

DSP Delivery Board

1st June 2007

Agenda item: Migrant Workers in Devon

Recommendations:

The Delivery Board is asked to:

1. Welcome the work of the Task Group and recognise the importance of its initial report to establishing a response to issues relating to Migrant Workers in Devon. The particular contribution of the Community Council of Devon in co-ordinating this work should be acknowledged and thanks offered to partners across the voluntary, business and public sectors who have contributed to the work of the Task Group so far.
2. Recognise the importance of establishing clear and determined leadership for this cross cutting work, ensuring that it is included in the new SCS and LAA and that there is clarity about which of the DSP task groups should drive the work forward from here (through Economic Partnership or Stronger and Inclusive Communities?) . In this context leadership means both community leadership (through a member lead) and oversight of a work programme (through the identification of a Delivery Board champion). This will ensure that the Devon community receives clear messages about our approach to migrant labour and the importance of strong community relations.
3. Agree and support in principle the programme of work (detailed in the Project Plan within the report) including the early production of a Welcome Pack and Fact and Myth Buster Guide.
4. Further develop the partnership with national and regional agencies (with the support of SWERDA and GOSW) to provide better co-ordinated support and information. In particular, the need for accurate and up to date data, that is easy to access, from agencies such as JobCentre Plus, Inland Revenue, Department of Work and Pensions, Regional Development Agency, Government Office South West.
5. Consider roles of Devon PCT (using patient information from GP registrations) and Devon Observatory in gathering and providing information on the numbers of migrant workers and their language needs. Provide a steer on how to develop this area of work at the Devon level.
6. Consider how the Migrant Worker Task Group and work areas can or should be funded: at present there are no resources identified to facilitate or produce these pieces of work (which cut across all public services) beyond May 2007. Key work areas are listed below.

Key Work Areas for Consideration

- a. Facilitation and organisation of the Migrant Worker Task Group
- b. Consultation/involvement with migrant workers (funding consultation costs, development of a network, running information events)
- c. Printing of the Welcome Pack (sponsorship is being explored from private businesses who benefit from migrant working; support and recommendations are welcome)
- d. Further research and information gathering
- e. Safety inspections pilot
- f. Capacity building – faith and community sector to provide support at a grass-roots level
- g. Seeking further funding (capacity of staff)

Delivery of the Project Plan (Year 1) would cost approximately £100,000 and would be supplemented by considerable 'in kind' donations. Initial priority costs for the Delivery Board to consider are Task Group facilitation (£5,000); Welcome Pack production (£19,000), consultation and involvement of Migrant workers (£15,000).

Context / Background

The attached report was commissioned by Common Ground on behalf of the DSP to provide the Delivery Board with an initial assessment of issues relating to migrant working in Devon. It has been prepared by a Task Group convened by the Community Council for Devon (resourced by Devon County Council) and has involved a wide range of partners. There has been tremendous commitment to the work by all concerned and the opportunity to share perspectives has illustrated just how many organisations are concerned about and working on this issue. The report should be seen as work in progress.

The discussion in the report recognises that the increasing migrant workforce both offers a welcome boost to the economy and presents challenges to our communities.

It is important to develop a co-ordinated response to the issues raised in the report and consider how future work can be effectively resourced and prioritised appropriately in order to:

- a) Achieve proportionate and sustainable outcomes.
- b) Promote good community relations and meet public sector Race Equality Duties.
- c) Ensure that Devon's economy continues to benefit from migrant working.

The report has been prepared in the first few month of this year and highlights a number of issues which we the Task Force believe need to be acknowledged and acted upon by the Devon Strategic Partnership. It is designed to

- a) provide an initial baseline of data and information
- b) initiate some early responses through the proposed Welcome Pack and Fact and Myth Buster
- c) identify other actions that are required

This is a complex area of work but it is clear that some key challenges face us as a community most notably that migrant workers:

- a) Can make a positive contribution to the economy without fear of exploitation;
- b) Have access to effective and timely advice about housing, health, money and employment rights and responsibilities and the law;
- c) Are welcomed and integrated into Devon's communities and that good community relations are achieved.

See accompanying full report: Migrant Workers – Scoping the Issues for Devon April 2007

Submitted by David Rolls and Ian Hobbs on behalf of the Migrant Worker Task Group.