

NRPF Network
ADSS Asylum Taskforce NRPF Sub-group
Tuesday 8 May 2007 - 12 noon- 3pm
Islington Council Town Hall

Minutes

Present

Colin Elliot, Principal Manager, Asylum Seekers and Refugees, Manchester City Council (Chair)
Olvia Fellas, NRPF Team Manager, LB Islington
Frances Smith, NRPF Project Worker, Islington Council (minutes)
Bill Davies, Team Manager, MAST Statutory, Manchester City Council
Ted Brown, Principal Care Manager, Bradford MBC
Becky Lyons, Commissioning Manager, Disability, Newcastle City Council
Paul Mavin, Team Manager, Intermediate Care Services (PSI and SGH Social Work), Southend on Sea
Peter Olnier, Strategic Manager for Asylum and Persons from Abroad,
Duncan Hunt, Manager, South of England Strategic Partnership for Migration (substituting for Mary Blanche)
Mark Rapley, Corporate Consultant, LB Lambeth
Paulina Acha, Team Manager, Children & Family Services, LB Lambeth

Apologies

Mary Blanche, Senior Policy Manager – Asylum and Migration, Kent CC
Pip Tyler, Team Manager, National Consortia Support Team
Adrian Smith, Head of Asylum and Refugee Service, Islington Council (Chair)
Emma Jenkins, Policy Adviser, Local Government Association (LGA)
Lorraine Ayensu Team Manager, Bristol Asylum Support and Refugee Integration Team
Cynthia Winnifred, London Borough of Lambeth

	Item	Action
1.	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u>	
2.	<u>Minutes and matters arising</u> Minutes agreed. Legal advice requested on support for former UASCs.	

<p>3.</p>	<p><u>Progress Report</u></p> <p>The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT) and Joint Commission on Human Rights recently published reports. As detailed in April's Briefing these made recommendations on the subject of refused destitute asylum seekers.</p> <p>Peter Hay, Co-Chair of the ADSS Asylum Taskforce met with Lin Homer, CEO of the Border and Immigration Agency (BIA) at the end of March 2007. Ms Homer has indicated her interest in the NRPF and a willingness to pursue the issue. She is currently visiting BIA staff around the UK. CE suggested that LA staff may want to use this opportunity to meet with her.</p> <p>The NRPF working group meeting with Paul Darling, BIA Finance, is to be arranged. The meeting will include Emma Jenkins and Adrian Smith.</p> <p>Adrian Smith is due to provide evidence to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion in the near future. CE suggested that he and other steering group members would provide information for this should it be needed.</p> <p>NRPF was raised at the ADSS Spring Seminar.</p> <p>BD and others indicated they found the monthly Briefings useful. FS to provide links for other sources of information.</p>	<p>FS</p>
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4.	<p><u>Reports from the Regions</u></p> <p>Yorkshire and Humberside TB is working with Vicky Williams of Yorkshire and Humberside Consortium/ National Consortium Co-ordinating Group (NCCG) to resurrect the regional NRPF meeting. It may be launched with a regional conference.</p> <p>North East There is still no appetite for a regional meeting. NRPF is mainly an issue for Newcastle City Council.</p> <p>Lambeth NRPF is very high on Lambeth's agenda and it is pursuing a number of legal cases. The cost to the authority is high. It has recently begun to invite the Home Office to be a party in its legal challenges. It has started to deal with cases involving Treaty rights. It had a recent success in the case of <i>Blackburn-Smith</i>, is appealing the judgement in <i>N v Lambeth</i> Neutral Citation Number: [2006] EWHC 3427 (Admin), has had its first Accession State challenge and is defending a case involving someone who is HIV asymptomatic. It has faced domestic violence cases where people have presented in Lambeth as opposed to other European States.</p> <p>Southend-on-Sea Having had a tailing off of cases, the number of people presenting has risen in recent weeks. PM indicated that he would be interested in pursuing the issue of a regional NRPF group. FS to provide relevant contacts.</p> <p>South of England DH indicated that there is increasing interest in NRPF, & there have been two regional meetings which OF attended. There is a need for further engagement to ensure LAs understand their duties.</p> <p>North West Following an initial meeting with LAs in Greater Manchester, there has now been a meeting of LAs across the North West on NRPF. There are varying levels of awareness of the issue, & some LAs are not monitoring their expenditure separately. Like in other regions, LAs are waking up to the NRPF issue, which poses a bigger problem than many thought, with higher number of cases and budgetary implications. Political will is needed to address the issue.</p>	FS
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	<p>West Midlands</p> <p>The West Midlands has had its third meeting. It is a cohesive group & reports to the regional strategic partnership for asylum & refugee support as well as the NRPF Steering group. Its work includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A planned meeting with health practitioners • Facilitating late special representation bids for some LAs • A meeting with the Deputy Manager for the BIA in the region, who has agreed to take up issues around the quality of section 4 decision making as detailed in <i>Failing the Failed</i> (ASAP 2007) • Circulating recent Zimbabwe & Darfur cases, & a briefing template for councillors & MPs • Developing a costs template. <p>PO noted the new BIA region is far larger than the West Midlands, incorporating the East Midlands and East of England. The other two regions do not yet have an NRPF group, though they do have representation on the steering group.</p> <p>It was agreed that a web page should be developed providing details of regional NRPF groups on the Network web pages.</p>	<p>FS/OF</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>Liaison with Borders and Immigration Agency</u></p> <p>CE confirmed the HO Taskforce is due to go to Manchester in June/July 2007.</p> <p>The need for the Network to take on a national co-ordinating role was emphasised with the regionalisation of the BIA & because the Taskforce was moving around the country.</p> <p>In terms of additional issues that need to be raised with the HO, MR suggested the problem with “NASS” breaching its own charter should be raised e.g. in the implementation and information provided around section 4 (web information indicates that you need to agree to return in order to receive this, and on Article 3 claims. Other examples were provided: NASS refusing support because LAs were supporting.</p> <p>A further issue to be raised is the issue of legacy cases & implications for NRPF(NB Lin Homer has had discussions in Scotland about this).</p>	

