

Subject:	Progress Update on Implementation of International Migrant Needs Assessment Recommendations		
Date of Meeting:	11th March 2019		
Report of:	Executive Director	for	Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing
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Ward(s) affected:	(All Wards);		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 The report summarises the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the IMNA (International Migrants Needs Assessment) published in January 2018 as part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment programme. The IMNA was presented to this committee in January 2018. As well as endorsing the report and its recommendations, the Committee resolved to consider the findings of the report in its future work and also to receive an officer update on an annual basis on progress made in implementing the recommendations.
- 1.2 As the recommendations are expansive and involve many statutory and voluntary sector partners, the city's Equality and Inclusion Partnership (EQUIP) has oversight over the implementation of the IMNA recommendations and received a report on this subject in October 2018. However Brighton & Hove City Council is key to both the implementation of the recommendations and their co-ordination – hence the report to this committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee note the findings of this update report.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The definition of 'migrant' used within this piece of work is very broad. It is "Any person who lives temporarily or permanently in a country where they were not born". This includes refugees, asylum seekers and those who are forced to leave their countries, - as well as those who have chosen to move to the UK to study, work or join family members. The approach of those working on the IMNA and the multi-agency advisory group for the project was to be pragmatic and flexible, focusing on where vulnerability is greatest.

- 3.2 The IMNA promotes a better understanding of the widely diverse characteristics and needs of the populations in Brighton and Hove commonly referred to as BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) or BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic). In turn this inform the policy and service delivery decisions and designs of public and voluntary sector organisations.

Implementation of the Recommendations To Date

- 3.3 The themes and work streams contained within the IMNA recommendations are wide and diverse. Many of them focus on enabling *existing* projects and services to adapt in order to ensure that the needs of migrant residents – including those who are most marginalised– are included as services and projects are planned and delivered. In some cases, new pieces of work (such as training or information products) are recommended. The recommendations have been prioritised and are being progressed with many partners on a case by case basis by the CETS (Communities Equality and Third Sector) team within the council. Progress on each individual recommendation is summarised in appendix 1.
- 3.4 Existing forums and groups are providing opportunities for consultation and partnerships where needed. Brighton & Hove Refugee & Migrant Forum meets in Brighton Town Hall and has themed meetings on a quarterly basis. There is also a multi-agency group of local statutory and voluntary sector agencies working together to receive refugees on the government’s resettlement programme. These and groupings within the statutory and community and voluntary sector (notably the Sanctuary on Sea group) provide sounding boards for the ongoing work on the IMNA.
- 3.5 The Communities Equality and Third Sector Team represents the City Council on the South East Strategic Partnership for migration (SESPM) , a structure that enables regular discussion with other local authorities, the Home Office and other government bodies on issues related to migration to the UK and its impact on the South East. Brighton & Hove City Council chairs the Sussex and Surrey sub-group of this partnership and represents Sussex and Surrey at the Executive Board of SESPM. The local authority’s close involvement with this partnership enables relevant officers to learn about national and regional developments in this fast-moving field, which can in turn be fed into our work on migration through the implementation of the IMNA recommendations.
- 3.6 There is no specific budget attached to the implementation of the IMNA recommendations. However, the Communities Fund has awarded two linked Collaboration Fund grants this year which enable progress on a number of the recommendations. One of these grants has been awarded to a training project which responds to concerns that the knowledge and skills within the ‘refugee and migrant sector’ may not always be well integrated within the rest of the city’s services.
- 3.7 The second Collaboration Funding grant complements funding awarded to the city by the government’s Controlling Migration Fund (CMF). This funding has enabled the development of a two year project in the city called the Migrant and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Support Hub – or MESH. This will improve referral pathways and co-ordinate the provision of ESOL for local migrant residents and also provide casework and signposting support for

marginalised migrants who need help navigating their way into services. In line with the aims of the Controlling Migration Fund, the outcomes of the MESH will be evaluated to assess its benefits for both the migrant and 'host' populations of the city.

- 3.8 The Community Safety recommendations which relate explicitly to addressing hate crime directed against migrant residents have been prioritised during 2018 by the CETS team as part of our work to counter extremism including hate crime.
- 3.9 In 2016 Brighton & Hove was awarded 'City of Sanctuary' status and an active local City of Sanctuary Group, called Sanctuary on Sea (SOS), has continued to meet and champion the aims of the City of Sanctuary movement to create a culture of welcome here in Brighton and Hove. The SOS committee has a broad representation of expertise from both universities and a range of grassroots groups working with refugees and other Sanctuary Seekers'. The City Council CETS team has a co-opted place on the SOS management committee.
- 3.10 Having been a member of the steering group for the IMNA project, SOS now sees itself as a key civil society partner in supporting and advising on many of the recommendations, particularly the broader ones included in the section on 'community attributes, networks and integration'. However the SOS committee is clear that the organisation does not have resources to deliver services and its volunteer-led activities cannot replace change within the mainstream funded statutory and voluntary sector. One of the most successful aspects of the Sanctuary on Sea work is the creation of a Schools of Sanctuary programme which has led to four secondary schools and twelve primary schools in the city becoming Schools of Sanctuary. Recent additions to the programme are two of the city's nurseries – our first nursery schools of Sanctuary.

Priorities over the next twelve months

- 3.11 The last chapter of the IMNA concludes that there is a severe shortage of accredited immigration legal advice across Sussex. The final recommendation of the report is for an assessment of the need for local immigration advice once the implications of the BREXIT process for EU national residents become clear. The government has released details of the EU Settlement Scheme which requires applicants to apply online for Settled Status. Whilst the government's expectation is that most EU nationals will be able to navigate this system by themselves, a national funding pot has been made available for local community and voluntary sector groups to build their capacity to offer advice on Settled Status to more vulnerable groups who may not be aware of the process or may have difficulties completing it before the deadline of June 2021. At the time of writing we do not know whether there have been successful bids to this funding pot from organisations proposing to offer advice in the Sussex area. The lack of immigration advice for EU national residents has therefore been flagged up as a risk within the council's BREXIT planning and an exploration of how this situation can be remedied will be a priority over the coming months.
- 3.12 Gaps in the provision of appropriate mental health support for vulnerable migrants, especially those who are suffering the effects of traumatic experiences, are frequently raised by the community and voluntary sector when migrant wellbeing is under discussion. This has also emerged in the research recently

undertaken by Downslink YMCA's Right Here project into young refugees and asylum seekers. A recent community meeting convened at Jubilee Library during a visit to the city of Lords Dubs and Bassam explored the issue of mental health provision for young refugees and this now needs to be followed up with commissioners and service providers who attended that meeting and heard what the community and voluntary sector observe in their daily work. This will progress recommendation 30 of the IMNA (***Improve access to appropriate mental health services, in particular to meet the needs of refugees and other vulnerable migrants who may be suffering from trauma***)

- 3.13 The remaining health recommendations are largely related to the dissemination of information about migrant health entitlements for primary and secondary care to both migrants and to health professionals. All of these recommendations should be taken forward together over the next six months.
- 3.14 A migrant health conference is planned for 30th April 2019 in Brighton in partnership with Public Health England and the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration. The aim of the conference will be to raise awareness of specific health issues affecting migrants – including poor mental health for refugees – with a wide range of health professionals and the community and voluntary sector across the South East. Part of the conference will also address strategies for embedding this knowledge and good practice into the NHS.
- 3.15 As the ideas for the 'Unity Project', a public communications initiative being led by EQUIP (the Equalities and Inclusion Partnership) develop, this can provide a vehicle for individual migrants and their community groups to become involved with other diverse groups and interests in the city, addressing some of the broader recommendations about migrant integration into the life of the city. This will be aided by the inclusion of migrant community assets in the work going on at neighbourhood level,(including the development of Neighbourhood Action Plans) and also by including the findings and recommendations of the IMNA within the consultation on how the council will commission its support to the Third Sector between 2020 and 2023.
- 3.16 The methodology used in the 'community voice' strand of the evidence-gathering for the IMNA has attracted some attention, including from Public Health England who have used it as an example of good practice in their recently published Migrant Health Toolkit. One of the hopes of the IMNA team and steering group was for the goodwill, enthusiasm, and skills of local migrants generated through the project, to lead to the voice of migrants being incorporated into service design (IMNA recommendation 9). The CETS team will continue to promote this approach within the broader work on community engagement.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Not applicable in this report.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 A Steering Group including a number of community and voluntary sector groups guided the writing of the IMNA. As described in paragraph 3.4 above, the implementation of the recommendations is proceeding with the help of a number

of community and voluntary sector groups who are members of the council-chaired Refugee & Migrant Forum.

6. CONCLUSION

The recommendations of the IMNA are being progressed at different rates and not all have been implemented at the time of writing. However the priority recommendations to be taken forward are outlined above and in the attached action plan.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 This report is for noting and there are no direct financial implications arising. A summary of the funding linked to IMNA recommendations is set out in sections 3.5 and 3.6.

Finance Officer Consulted: Name Michael Bentley Date: 07/02/19

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report which is for noting. Any specific projects proposed in relation to the IMNA would require approval under the Council's Scheme of Delegations and legal and financial implications would need to be considered at that stage.

Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert Date: 18.02.19

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 The recommendations were written to reduce inequalities identified in the report between migrant and non-migrant residents of Brighton and Hove. The IMNA includes data on what the report writers could find out about migrant populations with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. There was no data on the intersectionality between migration history and sexual orientation or gender identity. As a result of this gap in our intelligence on this issue, Switchboard (local organisation representing the interests of the LGBTQ+ populations of the city) were commissioned by the City Council and the CCG to look in more detail at the particular challenges facing refugees and asylum seekers who are LGBTQ+.

Public Health Implications:

- 7.4 The recommendations are in line with the council's commitment to improve Public Health and Wellbeing and to Reduce Inequalities across the city. There is an increasing understanding of the health and wellbeing needs of migrants and Public Health England has recently released a toolkit citing the Brighton & Hove IMNA as an example of good practice.

