



House of Commons  
Communities and Local  
Government Committee

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# Community Cohesion and Migration

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**Tenth Report of Session 2007–08**

***Volume II***

*Oral and written evidence*

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## Communities and Local Government Committee

The Communities and Local Government Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department for Communities and Local Government and its associated bodies.

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Dr Phyllis Starkey MP (*Labour, Milton Keynes South West*) (Chair)

Sir Paul Beresford MP (*Conservative, Mole Valley*)

Mr Clive Betts MP (*Labour, Sheffield Attercliffe*)

John Cummings MP (*Labour, Easington*)

Jim Dobbin MP (*Labour Co-op, Heywood and Middleton*)

Andrew George MP (*Liberal Democrat, St Ives*)

Mr Greg Hands MP (*Conservative, Hammersmith and Fulham*)

Anne Main MP (*Conservative, St Albans*)

Mr Bill Oler MP (*Labour, Nuneaton*)

Dr John Pugh MP (*Liberal Democrat, Southport*)

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## Taken before the Communities and Local Government Committee on Wednesday 27 February 2008

Members present

Dr Phyllis Starkey, in the Chair

Sir Paul Beresford  
Mr Clive Betts  
John Cummings  
Jim Dobbin  
Andrew George

Mr Greg Hands  
Anne Main  
Mr Bill Olnier  
Dr John Pugh

*Witness:* **Mr Trevor Phillips**, Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, gave evidence.

**Q1 Chair:** Good to see you again, Mr Phillips. This inquiry is about community cohesion and migration, and you are the first of this afternoon's witnesses, so if I could start? We also have a pretty tight timetable, so we will try and keep our questions brief, and we would like the answers brief as well and to the point. Can I start by asking you from the point of view of your organisation what actions you think you should be taking to promote good relations between migrants and the host community?

**Mr Phillips:** First of all, thank you, Chair, for inviting me. I think the most important thing is to ensure that we understand exactly what is going on, and that we essentially regard migration and integration as two sides of the same process. There are many arguments about size and scale and all the rest of it about migration which you may want to get into, but essentially, we think that the first point is that we can manage most migration. We think that most migration now is broadly speaking benign, because it is economic. Humanitarian migration is actually quite a small part of the flow, but in itself, we think that this is part of the British tradition and so on. So essentially, I suppose the answer to your question is that what we think we need to do is make sure we have a properly structured integration programme, that we do this explicitly, that we manage it alongside our migration programme, and most of all that we manage our integration programmes with regard to the kind of migration that is taking place today. If I may just say one other sentence about this, there is a great deal of confusion, I think, amongst people about the nature of migration. Historically in this country we have had migration which is essentially post-colonial, which comes in rather discrete waves, like the one of which my parents were a part, from the Caribbean, or from South Asia. Today, we face a completely different sort of migration, many different groups of people coming at the same time, principally coming for work, not necessarily having had a previous connection with the UK, not necessarily speaking English, and by the way not necessarily wanting to stay here for good. This is a rather different proposition, both on the migration and on the integration front.

**Q2 Sir Paul Beresford:** Trevor, you have been talking about immigration. Migration is two-way, it is emigration as well, and there is a lot of information in the newspapers at the moment about emigration of educated professionals, plumbers, builders and so forth, not necessarily white, but predominantly white, out of this country to Australia, New Zealand, United States, Canada, *et cetera*, and that presumably is having an effect, perhaps positively, drawing Polish people here and others, but do you think it is having an effect? What effect do you think it is having? Is it important?

**Mr Phillips:** The first thing to say, it is not new. Historically, until about 40 years ago, this was a country of emigration, as you know. Where did all those people in New Zealand and the new people in Australia come from? So this is not a particularly new phenomenon to this country. Do I think it is having an effect? I do not think it is one that is specifically of significance for public policy. There is, I guess, an argument that says the more churn—that is to say both in and out—there is, the more communities change, and at the heart of the discussion I think that you are having is the issue of change and the significance to communities. I think in that respect there is significance to it, but I think the truth of the matter is that if we are thinking about the change that is politically and socially significant in this country, it is largely to do with who comes rather than who goes.

**Q3 Sir Paul Beresford:** Just a quick follow-up: not today, but I would quite like you to have a little think about it and look at the figures, because the other difficulty we have which you have not touched upon is those people who are leaving are migrants but they are trained professional people predominantly, and we are losing a group of key people to the development of this country.

**Mr Phillips:** But we are also, as you will know, gaining a great many people who are skilled. In fact, the entire purpose of the points system just introduced by the Government is precisely to raise

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the bar on entry, so I think in practice I would be surprised if there were a net loss of skills that are economically valuable to us, and bear in mind modern migration is really more economic in character than anything else. So what we are, as it were, sucking in, are people with skills that the economy as we currently have it in this country needs.

**Q4 Mr Betts:** Before I ask the question, can I just apologise for having to leave the Committee for a temporary period shortly after your answer. It will not be due to anything you have said, just to reassure you.

**Mr Phillips:** It usually is, so it is all right, I do not mind.

**Q5 Mr Betts:** When the Commission on Integration and Cohesion made its recommendations, we had a pretty detailed response from the Secretary of State indicating what the Government would do about those recommendations. Were you content with the Government's response and do you believe it is actually going to deliver on it?

**Mr Phillips:** Well, those are two quite different questions. First of all, the way that I saw the Commission's report, there were really three key things that I think are important. One is the extent to which they drew attention to the most significant issue for community cohesion, and that is change. It is not just the fact that different people live together, but they specifically pointed out that the local circumstances are critical, and they identified three kinds of areas in which there were risks, as it were, in relation to community cohesion. The first group is those in outer London and rural areas which are experiencing migration in large numbers for the first time, and all areas where there are new kinds of migrant, Portuguese, Poles and so forth. Secondly, they drew attention importantly to the issue of fairness and the perception of fairness and that being critical to community cohesion. If people think new migrants or new residents are being treated in some way more favourably than they should be, then that becomes an issue, and indeed if those who come in feel they are being treated unfairly, that creates an issue of community cohesion. Thirdly, I think their solution, "*Shared futures*", was the right answer. I think there were three things missing in the Government's response, which broadly speaking I thought was fine. Now whether they can deliver on all of it, I do not know, though I think actually the character of the Government's response was modest to a degree that suggests that they ought to be able to deliver on it, but I think there are three things that perhaps they ought to have paid attention to. One is measurement. How do we measure what is going on? They put a lot of store by the citizenship survey which is based on perceptions, and indeed they are allocating funds, you will see in their response, on the basis of what people say they think about their area. The more people say that they think that

their area is fine, the less money they are likely to get.

**Q6 Chair:** Can I just clarify, you are not at this point talking about numbers here, you are talking about the way in which you assess whether there is good community cohesion or not?

**Mr Phillips:** Correct. What the Government's response says is that they are going to hand out—well, the total is £50 million, but I think the first tranche is £38.5 million or something of that sort—the way they are distributing funds is based on the percentage of people who say, "People get on well in my area". The more people say that, the less they are deemed to be of concern. I have some anxieties about this. I think it is quite possible and quite likely that people in a monocultural area, or in an area where different groups of people never mix, are likely to say, "It is all fine here". There is a well established school of thought, started by Chicago academics in the early 1920s, which has a model for immigration which suggests that actually, the point at which people get anxious is the point at which true integration begins, because that is when people actually start to meet each other, and there is a little hump there that people have to get over. So I have some anxiety about the issue of measurement. Secondly, I think that both the original report and the Government's response have not quite dealt with what is a very real phenomenon in this country, and that is potential conflict and actual conflict between new migrants and last wave migrants. We are thinking Sikhs and Somalis, Iraqis and Kurds, Indians and East Europeans and you hear it in all sorts of places, because the new migrants move in adjacent to the last wave, because these are the natural gateways, harbours, ports and so forth, and you hear it from the last wave, "We worked hard, they do not", so I think this is a phenomenon to which we have not really paid enough attention. The third point I just wanted to drop into the discussion is to return to my point earlier that migration now is largely an economic phenomenon. That means that it follows the course to parts of the country which are economically booming, and that is why, of course, we have issues in London and the South East, issues which are to do with infrastructure pressure and so forth. I wonder if there should not have been a case for a more active consideration of regional policy of the kind that we are seeing in Canada and Australia, as part of both economic policy but also part of an effort to ensure that conditions are more favourable towards community cohesion and integration.

**Q7 Mr O'Leary:** I just get the view, Trevor, that there is a world of difference between the perception of the problem and the reality of the problem, and even during your answer to my colleague, you kept using the words migration and immigration. There is a huge difference, as you suggest, between migration and immigration. I just wonder how fully understood that is out there in the general public, and with the authorities as well.

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**Mr Phillips:** Well, yes. I think one could get very technical about this, I agree, but I have to say that I myself tend to use the word migration now because I think it is a more neutral way of describing what is essentially, as I said, an economic phenomenon. I think that the word immigration for the last 40 years has, for reasons which are obvious if one remembers what happened at the beginning of that period, acquired a set of connotations which make it all about race, all about difference, when it does not need to be. So I think you are right, there is a sort of difference here, but I myself tend to try to use the word migration now purely because I think it is better for people to be able to talk about this issue without it being overlaid with racial overtones which, if they were ever legitimate, are clearly almost irrelevant today.

**Chair:** Can we try and drill down on a few specific questions? Andrew, do you want to raise one about the Commission on Integration and Cohesion?

**Mr George:** Yes, I wonder if I might just ask it as a lead-up, whether from your wealth of experience you could perhaps guide me at least, for a community dealing with the issues of known and existing prejudices which exist in the community, whether it is better for a community to respond to those in a positive way through a celebration of diversity, through the recognition of the enrichment which migration brings, rather than through being more kind of critical and accusatory and trying to point out where the racism and the prejudice exists. In terms of the balance of how to address the existence of prejudice in the community, how do you get the balance right, because presumably one involves one being associated with the thought police and the other—

**Q8 Chair:** Can we try and keep this brief, Andrew?

**Mr Phillips:** I see where you are trying to go here. Forgive me, I do not really agree with the premise of your question. I think it is perfectly reasonable for people to say, “I want to get to know my neighbour, he is very different to me, I like their children”, and so on, and at the same time be in some cases extremely angry about what other people might say about their neighbour. In fact, I think the truth of the matter is the more people get to know each other across the lines of ethnic and religious difference, the less those things become significant, unless they are drawn attention to in a negative way by somebody else, in which case, what tends to happen actually is that people get very angry about it and say, “How dare you say that about my friend?” I think for matters of public policy, the fundamental point is this: first of all, everybody should be equally protected by the law, that we should identify bias, discrimination and racism where we see it; that the way in which we can best deal with the problem that you identified actually between people is by putting people in a situation where they get to know each other as people, as mothers at the school gate, as fellow workers, as fellow students. That is, in my book, the real underlying meaning of the word integration.

**Q9 Mr George:** At a national and practical level, the Commission on Integration and Cohesion recommended the establishment of a national body and yet you indicated that your Commission responded with caution to that. Why are you so cautious?

**Mr Phillips:** Because I do not think we are there yet. I think we first have to get some of the basics right. We first have to understand what is the problem that we have to address, and we can talk about it in general terms, but I would like to see some more specific measures being set down; secondly, I think we need to have some common understanding of what is our strategy for dealing with it, and for my money, at the heart of the strategy has to be an effort to get people not just to live side by side, but to interact in their real lives, and their real everyday lives. Thirdly, I think we need to focus on making sure that the levers that we have available to public policy, that is to say the control that we might have over public authorities and so on, to make those public authorities behave in a way that ensures that people feel they are treated equally and encourages people to get together. After we have done all of that, then I think we can start thinking about whether we need a single central body to bring it together. So I am not against it, but I just do not think we are at that stage yet.

**Q10 Anne Main:** You will probably have some very brief answers to this. I agree with Darra Singh saying that one of the barriers to integration is not being able to speak the language, it is also a big drain on local schools and resources, not being able to communicate with their peers and with their friends. Would you agree with that, and also, would you like to give us your views on the change to funding with regard to language courses, and also your views briefly on translation services that are provided by councils which some say maintain a dependency and do not encourage people to speak English?

**Mr Phillips:** Well, the answers, as you asked for them briefly, are yes; yes, I agree with the Government’s policy; and no, I think translation services are really a transition service.

**Q11 Anne Main:** Thank you. What about funding to do with the language courses?

**Mr Phillips:** Well, that is what I meant when I said I agree with what the Government is proposing, that is to say, to move the emphasis and the weight of funding towards people who need English because they are going to be settling here long-term. I think for those who are coming to work, and who are here short-term, actually, to be perfectly honest, they can help themselves or their employers ought to help them.

**Chair:** Greg, do you want to move on to social housing?

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**Q12 Mr Hands:** Trevor, what are you hoping to achieve with your inquiry on social housing allocations? What do you perceive as being the risks in the report and what kind of reactions might it set off, and do you think there are areas where migrants are getting priority?

**Mr Phillips:** Well, let me first say this as a matter of principle: I do not think there are ever any risks associated with telling the truth, simple and straightforward. What do we hope to achieve: well, the background is, of course, that we know that there are many, many areas in this country where it is said that somebody says that migrants get public services unfairly or ahead of people who are entitled because they have been paying their National Insurance stamp and so on and so forth. Nowhere is this more prevalent than in the so-called—let me be neutral—than in the arena of social and public housing, where it is said quite widely and believed quite widely that new migrants somehow “jump the queue”. My view about this is that there has never been any serious evidence produced to show that this is true. Any time you ask somebody, it usually comes down to “a bloke who said it to my friend in the pub”. My view about this is that, you know, I can be as cynical as I like about it, but there are millions of people out there who believe it. The job of my Commission is to be an independent authority, to provide independent evidence on these matters, and the reason that we put forward the idea of an inquiry into this is simply to see, is there any truth in it? If it turned out that there is some truth in it, actually, we are the right people to do the inquiry, because we are the people who have the power to stop that sort of discriminatory allocation taking place, so it seems to me that the steps are pretty straightforward: we find out if there is something wrong, unlawful, unfair going on. If there is not, we tell everybody, and everybody can shut up about it. If there is, we will stop it.

**Q13 Mr Hands:** It sounds like you are going to be finding that there is no jumping of the queue.

**Mr Phillips:** Do not presume that at all.

**Q14 Mr Hands:** It sounds like that is your own opinion.

**Mr Phillips:** No. I thought I was quite careful to say that I had never seen any evidence, but that does not mean that there is not any evidence. I am a chemist.

**Q15 Mr Hands:** Fair enough. Is there a question though as to whether there should be? If there is an argument that there is no jumping of the queue, what about those who make the argument that there should be priority and preference to those who have been locally resident for longer, which I think is a slightly separate question, but is your inquiry looking into that as well, like local letting schemes and things like that?

**Mr Phillips:** I think it is a perfectly reasonable question to ask. What we are probably going to do is do a phase two of this exercise, because that will take longer, but I think the question in principle that you are asking is: is it ever legitimate to favour those who have, on the face of it, some prior claim, some prior entitlement, because of longer residence? Well, I think the answer is that in principle, there must be a case for that. However, I think fundamentally, what this is really about is transparency. I do not think anybody would argue if, for example, a local authority argued it out, put it to a vote and said, “These people get preference, and that is the way the system works”, whether it is newcomers because they have bigger needs, or people who have been there for a longer time because they have a historic entitlement. You could make that decision either way, it is a political decision. From our point of view, we are not a political organisation, we are an NDPB, so we do not have a view about that. What we do have a view about is that whatever is done must be transparent, it must be decided legitimately, and those who pay for those services must know what has happened, so that involves a properly set-out, articulated policy, a decision on that policy, and transparent monitoring of that policy. At the present time, we are not convinced that any of those things is happening.

**Anne Main:** Can I just ask a very brief supplementary to that? Given that many of the people who present to a local authority will have a high need and be homeless, do you think that having a large number of homeless people in an authority’s area will give that perception to those people?

**Chair:** That would be getting back into a discussion about housing allocation policy.

**Anne Main:** I am just asking about the remit that you have because I am conscious that you are taking it on board that a housing authority has an obligation to house homeless people, and that can sometimes make people feel, who are waiting patiently on a list, unfairly treated.

**Q16 Chair:** Trevor, can I come on to that in the context of the discussion about housing allocations policies?

**Mr Phillips:** I can answer that in a sentence. Hypothetically, that is entirely true, but there is no actual suggestion that there is any correlation between the anxiety that people feel and, for example, the numbers of homeless people on the local housing roll. If you compare Barking and Dagenham with Westminster, I do not see that issue becoming a major political question in Westminster, it is in Barking, and the homelessness roll in Westminster historically is many times what it is in Barking.

**Q17 Dr Pugh:** Can I take you back to some of the earlier remarks you made on the trade-off between addressing inequalities and working towards community cohesion? It seems to me to be a kind of no win situation. Either a migrant community is worse off, with poor jobs, low pay and poor housing, and then there is no resentment, unless they are

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competing for jobs that other people want; or alternatively, they are perceived to be better off, and have a better deal on housing benefit and other things. Very rarely is it the case that you get the appearance of absolute equality, so in a sense, it is almost an impossible mission you have, both to satisfy ambitions apropos community cohesion and also with regard to inequality, is it not?

**Mr Phillips:** Forgive me, I am not sure I completely understand the question, because I do not think that there is any particular reason or any history, that people just do not—not that this is anything particularly to do with migrants—people do not just dislike people because they are poor or homeless.

**Q18 Dr Pugh:** That was not my point. My point was that when the migrant community arrives, and they are clearly seen to be doing the worst jobs, getting the lowest pay and the poorest housing, there is, generally speaking, a degree of community tolerance and maybe community cohesion. If on the other hand the reverse is the case, the situation becomes more difficult and more socially problematic, and therefore, getting the community cohesion and getting the equality are sometimes seen to be crossgrained.

**Mr Phillips:** I see. Yes, but I do not think that is anything like the situation at the moment. I mean, most of the newest migrants into this country over the past four or five years are people who come and work. I cannot remember right now the actual number of, for example, people from Eastern Europe who are claiming benefit, but it is absolutely tiny.

**Q19 Dr Pugh:** But the vast bulk of people who are working in the migrant community at the moment are doing jobs that other people are not sufficiently attracted to, are lower paid than other jobs, are living in more crowded conditions, and were that not the case, you could argue—

**Mr Phillips:** Oh, I see.

**Q20 Chair:** Particularly in Eastern England, for example.

**Mr Phillips:** Forgive me, I do not entirely buy that. One of the largest migrant communities into this country, and indeed into this city, are North Americans, and if I guess rightly, there is a hugely disproportionate number of bankers and people earning over six figures amongst that group.

**Q21 Dr Pugh:** You are being a bit disingenuous here. To be fair, when you go to Peterborough, they are not besieged with North Americans and Massachusetts accents and things like that. That is not the case. The bulk of people in the area we went to in Peterborough are actually doing low grade agricultural jobs.

**Mr Phillips:** What I am struggling to do is quite understand what is the proposition you are putting to me. If you are saying that people who come here

and do poorly paid jobs and do them honestly and so on, nobody minds them, I agree.

**Q22 Dr Pugh:** Can I just put one further point? You mentioned the Chicago school, and the research there showed that as people become more integrated in American society, they become more like Americans and less abiding by the cultural norms which they have brought with them to the United States. Is there a similar phenomenon in England, whereby when you get greater integration, to some extent, within the migrant community, you get less internal community cohesion, and so a breakdown of some of the norms, and some of the good values that that community has?

**Mr Phillips:** Two points. First of all, that is not actually what I said about the Chicago school. What I said about the Chicago school is that they have a model which describes the different generations.

**Q23 Dr Pugh:** No, I know about the Chicago school.

**Mr Phillips:** Fine. On the question of whether essentially what you are saying as to the greater integration of a community, that is to say that community acquires a set of life chances and so on which are more typical, more close to the average, does that mean that their internal community bonding reduces? I do not think that necessarily has to be the case.

**Q24 Dr Pugh:** The visit to Oldham—

**Mr Phillips:** Can I just finish what I was going to say? Look at the Jewish community or the East African community in this country, both of which have become, if you like, superordinary in many ways, but nobody would suppose that either of those communities are any less coherent than they were previously.

**Q25 Chair:** I think that is a debatable point. However, Trevor, we have run out of time, but I do want to take you back to the first question I asked, which you did not answer, which is: what is the Commission doing to promote community cohesion and the integration of migrants? Not what the Government should be doing, but what you are doing.

