration funding, and considered the implications of some of these funds closing. This was commissioned by the ATLAS Partnership and COSLA, Scottish Refugee Council and Scottish Executive sat on the steering group. MG asked members to note the research and advised the report would be available in around one month. She also asked members to consider the following implications of the research:

1. Allocation of funds needs to be more strategic. The research acknowledged that allocation had been increasingly strategic over the life of some of the funds. Case review and NAM should shift funding priorities to work in different ways/provide different services.
2. A move to more integrated services would be beneficial, and may help partners access more resources.

Item 9: Information Sources

MG drew members attention to the paper on information sources (appended). While information sources for asylum seekers are now of a very high quality more information is needed on migrant workers and refugees in order to effectively plan services. MG asked for endorsement to continue to work to access better sources.

MW suggested the schools census conducted by the Scottish Executive may be a useful source of information on refugees.

SD pointed out that the need for data had to be balanced with various sensitivities around asking people about their status. This is particularly important in the context of restricted rights and entitlements.

Item 10: Next meeting

The next meeting of the SSCG will be held on 28 November at a venue to be confirmed in Glasgow.

Future meetings will be held on a rotating basis in Glasgow or Edinburgh:

28 November

28 February

21 May