

**North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership - Executive**

**8 January 2009**

**Strategic review of the impact of inward migration from the EU  
Accession States into North Yorkshire**

**1 Purpose of report**

- 1.1 The report summarises progress of the review to date and next steps.

**2 Background**

- 2.1 A report covering the purpose of the strategic review and progress to that point was presented to the NYSP Executive on 26 June 2008. In summary, the review aims to provide an overview of the impact of inward migration by European Accession State migrant workers (A8) – both on local communities and services and on the workers themselves.
- 2.2 The review was progressed through Action Learning Sets (ALS) over the period January to November 2008. The ALS included representatives from a wide range of statutory, private and third sector organisations.
- 2.3 The strategic review report was completed and circulated for comment at the end of August 2008, a copy was also placed on the NYSP Website. Widespread consultation was held up to 31 October 2008, including members of the ALS making presentations to groups of migrant workers and local and county-wide bodies. Feedback was very positive, providing evidence of the effectiveness of the ALS approach.

**3 Key messages from feedback**

- 3.1 There was support for the four strategic priorities, to:
- Develop effective, accurate and accessible intelligence on the experience of inward migration and its impact in North Yorkshire.
  - Improve access to services for migrants into North Yorkshire as well as develop the capacity and resilience of services to cope with the pressures created by inward migration.
  - Improve access to relevant information and appropriate support to migrant communities in North Yorkshire to overcome some of their potential difficulties living and working in North Yorkshire.
  - Undertake effective action that helps to promote understanding, encourage harmonious relationships and better integration of all sections of communities across North Yorkshire.

- 3.2 Consultation confirmed that the seven themes identified in the review were those most relevant to both service providers and migrant workers:
- Community safety
  - Education and training
  - Employment
  - Housing and accommodation
  - Health
  - Access to information and advice
  - Community cohesion
- 3.3 A key recommendation from the consultation was that our approach needs to be one which makes a strong case for the positive impact of inward migration:
- Employers are pleased with the work ethic of migrant workers and some would be hard pressed to recruit sufficient workers without them.
  - A8 workers who come to the UK make a positive contribution to their communities. As an example, schools are reporting high levels of engagement of migrant worker parents and good attitudes to learning by their children.
  - Levels of criminality recorded by the police are lower for migrant workers than the indigenous population (which is already low by national standards).
- 3.4 There are however some issues to address, which were confirmed through the consultation events held with migrant workers.
- 3.5 Some migrant workers have been made to feel unwelcome with cases of racial abuse, nuisance neighbours, and people not welcomed in shops, pubs etc.
- 3.6 Communication can be a problem in accessing a wide range of public services.
- 3.7 Adult Learning classes are greatly appreciated but there are frequently problems accessing them:
- Some English competency is required before learners can enrol on courses such as ESOL.
  - Costs are an issue.
  - Class timings and finding time to attend can be difficult to find.
  - Physical access to those living and working in remote rural areas is a problem.
- 3.8 There have been some poor practices by some employers in regard to:
- Health and safety in the workplace.
  - Lack of employment contracts, or failure to comply with them.

- Tied accommodation, sometimes of poor quality with high charges.
- 3.9 Many housing and accommodation issues were raised:
- There is a shortage of affordable accommodation; this is most marked for families.
  - There are difficulties providing references.
  - Housing bonds can be difficult to raise and there have been cases of landlords failing to return these at the end of tenancies.
  - Getting mortgages and insurance is often problematic.
  - The quality of accommodation often fails to reach decency standards.
  - There is a perception that landlords charge migrant workers more than other tenants.
- 3.10 Access to health care can be problematic:
- Some migrant workers have had problems registering with GPs.
  - They are more likely to use Hospital A&E as a result of not accessing GP care.
  - Information about health care services and entitlements isn't seen as easily available.
  - Accessing dental care is difficult.
- 3.11 In addition we know that many East European women are not inoculated against common UK diseases (eg rubella). There is also a higher incidence of TB and some evidence nationally that levels of mental illness in men may be higher.

#### **4 Work in progress**

- 4.1 The ALS was mindful of the need to operationalise its work wherever possible, as soon as possible, in particular where national guidance has been issued:

##### *North Yorkshire Welcome Pack*

- 4.2 A Welcome Pack has been developed and launched on the NYSP Website<sup>1</sup>. This provides a wide range of information for all new arrivals. Consultation feedback has told us that people who have been here for a long time have also found the information useful.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.nysp.org.uk/welcomepack](http://www.nysp.org.uk/welcomepack)

- 4.3 The Welcome Pack has two sections:
- National information, for example on driving requirements and a wide range of civil matters (including marriage, school attendance etc). This is available in 20 languages.
  - Local information, including public and third sector services. This is available in the four most commonly spoken East European languages in North Yorkshire (Polish, Czech, Lithuanian and Latvian). Further languages can be provided if there is a proven need (and funding available).
- 4.4 Electronic versions of the Welcome Pack are located on the NYSP Website and partners are being encouraged to provide a link from their websites and to print out the relevant parts of the Welcome Pack as and when required. Updates are coordinated by NYCC on a monthly basis with national information being supplied by Interskills and local information by partners, generally via LSPs. The cost of the Welcome Pack is minimal and shared between partners.
- 4.5 Information about services and entitlements is an important issue for many migrant workers. The Welcome Pack goes some way towards resolving this but we will have to ensure that our services are welcoming when they are contacted. Evidence nationally tells us that it only takes one unhelpful response from a service provider to put people off using the Welcome Pack again.

*BME and Migrant Worker accommodation needs review*

- 4.6 Housing and accommodation was identified as a significant issue at an early stage. The Chief Housing Officers Group has established a steering group to commission a research project to establish needs, trends and make recommendations on BME and migrant worker accommodation needs.
- 4.7 Salford University has been commissioned to carry out this work, which has now commenced. The aim is to reach 800 individuals throughout the county (including City of York) and to hold focus groups of both new and settled migrants. The report will be available in spring 2009 and actions required will be incorporated into the Action Plan.

**5 Next steps**

- 5.1 The Strategic Review document is being revised to take account of consultation feedback and include an annexe detailing the feedback provided and consultation events held. This will be publicised and placed on the NYSP Website.
- 5.2 A detailed Action Plan will be completed by early spring 2009. This work is being taken forward by a small group of officers serviced by NYCC. The NYSP Equalities Task group will monitor this work and the effectiveness of the plan.

- 5.3 Specific actions will be detailed in the action plan, covering the seven themes listed in 3.2 and addressing the strategic priorities of 3.1.

**6 Recommendation**

- 6.1 The NYSP Executive is asked to consider the report.

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