**Mr Phillips:** Forgive me. We have been in existence about 150 days. We are essentially, to begin with, adopting some of what we have taken from our legacy Commissions. In particular, I think I am very proud of the work that was done by our legacy Commission CRE in Wales, with their *Croeso*, the Welcome programme, which we intend to continue, and we are essentially carrying on. We are beginning to develop some new policies for guidance using the public race equality duties to ensure that public authorities take good relations as part of the way that they work, and that is, I think, the second piece of power that we have. Thirdly, we have a substantial grants programme. It was, in the CRE,

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about £4.5 million. Under our new Commission, it will amount to about £10 million, although that will cover a series of grounds, but we have shifted that grant programme even further in the direction of essentially giving grants to local organisations which

focus on integration and community cohesion. So those are three of the things that we think are extremely important for us to do.

**Chair:** Thank you very much indeed. Can we move on to the next set of witnesses.

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*Witnesses:* **Mr Tim Allen**, Programme Director for analysis and research, Local Government Association, **Mr Gareth Davies**, Managing Director for Local Government, Audit Commission, and **Mr Andrew Blake-Herbert**, Strategic Director of Resources, Slough Borough Council, gave evidence.

**Q26 Chair:** Can I ask the three of you to say who you are and which of the three organisations you are representing?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** I am Andrew Blake-Herbert, I am the director of resources from Slough Borough Council.

**Mr Davies:** I am Gareth Davies, I am the Audit Commission's managing director for local government.

**Mr Allen:** I am Tim Allen, from the Local Government Association, in charge of analysis and research.

**Chair:** Jim, do you want to start? Can I just say, before Mr Dobbin asks this question, do not all three feel obliged to answer every question, in fact please do not, and I will try and make sure you all get a reasonably good go at it.

Government Association and the IDeA have a significant programme around this topic, which is already, you know, making a visible difference.

**Q29 Jim Dobbin:** I live in Rochdale, which is between Oldham and Burnley. They have had problems in Burnley, but it has been fairly cohesive in Rochdale.

**Mr Davies:** It is worth looking at some of the individual reports that I mentioned. One recently published has one of the strongest performances on community cohesion is Kirklees, for example, which is another very diverse area with a long history of coping with change, so it is certainly not possible to extrapolate from the demographic make-up of an area to its performance on community cohesion. We see areas with very similar demographics achieving quite different levels of performance.

**Q27 Jim Dobbin:** Thanks very much, Chair. The Audit Commission has been quite critical of local government, basically because they say that many local authorities do not have a proper strategy for coping with community cohesion. Could you enlighten us as to what you think is wrong?

**Mr Davies:** What we have tried to explain is we think there is a wide diversity of practice amongst local authorities, and we are particularly drawing there on our corporate assessments of councils. We are in the middle of a three-year programme of those assessments, and they have shown that wide range of performance on cohesion. In some ways, that is understandable. The strongest performers on having a clear strategy around this are those that have been dealing with this issue in different forms for a long time, so waves of new migrants are less of a challenge to an authority that has developed resilience and a capacity to handle these issues over a period. It is clearly those parts of the country where this is a newer phenomenon where they are much more challenged by this and do not have the existing depth of skills and capacity to deal with it.

**Q30 Chair:** Mr Allen, I do not know if you want to comment on that?

**Mr Allen:** Thank you. Whilst I would accept the Audit Commission's evidence that councils have had to react to a very rapidly changing position, some of the evidence quoted is two or three years old. We are talking about a phenomenon, for those councils that have not previously experienced migration, which actually has happened over that three or four years, so I think what you see is a pattern of councils responding, and I think responding very successfully, to significant population changes in areas that have not previously experienced population change, or not at least in recent history. I think what is becoming evident, and is becoming evident to those councils, is that as this is not a transient experience, we are having to move from a position of reacting and responding to the immediacy of significant churn in the schools, often young children arriving with limited skills mid-term, to the more strategic and longer term implications, for example you may serve HMOs on sub-standard housing, but actually, that displaces people who may now need housing one way or another. Now we have a more strategic approach that is needed, and that, I think, is now where councils are beginning to respond, and beginning to think about how you tackle those issues, and what the implications are.

**Chair:** Anne, I think this may be a question for Slough.

**Q28 Jim Dobbin:** There are examples in some authorities, for example in Slough, and in Peterborough, where we visited, of good practice. How slow do you think local authorities are to learn from each other?

**Mr Davies:** Again from the Commission's perspective, we think that picture is changing rapidly. The amount of support that local government as a sector is now providing to authorities as individual councils is dramatically better than it was several years ago, and so the Local

**Q31 Anne Main:** I would like to start with Mr Blake-Herbert, please. When we visited Peterborough, one of the things that came over loud and clear was not

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so much having ethnic minority communities coming in, but it was the speed and pace at which they were coming in which left many areas of the local council struggling to keep up with that pace of change, and I just wonder what Slough's view is, because you have had a transition from quite a settled ethnic minority community to a slightly more churned one.

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** It is not just the scale or the speed of it that is also part of the issue, it is the fact that this wave of migration, unlike those in the past—it is the inability of statistics to keep up with the figures and the bigger impact that that has for local authorities, in terms of the certainty we have in terms of the numbers so we are able to plan services appropriately, not only for the new migrants, but also for the current indigenous population; also in terms of the impact that has on funding. So when councillors are making decisions about local services and what to provide, they are able to support people in the right way.

**Q32 Anne Main:** Do you feel the Government is not sympathetic to what you have just said, in terms of being able to extrapolate for future needs, rather than looking back on probably census data that may well be quite out of date, from what you have said?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** Certainly in terms of Slough, we have been pushing our campaign for a number of years now, in terms of the figures and the inaccuracies in the statistics. That does have a real impact in terms of services locally, and I think it is well recognised by cohesion experts that when different communities seem to be vying for limited resources, that you can have cohesion issues arise.

**Q33 Anne Main:** Are you seeing that in Slough?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** Certainly in terms of the work we are doing. We have an established community, they are very well integrated, in terms of living and working together and socialising together, but we are watching it very closely, and one of the things, in terms of the work we have done, we have carried out a fair bit of cohesion work within the borough, and it is not just white communities that are seeing it, it is also existing BME communities that are beginning to raise issues about cohesion that are coming forward and we are having to manage that very closely.

**Q34 Anne Main:** What particular issues are they raising as a result of this rapid pace of change, just briefly?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** It is the rapid pace of change.

**Q35 Chair:** What particular services, I think is what we are trying to get a handle on.

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** In terms of real services for the borough, it is around schooling and the impact on schooling; it is around housing, in particular for Slough around the number of houses in multiple occupation which are two-storey, not three-storey, or sheds with beds, which is also a phenomenon which is springing up across the borough, but it is also about skills. Slough has one of the lowest wage

rates in the south-east of England, we have the lowest skills base in the south-east of England, this has had an impact in terms of people's employment, but it also has an impact for the authority when we have limited resources, because the figures say the population is falling, and therefore the local authority's funding is falling. For Members to balance that, is it about ESL classes and supporting new migrants who cannot speak English, or is it about getting the skills up in parts of our community which are low-skilled, like the Pakistani part of our community, to get people into employment? We have to balance that very closely.

**Chair:** I am sure you are aware, Mr Blake-Herbert, that the Treasury Select Committee is doing an inquiry about the numbers issue, so we are not actually getting into that, and I know that John wants to ask questions about HMOs, so if we could keep off that aspect.

**Q36 Mr Hands:** I just want to come in very quickly, because we might be missing something here. You are quite right, our inquiry is not about numbers, but are there any cohesion issues relating to numbers? In Hammersmith & Fulham, we have the same problem that Slough has, and quite often, there will be groups or communities lobbying on the basis that they think they have more numbers than the official numbers actually suggest, and that in itself causes cohesion issues relating to the counting of population. Is that something you are seeing as well?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** It is something we are seeing. It is either because we have been quite public about our campaign in trying to get the right resources to the borough that it should be getting to support both new migrants and the current indigenous population, that is something we are watching very closely, but it is something we are trying to manage as part of both working with those communities very closely, working with our business community in the same way, so we are able to support that and try and prevent that happening.

**Chair:** John Cummings, and then I will come back to you.

**Q37 John Cummings:** Are you suggesting that perhaps we have two policies here, one for the problems in relation to migrants and social cohesion, but there is also the problem with our indigenous population who are running around without any form of respect towards their peers, towards their local authorities, towards their services?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** I do not think I am suggesting that directly. I think what I would say, it is back to the immigration versus migration question from earlier. From our point of view, it does not matter whether someone comes from Putney or from Poland into the borough, if official statistics are not keeping pace with that to be able to tell us about the numbers of people who are coming, and therefore we have not got the funding to be able to support people, that is the key issue in terms of delivering cohesion at a local level.

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**Q38 John Cummings:** Do you think that local authorities are applying equality across the board here, in relation to the resources that appear to be directed towards the problems caused through immigrants and the problems that have existed with our communities for a great number of years now with our indigenous youth?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** In terms of it from a local authority's point of view, new migrants, when they arrive in the country, are not entitled to claim benefits in the same way for a period of twelve months until they have been in the country and worked. In terms of the council's policies, we obviously have to support all of the communities that live within our boroughs in the right way. Some of that is about specialist services, but for somewhere like Slough, where we have been managing migration for a very long period of time, most of those services are now generic across the varying different communities that live within our boroughs. However, there are times when we do have to respond to new migration communities in a very different way, and for example, it is one of the things we have seen in Slough, between January and April 2007, we had 400 Romanian Roma arrive in the borough, and they brought with them a very specific requirement, in terms of the local authority, around the services we had to provide. For a change, we did have to set up a specific team to actually be able to deal with the issues and problems they brought to the borough.

**Q39 Chair:** Can you just briefly explain what the specific need was then that was different from another community, apart from language obviously?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** The Roma community, rather than the Romanian community, came with very different views and opinions in terms of their background and their make-up. They did not necessarily come to the country to work, in the way that a lot of migrants have come to the country to work. A lot of them had been arrested at various points in time in various parts of London and the surrounding south-east for some small criminal activities, and in fact we had raids in the borough by Westminster police a few weeks ago, around looking at that, around looking at trafficking of individuals into the country. That is something that has caused particular issues within those communities where they have settled and where they have based in a small group, rather than integrating into the rest of the borough.

**Q40 John Cummings:** I understand what you are saying. What I am trying to boil it down to is that whilst you can identify 400 immigrants who are causing perhaps problems, who are not fitting in, could you not equally identify 400 from the indigenous population who have been born and bred there, perhaps have lived there for several generations, and is the same attention not being directed towards those, and also equal resources directed towards these problems?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** Certainly in terms of as a local authority, we have a requirement to carry out Race Relations (Amendment) Act impact assessments on all services that we provide, and making sure that we are providing those services to the community. The key part there is when funding is falling, because of inaccurate population statistics, it gets much harder for the councillors within the borough to balance their responsibilities to the various parts of the communities and that is what then can raise the fears of cohesion.

**Q41 Chair:** Can I just briefly on this numbers thing, we do not want to get into the detail of how we get the numbers right, but Mr Allen from the LGA, I know we have written evidence from the Borough of Newham and from Leicester, both of whom are also claiming that they are undercounted. I know Hammersmith & Fulham does, I know my own council does. Just roughly, how widespread do you think this issue is about councils claiming that the official estimates of population are too low, and are there more of them than there used to be?

**Mr Allen:** I think the answer to your question is yes, it is very widespread. The system simply does not pick up on rapid population changes for two reasons: one, we are reliant fundamentally on the 2001 census, which is out of date, and yes, there are statistical manipulations, but those are based by and large on very small samples, which when you break them down to a local level simply do not work. Secondly, there are administrative data that sort of give you an indication—GP registers, school registers, National Insurance registrations—but none of those really give you a full picture. What they do tell you, when you look at them as a diagnostic, not as an ultimate count, it is very clear that the overall population is significantly higher than the estimates, and part of that is because we do not pick up on the churn. So some parts of the country exhibit rapid churn, so people may come in for six months and leave, but they are being replaced, so the overall population level within any given area is actually significantly higher than the apparent long-term level.

**Q42 Dr Pugh:** The Equality and Human Rights Commission say that most economic migrants and refugees live in temporary private, particularly rented accommodation. Presumably you agree with that, yes?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** Yes.

**Q43 Dr Pugh:** Presumably you also agree the bulk of that is HMOs as well?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** Yes.

**Q44 Dr Pugh:** What are the practical difficulties facing communities where there are high numbers of HMOs catering for the migrant population? I mean not just simply problems it creates for the council, but problems it creates for the wider community that may be living adjacent.

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**Mr Blake-Herbert:** One of the key parts there at the beginning is local authorities have a responsibility to license three-storey houses of multiple occupation, and we are funded appropriately to be able to do that, supposedly funded appropriately. In terms of the key issues we are experiencing in Slough, we do not have a large number of three-storey buildings, so one of the things we have experienced is about two-storey HMOs, so these are predominantly standard three-bed semi houses being converted into HMOs which we then do not have the funding to be able to go out and license and inspect in the way that we would like to.

**Q45 Dr Pugh:** So you are seeing a net growth of HMOs?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** Indeed.

**Q46 Dr Pugh:** Can you put a percentage on that, broadly speaking?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** Percentage of it in terms of housing—

**Q47 Dr Pugh:** Not in terms of housing. By what percentage is the HMO stock going up? 10 per cent, 20 per cent, 30 per cent?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** Over 20 per cent. In an 18-month period, we have had over 1,050 two-storey HMOs reported to us, and they were reported to the local authority predominantly by complaints from neighbours, so they are coming in in that way that we are getting identified.

**Q48 Dr Pugh:** So probably the actual figure is higher still because there are some you still have not identified.

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** Indeed. The members, as part of setting the council tax and the budget the other evening, did agree to put funding available to carry out an audit of these, because we recognise our responsibility to need to do that and understand it. The bigger issue will be that when we get the feedback from the audit saying there are this many, these are the locations, how we go and address that without having funding, because it is unscrupulous landlords making money on the back of migrants who are prepared to pay X amount—

**Q49 Dr Pugh:** So there is a proliferation of unscrupulous landlords that councils are having difficulty currently policing; is that the view from the LGA?

**Mr Allen:** Yes, it is, and it is quite widespread. I would not wish to say that all landlords are unscrupulous, there are many that are not, but there are quite clearly records across the country of difficulties in terms of pursuing HMOs where people are living in unsanitary conditions and then needing to—

**Q50 Dr Pugh:** What needs doing about it? Does the Government need to make more money available or do councils need to alter their priorities?

**Mr Allen:** I think we would have to say that at some stage, given the scale of what we have seen in the last few years, it has to be about funding. Where do you cut from if you are a small council in a rural area that is dealing with a very large influx of people that were not there four years ago?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** I think in response to that, again it is back to we have the responsibility under legislation to check and license those that are three-storey, but there is no such guidance around those that are two-storey, but it is about our responsibility to the health and well-being of the people in those properties and the surrounding properties.

**Q51 Dr Pugh:** Just in terms of the observation, in terms of general effect on the community, if you get a proliferation of HMOs pepperpotting a particular area, where maybe the property is more amenable to change and alteration to HMO status, what effect does that have on the wider community?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** In terms of that, it is the health and well-being both of the individuals in those and the individuals in surrounding properties. So, for example, one of the key things in terms of what gets fed back to us, in terms of complaints, is the level of refuse that is created within those individual properties. When it is bin day and the refuse is put out, there are large amounts out, the bins are completely overfull, therefore the refuse teams will not collect them because there is additional waste.

**Q52 Dr Pugh:** Councils need to go and explain?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** Indeed.

**Dr Pugh:** I had an issue in my constituency where I think an HMO populated by Somalis had a barbecue, which is perfectly okay, the only thing is they had it in the front garden, in the road, and all that was needed was for them to have it explained that this was not what we did in the UK.

**Q53 Chair:** Can I just ask a question of the Audit Commission about comprehensive area assessments? Which is: if councils choose not to specify community cohesion in their local area agreement, how are you going to assess whether they are actually promoting community cohesion?

**Mr Davies:** Yes, the whole premise of the new framework, the comprehensive area assessment framework, is we will take more account of the priorities agreed by the local authority and its partners with central government, rather than impose a one size fits all assessment framework, regardless of the priorities of the area. So the preamble to our assessment is always to understand how that local area agreement has been arrived at, and the quality of the analysis that has gone into it and the basis on which those priorities have been arrived at. So is it based on a good understanding of the community and a good consultation with various parts of that community? So assuming the answer to that was yes, then we are not going to second guess the carefully arrived at local area agreement. The clear purpose of that is to steer resources to the priorities for that place. On the other hand, nor are we going to, as inspectorates,

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ignore the impact on potentially vulnerable people who are experiencing serious problems in an area. So if there is any evidence of that, clearly we would want to raise it and understand how the authority is responding, but the premise has to be that the local area agreement is well-founded and we have therefore focused on the priorities within that.

**Mr Allen:** I think two things. One, I think I see no evidence that councils, particularly through their LAA, will ignore serious or potentially serious cohesion issues. Secondly, it is perhaps worth recording, you may be aware, but it is not always clear, that the Government's 198 indicators will all be measured and all recorded, so, if you like, those indicators are designed to pick up information at local level, at council level, so if cohesion is an issue and those indicators are well chosen, there will be clear evidence as to whether councils are tackling the problem or not.

**Q54 Chair:** Can I ask a further question about funding? If a better way could be found to count how many people there are, is it your view that the additional funding should continue to come through the formula and, if so, how can the formula be responsive to rapid change that is actually occurring, given it is done over three years, or do you think that the Community Cohesion Fund, which I guess you would want to be bigger, is the better way of doing it, in that that could be more responsive to rapid change?

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** I think it is a combination of both. From the point of view of an authority such as Slough, with hyper-diversity in the issues it has got, at the moment the population statistics say our population is falling; because the population is falling, we are losing funding from the point that we used to be at the ceiling on local authority funding, when ceilings existed, to the point that we are significantly beneath the floor. With three-year settlements, it is nice to have that understanding going forwards to know where you are going, but not when it is based on inaccurate flawed population statistics. The fact that we have three-year settlements means that in those interim periods there needs to be a responsive source of funding available for local authorities to be able to call on when they have particular pressures.

**Q55 Chair:** Mr Allen?

**Mr Allen:** I would agree with that. We very much welcome the £50 million cohesion funding, but the issue is wider. We have seen a very substantial increase in population. We applied a very cautious one per cent increase in population, and if you apply that one per cent increase in population to that element of local authority funding nationally that is driven by the population formula, that is about £25 billion. One per cent of that is about £250 million. I think that was our suggestion for a rapid response to this increase in population. I think long-term we have to have a system that, as Andrew says, gives us reasonable security of funding over a period of years

because you have got to plan, but you have to have some mechanisms to be able to respond effectively to events of the sort we have seen in the last four years.

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** To go back to the key point, whatever is made available, if it is through a specific grant, there needs to be a proper basis of allocation. Again, if it is on a flawed basis, I would go back to the cohesion fund and say that has not been allocated on the best basis, it has not necessarily gone to those authorities that need it and, therefore, again, if it is specific grant funding, there needs to be a proper basis for allocating it.

**Q56 Andrew George:** Can I presume, Mr Allen, that there is no local authority that is complaining that there has been an overestimate of migrant population?

**Mr Allen:** That would be correct, yes.

**Q57 Andrew George:** Can you envisage any formula fund which would be couched in such a way as to discourage local authorities from over inflating the migrant population?

**Mr Allen:** I think I would turn that round and say that what we need is a transparent and effective means to measure local populations and to do so quickly and currently rather than relying on our census.

**Q58 Chair:** Have you got an answer as to how you would do it?

**Mr Allen:** I think, in the short-term, we will not restructure the system for collecting population statistics. What one has got to do is to take those sets of administrative data that give you a good diagnostic, make those transparent and available on a consistent basis and then use those as a check against the official national projections and, where the two are out of kilter, that is where one would need a discussion about budgetary allocations.

**Q59 Andrew George:** Can I ask Mr Davies whether you are content that the method by which migrant populations are estimated is properly audited in order to avoid a situation where local authorities could, in fact, inflate the figures in order to achieve higher funding?

**Mr Davies:** The difficulty is that system does not exist at the moment. I think it is widely accepted that the current system for using population figures to determine funding is inadequate to cope with the speed of migration and, as we have seen, I think that is a pretty well shared view. The question is what to do about it. One interesting question is whether there are any local sources of income which could, in theory, respond more rapidly to changes in local population and nationally set targets—whether there are possibilities there—so you are drawn to Council Tax collection from some of the properties that we have been discussing, which is a complex area given the nature of the tenancies, but also issues of local authority charging for services. We have recently reported on that as a significant source of income for local authorities and ought to figure in

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the deliberations around how we generate the resources to serve the needs of this rapidly changing population.

