

Thames Valley Strategic Migration Group Terms of Reference

Introduction

The South East hosts the largest number of migrants outside of London (12% of the national total). Migrants here represent a large and diverse population; the size and nature being influenced by economic and geopolitical events.

In order to fully understand migration and the impact, the region this partnership has been broken down into four 'bite-sized' sub regions of which Thames Valley is one with the others being Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sussex and Surrey and Kent.

The South East Strategic Partnership for Migration (SESPM) is grant funded by the Home Office to provide a strategic leadership, advisory and coordination functions for migration in the South East. The core areas of work include the accommodation and support arrangements for asylum seekers and refugees, coordinating the South East regions participation in the refugee Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programmes, coordinating the National Transfer Scheme for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and identifying and addressing regional migration priorities.

Purpose

Bringing together a multi-agency forum for strategic and senior operational professionals in the area to consider and respond to key migration issues at the local level.

Communication: sub –regional Strategic Migration groups (SMGs) provide a two way communication vehicle to connect central policy and decision making with the experience and impact of migration at the local level.

Influence and Inform: sub-regional SMGs will identify key impacts, challenges, benefits and best practice relating to migration to influence and inform national and local migration policy and decision making including for example housing, health, education, employment, integration and community safety and to identify areas for policy and service development.

Terms of Reference

- To facilitate multi-agency 'good practice' sharing events/agenda items
- To develop and sustain a strategic overview, by analysing the impact of migration in service provision and community cohesion.
- To promote best practice across agencies working with migrant communities, by sharing knowledge and experience.
- To seek to capture the lived experience of migrants living in the region.
- To develop initiatives and projects that maximise the social and economic benefits of migration.
- To promote objective reflection of the cultural and economic impact of migration to the area.

- To contribute to local, regional and national fora, and consultations, as appropriate.
- To provide a representative to the SESPM Executive Board.

Frequency of Meetings

- Four times per year

Chair

The chair is decided annually. For 2021-22 it is Jeremy Beake, Milton Keynes Council. This arrangement may change by consent of the partners of this Sub Regional Strategic Migration Group. The group will nominate a vice chair.

Conduct

Meetings will take place in a spirit of mutual respect encouraging participation and constructive debate, dialogue and deliberation. Minutes of the meeting will be prepared and circulated to invitees.

Membership

The South East Strategic Partnership for Migration facilitates the Sub Regional Strategic Migration Groups. Their membership and direction is locally owned.

Local authorities:

The six Berkshire Unitary authorities; Oxfordshire County Council and the five District and Borough authorities therein; Buckinghamshire County Council and the four District and Borough authorities therein; and Milton Keynes Unitary authority.

In particular:

- Children and Families Service
- Adult Services
- Education
- No Recourse to Public Funds
- Housing
- Community Safety and Safeguarding
- Regulatory Services
- Policy

Home Office and other Government Departments:

- Immigration Compliance and Enforcement
- Refugees, Asylum, Safeguarding and Integration
- Interventions and Sanctions
- Border Force
- Ministry of Communities and Local Government
- Department for International Development
- Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority
- Police
- British Transport Police
- Department for Work and Pensions

Health including:

- Public Health
- NHS

- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Ambulance Service
- Health Watch
- Specialist in the field of migration and health

Fire and Rescue Service

Relevant third sector, NGOs, community groups organisations Current members include:

- Asylum Welcome
- Slough Refugee support
- Reading Refugee Support
- Oxford Asylum welcome
- British Red Cross
- City of Sanctuary
- Migrant Help
- The Passage
- Sanctuary Hosting
- Churches Together

Other appropriately registered third sector, NGOs and community groups will be considered subject to having relevant published aims and objectives and a clear governance structure.

The regional contracted Asylum Dispersal Accommodation provider; currently Clearsprings Ready Homes and the AIRE provider, Migrant Help.

Academics and researchers in the migration field