<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Collection of Costs Information</u></p> <p>It was agreed that a clear summary of costs was needed for the Home Office, and that LAs would need to collect more detailed information to evidence any reimbursement claim.</p> <p>OF will re-circulate the simpler original template for steering group members to complete with end of year costs (06/07). OF to re-circulate more detailed proforma adding columns for nationality and HO reference, suggesting that LAs might want to use this to collect data. In addition, AS to establish in what format the HO might want costs information, and this can be used to review the more detailed proforma.</p>	<p>OF/all LA steering group members/AS</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>NRPF Network & Red Cross Conference</u></p> <p>OF confirmed the conference would be held on 4 July 2007 at the London Voluntary Resource Centre on Holloway Road, and that attendance was by invitation only.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>Policy Guidance</u></p> <p>Steering group members to send in comments on DV guidance by end of May 2007. Comments to be incorporated & guidance to be posted on the web pages on an interim basis, & revised guidance to be tabled at next NRPF steering group meeting for sign off. It was noted that in Yorkshire & Humberside region there is an agreement that the authority from where DV cases originate will finance support in another LA area for 13 weeks whilst an assessment is undertaken.</p> <p>Draft guidance on subsistence rates to be circulated before next steering group meeting. Most LAs indicated they were paying NASS rates.</p> <p>It was agreed that additional guidance on NRPF for children and family cases should be drafted for consideration at next steering group meeting. MR can provide relevant Lambeth policies.</p>	<p>All/OF</p> <p>OF</p> <p>OF</p>

9.	<u>AOB</u> Islington is drafting a monitoring report for the HO on the work of the Network and plans to share this with steering group meetings. It is FS's last NRPF steering group meeting. Any queries should go to OF until arrangements for a replacement Project Worker are confirmed.	
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Dates of future Meetings

The next two meetings will be held on

- Tuesday 10 July 2007, 12 – 3pm (venue tbc)
- Tuesday 4 September 2007, 12 – 3pm (venue tbc)