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** I was going to say, it is right that they are calculated nationally by someone like the Office of National Statistics, so it is not about local authorities inflating them locally to suit their own needs, and, to be fair, the Office of National Statistics have a very hard job in doing that. The key part there is about looking at other data sources that exist, even if it is to Q and A their statistics. For example, one of the ones they will not use is child benefit data, because they say it is a huge under count of children when, according to the ONS, there

are less children living in Slough than the number of children being paid child benefit. So it is about that Q and A element and trying to get that right.

**Q60 Chair:** That might indicate a certain amount of fraud rather than lots of children!

**Mr Blake-Herbert:** Possibly, but it is not necessarily about the populations not keeping count. A lot of local authorities have got growth, according to the ONS, but they are saying it is not growing rapidly enough, but some authorities, like Slough, are actually saying the population is decreasing.

**Chair:** Thank you very much.

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*Witnesses:* **Mr Ted Cattle**, Executive Chairman, and **Mr Nick Johnson**, Director of Policy, Institute of Community Cohesion, gave evidence.

**Q61 Chair:** Welcome to our last two witnesses. I assume you have been sitting and listening.

**Mr Cattle:** Yes.

**Q62 Chair:** Excellent. Can we start off by asking whether you believe that there are any lessons to be learned from your findings, after the race disturbances in 2001, which could apply to the communities which now face a challenge of rapid and quite significant inward migration largely from the A8?

**Mr Cattle:** I think there is a lot of similarity really. I think we have got to appreciate that community cohesion is a relatively new concept. It only emerged about six years ago. It is only in the last three or four years that programmes have really been devised to try and bring people together to promote interaction between people of different backgrounds, whether that is new migrants, whether it is existing communities or whether it is intergenerational or conflict between travellers and other groups. It is still a fairly new agenda and we are only, I think, beginning to come to terms with it. At present I think there is a lot of work that is being done. Over 200 local authorities now have dedicated staff for community cohesion—lots of voluntary organisations help with that—there are now dedicated action plans and performance frameworks in place, so it is a huge change, but this is still relatively recent. The work that is going on to promote interaction between new migrants and existing communities, I think, is pretty similar to the sorts of ways in which we need to break down barriers between the communities that fell out in the disturbances in 2001.

**Q63 Chair:** One of the issues that you highlighted in that report was about the segregation of communities and parallel lives. The new migrant communities, on the whole, seem to be moving into areas of cheap housing and, therefore, you seem to be getting exactly the same problems of segregation. Do you have any suggestions as to how that can be avoided?

**Mr Cattle:** I think there is a danger of focusing too much on residential segregation. That is obviously a very big part of the picture, but we have got to look at residential and social segregation together. The real problem is when physical segregation is compounded by segregation in education, in the workplace, in social, cultural and other spheres where you get a very distinct set of what I have called at times “parallel lives” and, therefore, the breakdown of trust and co-operation. I think there is a problem of migrants currently reinforcing some of those areas, although, of course, the new Eastern European migrants are tending to go to entirely new areas and that has injected quite an element of difference, but I think the main issue really is how we try and break down segregation in all spheres; in other words, in schools, in workplaces, in social, cultural areas as well as in housing areas. There are a number of authorities and local areas that are beginning to address those issues and are trying to develop proactive strategies for breaking down the segregation in all of those different areas, but there is clearly a concern that cannot be done by any enforced movement or bussing of people from one area to another, because that would be counter-productive. It has to be done by taking the community with you.

**Q64 Mr Betts:** I raised this question last time we had a committee inquiry into these issues with the Minister, and I think the Minister was a little thrown when I asked him. I said: it is not about bussing. In my constituency, in the Damall area, you actually have a relatively mixed community, in terms of the total area, between the white population, some Somalis and quite a lot of the population are from Kashmiri backgrounds, so from Bangladesh. What you have is two schools in that community and, because of parental choice, parents choose to send their children to a school where predominantly children of the same background go, and they often walk farther than they need to in order to do that. Is there anything you can do with that sort of problem?

**Mr Cattle:** Yes, there is and it is happening in some areas. Firstly, I think you have to start with some fairly soft schemes, like school twinning: twinning of

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those sorts of schools, twinning of the children, joint lessons across the two schools. Then you have to start by twinning the parental groups, building up their confidence that they can actually work together or work in a family of schools, and then you can start doing a lot more joint programmes between the different schools. Some areas, like Oldham, who started off with 50 schools twinned five years ago, have got to the point where they now feel able to propose multi-faith academies, using the *Building Schools for the Future* programme, to completely reconfigure their school provision. They could not have just come along and done that; they had to build the confidence of the students but, more particularly, the parental groups and to see that as a positive area. Most parents we talk to, and certainly most of the students we talk to, actually want a multi-cultural existence. They do not want to just have a mono-cultural schooling. They realise that they are growing up in a multi-cultural society and that they have to have some educational activity which prepares them for that multi-cultural society.

**Q65 Dr Pugh:** You raised Oldham, and Mr Betts here and I went on the trip to Oldham in 2003 and spent some time there, but in a sense Oldham is very different from the problem we are confronted with now, because in Oldham you had an immigrant community that had been settled there for some time that were leading parallel lives alongside a white European community with different traditions, and so on. The situation we are confronted with, with economic migrants coming for a short period, possibly moving around, often not having children or intending to have children in this country, is very different. We cannot extrapolate from what you discovered in Oldham very much to what we have got now, can we?

**Mr Cattle:** Every area is different. Every area should have a community cohesion programme which focuses on its problems. Obviously in other parts of the country, as you say, the situation will be different, but the general point which was made earlier was: is there a tendency to reinforce some of the settlement patterns, and the answer is, yes, there is. There are some exceptions to that. With school populations generally there has recently been done a fairly extensive piece of work which has looked at PLASC data across the country (Pupil Level Annual School Census) which has shown that schools are becoming more segregated and they are becoming more segregated than the residential areas. As a generalisation, that holds true, but clearly in some areas it will be a different situation.

**Q66 Dr Pugh:** On the idea of cohesion, you could say that we are setting the bar rather high; in other words, a lot of economic migrants come, often with short-term intentions of earning money and sending it home, and so on, and they obviously need to know about British road law and about what their rights are and where to put their rubbish, and so on. Is there a real need to have them integrate any more than we wish to see the expats in Spain integrate into the Spanish society?

**Mr Cattle:** It is something I often contrast actually, the expats' vision in Spain, which is not part of immigration at all. I think if people are coming to this country and want to stand a chance of equal opportunities, if they want to get fair employment practices, and so on, then they have to be prepared to integrate, they have to be prepared to learn the English language.

**Q67 Dr Pugh:** This is about mutual understanding, this is not about community cohesion, which is something more exalted in its ambition, is it not?

**Mr Cattle:** I am not sure it is. There is, obviously, a close coincidence between the two. I think, if people are living in this country, then we want them to play a part in citizenship, we want them to play a part in democratic and other frameworks, we want them to play an equal part in employment and, in order to do that, they have to have a certain amount of skills which enable them to relate to other sections of the population. This is not a one-way street. A lot of our work done in communities at the moment is with the existing host population who are trying to come to terms with the change they see as a threat to their identity, they see some conflict over resources. This is about working with both the existing residents as well as the new residents and trying to establish some basis of co-operation and collaboration between them. In the past we focused very much on difference rather than on commonalities.

**Q68 Anne Main:** One of the things that we noticed in Peterborough was that when we had various ethnic minority communities come to us representing their communities and where they lived, they were very happy about the business opportunities being presented as a result of having a rapid inward growth of migrants and the fact that you could buy a woman in a pub, prostitution seemed to be growing, and, indeed, cannabis factories and a whole list of other activities, not necessarily introduced by the migrants but being seen as exploitative. Other criminal activities were exploiting the migrants within the community, and this was creating a big issue in Peterborough, and it is something that is being touched on in other areas as well, but these are presenting established criminals with opportunities to create division within communities. I would like your views on that.

**Mr Cattle:** I think there is clear evidence that migrants are exploited in many different ways. They are exploited through trafficking, through prostitution; they are more often the victims of crime than the perpetrators of crime. I think there is clear evidence that is the case. Again, I think it is part of having to focus on the different dimensions of migration policy. I think those issues have to be addressed, and certainly the police concerns about funding formulas, and so on, have drawn attention to exactly that point.

**Q69 Anne Main:** On the topic of funding, because it was the police who were talking to us about many of these issues as well as the residents, what are your views in terms of funding for English language? If we

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do have a relatively transient migrant population not necessarily wishing to integrate, what are your views in terms of language courses and accessibility to language courses?

**Mr Johnson:** I think our view is that language courses should be as available as much as possible. Clearly there is a funding issue there, but one of the things we raised in our submission and would raise also is this hint that businesses might be asked to contribute. We would feel very strongly that businesses should be asked to contribute. After all, many local businesses or national companies have achieved the benefits of having an influx of migrant labour and, therefore, some contribution from them towards English language classes for their employees should be advocated.

**Q70 Mr Hands:** I am sorry to butt in, but is that not going to incentivise businesses to purely hire indigenous workers if they know that to hire a migrant worker they have got to pay for English language classes? Is that the right approach?

**Mr Cattle:** No, I think it is part of the business cost. I know firms that go to Poland to carry out direct recruitment. That is a cost which they would not have if they were recruiting from an indigenous workforce. They see that as part of their business costs in order to attract people with particular skills. In this case I am thinking of bus drivers. It is absolutely essential that when those people are recruited they have English language skills so that they can understand their rights, they can understand road directions, they can speak to customers, they can receive instructions from their managers, and it seems a quite unacceptable situation where employers are prepared to take on workers who are not skilled to do the job for which they are employed; so we feel there should be a very strong onus on businesses to fund English language costs, just as the recruitment costs and other transitional costs.

**Q71 Mr Hands:** I am going to take issue with that. I think that businesses can be in the best position to judge whether the person they are giving the job to, whether they can or cannot speak English, is going to be able to do that job properly, but by making it necessary for businesses to give English language classes to those who cannot currently speak English, I think you are going to find businesses will be incentivised massively not to hire migrant workers.

**Mr Cattle:** How can an employer employ somebody when they are unable to read health and safety instructions?

**Q72 Mr Hands:** I am not sure you understand what employers do.

**Mr Cattle:** I have been an employer.

**Q73 Mr Hands:** They employ someone on the basis of their ability to do the job. If they have got the wrong people, then their business would not last terribly long.

**Mr Cattle:** Unfortunately, there are employers who cut corners, and I think that is one of the areas where they cut corners. They have to understand their responsibilities to their employees, not just the new ones that they are taking on, but towards their existing employees as well. It seems to me that English language classes are a relatively small business cost compared with some of the other costs that they are undertaking.

**Q74 Anne Main:** Can I pick up on this, since I have raised funding? I still feel we are skirting round the subject somewhat. We have a large number of people who are coming in. If we look at the Spanish example, they do not intend to integrate. How do you envisage those people getting a language skill or do you not envisage them getting a language skill?

**Mr Cattle:** I think there are two reasons why we think it is necessary for people have English language skills. One is so that they can participate in the labour market but, even if they are not wanting to participate in the labour market, then they should have English language skills so that they can take part in democratic debate, they can participate as a citizen and all the time that they have aspirations of citizenship or even denizenship, because they then take part—

**Q75 Anne Main:** That is not what I mean. I mean people coming over here for a short space of time, maybe a managed space of time, six months, eight months, nine months, a year whatever. Do you envisage that they will be obliged to have, or ought to be offered, language skills or do you say that for those people we would not expect it?

**Mr Johnson:** I think we would expect it. I think it is important not to generalise. Whatever people's intentions when they arrive here, their intentions may change once they are here. Many migrants will go to a country only intending to be there for a short period of time and then choose to settle, and I think, particularly with the A8 migrations, it is still too early to tell just what this pattern of migration will look like in the long-term.

**Q76 Anne Main:** How would you frame that then? If someone is coming in and they are not sure for how long they are going to stay, at what point would you say they either must or ought to be enrolled on a language course, either ought by their employer or must through the local authority? What period of time?

**Mr Cattle:** I am not sure it is about a period of time. If they are here as a visitor or a tourist, then I do not think there is any requirement for them to learn English. If they are here to participate in the labour market or to participate as a citizen, then I think there is a requirement. It is not about length of time, it is the purpose.

**Q77 Chair:** Should they learn English before they come, at least to a moderate level?

**Mr Cattle:** That depends on the job requirement. It goes back to the point there. I think there has to be a level of English understanding if they are going to

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participate in the labour market. I would not expect them to be fully conversant with all English language requirements, but they would have to reach a certain level to enable them to participate in the labour market, as I said earlier, to understand health and safety instructions, to help understand management directions, and so on.

**Q78 Dr Pugh:** Would it apply, conversely, to British people working elsewhere in the European community? Would the *Auf Wiedersehen Pet* lot have to learn German or Polish, or whatever? That is, logically, your argument, is it not?

**Mr Cattle:** Yes.

**Q79 Dr Pugh:** They should be obliged in Germany to learn the local language?

**Mr Cattle:** If they are going in order to participate the labour market or to participate as citizens, then, of course. Absolutely. How else can they take part in the debate in that country? How else can they receive equal opportunities?

**Q80 Mr Betts:** On the issue of community cohesion, many migrants, and the most recent migrants are probably the same, tend to move into relatively poor neighbourhoods, but, despite that, there are still significant differences between the income levels of the new migrants, their employment levels, their skill levels, their educational achievement. With all those differences, can you really get community cohesion?

**Mr Cattle:** I do not think you can get community cohesion unless you tackle the basic inequalities at the same time. At the moment there are a number of groups, particularly Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, in the labour market, particularly women, who are very, very disadvantaged compared with other groups. That is also true, of course, in respect of some of the different black groups and white working-class groups in some areas as well. I do not think it is possible to have cohesion where you have got such a stark set of differences between people competing in the same area. Part of cohesion and part of the original definition of cohesion was to tackle inequalities at the same time, and it has to be done in order to bridge some of those gaps. I do not see them as being two different things. Of course, if you do tackle some of the inequalities, then the chances are that people are going to end up in the same workplace and are going to interact with each other. They are going to end up at universities and in schools in order to interact. The process of measuring inequalities means that you are also maximising the opportunities for people to relate to each other as well on an equal footing.

**Q81 Mr Betts:** Is there not one potential pitfall in this, and certainly I came across it in my own constituency where we have a number of Slovakian migrants who have moved in who actually—I am generalising here—unlike most of the Poles, are probably here as individuals to send money back and probably will go back themselves at some point. Slovaks arrive with these extended families because Roma face persecution in Slovakia, that is

one of the reasons they come. They clearly are getting some pretty poor housing, often overcrowded. There is a particular need to address that issue, particularly the deprivation and housing amongst that community. You create a scheme, therefore, to address it and you forget there are actually still quite a few white indigenous families who live in equally bad housing. That is what you have got to be careful of, that in trying to focus on some of the obvious inequalities you forget some people who might be left on one side.

**Mr Cattle:** I think that is absolutely right, and it goes back to this whole point about single group funding. The issue here is to focus on the need, and if the need is in one particular community, then that should be addressed, but I think you should go out of your way to make sure that where (maybe not on the same scale) a need exists in other communities, you actually try to deal with those at the same time. Otherwise you will get accusations of unfairness and there will be competition between communities. I think that is absolutely the case, and single group funding in the past probably has exacerbated some of those tensions.

**Q82 Mr Betts:** Coming back to what the Government can do to help, speaking to the Head of Tinsley Junior School in my constituency, where there are about 30 kids from Slovakian families, she was saying, “While we have got children who do not speak English terribly well from the Kashmiri community, the children come and they will tend, by and large, to stay with the school and, therefore, we can adopt a planned approach to try and assist them with their language; but where I have got 30 children from Slovakian families, the next month I will have 30 children but they will not be the same children.” How can we target our funding and deal with it in such a way that addresses that sort of population churn, which is a real issue and says something about the very newest migrants that we have?

**Mr Cattle:** I was listening to the debate earlier about funding, and one of the dimensions which was perhaps missed out of that was the need to reflect population churn within the funding formulas. It is not just about numbers, it is about population churn, and that is a key issue in funding which is completely neglected at the moment. There are two ways in which those sorts of issues which you raise are being addressed by local authorities. One is to let the schools deal with it on an individual basis, each coping with a number of Slovakian or Roma children or groups from other countries, and the other is to create some sort of local authority-wide assessment centre. This has been done in a number of local areas, where the children from those different communities start off in those assessment centres, they are turbo-charged through English language, they are assessed for any special needs that they have and then fed back into the schools at a point where they perhaps become slightly more competent and able to deal with some of the things which they will face. I think at the moment local

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authorities are undecided about whether to work in those families of schools and across the piece or whether to leave it to individual schools to sort out. I feel that probably the best way is to deal with it collectively.

**Q83 Mr Betts:** At this stage it is said that it was given no help at all, as I understand it, not specifically.

**Mr Cattle:** Again, you heard about the money given for cohesion. There is a certain amount of money that comes through the EMEG formula anyway, which is a long-standing formula. Schools do have certain other funds available to them, but the general point is right: there is no specific funding which copes with that. Nevertheless, some local authorities have decided that they are going to go for some sort of centralised system of assessment and then pass those children out into schools rather than simply let them go into schools in the first instance.

**Mr Johnson:** A general point in terms of the Commission integrating Egan's recommendations (a very positive step), the Government has endorsed that a lot of them do come with a cost and funding is not always attached to them.

**Q84 Chair:** On that, do you think the Government should take up the CIC suggestion to establish a national body overseeing migration, and, if you do, do you agree with the point that was put forward by Trevor Phillips? Were you here at the beginning?

**Mr Johnson:** Yes.

**Q85 Chair:** He seemed to be suggesting that migrants should not be left to go where the jobs are but should be positively directed at certain bits of the country, though how exactly you are going to do that, I do not know.

**Mr Cattle:** I think there is a danger in setting up another agency within the auspices of government. At the moment a lot of the integration activities are left to the local level, they are left to local authorities and their partners to handle, and I feel, almost irrespective of whether some sort of national agency was established, it would inevitably fall on local authorities. Every situation is very different, and I would be worried about some sort of one-size-fits-all type of approach to that. I think in the end local authorities, health authorities, police authorities, all the other agencies have to work together and sort out their own integration issues. There has been a big focus on migrants today, but actually cohesion issues are not just about migrant communities, there are a lot of long-standing rivalries and differences between generations, and so on, which local authorities are also working on. In Brighton the identifiable gay community has been subject to homophobic violence and the authority there are working on cohesion programmes in respect of that community. I think letting local authorities focus on their local issues is crucial, and I think some national advice and support is inevitable, but a one-size-fits-all approach would be, I think, pretty well untenable.

**Mr Johnson:** I think, undoubtedly, there is a need for better co-ordination at a national level of policies in this area, be it funding in numbers, English language provision, joining up the work of various different government departments on this who do not always talk to one another and do not always seem to be consistent with policies, is definitely needed.

**Q86 Chair:** Would you like to give a concrete example of where they do not seem to be consistent?

**Mr Johnson:** I think the decision on ESOL funding was a case in point, where you had some departments talking about the need for greater English language provision while at the same time the DfES, as it was then, was cutting funding on programmes on English language. That has now been reversed, but I think that showed just the sort of poor quality of joined-up government on this.

**Q87 Chair:** Finally, to what extent do you think the Government's performance indicators on cohesion are useful?

**Mr Cattle:** They are useful. There is no doubt that the indicator, which is how well people get on with others of different backgrounds, is an indicator of sorts, and certainly the ones that have the lowest scores, we tend to agree, probably have got the biggest problems, and often there is a coincidence of those low scores with the activity of the BNP and the far right in those areas, so there is some consistency in that approach. I am pleased that the Government is introducing new indicators in respect of interaction, particularly because that is actually about asking people and measuring the extent to which there is some cross-community activity. I think it is essential that that is introduced; a sense of belonging I think would also be useful. We tend to look at both hard and soft indicators—the hard indicators being about the incidence of race-hate crime or homophobic crime, the extent of inequalities and the soft indicators which are more perceptual—but, most of all, we encourage local authorities and their partners to keep an on-going framework for this where they are constantly measuring the tensions in their communities and they are trying to anticipate the tensions and the difficulties. We are firmly of the view that tensions like the Lozells Riots could have been avoided if there had been much better early-warning systems, much greater intelligence gathering and sharing between different agencies. I think, in the end, the performance indicators are fine, but actually it does mean that local authorities and their partners have to work much more carefully together and to see their role as not simply service deliverers, which is, of course, where perhaps local government has focused in the past, but responsible for anticipating and understanding tensions and mapping population change. It is a much more sophisticated approach to what goes on at the local level than some of the service delivery styles in the past.

**Mr Johnson:** It is the measuring and interaction points that are particularly important. I think we

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would share some of Trevor's concerns about too much funding being allocated purely on the perception indicators. I think issues such as the school issue and intake of schools should be measured as part of a cohesion indicator across education service delivery rather than just issues that relate purely to cohesion initiatives.

**Chair:** Thank you very much indeed.

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**Tuesday 4 March 2008**

Members present

Dr Phyllis Starkey, in the Chair

Mr Clive Betts  
Andrew George  
Mr Greg Hands

Dr John Pugh  
Emily Thornberry

*Witnesses:* **Mr Shufkat Razaq**, Chair of Burnley Action Partnership (Local Strategic Partnership); **Ms Sajda Majeed**, Programme Manager, The Chai Centre; and **Mr Marian Siwerski**, gave evidence.

**Q88 Chair:** Can I start the meeting and maybe it would help if I quickly explained the purpose of the meeting and the reason why the Committee is here in Burnley. This is the Communities and Local Government Select Committee and our role is to monitor the work of the Department for Communities and Local Government of central government. This is an inquiry on community cohesion and migration and we are visiting three different parts of England. We have already had a visit to Peterborough which has a very high level of European Union migration associated with the agricultural industry; and yesterday and today we are in Burnley; and in a week or two we will be visiting Barking and Dagenham in London. We are taking formal evidence this morning so a transcript will be made of the proceedings and will be made public and will feed into the work of the inquiry. Eventually we will produce a report with recommendations to the Government. The Government is obliged to respond to our recommendations. They do not actually have to do as we ask but if they do not they are usually expected to explain why they are rejecting our recommendations. The purpose of the session this morning is to hear from you your experience of the effects of migration so that it informs our inquiry. We are very clear that there is a very different experience in different parts of the country and we need to understand what is going on in different bits of the country in order to be able to inform our general inquiry. If the individuals who have given evidence go away and think there was something you really should have said that you did not, then we are more than happy to receive written representations from you afterwards. If I could start off to the three witnesses that we have here really and first just ask what each of you would think are the main areas of tension between the black and minority ethnic population, the white population and the more newly arrived migrants?

**Mr Razaq:** I do not think any of us are in a rush to start but I will go first. In terms of what the areas of tensions are, I think the most topical, without being political, is the issue around violent extremism at the moment. In terms of tensions between minority communities, particularly the Muslim community (and Burnley's demographics are such that of the ethnic minority community we have got a sizeable Muslim population) and given the whole global issue around preventing terrorism and extremism, I think one of the tensions would be around how that

is perceived by the local community with the Muslim population that is here as well. I think one of the biggest areas of tension would be when there are acts of extremism taking place elsewhere in the country then obviously that has a knock-on effect in terms of tensions between communities locally as well.

**Q89 Chair:** And how does that manifest itself?

**Mr Razaq:** I think that would probably manifest itself—for example if there is an incident, there will be increased anxieties within the indigenous communities locally and you could see a rise in the number of what you would call racial incidents perhaps, and you would probably see that in the schools and you would probably see that within the community as well. However, I have to say that is one of the main areas of tension which everybody will probably recognise, but then there are other tensions in terms of how regeneration activity takes place and how areas are given preference over others, and that is a long-standing one. I think that has been there for a number of years since the beginning of the Single Regeneration Budget programme: how areas are given preference over other areas in terms of regeneration expenditure. For me those are the two main areas of tension. One is a relatively historic one where the regeneration budget was spent in certain areas and people's perception in other areas was that it was going to one area and not another. I think that is less so now but the first one that I mentioned is probably more of a cause of tension between communities than the other now.

**Ms Majeed:** I kind of agree with most of what Shufkat is saying. From my own experience of bringing the schools together through the Building Schools for the Future project that we have had here, that has led to some issues, particularly in schools where there is a high percentage of white children and the two schools have come together and you have got a small percentage of Asian kids, particularly in the Padiham area I would say, where I think there are some issues around that. I am a bit unsure whether the issue is within the school or from people that support certain political parties and their views and they are brought into schools via the children, but really it is the parents, and maybe there are preconceived ideas about binding two schools together, that issues are going to arise because they

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do not get on. I think the Council have done a lot of work to resolve that issue and are working towards that.

**Mr Siwerski:** I am from Poland. I think the co-operation for example between Polish drivers and English people is good and generally I think when you ask about Polish people it is good. Maybe because I have stayed here with my family I think in schools there is good co-operation. The next problem generally for Polish people is the English language because when you understand, when you ask, this is good, but when you do not understand anything, this is a problem, you do not know where you can go and who can help you. Generally 90 per cent I think the problem is when you do not understand and generally there is a problem with the English language. Between Polish and English people I think relations are generally good. I can tell you from my example because my family live here and generally we have not had a problem. We have been able to rent a house, my daughter goes to school, my wife has a job, so for us it is a good situation because we can live here normally, but people who I think maybe want to live here for three or five years and they are only looking for a job, this is a problem because I am not sure they need the English language, but this is only a group of Polish people, or because the Polish and Czech languages are the same so Polish and Czech people, and I think generally the problem is with the English language.

**Q90 Mr Betts:** Do communities in Burnley really lead separate lives? Are they pretty segregated in terms of the different communities? We learned yesterday that there are areas which are predominantly people who originated from the Asian sub-continent, and there are areas which are predominantly white communities and there is not a lot of interaction between them. Does that create difficulties?

**Mr Razaq:** I think it depends really on what we mean by segregation. I think if we are looking at it from the point of view of whether there are areas where there is a significant-sized Asian population and they cluster together, then that is true. The majority of the Asian population is there but what we are beginning to see is, for want of a better expression, dispersion, so they are moving into other areas. If we are looking at segregation from that point of view of are there areas which are predominantly Asian and are there areas where there are very few Asians, in that context there is segregation but it is not a case that in the supermarket there is an aisle for Asians and an aisle for everybody else. It is not that sort of thing. Some people would perhaps unfortunately paint that kind of picture of Mississippi in the 1960s, or something like that, but that is not the case. There is a physical sense of segregation where there are predominantly Asian areas and other areas where there are very few Asians. If you look more broadly than that and if you look at whether there is any work going on between Asians and the white community, then there is work going on between Asians and the white community; whether Asians are taking part in mainstream activity, then there are Asians taking

part in mainstream activity; whether there are Asians involved in public sector working, then there are. More broadly in terms of integration, I think it is happening but I would not be so naive as to say that it is absolutely perfect. We need to do more but in that context there is not that much segregation as you would probably have a perception coming to Burnley. However, in terms of physical location that is true to an extent.

**Ms Majeed:** I would agree with that. I think there is that segregation physically, but obviously when you are at work, you do not just have Asian friends, you work with all your colleagues, you meet them out of work, and it is the same in schools. When Shufkat touched on mainstream activities, I know quite a few Asian kids who go to boxing clubs or karate clubs and they are not special clubs set up for Asian kids, they are clubs that are set up for anybody in Burnley and anybody can attend. I do feel that there is integration. Again there is a fair bit we can do. If people choose to live in a certain part of the area because there is a higher percentage of Asians, it is probably because it is convenient for them. The shops are close by, the mosques are close by and the schools are close by. It is a lot about convenience and the feeling they want to live close to family members, mothers and fathers, in the same way that we had in Britain with the white community a number of years ago. I do not feel segregated at all. I think there are opportunities to integrate with people if you want to invite people into your house. It does not necessarily mean if you are living on a housing estate where there is an even balance of white and Asian families they are going to integrate any better.

**Q91 Mr Betts:** Can I pick up on what you said before about concerns about who was getting the money for housing renovation work. That did imply rather that there were some areas perceived to be Asian areas and some white areas, and perhaps some conflicts and tensions about where the money was going because it either went to a white area or an Asian area. Can you say a bit more about that?

**Mr Razaq:** It was more so the case; it is not the case as much now. In certain circumstances I would say certain people for their own political agendas would still use that, but in terms of the wider community generally in my opinion the feeling that Asian areas are getting more than white areas has been addressed, I would say pretty well, by the local authority. There was a time when there was this view that the Asian areas were getting all the money and the white areas were not. The reality of the matter, which you will be aware of, is it is dependent on deprivation. Money comes into Burnley for certain areas because of the deprivation those areas face. We have five areas particularly which are amongst the most deprived in the country and of those five areas one would be regarded as an Asian area because the majority of the population there is Asian. Communication was an issue and how it was communicated out to the community of why a particular area was getting funds and others did not seem to be getting funds, and that has been addressed. There was also a drive from government

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to try and address that issue but the local authority particularly, especially in recent years, have done well in trying to address that issue, so now the communication is improved and I think the perception amongst people will also be improved. Certain people I come in touch with now see that is an area that is getting extra support, not because it is an Asian area but because it is a deprived area, and there are other areas that are deprived as well that warrant the same support. That still leaves us with a different kind of issue that of the 15 wards, the 10 that are not deprived say, “Why are those areas getting it?” and it is no longer “Why are the Asians getting it?”

**Q92 Mr Betts:** Sometimes it is all or nothing and you get everything in the five and nothing outside?

**Mr Razaq:** The perception is “those people cannot be bothered working so why are they getting that support when we are working very hard and we are not having our local community centre done up?” so the issue has changed.

**Q93 Andrew George:** This is not so much a devil’s advocate question as a Martian’s advocate question. I have just come here from Mars, and Burnley is a fantastic place, the sun always shines as far as I can see, and it is a community rich in history, and there are people who have come here over the years from different parts of the world so it is rich in culture as well. Please explain to me why there are tensions here? Why are people not celebrating that cultural diversity? Why are people not enriching themselves and learning more from each other rather than falling out with each other?

**Ms Majeed:** What I would say is that they were falling out but they are making up now, so it is something that did happen, but probably in the past three years I have seen a change for the better because there is integration and people do come together. My own perception is I feel when people were writing newspaper columns and saying such-and-such is happening in this area and such-and-such funding is happening in this area—and I am talking historically now because those things have happened—and what I am saying is that some of those issues have been resolved and things that were being written in the paper as open letters were then being discussed in pubs, clubs and maybe households, and that led to this build-up of “them and us”. As Shufkat said, a lot of that has been addressed now and it has changed. It is maybe a question about something that happened in history and we are working to make it better. Some of the things that I would point out include the Building Good Community Relations programme that I have been involved in in the past three years. There is a better network of people now across Burnley that have that trust with one another and can approach one another and ask questions rather than hearing rumours and thinking there is this going on and that going on. There has been a lot of good work in building up that relationship so people have that trust in one another.

**Q94 Mr Betts:** So you started off badly, rumours did not particularly help, but you are starting to make things better?

**Ms Majeed:** Yes, I think the media have played a key part in that, maybe there are more positive messages coming out from our local newspaper than there were in the past.

**Mr Razaq:** When I speak to my parents and those that are the first generation of Asians to come particularly into Burnley, things did not start off bad, things were quite good. When they came here, they were made welcome, and they had many friends from the indigenous community, the white community. Yes, there were racial remarks because it was the late 1960s and 1970s and because people were seeing different people, people who were different to them, so there was that, “Who are these people?” and all that, but it was not bad. They got on well. They went to the factories. The economy round here was pretty good from what my parents tell me, there were plenty of jobs, things were pretty good and everybody generally got on well. Then when the decline started, the factories started disappearing and the jobs were not there. My father tells me if he did not like the work he could leave one factory in the morning and walk into another factory in the afternoon. The situation was like that because we had some major industries round here. But when the decline started, the jobs started disappearing and there is a correlation between that and the tensions building up between communities. As far as it goes with regards to my parents’ experience, because I cannot remember how these tensions came about because in the school that I went to, there were 1,000 students and 20 Asians and in the five years I was there, there were two fights between an Asian and a white person. That is fact so it was fine. But then after that as the deprivation issues have got more severe and people are looking at their own circumstances thinking, “I haven’t got the money, I can’t get a job” (because you could not get jobs that did not need skills) and tensions started building up. If you are frustrated with your own situation, it is natural—everybody does it—you look to blame somebody else or a perception is created where you feel somebody else is taking an opportunity away from you. It started off good, it was good for quite some while, and tensions then came because of deprivation. I think things are now improving again as the situation in the town begins to improve as well.

**Andrew George:** If you follow the logic of that argument, you would say that the way of overcoming the tensions is to inject wealth and prosperity into the area, you do not need community development or anything else.

**Chair:** That is a question that Emily was going to pursue.

**Q95 Emily Thornberry:** I was going to ask what else should the Government do to help your community bind together? If there is one recommendation you would want us to take away, what would it be?

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**Ms Majeed:** I think it is a combination of maybe a bit more to do with community development, but we have to be really careful. I have a child who is 14 and for him integration and segregation are not really issues. If we keep on saying, “Right kids, we need to come together, let’s look at how we integrate,” suddenly it becomes an issue and it has not been an issue up until we have said it is an issue. It is about dealing with it in a subtle way and bringing young people together so they can come together and integrate. If you live in communities like Daneshouse, apart from if you are involved in mainstream sports activities out of school maybe you are not going to get that opportunity to integrate with other children that are not from the Asian community. We have had community development around for a long time. I have been involved in community development probably for 15 years. It needs innovation, it needs something new rather than, “Let’s sit down and have samosas and that is a salwar kameez”—we need a bit more than that and we need to make it fun. With regeneration in a way the two are linked together because if there is more work, more people going out and working, they are integrating and that in itself can lead to community development because if you are working in a place together, you are doing social activities together out of work, then you are interacting, are you not, if that makes sense.

**Mr Razaq:** I will give you an example of something that has been helpful to us. What has been helpful to us in recent years is where we have received funding (and it is not a huge amount relatively speaking but it is still a help) from the Neighbourhood Renewal funding, we have had some flexibility. The reasons we got that funding is because we are one of the most deprived areas in the country and we were given some flexibility in how we used that funding and we used that funding a bit differently to how previous regeneration funding has been used. For example, the previous regeneration funding has focused on particular areas so SRB was focused on Burnley Wood, Daneshouse and Stoneyholme and Bank Hall but in the Neighbourhood Renewal funding which we got there was some flexibility in how we used that. We could use that to cover the whole borough and lift the game for the whole borough which in turn would lift the game for the most deprived areas, and that has been helpful to us. I think one thing that CLG in particular could do is continue allowing that degree of flexibility in funds like the Neighbourhood Renewal funding, which we are in receipt of, and any other funding which comes on-stream to help support Super Output Areas. If we are allowed to continue with the degree of flexibility we have had in terms of using that funding to leverage mainstream funds, not just focusing it on the most deprived areas but allowing us to focus it on the whole borough, that would be helpful.

**Q96 Emily Thornberry:** If our priority as a Labour Government is to help the poorest then why would we be giving it to the whole borough and not targeting it to the poorest?

**Mr Razaq:** The poorest area is not an island on its own; it is within a borough. We have tried this on the ground and it worked. If you focus £1 million on the poorest areas—and there is absolutely a reason to focus it on the poorest areas—the impact is less and the impact you are likely to get from focusing it on the borough would be far greater, and that is first-hand experience that I have had and colleagues have had working in regeneration. That is what works on the ground. People may disagree with that but that is what I have seen and I would advocate that is what you need to do to lift the poorest areas and raise the whole game in the borough.

**Chair:** That is a very interesting point you have made. Would you be able to drop us a note with some specific detail—

**Emily Thornberry:** --- And perhaps some examples?

**Q97 Chair:** --- because that would be really helpful.

**Mr Razaq:** If you are trying to promote enterprise, something I am very familiar with, and if you focus enterprise on the most deprived areas and you invested, say, £100,000 in a campaign to promote enterprise in the poorest areas, there is a whole host of issues and you are going to get three or four or maybe ten businesses started. If you focus it more widely on the whole area you may get 20 or 30 businesses starting up which in turn will be employing people from the poorest areas. That is an example. If you focus it purely on that area you are not going to get that because of issues in that area. But I could drop you a note with more specific details.

**Q98 Mr Hands:** First of all I would say we are obviously a cross-party Committee representing all three main political parties. Could I ask Mr Siwerski to tell us a little bit about the Polish community in Burnley first of all. Is it predominantly recent arrivals or is there a longer-standing Polish community?

**Mr Siwerski:** For me Polish people are in two groups. One group is a group where people want to live here for three or five years but they have family in Poland and I think they will only be here three or five years and then they will live in Poland. The second group is people who live here and have families. I think once you have family here you know what you want. Like my situation, it is step-by-step, you have a job, a house, you know what you want, but generally Polish people or Polish groups I am not sure what I can tell you.

**Q99 Mr Hands:** What would you say are the problems that recent arrivals from Poland have here? Also what is the impression that recent arrivals from Poland have of community relations in Burnley, coming as an outsider, not quite the man arriving from Mars that my colleague described but someone arriving from Poland, what they would make of these two communities in Burnley?

**Mr Siwerski:** I do not know, I cannot tell you, I am not sure.

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**Q100 Mr Hands:** Can I just ask a final question about whether anybody provided English language classes to recent arrivals from Poland, whether it be employers, the local authority or privately, and if that is a priority?

**Mr Siwerski:** No, English language, for example when I was here the first day when I got to the office and met my boss I told him I want to learn the English language my colleague and I—because I came here together with my colleague—went to

Burnley College, which was English language and because we are Catholic and here is a Catholic Church, Father Brian organised a course for people from Poland. I came and learnt the English language once every week.

**Chair:** Right, well, I am afraid we have not been able to explore all the topics we might have wanted to but thank you very much indeed. As I say, if there are additional points do write into us. Thank you very much.

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*Witnesses:* **Ms Brenda Rochester**, Canalside Community Association; **Mr Richard Chipps**, Thursby Gardens Community Action Group; **Ms Ann Royle**, Central Briercliffe Road Action Group; and **Mr Stewart Bone**, Piccadilly's Moving Community Association, gave evidence.

**Chair:** I think you were here in the audience so you have heard the explanation of why we are here and what we are up to so we will move straight into questions. Clive?

**Q101 Mr Betts:** Can you begin by saying, as you see things, what are the main areas of tension, the main issues between the various communities in Burnley—the white community, the ethnic minority community and the newly arrived people from Poland—or perhaps you will tell me there are not any tensions at all?

**Ms Rochester:** That will depend where you live. I live in a little area of the town called Top-of-the-Town which is adjacent to the town centre. Fortunately we are lucky in that we do not have racial tension.

**Q102 Mr Betts:** Not knowing the area, is this an area with a mixed community?

**Ms Rochester:** Yes we have a community and following up on the gentleman from Mars, we have done a lot --- silence from Mars! Our community has done a lot. We have done a lot of projects that are looking at where the town was, how it has progressed from being one type of community right through, and we recently did a project called The Past is our Future so we could look and engage and find the richness of other cultures and see how that has built Burnley as a place to be. We find that a lot of the unrest—and I do not want to be shot down for this—really stems from the media. Things are blown out of proportion on television, not necessarily radio, not necessarily local papers, but things are blown out of proportion and this bothers us. We are a community and whilst people see or perceive divisions that are not really there then that is our difficulty. We work very hard across our communities at grass-roots level. We engage with people. I am not just interested in the Canalside community. I work across what I call grass-roots levels and that is where the support needs to be.

**Q103 Chair:** What about the rest of you?

**Mr Chipps:** There are tensions which exist. It was quite relevant what Brenda said—it depends where you live in the town. We live bordering right on to the Asian community and we have always worked alongside the Asian community. Going back to what

the previous panel said, in the 1970s there were no problems. The tensions that are there now are around not only the perception but the fact that a lot of money is spent within the Asian area and alongside them you have got the indigenous whites who are equally poor, living in the same conditions, very often ignored, so throughout the white community that is very prevalent. There is not only perception but the facts. It would be quite easy for us to ascertain whether this is correct or not. Let us get the facts together and let us have a look where it is spent once and for all and either dismiss this perception or let us address it, but that is the main one.

**Mr Bone:** I live a long way away from what is perceived as the Asian communities. I live over the south side of the town here. However, the predominant population of this area is fairly old, certainly well-established, long-established people who have been living there for many generations, but there is also quite a large number of houses that have been bought up by landlords, frequently considered to be unscrupulous landlords, so we consider that we have suffered from what is referred to as adjacent area problems in that when an area is targeted for improvement, we will get the movement across of people who perhaps only stay in a property for six months and then move on again, and this tends to bring a lot of unrest because in the majority these people tend to be not working, for whatever reason, and also they have quite strong attitudes regarding they are right and that is it. I also have a foot in another part of town which is slap-bang in the middle of the Asian community because I am on the management committee of Burnley Community Farm. Burnley Community Farm was proposed from the disturbances of 2001 so that it would be able to be a cohesive function to actually bring communities together, because once you have this structure of a farm, people will come to it and will mix. The real problem we have experienced is that over the years we have just not been able to get a piece of land. This is down to the community deciding it should be on a certain piece of land at Enabled Action Plan level but at the master planning level the consultants then decided it was going to be housing. We are now into the Area Action Plan stage and it is going to be housing but there is going to be

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a school becoming vacant in the next year, so we have been pushed back quite a few years, six or seven years, but when that school becomes vacant we can possibly have part of it but the rest of it is going to be used for football fields adjacent to the sliproad for the motorway. As soon as we talk about community cohesion and putting the farm in one area, any one area, people not very far away say, "Why are they getting it again?" This has been said to me within the last week, "Why are they getting it again?" It does not matter whether it is people over there, people over there or people cheek-by-jowl, if you put it one side of a road, it is them, if it is the other side of the road, it is us. No matter where you go in Burnley there are "us and them"; it can be between whites on either side of Colmworth Lane, it does not matter, it is the territorial mentality. I have only been in Burnley less than ten years now, although I lived in Rossendale before, and it is quite amazing the territorial nature. Because of the nature of the original Asian influx, which was floor workers in the cotton mills, they went to certain geographical areas and that is the predominant areas where they have remained. We cannot differentiate between a recent arrival and a long-term resident because they tend to look after themselves, should we say. I have had white people ask me, "Why do those Asians get these businesses?" and I say to them, "Because they have a culture of working together, of building a family business and running it in such a way that it becomes successful. Why don't you do something?" They say, "I can't do that, someone should give me a job." That is a built-in attitude, it is an attitude which I try to break with whoever I speak but you cannot change a lot of the attitudes. I will mention Polish people because my immediate neighbours to my left-hand side are Polish. I live in what is called a two-up two-down and we did have bad neighbours there. We managed by working with the landlady to get rid of them and she could not be bothered any more and put the house up for sale. It was bought by a craftsman/businessman Polish man. You could not meet a nicer person. We said to him, "You make sure you put in some good tenants," and he said, "I will get you a nice Polish family". And he did; they are nice; we could not have better neighbours and a better landlord, and that is fantastic. However it depends, we have got some fairly newly moved in whites across the road, four children, and they now take to kicking the car that these Polish people have bought and then running off. They are getting harassed now purely for the fun of it. I have not caught them yet but watch out!

**Ms Royle:** I would like to say the area I live in is classed as one of the better areas but over the past two years we have begun to notice a big difference in the fact that what is happening in the rest of Burnley is affecting the area that we live in. There has been a lot of migration with Asians and Polish coming into the area. With the Polish we have no problem; they have integrated very well; they get on with everybody.

**Q104 Mr Betts:** Are these mainly Polish people who come as families rather than single people?

**Ms Royle:** Some are families but you tend to find the majority are single at the moment. Obviously they have come over to try and find jobs before they bring their families over.

**Q105 Chair:** Are there issues of houses in multiple occupation?

**Ms Royle:** There are, yes, and like this gentleman here we have problems with landlords moving into bad properties, some making them multiples. Yes, we have had a great lot of problems with that, but we tend to find those are mostly the white majority that we have the problems with in these multi-flats. What we find with the Asians is they tend to keep to themselves and not really integrate with us. There are a couple of families that do but we are finding the more that are coming up the less they are integrating with us. They are keeping themselves to themselves, which we really do not want; we want them to integrate with the whole of the area that we live in. We tend to find that we are getting a lot of problems that the local council seem to be ignoring because they are concentrating more on the "Elevate" areas, and what we have been trying to get over to the Council is they should start doing something about this now, nip it in the bud as we say, before we become another Elevate area, because that is what we do not want, but because of what is happening in the rest of Burnley it is affecting our area.

**Dr Pugh:** Elevate areas did you say?

**Chair:** Which means what?

**Q106 Andrew George:** Is that an area of Burnley?

**Mr Chipps:** A regeneration area.

**Q107 Chair:** What would you want the Council to do that you think they are not doing?

**Ms Royle:** What I want them to do is to take notice that what is happening in the other areas of Burnley is impacting on our area. Like I say, the landlords have now started moving into our area now that these other areas are being knocked down, so the landlords are moving into our area and other areas that are not in the elevate area, which is having an effect on us because landlords are buying all the properties that are coming up for sale.

**Mr Chipps:** This is a problem throughout Burnley. When you tackle one area in particular, the hardcore element which is causing those problems, generally speaking, moves because of the harassment they receive from the police and the council. Rather than tackling them personally and individually, they move out and obviously create problems in other areas, so instead of having one area with 20 families, they move into three or four other areas and we get this problem again. Until we tackle the hardcore element, unfortunately we are just shifting them around and experiencing the same problem every ten years from the same people. Another serious problem as regards the tensions is the fact that because of the nature of the Asians being very good social networkers and business networkers, as Stewart brought up, the problem is also they have a mistrust of the police and do not use the police and very often will deal with things themselves, which

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then causes tension amongst the white community because inevitably they deal with things themselves and if you get more than one or two Asians collecting, the reaction generally speaking is you will get one or two whites collecting in retaliation because of this sort of gang culture. The strange thing is the perception amongst the white people is they are favoured by the police and the council and yet they have this mistrust of the police, so it is strange.

**Q108 Dr Pugh:** The evidence you are giving is forming into a pattern from both sets of witnesses so far. The previous witness, Mr Razaq, made an analysis of the racial segregation in Burnley on the following lines: he said that people live in different areas but they mix in leisure, they mix in the shopping environment, they mix in public sector employment. It has already been touched upon but is there the same mix in for example small enterprises or are those more segregated? In other words, is the private sector more manifestly segregated than the public sector in employment terms?

**Mr Bone:** I worked for some months for an Asian-owned and run business which was based in Essex but they had a branch up here where I was working. I got on perfectly well with everybody in the company, but I was a fairly senior technical person whereas the line operatives were under a very great deal of pressure by the management and I do not think it would have been tolerated if it had been predominantly white people, they would not have worked in those conditions.

**Q109 Dr Pugh:** Are you saying that SMEs in general are mono-ethnic or are they usually or characteristically mixed? What is your view?

**Mr Bone:** Predominantly mono-ethnic.

**Q110 Dr Pugh:** The other point made which I think is quite a crucial one is it is not necessarily a problem if people mix in other environments the fact that they live in distinct environments. That clearly is the pattern in Burnley. Do you see that as a problem, the fact that people go back to different areas and streets, and do you think it will change?

**Mr Bone:** The mix socially I think is only the skimming of certain people who have integrated. I have got a word for it, I call it the "sofa group", it is the same old faces. There could well be 10,000 Asians and you will see only 500 of them who actually do mix. They are the same people as we have seen here today. I mentioned the farm: the chair of the farm is an Asian councillor, the secretary is an Asian lady who is the wife of a councillor. There are five whites on there. We are all, as I say, based up there in the Stoneyholme area and there is a lot of close working when we are there, but I then go back to my area here. There were two Asian families living literally five or six doors away from me, and going back 18 months ago one of them left and about four or five months later the other one left.

**Q111 Dr Pugh:** So it is a problem, that is what you are saying?

**Mr Bone:** The reason the first one left was because the Asian gentleman was living with a white woman partner and his house literally was attacked and he was attacked in his home and he was driven out by a white gang. They were caught. They also at the same time jumped on the car and tried to break into the adjacent house but they badly damaged the car. This was a white attack on two Asians living in a very predominantly long-established white area. There had been a shop directly across the road from them that was Asian-run but the strange point about it was that was a Hindu not a Muslim one, and they used to get a bit of hassle but nothing like as much, and there are these differences. What I will say in the main is the Asian men who wear suits will be seen mixing and they will have jobs that have a natural ethnic mix whereas the majority who work in their own environment will stay in their own environment and will tend not to mix.

**Q112 Dr Pugh:** Is that a general view?

**Mr Chipps:** Again Stewart lives in an area away from the main group. The community groups work very hard at improving these things. There are a lot of Asians and whites who integrate but they only integrate within business or at some sort of community group level. It is true what he says that very often it is a small minority. Everybody is trying to bring more and more people into that but obviously that is difficult. It is not easy, it is the hardcore element of both the white community and the Asian community and obviously for the community to succeed in that they need a lot of help because community groups want to tackle it and community groups are working hard daily but they need help to do that.

**Q113 Chair:** What sort of help do they need?

**Mr Chipps:** Financial and training.

**Ms Rochester:** Can I just elaborate a little bit on that. I am involved with five other community groups across the borough. I am sorry but I get a bit annoyed when people start saying Asian/English/Polish; we are all people, we are all members of society. The project is centred around the training of local young people to become youth workers. Our begging bowl is getting very, very heavy. We have the enthusiasm from the young people, we have the support of all the community, but we are having to beg for money to train those young people. We are doing that so that we engage with young people to give them something positive, to break down barriers, to stop them hanging about on street corners (where sometimes they are not doing anything wrong). I am a member of the older generation and the older generation have got very short memories, they say, "We never did that." Well, I did, I am sorry! That is the problem. We are working and tiring ourselves out getting funding and the funding is put up there and not where it is needed down here. That applies to a lot of the projects I am involved with. Yes, I am chairperson of the Canalside Community Association but I am also the

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chair of other things and we are all chasing the same little pots of money. That sometimes gets, how can I put it, disheartening.

**Mr Bone:** I will give you a quick example of that. I was a computer professional before I retired and we as a community group set up and got funding of £3,500 to £4,000. As part of that I wanted to put a bid in to buy a projector to be able to put slides up and to give presentations and I was told, “No, it does not come within these remits.” We still have £2,500 sitting in the bank but we cannot have a projector. Occasionally we will borrow one and do a presentation but if we had our own we could work much more efficiently and much better.

**Q114 Andrew George:** Can I ask the “man from Mars” cricket test question, not Norman Tebbit’s, that is the community in Burnley across the community play cricket no doubt; are those cricket clubs mixed ethnic given the fact that is one issue which I imagine people do cross the ethnic divide for?

**Mr Chipps:** It is.

**Q115 Andrew George:** Are there mixed clubs or do they tend to be mono-ethnic?

**Mr Chipps:** I am sure they are but it is also a method we are trying to use within the community: sport at a competitive level to involve both communities. I cannot answer for the actual professional clubs because I do not know but I would imagine so.

**Q116 Andrew George:** But at community level?

**Ms Rochester:** We have some young men in our area that are members of Colne Cricket Club so at that level I do not think there is segregation.

**Mr Chipps:** There are two distinct levels of segregation. It does not exist with the people who are more affluent or perhaps more professional where integration is not a problem within the Asian and white community, and generally speaking they fit in very well. Unfortunately, there is the other level which is the community level in the poor areas where there is segregation and where integration does not exist.

**Ms Rochester:** Ours is a poor area.

**Mr Chipps:** Yes but you do not live alongside. Effectively they are not minorities. If you live alongside and within them they become majorities.

**Mr Bone:** Let me change from cricket to football, there was some very good work done by battleaxe granny up there, our chair, who decided to set up a football team. She got funding for kit, *et cetera*, and got some real rough necks into this team and she was able to get funding for a coach. The coach came along and they said, “We are not having anything to do with him, he is Asian,” and that was it. The BNP banners went up I am afraid.

**Q117 Emily Thornberry:** Can I ask a question which I asked the other group as well, which is we have to make recommendations to the Government and we would really like to hear what you think we should be recommending to the Government that they should be doing that would be of help in Burnley. I

think the question I really ought to ask you, to get you to focus, is what would be the one recommendation that you would suggest that we make to the Government?

**Mr Bone:** Trust the community groups; give them flexible funding.

**Mr Chipps:** Put funding into groups and training into groups, basically what the Government are doing, put it into groups; do not rely on agencies and individuals, trust the community groups themselves. They are the only ones who know what should be done within their community. They are the ones who know the problems and they know how to get out of them.

**Mr Bone:** Make us account for the money but trust us to have a bit of flexibility in spending it and show the results.

**Q118 Andrew George:** You did not hear me, Brenda.

**Ms Rochester:** I am sorry, I do have a hearing problem.

**Mr Chipps:** It is your age!

**Ms Rochester:** I seem to have been around since Adam was a lad! I was involved in setting up English-as-a-second-language classes; I was involved in setting up the adult literacy scheme in Burnley; the numeracy scheme in Burnley. I historically know the background to areas in Burnley when parts were called the “Irish Park”. That is the problem I have. I feel that sometimes people do not look far enough back to see how change has evolved. They want it instantly; they want it now. Any change that is going to come about will evolve and it will only evolve when we do not see differences but when we see commonality. I agree with everything that has been said about funding. That is a major burden. There are so many groups who would come together but then they are faced with this filling in of forms. I am not saying we should not fill in forms but they seem to be barriers and instead of funding supporting the groups, gaining the funding appears to be a barrier. At the moment I am involved in a group that is refurbishing and regenerating a Grade II listed building that has been almost let fall down. When people hear what we are doing they say, “How do you find the time?” We do find the time but it is just reliant all the time on volunteers. Sometimes volunteers could do with a lot more support. And again, I do live in a poor area of the town. We have a great divide between terraced houses and very big Victorian terraced houses and we have got a divide as far as wealth is concerned. When I saw the word “migrant” my immediate thought was—and this is where I am going back to something Stewart said—it is not Polish migrants or Asian migrants or whatever; it is the migrants who come into the area, destroy property and move on to destroy some more. We have had a house in our area that was blown up by migrant residents three or four years ago and it is still standing empty and boarded up. That does not encourage other members of our community, people who are working hard to keep their properties in good repair. In fact, the young man who lived next door has moved out of the area purely because of

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that property. There are a lot of issues. It is not just religious or cultural or whatever, there are a lot of issues. Sorry, I will shut up now!

**Chair:** Can I thank you all very much. It has actually been very helpful, it has given us a picture of what is going on here which is really why we came and what we wanted to get. As I say, if you want to put in any more in writing afterwards, we are happy to receive that. Thank you very much indeed.

*Witnesses:* **Councillor Gordon Birtwistle**, Leader, Burnley Borough Council, **Mr Steve Rumbelow**, Chief Executive, Burnley Borough Council, **County Councillor Doreen Pollitt**, Deputy Leader, Lancashire County Services, and **Ms Jane Abdulla**, Senior Policy Officer, Lancashire County Council, gave evidence.

**Q119 Chair:** I am not sure if you have been here during the previous evidence session but quite a lot of the questions we want to ask you now come out of those sessions really and what the various groups were saying. I guess I would like to highlight one of the main issues which seems to have come out of both of the previous groups' evidence which is that many of the tensions here in Burnley seem to come from perceptions or realities that funding is not being allocated fairly. I would like to ask you as councils what efforts you are making to be transparent in your funding allocations and resource allocations?

**Mr Rumbelow:** That has undoubtedly in the past been a particular problem. It is less of a problem now but it is something that as a Council we recognise we cannot be blasé about. Both councils recognise that our community leadership is key to this issue, not least because much of it is about perceptions, and the thing that drives most of the concerns of communities, which was summed up in the last session very well, is about looking at differences and where there are racial differences the differences become racialised, so we are very clear that what we have got to do is to communicate effectively why we are taking the decisions we are taking, why resources are being invested in the way they are being invested, and be open about a dialogue around that.

**Q120 Chair:** Do you think you have failed in the past?

**Mr Rumbelow:** I think we have been very honest in the past that we have not always got that right, and that was one of the contributory factors to the problems we had back in 2001. It was triggered by criminality frankly, but we recognised when we looked at the reasons why it took the turn it took, some of that was about our responsibility for making sure that we were communicating effectively with communities. It is very common for councils to communicate with the communities that are going to benefit but not so common for councils to communicate effectively with communities that are not going to benefit. We are starting to get that right. I am not suggesting for a minute we always get it right, but we have changed our approach to that significantly. We are resourcing that better, we have better resourced management, so we have got people on the ground to get an early warning of some of those issues so we can actually tackle them effectively.

**Q121 Chair:** Councillor Birtwistle?

**Councillor Birtwistle:** I agree with the Chief Executive. I have only been in the post as Leader of the Council for 18 months. When we took over control of the Council 18 months ago we decided the thing that would be at the top of our agenda would be to be honest with the people. We have a mantra that we will make the town "safer, cleaner, greener and more prosperous" but we decided we would also be honest with the people. We took the view then that we would explain to people as best we could how the funding was being supplied, where the funding was being supplied and the reasons why the funding was being supplied. I think that is one of the reasons why now we do not have as much emphasis put on the perception that funding is being unfairly distributed. I think people now understand why it is being distributed as it is because we are being open with everybody.

**Q122 Chair:** Councillor Pollitt?

**County Councillor Pollitt:** Doreen Pollitt, Deputy Leader, Lancashire County Council. We have a funding stream right across county hall. We have a grants committee that issues amounts of grant out to various organisations right across the 12 districts and obviously here as well in Burnley. That was reviewed about two years ago because we found that we had fallen really in a bad arena in one sense because we continued to give the same people the grants and we did not always measure whether those grants were being used properly or not. Two years ago we completely reviewed it all. We now give grants for three years so that there is some consistency in projects because one year is not enough, and we have found that really works. We do performance management to keep our eye on it obviously because it is taxpayers' money and we need to be careful with it and that is working better. The other thing we introduced a couple of years ago was something called Lancashire Local. That is cross-party here in Burnley between the county councillors and the district councillors. We come together and the county councillors devolve quite a substantial amount of money around highways and different other areas where local people can see where the money is going and how it is being used. Each county councillor also has a grant that can be spent on local issues. That might be buying some new cricket stuff for the local cricket club. I live in Accrington and I am the councillor for Accrington, and I gave some money out to a bowling club

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and Ms Jane Abdulla**

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because they were having a youth programme teaching men and women to bowl and they wanted a lightweight ball to use. There are a lot of things going on. We try to work in co-operation with all our districts. We have a good relationship with Burnley. I know Burnley, I only live a few miles down the road in Accrington and so that is helpful. Lancashire Local has been successful. We have got a climate change grant of £1 million put into Lancashire Local for local communities to bid into so they could perhaps cut down on electricity by doing whatever they want to do with the grant to save electricity, *et cetera, et cetera*. There are a lot of different schemes going on at the moment.

**Q123 Dr Pugh:** Can I ask about political leadership. If people live in very distinct communities, obviously there is a great premium for any elected councillor to be seen to be doing the best for the community, to be asking for more resources, more benefits for that community. There is not an enormous political bonus for them in demanding greater political cohesion or more fairness all round. Is that what happens in Burnley, that most politicians become parochial and lose the big picture and basically get in at election time by banging the drum for their own community?

**Councillor Birtwistle:** As a councillor, and I have been a councillor for 25 years, that is a fair comment that all councillors that are worth their salt fight for their own wards.

**Q124 Dr Pugh:** Is there any political risk in doing a bit more than that?

**Councillor Birtwistle:** Certain political parties within the Council will tend to do that, but I think we have all realised that we all represent a specific town, we all represent Burnley, and we are all here to fight for the best for Burnley. A typical example we have at the moment is that we are investing over £1 million in a new sports centre at Padiham. Padiham is at the far extremity of Burnley approaching the Ribble Valley. A lot of councillors are not happy with the way that we have funded some of the capital to build this new facility because they feel they want money spent in their own wards. It is very difficult to explain to people at the other end of the town that this is a facility for the whole of Burnley, not just for Padiham, but for those who contribute to it and pay for it, as the people in Padiham can use the facilities that we have in town. We did have some difficulty pushing that through the budget process. We managed to get it through but there was a lot of argument, and I tried to explain to everybody that we all represent Burnley. All right, we have specific communities we represent in our own wards but we have got to look at the bigger picture. We want Burnley to be a more prosperous place where people would wish to come and live and work.

**Q125 Mr Betts:** What has been said to us is that the racial tensions are probably eased somewhat compared with the problems in the summer of 2001, but that almost seems to be despite the fact you have

still got the situation which the Cantle Report described as “parallel lives” where people are living in different communities, children are going to different schools, different places of employment and are certainly not mixing on a social and leisure activity basis. Is that a fair description of what is going on? Is there a need to get people to integrate more together providing we do not have riots in the streets, is it all right really?

