

MAYOR OF LONDON

Minutes of the London Strategic Migration Partnership

2–4pm

18 November 2015

City Hall, CR2

Present

MM	Munira Mirza	Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture (Chair)
NG	Nicholas Garrott	Special Economic Assistant to the Chief Economic Advisor
MWe	Mike Wells	UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)
MB	CLlr Muhammed Butt	London Councils
RC	Rita Chadha	MRAP

In attendance

AMP	Anne-Marie Pickup	DCLG
DS	Diana Sutton	Bell Foundation
JP	Jenny Phillimore	Institute of Superdiversity
LJ	Lucy Jones	Doctors of the World
MW	Maurice Wren	Refugee Council
NN	Nev Nolan	Home Office
PC	Philip Clifford	London Councils
DSt	Dave Stringer	MPS
MK	Dr Marilena Korkodilos	PHE
SGr	Saira Grant	The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI)
SK	Sunder Katwala	British Future
AS	Alex Stevenson	NIACE
SM	Sarah Mulley	GLA
SG	Shanthi Gunsekera	GLA
AM	Amna Mahmoud	GLA

Apologies

MH	Mulat Haregot	MRAP
MJ	Matthew Jaffa	Federation of Small Businesses

1. Welcome and Introduction

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and explained the focus on integration:

1.1 The meeting objective was: to bring the strategic migration challenges and issues affecting integration in London to the attention of the LSMP and consider the impact of the immigration Bill on integration.

1.2 Our thoughts are with everyone affected by the terrible events in Paris this weekend. The events highlight the importance of building cohesive communities in London, in the context of wider strategies to prevent radicalisation.

MAYOR OF LONDON

1.3 Members introduced themselves.

2. Resettlement of Syrian Refugees

The Chair updated members on the Government's announcements to resettle 20,000 of the most vulnerable refugees fleeing war and persecution in Syria, and London's role.

2.1 The GLA has been working closely with London boroughs, London Councils, the LGA and Government on London's response.

2.2 The Mayor has written to the Minister twice to request details of the scheme and how it will work in London, including funding, ahead of the Spending Review to enable as many London boroughs as possible to make an informed and sustainable offer before Christmas.

2.3 The Mayor will host a meeting with borough leaders to discuss London's response following the Spending Review when details of the funding package are expected to be announced.

2.4 The GLA will convene an information session with London borough officers next week.

2.5 The GLA has convened an additional meeting with the Migrant and Refugee Advisory Panel to hear from the third sector their views on London's response.

2.6 MWe/AMP informed members that the Government has established a cross-departmental team involving the Home Office, DCLG and DFID.

2.7 The first group of refugees has arrived in the UK and the Home Office is on track to resettle 1,000 refugees before Christmas.

2.8 It was suggested that the Mayor re-emphasises London's unity and its continued commitment to welcome refugees.

3. Local Challenges and Approaches

CLlr Muhammed Butt and Philip Clifford presented London Councils' views on local approaches to integration:

3.1 London Councils highlighted ongoing work to support integration as part of boroughs' 'business as usual' activities in communities, but also emphasised that some specific challenges exist.

3.2 Measuring integration continues to be a particular challenge for boroughs, given the high rate of population change in some areas. There are a range of indicators of integration that could be considered to measure change, highlight challenges and guide policy.

3.3 Boroughs would welcome the opportunity to share best practice on integration.

Action 1: GLA to convene a working group to look at how to measure integration in London.

Action 2: GLA to consider how to facilitate sharing of best practice on integration, initially through conversations around Syrian resettlement.

4. English Language and Integration

The Chair informed members that;

4.1 The Mayor has written to the Chancellor requesting that greater powers and funding over skills are devolved, as part of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review, in order to meet present and future skills demands. In particular he requested that adult skills including ESOL in London be protected.

