



**NRPF Network Steering Group
10th November 2008
Islington Town Hall, London**

Present:

Olvia Fellas – LB Islington (Chair)
Jonathan Price – LB Islington (Minutes)
Janice Grant – Kent CC
Peter Olnier – Birmingham CC
Ted Brown – Bradford CC
Carey Baff – Birmingham CC
Ian Beattie - LGA

Apologies:

Bill Davies – Manchester CC
Mark Rapley – LB Lambeth

Notes	Action points
<p>1. Introductions and Apologies Bill Davies and Mark Rapley sent their apologies.</p>	
<p>2. Minutes and Matters Arising Domestic violence update – Oliver Mills presented the Home Office proposals to the Directors of the ADASS/ADCS. The directors did not support the proposals on the basis that local authorities should not perform a gatekeeping role in cases where victims of domestic violence are applying for ILR under the domestic violence rule. Bradford is willing to take part in a pilot scheme and the Interpersonal Violence Unit (IVU) may contact them. Ted said that it was important to get a foot in the door and to get some money coming in. The proposals are not hugely different from what they already do. COSLA suggested that UKBA caseworkers in each region take on the responsibility of administering applications. There are ethical and legal concerns regarding social workers 'checking' applications as they will become too involved in cases and may be acting unlawfully by giving immigration advice without being OISC registered. Olvia said that although it is a positive step, a mechanism needs to be found to make it work in practice. Janice and Jonathan will attend a meeting with the IVU on Friday 14th November to discuss the proposals.</p>	
<p>3. Communications Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback on Leeds conference <p>Feedback on the conference from participants was positive. 78% of participants said the conference had met their expectations and a further 16% said the</p>	

conference had partly met their expectations. It was felt that the conference had teased out the issues very well.

Ted thought that the region had not been sufficiently involved in the organisation of the conference.

• Consultations – Joint Committee on Human Rights
Jonathan submitted a response to the JCHR enquiry into the draft (partial) Immigration and Citizenship Bill. This will be circulated to the Steering Group. The submission focuses on the impact the Bill may have on local authorities in regards to their duties under the Human Rights Act.

• Home Affairs Committee oral evidence
Jonathan is due to give evidence to the Home Affairs Committee on Tuesday 18th November on the draft (partial) Immigration and Citizenship Bill. He will feed back to the Steering Group following the event.

• Strategic plan and steering group survey
Jonathan has designed a Steering Group survey to capture the views of Steering Group members and to explore key priorities for the Network in the forthcoming year. This will form part of our funding bid to the UKBA. The survey is anonymous. Jonathan will send out the link to the survey and give a deadline for responses.

• Children and Families Practice Guidance
Jonathan has completed the guidance after incorporating the Steering Group’s comments. It has been sent to Islington’s legal department to check the content of the guidance from a legal perspective. The guidance should be ready for publishing within a few weeks.

Carey listed some amendments that should be made to the guidance. Jonathan said that some amendments, such as definitions of ordinary residence, could be made to the general guidance when work to update this takes place. Additional changes to the Children and Families Guidance will have to be done with Islington’s legal team.

JP to circulate

JP to feedback

JP to send out

4. Topics of future conferences with British Red Cross

Jonathan said that we have reached half way in the series of six conferences being held with the Red Cross, and it would be useful to re-evaluate whether the topics for the remaining conferences are still pertinent. Steering Group members were asked to list the key issues affecting local authorities.

Ted highlighted A8 and A2 migrants, leaving care services and access to healthcare, the latter with the lowest priority.

Janice highlighted access to healthcare and leaving care services. She said that Kent would be happy to host a conference and provide a venue.

Peter highlighted Health and Carey said that Roma from A2 countries was a priority topic.

Ian stressed that it would be worthwhile waiting until the situation is resolved in regards to leaving care before this issue is tackled in a conference.

<p>On the whole, it was felt that the key issues hadn't changed. They are A8/A2 migrants, leaving care arrangements and access to healthcare. These will be taken forward when Jonathan and Olivia meet the Red Cross to plan the remaining conferences.</p>	
<p>5. Impact of Slough Ruling Peter said that the Slough ruling was having a major impact on their clients because most cases will be found not to be eligible after review. They are doing some work with the Case Resolution Directorate to seek to resolve cases. They have also identified some community safety and public health issues from the impact of the ruling. They have taken a report to the cabinet to explore options to provide transitional support on terminating services.</p> <p>Janice said that they had sent letters to their clients informing them that they will be reviewed under the new ruling.</p> <p>Ian said that the National AIDS Trust and Terrence Higgins Trust have raised concerns with the LGA over the impact of the ruling.</p> <p>Olivia said that the Network's practice guidance would be updated in light of the ruling. Ian said that it was important in the guidance to highlight that local authorities should liaise with the UKBA to ensure that, if individuals were no longer eligible to support after review, the transition to UKBA support was well co-ordinated to avoid any unnecessary disruption to the individuals concerned.</p>	
<p>6. Steering Group ToR and new members Jonathan to circulate draft terms of reference for Steering Group and move discussion to the next meeting.</p>	<p>JP to circulate</p>
<p>7. Regional Meeting Minutes Ted wanted to clarify positions in regards to uploading regional meeting minutes to the NRPF Network webpages.</p> <p>Jonathan said that the London Network had agreed that the minutes would be uploaded to the webpages and that the steering group minutes also get uploaded to the website.</p> <p>Peter said that he would take the proposal to the regional network in the West Midlands and report back on whether their minutes would be uploaded. Ted agreed to do the same.</p>	<p>PO and TB to report back</p>
<p>8. Regional Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Midlands Carey has drafted protocols on children and families regarding ordinary residence. The West Midlands Regional Network have held a regional training event, there was discussion in the Network meeting around the Slough and Leeds judgements, a voluntary sector representative gave an update in their meeting, and they are working to act on the recommendations of a report written on infant mortality in the region. • South East Janice said that there was no Network in the region, however there have been discussions with a regional migration group about incorporating NRPF issues into their existing structure. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yorkshire and Humberside The Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Network continue to meet regularly, with a focus on service delivery. Leeds City Council is considering setting up an NRPF team. The Network are trying to engage the Regional Strategic Migration Partnership and hope they will participate in the Network. • London The London Network have been successful in engaging with the Greater London Authority, who host the Strategic Migration Partnership for the city. They will be attending future meetings. The London meetings are getting very good turn out, with 20-30 per meeting and most London authorities represented. 	
<p>9. AOB Carey highlighted the need to communicate with UKBA over access to and provision of Section 4 support. Ian said that this was an issue the LGA can take forward on behalf of the Network.</p>	<p>IB to take issue forward</p>