**Councillor Birtwistle:** I agree that we do have parallel lives being lived in Burnley, but provided at the end of the day the parallel lives meet and create some cohesion as and when is required then I feel that is fine. I spend a lot of my time in the mainly Asian ward of Daneshouse and Stoneyholme. I spend a tremendous amount of time up there. They have their own religions, they have their own way of living, but they do come together with the rest of the Burnley community at the Community Festival and they meet at various functions that we have. I live a parallel life to my next-door neighbour, he does not live the life the same as I live, and in the Asian community they do live a separate lifeline to the indigenous community. As far as I am concerned, as long as we all live in harmony and peace and we all get together to sort out our problems and understand each other’s problems, to me people are free to live the lives they wish to lead.

**Mr Rumbelow:** It is undoubtedly the case that community relations are better now than they were then, and I think that is testament to some of the people that the Committee have heard from during your visit over the last day and a half, particularly because, if anything, the conditions have been getting more difficult and the levels of deprivation in Burnley are worse now than they were then. We have, unfortunately, moved in the wrong direction in terms of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) which was published just before Christmas. In 2004 we were the 37th worst district; we are now the 21st worst district. We have some particularly concerning concentrations in the overall concentration indicator; we are the fifth worst nationally and a number of our wards are in the worst one per cent nationally. Given that, I think the community development work and the work that we have been doing in the communities has been incredibly successful. The real issue for us is about general levels of deprivation; it is about fixing the economy; it is about making sure that we have opportunities for all our communities to become economically active, and that actually is the thing that has been touched on this morning that will deal best with the cohesion issues such that they are. That actually is not that different to many other places. I think it is important and I ought to make the point very clearly that Burnley is not by any means unique. We had a particular incident a few years ago and as far as we are concerned that is finished, that has gone, and the communities are working generally quite well together, but there are tensions that occur as a result—I think it was a point made earlier—and it does not matter whether it is an Asian community or white community, if people see someone across

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the other side of the road getting something they perceive to be different and better, they will make a point about that. If that community happens to be of a different racial origin then it is likely that difference will be looked on.

**Q126 Mr Hands:** You talked about Burnley's work being very successful. As we know, Burnley is not unique in having these problems. How much effort is being made to export best practice from Burnley or indeed import best practice from other places? So far the description in the last couple of minutes sounded like Burnley is moving and working entirely in isolation from other towns and cities in the UK that have these problems. I am just wondering what experience you have had interacting with others?

**Ms Abdallah:** The 15 local authorities across Lancashire are working together on community cohesion. There is a county-wide Cohesion Working Group and a county-wide Action Plan and part of that Action Plan is about sharing information—demographic information for example, tension levels, that kind of thing—and also sharing good practice and working on joint projects where there is added value so certainly across the sub region of Lancashire there is joint working across our authorities.

**Mr Rumbelow:** Can I just add, we are working wider as well. We have got a relationship developing with Leicester for example. Not yet Mars but maybe that will come in time! We do make a point of sharing our good practice and going and learning from other places as well.

**Q127 Mr Hands:** Can I also ask a question about violent extremism which cropped up right at the very beginning of the evidence in the very first answer to the very first question. What is the Council doing on efforts to prevent violent extremism? Is the Council really getting to grips with that?

**Ms Abdallah:** There is a Pan-Lancashire (with Preston, Blackburn and Lancashire County Council) Forum on preventing violent extremism that is funded by the national funding stream, the Pathfinder programme. I think at the moment we have got about £500,000 running a range of different projects—working with young people, working with Muslim women in the local community, working with the mosques—so Burnley Council together with the other district councils in Lancashire, Blackburn, Preston and the County, are engaged in a raft of projects really through that Pathfinder programme.

**Q128 Emily Thornberry:** Can I pick up on your point about deprivation because I represent a constituency in the eighth most deprived borough in Britain, Islington where we have many different people bumping along, all living on top of each other and so on. I do not think therefore that it is quite as simple as you have been suggesting. Of course deprivation plays an important part in it but it really is not the full answer. Although we are told that relationships are generally better within Burnley, I am concerned

about the answer that Councillor Birtwistle has given which is, yes, people may live parallel lives but they will come together on set-piece occasions and so that is all right. Surely that is an extremely fragile structure for a town to be based on? Is community cohesion not about more than that?

**Mr Rumbelow:** I am sure Councillor Birtwistle will answer for himself. I am not quite sure he did suggest that it was set-piece occasions.

**Q129 Mr Betts:** It did sound a bit like the sofa set that we heard about before.

**Mr Rumbelow:** It is not a sofa set. What we have got here in Burnley is actually a very mature approach to cohesion. We do not get hysterical about it. That is really important because part of the problem is when people get hysterical. I have to say that has on occasion applied to the Government and the Government has fallen into the trap of being a little reactionary about these issues. It is not all the Government's fault; it is very difficult when the Government makes a point because it often gets turned round by media coverage. However, it is true to say that we believe that living to a degree in segregated communities is not in itself a problem. It is only a problem if those people live entirely parallel lives and do not come together in work or do not feel able to go shopping in the same shopping centres and that kind of thing. It is actually quite natural for people to choose to live close to people they have particular things in common with. We are not saying that it is the answer; we are saying it is more complex than that, but not to get hysterical about it, and not to think the fact—and I guess here we are talking particularly about the Muslim community—that Muslims choose to locate quite close together because of convenience (and that was made very clear earlier, in terms of things like access to mosques and so forth) is in itself is a problem. We are very clear that the biggest problem this town faces is deprivation and the most urgent help we need is investment to turn our economy around. That is not the total answer but that is the biggest part of the answer.

**Ms Abdallah:** The Commission on Integration and Cohesion did a really good job to try and understand what undermines community cohesion. What they found is that people's perceptions about their local area and local services impact upon cohesion, and local circumstances—such as deprivation, job levels, those sorts of things—impact on cohesion. Those are very much things that the local authorities can and do do things about.

**Q130 Emily Thornberry:** But when people were asked, "Do you agree that people of different backgrounds get on well in your local area?" in Burnley only 53 per cent of residents responded positively compared to a national average of 80 per cent.

**Ms Abdallah:** That is right and what you will find is a correlation between that answer and people's answers to perception questions about "What do you think of your area as an area to live?" and a

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correlation with deprivation levels, so Burnley people would answer lower in terms of their perception of Burnley as an area to live or their perception of fairness of service provision, deprivation levels, employment levels, and that kind of thing. What you are saying there is completely consistent with what the Commission found. Again, it is very much things the local authorities can and do, do things about in terms of improving the area.

**Mr Rumbelow:** I think that is a very good technical answer but it is really important that it is complex and therefore it is not adequate just to take that indicator, take that one result and not see it in the context of the nature of this place.

**Q131 Dr Pugh:** Are you suggesting that Burnley people have a dour Lancastrian view of life which leads them to be very pessimistic about their own community, because that is what is being said?

**Mr Rumbelow:** As a newcomer to Burnley, I have to say that I did see a little bit of that when I first arrived, but scratch the surface and it is different.

**Q132 Dr Pugh:** Following on a point you said before, looking to the future, you suggested this geographical segregation by ethnic grouping and so on is not necessarily a problem. Does that mean if things were to be as you would want them to be in Burnley in the next 20 years, we could still come back, not from Mars this time but travelling through time, and find there is still the same degree of segregation geographically occurring in terms of dwellings but people got on a heck of a lot better? Is that a sustainable goal?

**Mr Rumbelow:** No, I would want you to come back in 20 years and see an economy in Burnley that is performing way above where it is now, and what that would mean is there would naturally therefore be something of a break-up of those concentrations because you have got to bear in mind that the housing offer in these communities is at the low end of the housing market.

**Q133 Dr Pugh:** So through development you will have social mobility which will produce mixing of communities?

**Mr Rumbelow:** If people are helped to become economically active they will crawl out of poverty, which is one of the key issues here, and therefore it is entirely likely that they will start to move out and spread. The point was made earlier implying that our South Asian community is a long-standing community. It is not that long standing. We are still in the third generation so it is not a long time.

**Councillor Birtwistle:** I think when the new administration took over, we looked at the problems we had and we all decided, and the management executive agreed, that prosperity was the future, and that is why we managed to achieve an £80 million new college and new university campus that is going to be linked to an enterprise park developing high technology manufacturing. We believe this will give hope to the people of the town that are presently living in conditions that are not acceptable. We hope

that this will lift the town up and then you will get people who are living on salaries where they are able to migrate to other parts of the town which are probably better than the ones they are presently living in and you will get automatic integration of the different races. Where I live is classed as one of the better parts of Burnley. I have lived in my house for 30 years and 30 years ago only the white community lived there. Now we have numerous members of the Asian community who have moved into the area where I live buying up £200,000 houses, but they are the professional people that have come and lived in Burnley, developed in Burnley, their families have developed in Burnley, and they are now integrating in all the areas of the town, but it is a slow process and until we really raise the prosperity of Burnley, when you remember it is an old manufacturing town which has been economically destroyed over the years, until we redevelop it as a high-class manufacturing area, it is a slow progress. I believe you could turn up here in 20 years' time and see a dramatic difference.

**Q134 Dr Pugh:** To be fair, if Burnley was all middle class it might be far less of a problem than we have got now but Burnley will never be all middle class; Burnley will always have a range of different classes, different skills and occupations and so on. What I was really asking you was do you foresee that this will be conditioned by social mobility circumstances where the separation of the working class Asian and the working class white disappears, goes; I am not sure that you do foresee that ever?

**Mr Rumbelow:** In terms of where people choose to live, possibly not. In terms of how people relate to each other, absolutely yes.

**Dr Pugh:** That is a good answer.

**Chair:** Clive, can we ask some questions about the new migrants.

**Q135 Mr Betts:** We have talked about the two separate communities and you have had now a new influx of people from the Eastern European accession states. Has that caused any particular problems within either of the communities? Has that put pressure on public services in any way that you have found difficult to cope with?

**Mr Rumbelow:** I think the Committee will probably have seen that the impact of A8 migration is relatively small here in Burnley, although relatively small changes in a small town like Burnley do occasionally put a few pressures on us. I am not suggesting there have been no pressures as a result of that but they are relatively small. The fact there have been so few A8 people migrating for jobs indicates what our problem is. Our problem is we have not got enough jobs and we have not got enough high-value jobs. In a perverse way, if we were facing some of the problems you will see when you visit other areas that would indicate our economy is doing better than it actually is and a wee bit more pressure of migration to do with work might not be a bad indicator to me, quite frankly, in a strange way. Colleagues elsewhere would not say the same, I am sure. One of the things

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we are facing is how government funding flows. One of the major problems we have got is we have been losing population for the past few years and that is forecast to continue, at a reducing rate but nevertheless it is forecast to continue. Clearly in the way RSG calculations work that is not good news for us. That does not mean that we need to spend less money because we are losing population; in order to turn that around we need to be spending more money. It is very disappointing when you have a 1.2 per cent increase for 2008-09 and 0.5 per cent increase for each of the following two years. It is very disturbing indeed.

**Chair:** Right, we are going to have to come to a close. Can I thank you very much indeed. I am going to have to apologise now to the people in the public gallery. We have just received a note from the party whips back in Westminster that we have got to leave on an earlier train in order to get back in time for a crucial vote. I am very sorry because we said that we would at this point have a half-hour session where

members of the public could contribute. We cannot now do that. It is not under our control. If there are members of the public here who had wanted to contribute, then we are more than happy to receive an e-mail or a written note from you of what you would have wished to have said. We will leave leaflets on the table here so if there are members of the public who would want to get their views through to us the leaflets will tell them how to do it. I am very sorry but it is not under our control. Literally we have just been told that we have got to go back on an earlier train than the one we had intended to go back on. Can I thank all the witnesses for the evidence they have given, it has been very helpful, and particularly thank you Burnley Council and the County Council for helping to organise our visit here. Obviously it has just given us a picture of what is going on in Burnley. It has been very useful and it will help to inform our inquiry. We will of course make sure that people in Burnley know about our inquiry and our report when it is finished. Thank you all very much indeed.

**Tuesday 1 April 2008**

Members present

Dr Phyllis Starkey, in the Chair

John Cummings  
Jim Dobbin

Anne Main  
Dr John Pugh

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*Witness:* **Mr Darra Singh**, Chair of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, gave evidence.

**Q136 Chair:** May I welcome you to this session in our inquiry on community cohesion and migration? It happens that the Committee members, those of us who are here, were this morning in Barking and Dagenham, so we have come fresh from the third of our visits; we have previously been in Burnley and Peterborough. I imagine members may wish to draw on that immediate experience in some of the questioning. May I start off with the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's report? We have taken evidence earlier from Trevor Phillips who described the Government's response to your Commission's report as "modest". Do you agree with that assessment and in what areas would you have wished to have seen the Government's response go further?

**Mr Singh:** First of all, thank you for inviting me. May I say that I welcome your Committee's inquiry into cohesion and migration? I hope that the outcome of your work will help to maintain a momentum behind my Commission's report and the recommendations we made. I am actually a bit more enthusiastic than Trevor Phillips in terms of the Government's response to date. I am also quite enthusiastic about local government's response to the report. You may well have picked that up today in your visit to Barking and Dagenham but, certainly talking to people as a chief executive and to chief executives of other councils, they have taken the report very positively. We made 57 recommendations in the report *Our Shared Future*. In terms of the Government's response published in early February, they demonstrated progress to one degree or another across all those recommendations. There was one in particular which they rejected to do with the rapid rebuttal unit and the one on which I am looking forward to seeing some further developments is around the recommendation focusing on the new agency looking at the integration of new migrants. In overall terms, I do think the pint glass is at least half full, if not a little bit more, and I am looking forward to the momentum we have generated being maintained. In terms of the formal response, they did pick up the work which has been undertaken to date, for example, the new duty on schools around community cohesion and the guidance provided there, the new programme around aiming higher for young people in terms of improving attainment for children and young people across different backgrounds and a swathe of other activities, on English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) for example, and a range of other initiatives, which I will not go through in detail with you at this stage.

**Q137 Chair:** Do you think that Government's new cohesion initiatives such as establishing the specialist cohesion teams provides the support local authorities need or do you think further support is required?

**Mr Singh:** The new initiative does recognise the point we were trying to make in the report which is that we should move away from an approach where we assume that one size fits all, that there is in some way, shape or form an actual template which can then be applicable to every area. Each locality is unique and presents different challenges; there are different histories, different community dynamics. That is the first point I would make. Secondly, in terms of whether the new teams are appropriate, it does depend very much on the challenges within localities and I would hope actually that where further or additional support is required by different areas, CLG and Government will be able to respond positively. I do also think that you will need to keep the work of those teams under review, so I cannot give you a concrete answer yes or no at this stage. We will need to see how the initiative progresses and the feedback we get from localities.

**Q138 Chair:** May I ask you something about the integration of migrants? Do you think that the challenges of integration are the same for all different groups of migrants or is there variation and therefore should the sorts of actions that local authorities or the Government are taking be varied or just the same for all migrants?

**Mr Singh:** They certainly should be varied because obviously migrants come from a range of different backgrounds, come with different levels of affluence, different levels of education, different levels of aspiration, tend to move and reside in different parts of the country. For example, in Ealing we are the fourth most ethnically diverse borough in the country and have a community makeup which is very different, say, to Barking and Dagenham or to local authorities in other parts of the country. What we are trying to get across in our report is that it is very much down to local councils, the leadership there, and local partnerships to assess the dynamics and the needs and requirements in their area and then to craft strategies and plans which respond to those. For example, I used to be chief executive of Luton Borough Council, again a very diverse local authority and very diverse borough. The requirements and challenges there, let us say around educational attainments and the gap between the best achievers and the poorest achievers, were very different to Ealing.

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**Q139 Anne Main:** Given that you were talking about how best to effect cohesion, possibly with cohesion teams, how much consideration have you given to the actual pace of change? It was not the ethnic minorities which were the problem for cohesion which was expressed in Peterborough and indeed in Barking, it was the speed and rapidity with which a local area was expected to adapt to change. How much do you think your cohesion teams would help with that?

**Mr Singh:** The cohesion teams are not mine.

**Q140 Anne Main:** How much do you think cohesion teams could help?

**Mr Singh:** Obviously if they are structured and resourced appropriately then they can help tremendously and the point we were trying to make in the report is that as a country we have a long tradition of dealing with migration and change. What has really surprised a number of people is the pace of change, which you will have picked up over recent years, and also the fact that the patterns of migration, as Trevor Phillips picked up in his evidence to you, are now very different. It is no longer people from the old Commonwealth countries coming to this country but much more varied. So pace and rapidity are particularly important. Some areas are more acclimatised and are used, through their history, to that kind of change; parts of London in particular. In some of the rural areas, Peterborough in particular and the surrounding environment there, the pace of change is something which is a newer phenomenon. It is important particularly for those areas for the new teams to be resourced up to an adequate level to be able to say there are challenges faced in other areas, this is an element of good practice we can bring to assist you and try to get underneath the skin of the issues facing them to make suggestions and proposals about how they can respond appropriately.

**Q141 Chair:** Today has seen the publication of the report of the House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs.

**Mr Singh:** I thought you might ask about that.

**Q142 Chair:** It would be useful just to have your initial—and we recognise obviously that it is initial—response to their main conclusion, which, as I understand it, is that the economic impact of immigration is neutral?

**Mr Singh:** Having very quickly read the report—obviously there is quite a lot of detail in there and I will need to go through it spending a lot more time on it—it seems to me that one of the things they are calling for is a lot more evidence, more research in terms of how we appropriately measure the economic impact or otherwise of migration. Certainly thinking about it not from the macro level but from Ealing's perspective, in terms of migration and the contributions that migrants make to local public sector services, they are tremendous in Ealing. We recruit social workers from abroad, for example, in children's services and the local hospital recruits

nurses and doctors and we have planners from outside the UK. We have a whole range of other services which are dependent to some degree or other on labour from abroad, from outside the UK. It is right that we should also focus on investing in citizens in this country and residents in terms of upskilling them and providing them with the opportunities to access the labour market, but we need to do that in a sustained and measured way rather than saying we should stop one approach and move over to another. Yes, we must always continue to make the case for migration and take the point about effective measurement and evidence. It is interesting that in my reading of the report, in quite a number of the recommendations, though not all, there is a call for better evidence. That must be right.

**Q143 Jim Dobbin:** It has been very interesting for the Committee to look at different parts of the country and the diverse problems which exist across the country. It will be interesting to see how our report turns out. Your Commission's report did not draw any firm conclusions on the significance of immigration as a driver of poor community cohesion. Why was that?

**Mr Singh:** Our report was a very thorough piece of work. As you probably gathered from the report itself, we spoke to something in excess of 2,000 people. We had over 600 written submissions, we talked to individuals from across a whole range of different backgrounds in nine regions in England and we also went to Scotland and Northern Ireland. What we were trying to reflect and what we wanted to be was to be as practical as we possibly could be and not to produce a piece of work which was more of an academic nature but to produce a piece of work with recommendations which actually fed off the contributions we received and built upon the good practice which we had seen. In fact we did look at the impact of migration at a local level and that was our remit as opposed to making a comment about national policy on immigration. That was not our remit and I did not really see that as my role as Chair of the Commission. It was really about how localities can adapt to change and what they can learn from what is happening in other parts of the country which purports to be good practice.

**Q144 Jim Dobbin:** If you believe what you read in the media at the present time recent immigration is seen as a driver of poor community cohesion. Would you agree with that? Do you think other factors such as deprivation or crime could be involved in that?

**Mr Singh:** What the research we undertook as a Commission has clearly shown is that we must avoid being simplistic in terms of trying to identify one single cause of either good or poor levels of cohesion at the moment. There is a whole range of different impacts and the levels of cohesion are driven by an area's history in terms of its industrial makeup and so on; the characteristics of the individuals who live there, for example their age, their qualifications, education and so on and also individual attitudes. Yes, deprivation can have an impact and can drive down levels of cohesion, but it is not always the case

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that happens. Levels of crime and people's fear of crime can also drive down levels of cohesion but that does not always happen and also levels of change, the rate at which an area changes in terms of its population, the so-called churn, can also have an impact. There is not one cause and there is not one solution. That is why each area is unique. Comparing Bradford, for example, to Barking and Dagenham, there are different challenges in both those areas and different responses are required. It does not mean you cannot learn something from each other, but you cannot always export an activity from Barking and Dagenham into Bradford and hope it will have the same effect.

**Q145 Jim Dobbin:** Why do you think a new national body for migration is required?

**Mr Singh:** We, as commissioners, felt that the responsibility, therefore accountability in terms of dealing with and responding to the challenges that migration develops in this country, is fragmented. You will be aware from the submissions you have already received that there is at the moment the Migration Impacts Forum, the Migration Advisory Committee, a Migration Directorate has been established in CLG and responsibilities quite sensibly lie with different government departments. What we were really looking for was something which brought all that together, not because we want to add to the layers of bureaucracy which exist at the moment—and as a bureaucrat I assure you of that—but because there needs to be a focal point in terms of responsibility and accountability and also an ability to respond, for example, positively to the report which was issued this morning, to be able to commission research and develop evidence as well as spread good practice and work with a range of other partners to improve resilience and positive relationships between communities.