MAYOR OF LONDON

- 4.2 New European funding (the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund), and the upcoming DCLG Cohesive Communities programme may offer opportunities for the LSMP to develop further programmes focused on English language learning as an enabler for integration in London.
- 4.3 Members made the following key points:
- 4.3.1 The ESOL conversation in London should take place alongside a wider debate about London's multilingual assets, and needs to be based on a clear understanding of how London's ESOL needs will change over time as migrant populations change.
 - 4.3.2 ESOL planning and delivery needs a joined up approach across sectors that considers ESOL in the context of people's wider learning needs (e.g. literacy and numeracy) and circumstances (e.g. childcare, health and social care provision, social and digital inclusion, citizenship and civil participation).
 - 4.3.3 In light of the range of needs in London, members agreed on the importance of a flexible provision in diverse settings (e.g. schools, employment, housing, community-based and apprenticeship programmes).
 - 4.3.4 The vital role of the voluntary and community sector in delivering and supporting ESOL learning was acknowledged.
 - 4.3.5 Resources are constrained - incentives for providers, partnerships and evaluation were cited as essential to ensure quality and sustainability, and wider funding sources should be considered.
 - 4.3.6 Demands for ESOL learning also need to take account of the Immigration Bill's language requirement for public sector workers.

Action 3: GLA to convene a working group to assess ESOL needs in London against current provision and resources, explore innovative new approaches, which will then make recommendations about where resources should now be focused.

5. Immigration Enforcement and Integration

Nev Nolan introduced key enforcement priorities and the Government's approach to implementing the Immigration Act (2014) and the current Bill while minimising unintended consequences for integration in London:

- 5.1 NN emphasised their intention to engage with communities, working with the MPS and through engagement with community safety partnerships.
- 5.2 Home Office intends to focus on voluntary departure.
- 5.3 NN assured members that all operations include community impact assessments.
- 5.4 An MRAP representative suggested that:
 - 5.4.1 Immigration enforcement activities should not be tied with the concept of integration
 - 5.4.2 A Home Office community engagement strategy that provides a clear accountability is needed at both national and local level.
 - 5.4.3 The level of community confidence in the police needs to be re-assessed and MOPAC should consider monitoring and evaluating the impact of the implementation of enforcement activities.
 - 5.4.4 A concern was raised that the changes to the voluntary return scheme, which will be delivered by the Home Office rather than by the Third sector, will risk the level of trust built within communities of the scheme over the years.
- 5.5 Rita Chadha tabled a paper setting out local integration challenges from community perspective and requested that the HO/MPS/MOPAC respond to the paper in writing.
- 5.6 A concern was raised that the 28 days transition period for newly-granted refugees continues to create multiple challenges for refugees and their communities. Organisations

MAYOR OF LONDON

have evidence that this policy leads to increased homelessness and destitution among this group.

- 5.7 It was also highlighted that newly-granted refugees may not receive the relevant documentation which is vital for accessing services, putting them at risk of not receiving services they are entitled to.

Action 4: The Home Office to provide an update on the Biometric Residence Permits (BRP).

Action 5: The Home Office will take back the suggestion of developing a community engagement strategy back, and report back to the group.

Action 6: HO/MPS/MOPAC to respond to RAMFEL's paper in writing.

- 5.8 Lucy Jones tabled a paper from the Doctors of the World raising a concern that the changes to health charges may result in unintended increases in health inequalities if those who are unable to prove entitlement are wrongly refused access to health services, or if, vulnerable people are deterred from accessing care.

- 5.9 The paper suggested that the LSMP to mitigate the impact on individuals, their communities and the public health in general.

Action 7: Officers to follow up the recommendations on the changes to health charges with the DoW and feedback to the LSMP.

- 5.10 Saira Grant introduced JCWI's 'alternative evaluation' research on Right To Rent (RTR) measures:

5.10.1 SG commented that the size of the data collected by both the Home Office and community to evaluate the scheme is relatively small. However, both evaluations highlighted the possible impact of unintended discrimination among those who are entitled to services.

5.10.2 Members highlighted that the information and guidance are aimed at landlords only and that there is no guidance for tenants who may face discrimination. It was suggested that the Home Office needs to work with communities and local authorities to ensure that the information and guidance are understood by all parties involved.

6. Minutes of 24 September were approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting.