**Migration: Policy and Practice Steering Group minutes – 12th September 2019**

**@ Birmingham Settlement**

**Attendees:**

Sharon Palmer – SP (Independent Chair)

Andrew Hoole – AH (Project Senior Coordinator)

Andreea Rimniceanu (Polish Expats Association)

Dave Stamp – DS (ASIRT)

Emma Birks – EB (Asylum Matters)

Jeremy Thompson – JT (Restore)

Martin Holcombe – MH (Birmingham Settlement)

Niall Mann – NM (IMIX)

**Apologies Received:**

Michael Bates – MB (Central England Law Centre)

Alicja Kaczmarek (Polish Expats Association)

Ayesha Saran – AS (Barrow Cadbury Trust)

Chiara Viezzi – CV (Red Cross)

Lynn Evans – LE (ASIRT)

Sarah Cutler – SC (Paul Hamlyn Foundation)

1. **Welcome, introductions and apologies**

SP welcomed all members, to the meeting. Apologies received were noted.

1. **Minutes of 10th July Meeting**

Minutes for the meeting on the 10th July were checked and agreed as correct.

1. **Project Update**

AH provided a short update of his activity since the last meeting. A revised draft of the Project Delivery Strategy has been completed and will be circulated to members for any additional comments prior to final sign-off.

Meetings are ongoing with key sector stakeholders to continue building awareness and collaboration with the project. Support is also being provided to existing regional meetings, most significantly in this period the WM Funders and Migration Working Group and the City of Sanctuary Partnership Board.

WM Funders Network – AH is representing the Project on the Steering Group planning the next event which will be held in December and focused on health, housing and community safety.

AHwill also be producing a pre-event Briefing Document to be disseminated to all attendees alongside joining instructions prior to the event.

City of Sanctuary Partnership Board – Led by Birmingham City Council with the aim of producing a Strategic Assessment of the city as a welcoming and inclusive place for migrants. AH will be assisting in ensuring a voluntary sector input into the final document. A structure and potential data sources for the document will be agreed by January.

Discussion was held around the use of Google Groups as a useful method of information sharing and communication across the sector. The group agreed that this would provide an effective forum and could be administered by the project.

**ACTION – AH and NM to set up the proposed group and structure. Membership to be invited to use the system and provide feedback at next meeting.**

Work continues on compiling an asset register of all stakeholders, partners and organisations involved in the sector. SP and JT highlighted the directory being produced by Birmingham City Council and how the Register could complement it.

1. **Strategic Updates**
   1. Legal Provision

DS updated the group on work being conducted around assisting EU nationals to obtain settled status in the UK. FoI requests have been submitted to Birmingham City Council in order to ascertain how many individuals currently in care are EU nationals and what provisions are being made to provide support.

AR highlighted issues around EU nationals being able to obtain the required ID documents to process claims. Brushstrokes and SIFA Fireside are providing drop-in services to assist with this.

During discussions the following issues were raised:

* the lack of awareness of changes in the application process
* lack of understanding by the Home Office of specific cases.
* how best to publicise and advocate in this area. NM volunteered to provide media training and support to achieve this. MH stated that training could be hosted at Birmingham Settlement.

**ACTION – Meeting to be arranged to progress this. Dates for media training course to be forwarded to AH for rooms to be booked.**

DS has arranged a meeting with local councillors to discuss and progress the issue at a local level. AH asked to attend meeting to see if support can be provided from a coordination perspective.

* 1. Housing

JT highlighted ongoing issues with individuals experiencing severe delays in waiting to be collected and moved to Section 4 accommodation. This has also been reported by others including sector colleagues. The situation is being raised at other forums and can be monitored by the in case further work is required by the group

* 1. Hate Crime

Alicja Kaczmarek (Polish Expats Association) is working on a funded project looking at his issue and will update at the next meeting.

**ACTION AH to ensure this is on the agenda for the next meeting**

* 1. Health

The campaign against healthcare charging led by Migrants Organise and Docs not Cops is continuing in the region.

* 1. Funding

AH will be a panel member allocating the MiFriendly Cities Share my Language Small Grants scheme

1. **Partners Update**
   1. ASIRT

ASIRT and currently in the process of recruiting a OISC Level 1 Immigration Adviser

* 1. Asylum Matters

Support is continuing for the national Lift the Ban campaign as well as advocacy work around the new accommodation contracts. A national campaign against destitution is planned for next year.

* 1. Red Cross

An anti-trafficking officer has been recruited as part of the Renew Project, funded by Comic Relief. This is a one year project to support women victims or those at risk of trafficking and modern day slavery.

1. **Any other business**

Prompted by an email from MB, a considerable discussion took place around the proposed support from AH on behalf of the project to the Destitution Steering Group. Points raised included the need to agree a mission statement and aim for the meeting, as well as whether the monthly frequency of the meeting should become bi-monthly or every six weeks. Comments will be discussed further at the DSG meeting on the 16th September and the group will be updated on developments.

1. **Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held on the 12th November between 11:00 – 13:00, at Birmingham Settlement

Meeting closed