**Q146 Jim Dobbin:** So you do not see a new body as duplicating the work of all these other organisations you have mentioned?

**Mr Singh:** No, in my opinion a new body should help to bring that work together and provide a clear sense of accountability and responsibility for these issues. In his evidence Trevor Phillips suggested that we should wait until we got some basic building blocks in place. I think actually, whatever those building blocks are, we should respond more positively to that now. CLG are looking to prepare a business case and I look forward to seeing the outcome of that exercise.

**Q147 Anne Main:** I want you to focus on local population numbers. Before you give me an answer to my question, I should just like to remind you of what was said in their Lordships' report, which was that there was a concern "More work needs to be done—by both central and local government—to assess whether or how much extra funding for local services is needed because of increased immigration. The Government should ensure that local councils have adequate funding to provide and pay for the increasing demand". That was in paragraph 151. We

have heard from councils that they dispute hotly the numbers supposedly living in their local area. What effect do you think the inaccuracies of local population statistics and any lag behind making sure they are up to date has on community cohesion?

**Mr Singh:** There are several impacts. An issue we face in Ealing, if I may revert to being chief executive of Ealing Council, and we are the third largest London borough by population, is that according to the census we have 303,000 residents. When we look at our information around school children, look at our information in terms of national insurance number registrations or workers' registration scheme numbers or indeed GP registrations, we estimate that is an underestimate, at our best estimate, by about 12,000 people. An issue for us all is how to get more real-time information or as close to real time as possible in terms of population numbers. Yes, it definitely does have an impact. Another issue is that the constant doubts which are expressed about the quality of the data do in some way undermine public confidence in the statements made about the number of people living in the UK and in different localities. There is a knock-on effect there. Obviously it feeds into the financial formula and to some extent drives demands on local public services as well. These are points which have been well made to you and we do pick up the issue in our report about the work of the ONS and the need quickly to improve how robust the data collection mechanisms are.

**Q148 Anne Main:** If you accept that community cohesion needs to be funded adequately—I think you have said that a few times and especially with regard to community cohesion teams—and data is lagging behind, can you give us any idea how you think this could be improved?

**Mr Singh:** Yes. Funding is an important issue but I would also argue that we cannot wait until additional funding is provided, if the case can be adequately made and the resources are available, before we respond to the challenges which we face in different localities. What we set out in our report is a range of recommendations which can be done now: initiatives around developing clear local visions, working with our partners to have an effective community strategy; initiatives around research on understanding local populations and community dynamics and aspirations; issues around designing and delivering existing services so they are sensitive to the needs of different communities are all things which can be done now and do not need to await additional resources. That is what we are doing in Ealing, in Barking and Dagenham this is happening and in many localities. The question in addition to that of course is how we adequately reflect the additional demand on services and how we adequately resource that within the system. That is a much bigger question but we do not need to wait to answer that before we do the rest of the work.

**Q149 Anne Main:** In which case what should Government be doing to support local authorities experiencing these rapid population changes?

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**Mr Singh:** A range of things. Central Government's main responsibility in this is setting the appropriate national framework and some of the elements of responses in CLG's document produced earlier this year—

**Q150 Anne Main:** Yes, but we have been told by councils under strain that frameworks, strategies, visions and ideas do not pay the bills when they have communities feeling that they are being short-changed somehow because of all these migrants coming in and using resources. This is just putting it blandly. We have just visited a council today which has 12 BNP members trading on those very fears. I would just like you to try to tell us the real elements of how a community is going to deal with accusations that funds are being stretched and resources are being stretched too thinly.

**Mr Singh:** How we deal with them and how many areas deal with them is first of all by actually being transparent about how resources are allocated, what is available in locality, providing plenty of information in terms of what we spend on different services and how individuals access services. We talk a lot in our report about busting myths in terms of access to housing and education and so on for new arrivals. It is not appropriate for us simply to hold our hands up and say we cannot do much because we do not have enough money or we need more money. If we were to say that, we would be neglecting our responsibility in terms of making the best of our existing resources.

**Q151 Anne Main:** You are anticipating my next question but I still want to ask it exactly. Do you believe then that there is or is not a need for a contingency fund to support local authorities so that money is there up front for those experiencing rapid new inward migration? Should an area which is expecting to take a lot of churn with migration have a special casebook for them to have a contingency grant?

**Mr Singh:** I support the Local Government Association's proposals in terms of a contingency fund. I note the additional funding which has already been made available in response to my Commission's report, the £50 million and how that has been distributed, and I have had information about that. We need to come forward with some evidence as to why that is not enough and also probably do a bit more thinking about how resources are allocated. Yes, it is right to have a contingency fund, but we need to do some careful work about establishing how that contingency fund is allocated.

**Q152 Anne Main:** So the welcome centre at Peterborough, which people cite as being a useful contact and entry point, is expensive to run. Do you think the Government should be funding welcome centres in areas which are expected to welcome lots of migrants?

**Mr Singh:** I come back to the fact that I do not think Government should be saying they will fund welcome centres or a single initiative in every single

area. The case needs to be made by local government and our partners as to what works and why additional resources are required in different areas. We need some evidence to make the case. Coming back to the report issued this morning by the House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs, it is all about making the case and providing the evidence.

**Q153 Anne Main:** Do you support that view?

**Mr Singh:** We should provide the evidence.

**Q154 Chair:** Interestingly, we put that question to the council this morning and their view was that they thought that they wished to provide that information to the new migrants in Barking and Dagenham in a different way. Different councils do different things.

**Mr Singh:** Absolutely.

**Q155 Chair:** On the whole question of funding, CLG actually has two funding streams to go to local authorities related to this matter. There is community cohesion but there is also the prevention of terrorism stream. Do you have any views on the interaction between those two streams and whether it is helpful to have separated the money out in that way and whether councils might not be tempted to apply for one stream of funding and then apply it to projects which more properly might be funded under the other.

**Mr Singh:** Yes, I take the point about the two sources of funding. My view on this and certainly talking to colleague chief executives—interestingly this was picked up in the Government's response to the Commission's report—is that whilst different streams of activity are complementary and there are some overlaps, it is right there should be some targeted activity around PVE, preventing violent extremism, as well as mainstreaming our activity in terms of work around community integration and cohesion. The prevention of violent extremism funding goes into the area of base grant, so yes, councils and LSPs, local strategic partnerships, do have an opportunity to flex some of the funding. In my experience the people I talk to tell me they are very mindful of the criteria which attach to that funding and the aims and objectives of the PVE. Yes, there may well always be a temptation; there is some overlap between the integration and cohesion activity and PVE, preventing violent extremism. It depends where localities wish to target their resources. There is always a temptation but I think people will be sensible about it.

**Q156 Jim Dobbin:** If the Government had to agree to the contingency fund it would be difficult to prioritise that, would it not? They would have to ring-fence it for a start. It would not be easy to allocate that across the country.

**Mr Singh:** Absolutely; yes. If a fund were set up, yes, of course there would need to be criteria for the allocation of that funding. It may well be that some of the factors could be the levels of mobility within particular areas, the levels of churn as demonstrated,

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let us say, by registrations for national insurance numbers, or as demonstrated by demand for GP services for example. Looking at existing data sources, I am using those as a proxy to show that the level of churn is so significant in a locality that there are additional challenges there. If a fund were set up, we would need to do two things: one is for local government and local partnerships to demonstrate their case for the funding to be allocated to particular areas; second is not to use the availability of that funding to divert us from our mainstream activity.

**Q157 Chair:** May I just ask about the question your Commission used to assess community cohesion? I cannot lay my hands on what exactly was asked but it was about how well you feel people of different backgrounds get on in your area. May I relate it to the choices that a number of other local authorities have made, including Barking and Dagenham, to develop their own question to assess community cohesion? I think the Barking and Dagenham one laid stress on fairness and equity within the question they asked. Do you think that it is helpful to tailor

these questions for different areas? If it is, how are we going to get any sort of measure across the country of whether certain areas have problems with community cohesion or not?

**Mr Singh:** The question we used was: how well do people from different backgrounds get on with each other in your locality within a 15- or 20-minute distance from where you live? It is a standard question which has been used in various surveys going back several years. The reason we stuck with that question is precisely because of the point you make, which is that there is a level of consistency there and we can track positive or negative results year on year. As I understand it, that question will go into the new place survey, so there will be consistency at the national level, but within that, individual councils and partnerships in different localities undertake their own surveys. Yes, it is right that people have some flexibility to establish their own questions at a local level. We need to have something where we can compare performance year on year and between localities at a national level and the system is there to do that.

**Chair:** Thank you very much indeed.

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*Witnesses:* **Ms Sally Hunt**, General Secretary, University and College Union (UCU), **Mr Patrick Wintour**, Acting Chair and **Ms Bharti Patel**, Secretary, Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Integration (ABNI), gave evidence.

**Q158 Chair:** We have representatives from two different organisations so I shall leave it to you to decide who responds to the question and if the other organisation wants to add to it, then please do. I should like to start off by focusing on ESOL provision. What effects do you believe the recent changes in ESOL funding have had on the integration of migrants?

**Ms Hunt:** It is fair to say that within the University and College Union we have done extensive work in terms of talking to our members about the impacts on this. What we know is that immediately following the changes there were shifts in waiting lists, there were cuts in courses, there were changes in the numbers of people and the communities who were making use of courses coming in. The difficulty we have had, even though we have submitted in our evidence the data which we have got so you can see it, is that it is still quite patchy in terms of being able to assess this. What we are concerned about is that, even though research has been done by the Department on this, it is aggregated so it is very difficult for any outside organisation to break that down. Anecdotally we know that a lot of communities where women do not necessarily work have been impacted upon and are not necessarily applying in the same numbers they were. We know that there have been different impacts, depending on whether it is settled communities or not. What we cannot tell you, and no-one can unless we get the information coming through from the research already done, is quite how that works in terms of the spread across the country. We know that the

students have changed. What we do not know yet is how that pattern has developed throughout the year. It is something we are very worried about.

**Mr Wintour:** The Board of which I am Acting Chair advises on naturalisation and integration and our principal concern therefore is with those who could loosely be termed aspirant citizens. In my day job I have been tracking things around ESOL over a number of years and I have to say, having seen various substantial pieces of research by KPMG and the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) and now looking at this most recent consultation from the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, DIUS, on the future strategy of ESOL, there does seem to be a very real difficulty around measuring the impact of the current investment in ESOL and being able to identify what is actually happening in terms of the delivery of the teaching of English to the different categories of learners. My experience is that the whole funding of ESOL has remained something of a swamp and I see no signs of that changing.

**Q159 Chair:** The changes which have been announced are giving priority to the groups which one might expect to be applying for citizenship essentially, or indeed some of them may already have it, that is those settled in the UK and overseas spouses and those with refugee status essentially. Are you saying that there is no evidence from either of your organisations whether the investment in free ESOL provision actually has any effect on integration or not?

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**Mr Wintour:** We still wait to hear a very cogent explanation of what the impact of the current level of investment of ESOL has been. Members of my Board, which includes those who have been working in this field for many years, continually visit FE colleges and monitor what the situation is. It seems to be very patchy; there are some areas where there are reports of a significant waiting list for precisely the groups one would have thought would be priorities and therefore should be the beneficiaries of possible changes in funding. I suspect that part of the problem is that the FE colleges, who are the primary deliverers of the teaching programmes, do not have any real appetite for identifying groups by their immigration status and therefore the collection of data about who the learners are and what impact the whole ESOL regime is having does seem difficult to unravel.

**Ms Patel:** Anecdotally it is fair to say that probably all of us here would say that the investment into ESOL is having a positive impact. I think Patrick's point is that what it needs is some further evaluation to work out exactly what that impact is in terms of integration. Certainly the Board has undertaken some visits to FE colleges quite recently and when we go out on these visits we talk to the participants, the learners themselves and it is clear to us that the interaction within the classroom is quite beneficial for integration. If you ask the individuals themselves, they say just how valuable the experience has been for them and for their lives and their integration to be able to speak English. I think Patrick is right when he says that we have not yet seen a formal and rigorous evaluation into the money which has been spent versus what is coming out the other end.

**Q160 John Cummings:** How do you measure the success of the enterprise? What tables do you keep? At any one time can you see how many have taken advantage and have succeeded in learning the language proficiently enough to make themselves understood and perhaps to write?

**Ms Patel:** I did qualify my statement by saying I was speaking anecdotally.

**John Cummings:** Do you have any figures to prove the success or otherwise of the scheme? Who audits the scheme?

**Chair:** The issue is that it is obviously easy to measure how many people learn English; that is dead simple. That is not the question. The question is: how valuable is the investment of free English language provision in helping those individuals to integrate into British society? It is a different issue completely, not whether they have learned English.

**John Cummings:** That is why I was quite specific. I am wondering about the success for people attending this particular course and how proficient they become at the end of the exercise.

**Chair:** We can provide that data. The key question is how it contributes to integration.

**John Cummings:** No, it is the key question for me.

**Q161 Chair:** Can we provide the answer to Mr Cummings question and then can we do the integration one?

**Ms Hunt:** I am not clear whether I will give you a satisfactory answer. Where we were trying to explain the difficulty we all have is that the level and the detail you are asking for simply is not there in the way that we want. If you are looking at what is happening in level one, level two and level three, that will change depending on the environment you are in and the people that we are asking about. One of the key points that we within UCU are stressing is that we need to have disaggregated data so you can get the very answer you want. We all know—and this is worth saying simply to state the obvious—that ESOL courses are possibly the most important thing that can happen to an individual in terms of their ability to integrate within a community. Learning a language is the most important part of integration in order that you can then contribute to the civic society, the economy and all other aspects. What we know, following the changes in funding, is that enrolments across the piece were affected. What we know specifically is that learners who need beginner level courses and entry level courses, the most vulnerable in effect, were the ones who stopped coming in in the levels of numbers that they were. The difficulty is, without having that data available in a way we can really break down, we think it is not possible for huge judgments to be made in terms of how we progress matters. If we know that our tutors, who are at the coalface, who are the people who are very experienced in being able to judge the students who normally try to come in the doors, are telling us that it has shifted and immediately so, we know that there is an issue there in terms of the most vulnerable now not having the access to that support that was there.

**Q162 John Cummings:** So you do not have the necessary data to answer the question I have just asked.

**Ms Hunt:** I do not think that at the moment you can have detailed data and that is something you should be asking for very definitely because it is something we all need to have if we are to make that judgment.

**Q163 Chair:** May I just clarify something because the cost issue is very important here? When you equate level one and the one below with vulnerable, it would be the case, would it not that, for example, an A8 migrant coming over here to work might be going in for those entry level courses, just as a refugee or an asylum seeker?

**Ms Hunt:** It could be. Again, it is about being very careful about not making a generic statement about that and you are asking the right question. One of the difficulties that we think needs to be thought about is that whilst you need to have some kind of national framework in terms of Government support and you need to have that integrated into local government planning and therefore there has to be flexibility, we know that, for example, if you are looking at rural communities having a lot of immigration coming in which is based on farming,

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based on low-paid labour frankly, based on small employers in terms of numbers, the issues there in terms of support and how that is done may be very different to those who are in settled communities in urban areas. Without the detail it is hard for anyone to give you a snap judgment as to whether this policy will work or that will not. There needs to be some level of breakdown there and level of recognition of flexibility.

**John Cummings:** Who is going to collect the detail?

**Chair:** The Government.

**Q164 John Cummings:** Is anyone collecting the detail?

**Ms Hunt:** The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) have an analysis. What we are suggesting is that something needs to be looked at in greater detail.

**Q165 Anne Main:** One of the interesting things which came out of the Lords' report in terms of economic environment was that the biggest winners are immigrants and their employers in the UK. In which case, who should provide—or should anyone provide or be responsible for—the cost of the English-language classes? Should it be the Government? Should it be employers, if they are the ones who seem to be benefiting, or should it be the individuals? Do you have a view on that?

**Mr Wintour:** There is a very strong case in the sense of the labour market being a very important driver around migration, that employers should bear a substantial responsibility not only for the teaching of English-language skills but also more broadly for the whole integration of employees into their local communities.

**Q166 Anne Main:** You are saying they should bear it. Should bear what? The cost of making sure their employees learn English and register on an ESOL course?

**Mr Wintour:** A colleague who sits on the ABNI Board, Sir Gulam Noon, is such an example. His business is a very significant employer of people whose first language is not English and he does provide exactly those sorts of classes for his own workforce and there are other examples of employers who do just that.

**Q167 John Cummings:** It is not across the piece, is it? Are you saying that there should be some statutory obligation on employers of economic migrants?

**Mr Wintour:** Possibly. I remember as a young man being responsible for a business in the days when there was a levy under the old Industrial Training Board and all I can tell you from my own experience is that employers are extremely adept at being able to find their way round all sorts of statutory requirements in terms of the provision of training. It is important that this is looked at in a much broader context of what the Government are doing in order to engage with employers around skills and training rather than perhaps to target some specific provision around English language.

**Q168 Anne Main:** To stop them sidestepping that then, should any new points-based immigration system include English-language provision as a criterion for the employer should they wish to sponsor an overseas worker?

**Mr Wintour:** That would perhaps be effective for those wanting to get A-star rating under the new proposals under this new points system; that, along with various other requirements on employers to undertake responsibility for the integration of migrant workers.

**Q169 Anne Main:** So you have sort of moved to a stronger position than you probably were a few sentences ago.

**Mr Wintour:** I have to say that whilst I have experience of the old Industrial Training Boards, I have not had experience as an employer of working under that sort of regime operated by the Home Office. It is early days. It will be extremely interesting to see.

**Q170 Anne Main:** Local authorities do have to prioritise and we understand there are priorities for asylum seekers and so on and quite rightly so. However, for the people who are in economic activity and appear to be benefiting themselves and their employer I should like to press you to say whether or not you believe there should be a strong case for the employer to do far more to have community cohesion by somehow being actively involved in having to provide funding or guaranteeing sponsoring and funding at the same time.

**Mr Wintour:** I would be very interested to know what evidence you took from employers on your visits, for example in Peterborough, which has clearly had a tremendous influx of migrants in terms of its geographical location, in terms of all the industries. I would be very interested to know what local employers and people did tell you about what they are currently providing, whether for example they have a new link centre.

**Q171 Anne Main:** Actually one of them in Peterborough said to us that they recognised that quite often, apart from the odd health and safety phrase, many of their employees did not need to have English within the workforce and in fact when they got English they often migrated off to better jobs. That was one of the things they told us. I remember hearing about a fork-lift truck company.

**Mr Wintour:** I remember an employer being asked why they were not investing more in training making precisely that point: that if they invested in training their workforce they very often went off to work for somebody else, which suggests that if you want to leave your employees sufficiently incompetent then they will remain with you. It does seem to me a weak argument which I have never found a very attractive one. We are looking at small- and medium-sized employers who very often are working in very low margin industries so, for example, those employers who come within the remit of the new gangmaster licensing authority do not have a lot of margin in

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terms of their investment and that is one of the difficulties. The sort of businesses which would support government efforts in terms of upskilling the workforce by and large are not the sort of employers who directly employ migrants. Take big supermarkets for example, they are crucially dependent on migrants in their supply chain though they may themselves not see themselves as significant employers of migrant labour. In those areas around agriculture, food, packing, processing, care industry, construction industry, very often you are dealing with employers who do not have a terrific track record in terms of their commitment to skill development and would not see this as a primary responsibility and would much prefer to see it parked at the doorstep of Government.

**Ms Patel:** Pushing on the door of voluntary initiatives as well. Patrick helped to broker something called the employers pledge a few years ago and it would be worth seeing how much further it can be taken by employers to implement some of the objectives of that, looking at other possible incentives around. One idea which has come out is the possibility of creating a tax incentive for employers to provide language training and so on. It is worth seeing what further efforts can be made to make employers do some of this voluntarily.

**Ms Hunt:** Yet, there is a very strong case for compulsion because the evidence about voluntary contributions shows that it does not work. If we are looking at discussions taking place and potentially coming forward through the legislation around agency workers, we ought to look at how that is actually going to provide some kind of framework that says that if agencies are bringing in migrant workers, then they have to have some kind of responsibility for what happens to them when they are here. We have to look at how local government is also asked to be accountable in terms of measures they have and language should be one of those and there has to be an element of how they are funding that. Equally, it is not reasonable, given that we all say that this is a priority in terms of government policy and social inclusion, for it simply to be the DIUS which funds it. We ought to be looking at much broader government funding for that in the discussion between ministries as to who has to take responsibility for that. It is not unfair to say that the business case is often put in such a way that we all say that it is in our interests for there to be better language. Actually it is in the interests of many businesses not to comply with the legal minimums which are there in terms of employment rights and language is one of the major tools for a worker to be able to express themselves and actually break out of that. It is something which we have to look at seriously and accept that compulsion is something which is about our own responsibility to individuals coming into the country.

**Q172 Jim Dobbin:** At some stage some migrants will want to attain British citizenship and we see ceremonies sprouting up across the country and in town halls around the country. Of course we are talking about language and the importance of

learning the English language, but there is inaccessibility to courses across the country. To what extent is that a barrier to migrants achieving citizenship?

**Ms Hunt:** It is a huge barrier. It varies literally from community to community and it varies according to locality. It can also vary if someone is within a settled community or someone who has come into a particular location and they want to move to another location because they can start a course in one area which might not be available elsewhere. It again goes back to whether we are absolutely committed to what has been said. If this citizenship involves language, if we are saying that social inclusion has to have at its heart someone's ability to speak and communicate, then what we have to accept is that the provision of ESOL is not something which can simply be about particular funding streams at a national level. It has to be funding streams which take account of local authorities' and FE colleges' ability to focus on the communities they have and respond in that way. It has to be something that accepts that both those who work and those who do not work have different needs and have different ways of accessing that kind of language. A good example is that there are many people, women in particular, who now are not able to access courses in the most basic way. That is not about them coming into the community as strangers; that is about people who are often coming in to families who are already settled, but because they are women, they are the spouse, they do not get free provision for a whole year. It can be that they are part of a family or the child of that family but because they are over 16 it is three years before they get free provision. We are actually setting up barriers in all sorts of different ways and between people within the same community in a way which makes no sense to me if what we are saying is that language, the ability to speak, the ability to commit, is something we believe is actually at the heart of bringing people together. It makes no sense at the moment.

**Q173 Jim Dobbin:** That brings us on to cost of learning English. Lord Goldsmith made a suggestion that loans should be provided. Do you agree with that?

**Ms Hunt:** No. I did read that and thought very hard about it because I can understand that if we have a limit we have to find different ways of doing it. However, there is something very basic here which is that if you are the least able to provide for your own family financially and if you are not able to earn the kind of income which makes you feel secure in terms of being able to provide for your family, I am not quite clear why us suggesting you take out a loan, that is get further into debt, is going to encourage those people anyway and I certainly do not think it is something the state should encourage those people into. If you are already poor, you are already prevented in so many ways from accessing society and accessing support and opportunities. Saying that you have to go into debt in order to try that when you are already not able and not confident is

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something I think we should be very, very careful of. The simple answer is no. Either we believe that we want to have community and we want to have the ability to communicate and we accept that is something we all benefit from collectively as a society or we do not. If we believe that, we should support it.

**Mr Wintour:** There is evidence that for those who are progressing on the journey to citizenship—the evidence that we look at is in terms of the test that people take—the pass rates are very significant. The Bangladeshi community, for example, is under 50 per cent, whereas, perhaps not surprisingly in terms of language, the Australians are 97 per cent. There are significant variations and a lot of the evidence therefore about the language needs of different groups comes through quite strongly in the figures we look at in terms of the results from the UK test. I should add, in the context of our discussions about ESOL, that it is very important to remember that we are not just talking about language but we are talking about teaching about life in the UK in its broadest sense. It is very much in our interest to make sure that the contents of this book, which is about life in the UK in its broadest sense, are well understood. Coming back to our discussion about the role of employers, it is important that they take that on as well and not simply think in terms of the technical language that people need in order to operate in the workplace.

**Q174 Jim Dobbin:** A general question about your working relationship with the Department for Communities and Local Government. Can you tell us a bit about your relationship and some examples of how you are working with the Department?

**Mr Wintour:** My colleague and I had a meeting very recently with the new head of this new Migration Directorate in CLG to find out more about what that was focusing on. We were pleased to hear that was drawing together the different strands within communities and local government, because that is all part of the difficulty of working across different government departments, the Home Office, DIUS, CLG. We were pleased to see that CLG were at least drawing together the threads in that Department. My question to him was to see where there were examples that CLG was able to find of local communities doing this well. Our interest in this, in terms of the tripod, would be the teaching and therefore the role of the FE colleges and the other community groups, the test centre and also the town hall in terms of the celebration when citizens finally go through at the end of the exam. We would like to see much stronger links at the local level and therefore in the case of Darra Singh and the London Borough of Ealing we would like to see the local authority taking much more of a lead in terms of drawing all this together around the delivery of cohesion and citizenship.

**Chair:** It might be made easier when the LSC role stops. May I thank you very much for the evidence you have given us.

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*Witnesses:* Ms Sarah Spencer CBE, Associate Director, Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), University of Oxford, and Professor Richard Black, Sussex Centre for Migration Research, University of Sussex, gave evidence.

**Q175 Dr Pugh:** You have done an extensive amount of research. What has your research shown on the difference between new migrants' experience of community cohesion and that of long-term residents living in the same neighbourhood? Obviously they have different definitions of what community cohesion means to them.

**Ms Spencer:** That is a very important question. While it is valuable that migrants have now at last been brought within the cohesion agenda, there are some distinct experiences which new migrants have which need not to be forgotten. They are distinct because of their newness, their lack of familiarity with the systems in the UK, which brings them information needs, language clearly, as you were discussing earlier. Sometimes their experiences before arrival, particularly if they are refugees, can mean they have health needs. Their limited rights attached to their legal status can limit their access to jobs, their access to voting, to services and so on. The fact that at the early stage all the evidence shows that people do not know how long they are going to stay; they may not know whether they are going to stay at all or how long they are going to stay and their ideas about that tend to change, particularly also perhaps the reaction by the public to them. From that I would just identify three particular issues that they

experience. One is that we found, for instance, from our big study of East European migrants, the difficulties caused for them by the lack of practical information on arrival, lack of information about how to access a GP, how to get a bank account, how to get a national insurance number and so on; just in those early days after arrival when you do not know how the system works and you need information. Secondly, a lot of evidence about the importance of English and the difficulties people have if they do not have English. I do have one or two statistics on that if you want them. I would also highlight the importance of the reaction of British people to them. We found in a study we published with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation last week, *Immigration, Faith and Cohesion in the UK*, that a perception of discrimination and verbal abuse was very important in undermining any sense of belonging in the UK, that however much people might want to feel they belonged, the reaction they were getting was that they did not; some of them were getting that. Also with the East European study, while most of them were socialising well with British people, we did find that one in four had no social contact with British people after two years and while some of that was simply that because of the jobs they were doing they did not meet British people, some of it was

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sometimes because of a negative reaction but also often just a distance, a lack of interest and ignorance about migrants and lack of inclination to make friends.

**Q176 Dr Pugh:** Just stopping you there for a moment, it seems to me that if you get an influx of people into a country you create potentially unstable situations and people on all sides, both the host community and the people arriving, will want to stabilise that situation. What may count as stability will vary. You seem to be suggesting that the migrant community will be relatively happy as long as they do not get abused, know their way around and can sort out one or two things. That is a fairly minimal definition of being integrated into your community. It strikes me the host community may want a lot more before they believe integration and cohesion exist. They may want to see them participate in local activities.

**Ms Spencer:** Our evidence is that they did want to. Certainly the East Europeans were very keen to socialise with British people. It was a loss to them when it did not happen. Most of them did and part of what I am trying to do is not suggest that there is a major crisis here. There are some challenges but on the whole it is going well.

**Q177 Dr Pugh:** That is very interesting. You are suggesting that a large number of the East European arrivals are not simply contented to get in, get the money and get out and know their way around, they really would like a more meaningful relationship with the community they are living with.

**Ms Spencer:** That was certainly the evidence. We did a survey but also in-depth interviews and people wanted to make friends, they wanted to socialise, they regretted it when they did not meet British people, they regretted it when their attempts at friendship were not always reciprocated.

**Q178 Dr Pugh:** Did this correlate with uncertain expectations about how long they might actually be in the host community?

**Ms Spencer:** It correlated in part with language and we did find that people who were fluent in English were more likely to socialise with British people, as you would expect, than with people with limited English. It was also partly that the people we were looking at were in low wage jobs but they were often not people who had limited education; their education levels were higher than the British born people they were working with and that might also have been something of a social barrier.

**Professor Black:** Our work is also with East European migrants, a specific group of East Europeans coming from countries which, at the time we did the work, had not acceded to the European Union. It does compare the levels of cohesion and the aspirations of people in that group and people who are long-term residents which includes some people who were migrants and also others who were native British. It supports what Sarah says. Broadly speaking there is quite a positive picture. On a number of indicators, the level of cohesion

indicators shown by immigrants is lower than for long-term residents so people feel they belong less to their community, they are less actively engaged in civic activities for example. Over time that appears to decline or at least it is a snapshot study, so we can say people who had been in the UK for longer were less likely to feel that they did not belong in their community, were less likely to say that they did not feel they could influence a local decision or less likely to say that they did not volunteer or take part in associations. We cannot know whether that is a time effect or a cohort effect. It might be that the people who came in seven or eight years ago faced better conditions seven or eight years ago than people who came in two or three years ago. Nonetheless there is a positive feature over time. The other thing which clearly does vary over time is language. We found one third of our immigrant sample when they came in had adequate or fluent English; at the time of the interviews 78 per cent said they had adequate or fluent English. Even accounting for self-reporting biases, that still suggests quite a substantial improvement in English language competence alongside what appears to be an improved situation in terms of cohesion of the community they were living in.

**Q179 Dr Pugh:** In terms of the different expectations, both of individual groups of migrants and also the host community, how useful is the Government's definition and measurement of community cohesion actually to you in giving a broad view of how well or how badly we are doing; how much of a problem it is in the first place.

**Professor Black:** Certainly from our point of view we found it reasonably useful. We were able to incorporate questions from the Home Office citizenship survey, for example, into our survey and they gave us quite an interesting range of responses from one third to two thirds of our sample saying they did or did not do various things. Having those set questions gives us an opportunity to compare across the country and also to compare across time. With a statistical hat on, I would say do not change the definitions without having a good reason to do so because you throw away the opportunity to do really valuable comparisons. That said, I can see that there might be some arguments. The Barking and Dagenham insistence, for example, on looking at fairness and equality seems to me reasonable. The question would be how you are going to define that and how you get that into an indicator which you can then monitor over time because ideally that is what you would want to be doing.

**Q180 Dr Pugh:** As a matter of interest, how many East Europeans actually do vote in local elections percentage-wise? I should imagine it is a very, very small percentage, is it?

**Professor Black:** In my sample it would be none, because they would not have had the right to do so.

**Ms Spencer:** Ours would have acquired the right to do so after they became EU citizens, but I do not know what proportion of them voted. In the study

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we published last week on new migrants we were surprised to find a higher proportion—still a minority—had voted than we expected.

**Q181 Chair:** Could you just clarify that? From the most recent study you did, you do have data on the proportion who voted.

**Ms Spencer:** The proportion who were registered who voted; yes. We were not able to establish though whether they were eligible to register, which is why I would not have particularly drawn attention to the data.

**Q182 Chair:** Can you off hand remember what the proportion was?

**Ms Spencer:** No, but I can provide details.

**Q183 Chair:** Could you do that?

**Ms Spencer:** Yes. May I say on the definition that I agree with Richard about the breadth of the definition? The dimension of inequality within that definition is very important and I do worry that PSA21 does not seek to measure that. There is a separate PSA which covers discrimination and inequality which means that when government departments and local authorities are looking at this PSA they are looking at belonging, they are looking at active participation, all good things, but the equality dimension is separate. Given the evidence about the importance of discrimination in both equality outcomes but also whether people do feel they belong, that is something we need to watch out for and the funding for cohesion does not cover that either.

**Professor Black:** A small difference in the nature of the question can make a big difference to the answers. For example when talking of belonging, two thirds of our sample of new immigrants felt they belonged in the UK but only one third felt they belonged in their community. Similarly, if you ask people whether they have participated in civic actions or feel they can change decisions at a local level, around 20 per cent say they can do that. If you ask people whether they participate in local clubs and associations and particularly if you include sports clubs, the figure is back up and there is a majority. What exactly you are asking about does make a difference. You cannot simply say you are going to measure belonging. You have to ask “belonging to what?”.

**Q184 Dr Pugh:** Just to press the point. Are you suggesting that if it were the case that a sub set of migrants were very happy where they were and the host community were very happy to have them but they happened to occupy a low strata of jobs which were all pretty uniform, pretty unskilled and so on, that would be an absence of community cohesion even though there would be no evidence of tension or hostility or anything like that?

**Ms Spencer:** The evidence shows that the low wage jobs that people do, with the mobility they often have, the shift work, the long hours and the low pay, are a barrier to them participating more actively in community life and socially or indeed taking English

classes. You ask whether we need to be worried about that when there is no tension on the streets. I think tension on the streets would be a rather limited definition of cohesion and it is a loss for the migrants and a loss for the community if people cannot participate actively. There seems to be a willingness there to do so. I might say that in the study which was published last week, where again there were rather low levels of participation in community organisations, something like 25 per cent, but about 40 per cent of people who had lived in the country ten years. What we did find was a striking degree of agreement between migrants and non-migrants as to what the issues were in the local community: crime, drugs, pollution. Everybody cared about the same things which would suggest that there was a potential for collective action to address them.

**Q185 Dr Pugh:** Probably blaming different causes.

**Ms Spencer:** Perhaps.

**Q186 Dr Pugh:** Professor Black, you are obviously dealing with people from new accession countries and some of them will not be Christian but Muslim. The model we have of a community is a rather artificial model but a crude one that everybody arrives at the Queen Vic or the Rovers' Return or somewhere like that at some point and clearly there are religious scruples in connection with this, there are different traditions and so on. Will people from places like Bulgaria necessarily have a bigger problem simply because of differences, not just simply of nationality but differences of faith?

**Professor Black:** Without having measured it directly, the group we were concerned with came from former communist countries where levels of religious observance were relatively low and largely on a par with the secularism of British society.

**Q187 Chair:** I am not quite sure whether this is a group which you studied but one of you said that for the East European migrants you looked at, put simply, the better their English, the better they felt they belonged here. Is that right?

**Ms Spencer:** Yes. They were more likely to feel welcome and to feel treated as an equal.

**Q188 Chair:** Did you also look at longer settled immigrant communities, for example Pakistani and Bangladeshi ones, where many of the women may have been here for a long time but do not have very good language skills? Was there any correlation there between English and feeling you belonged?

**Professor Black:** My understanding is that there is pretty good cross-national evidence both from the UK and also from the United States and Canada that learning English is about the single most useful thing you can do to integrate in general and in particular in the labour market. Also one of the findings of our study was that whereas when they came in men and women had roughly equal levels of English language proficiency—and indeed women were better educated, around half of our sample of women had university level education compared with around one third of men—by the time we

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interviewed them, men's English language proficiency had substantially increased whereas women's had largely not. One of the explanations for that is the kind of work that people are doing. The immigrants that we interviewed were very much concentrated in three sectors: in hotels and restaurants, in cleaning in general and in construction and obviously men were very much in construction and women were very much in cleaning and both were doing hotel and restaurant work although often in different parts of hotels and restaurants. If you think about it, some of those jobs necessitate working with people and working with people from other backgrounds, sometimes English, sometimes from other countries, but where English is necessarily the common language. To take one extreme, when people were going into cleaning work, cleaning offices, for example, is an increasingly lone worker situation. You have your time to go in and clean your particular part of the office and the only person you ever meet is your supervisor and companies perhaps even deliberately organise things so that workers do not need to interact with each other. In such employment, which is predominantly women's employment, the need to learn English and the opportunity to learn English is very limited. Contrast that with a construction site, where people working on a construction site might well these days be from a variety of different national backgrounds and where health and safety alone necessitate people interacting, at least in a rudimentary way. These are the kinds of workplaces where English language proficiency can sometimes improve quite dramatically, even in the absence of ESOL I would say. We need to look at what people are doing in terms of understanding both what the likelihood is of them improving their English and also what the need is for them to do so.

**Q189 Chair:** You have obviously identified a lack of English as one of the main barriers to integration of newly arrived migrants. What other barriers would you prioritise apart from ability to speak English?

**Professor Black:** The other obvious thing, speaking about East Europeans, the group we studied, is that you have a group which, at least in terms of their paper qualifications, are highly qualified and yet who appear to be relatively trapped in particular job sectors and particular kinds of jobs in those sectors. It is difficult from our study to put our finger on exactly what the problem is here, whether it is the nature of the qualifications which have been obtained or discrimination against people who have qualifications of a particular kind. There does certainly seem to be evidence that people's job mobility is quite low, particularly in certain sectors and that that has to do with their lack of qualifications which are recognised by employers as being useful qualifications, also bearing in mind that, regardless of how those qualifications are viewed on entry, if somebody is trapped in a dead-end job for a period of time without having the opportunity to renew those qualifications, they would become obsolete anyway.

**Ms Spencer:** Clearly I raised this question of lack of practical information and also discrimination. The study which was published last week included quite a lot of interviews with service providers and policy makers at the local level and they said that one of the barriers they felt was the terms of the national discourse about migration and about Muslims, that the negative terms of the debate, the suggestion that migrants were a drain on public services, a perception that they do not share our values, and association with terrorism, undermined their attempts to create a more inclusive sense of community, sense of shared citizenship. They felt there was a lack of balance in the debate, for instance the sense that migrants were taking services without that being balanced with the fact that migrants in many cases were providing services or indeed the research evidence which suggests, as our study did last week, that there was a lot of common attachment to the same sorts of values, democracy and justice and so on. That points to the importance of the terms of the national debate and about communication strategies and myth-busting and also the sort of mediation work to be done at local level when there really are conflicts of interest that need to be resolved.

**Q190 Chair:** Since you have mentioned it, do you have a comment on the House of Lords' report then?

**Ms Spencer:** No, because I want to read it properly before I comment. One of my colleagues was the special adviser and I do not think he would forgive me if I commented on it without reading it properly!

**Professor Black:** I have not looked at it in detail, but it struck me that one key issue was around whether we should measure the positive economic impact of migrants through GDP or through GDP per capita. Whilst clearly GDP per capita makes a difference, the absolute volume of GDP is also important for the UK economy. This was on the basis of reading the press reports this morning and I felt the press reports were unduly harsh on the Government's position.

**Q191 Dr Pugh:** In terms of that, would you like to be a little more forthcoming and comment on how it is relayed in the press? I am just looking at a statement here which says that it is possible, though not yet proven, that immigration adversely affects the employment opportunities of young people. I am sure I came across a statement on the BBC to say that it did and the report says that it is possible though not yet proven. Can you characterise on the effect of reporting of that nature on community cohesion?

**Professor Black:** It undoubtedly makes achieving community cohesion more difficult. The problem is that the effects are complicated. One group which is perhaps most threatened by immigration in terms of access to employment at the moment is junior doctors. In the context of more than a decade of meeting our need for doctors by importing doctors and now having a situation in which investment in medical training in the UK is producing a much better flow of trained doctors from British medical

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schools, we now have a classic example of an area in which there is a risk of oversupply reducing the employment prospects for people at the margin. Of course competition for jobs as doctors is not something which the public or the newspaper editors automatically think of in terms of immigration driving down wages but economically it is not going to drive down wages because the wages are set; it is going to influence the prospects of doctors graduating from British medical schools getting the job they want or not getting the job they want. There are undoubtedly certain sectors in the British economy where there is competition for jobs. There are also several other sectors in the British economy where domestic workers have largely abandoned those sectors and if you are to find, for example, a workforce to clear Brighton beach of debris in the early hours of the morning to meet the council's statutory responsibilities to keep a clean city, then you are going to have to recruit foreign workers.

**Q192 Chair:** May I just return to these barriers? Someone said that as well as understanding English new migrants need to understand how our society works. The classic is when you put the rubbish out and what you put out. Do you think that the local welcome centres that some councils have created are a useful way of communicating the rules or the way we run things in Britain?

**Ms Spencer:** It is for each local authority or the strategic partnership to decide what is the best way of ensuring that migrants' information needs are met and indeed that the needs of service providers are met for information about migrants. The kind of mediation service which an organisation like New Link provides, where it is not only talking to migrants but actually very much addresses the concerns of other residents as well, should be an important part of whatever service it is, whether it is a welcome centre or some other unit. I do think though that while integration is clearly very much a local issue, and it is for local authorities, police, primary care trusts and so on to be the deliverers and to engage most with migrants. I did find in the study that we did with East Europeans and in fact in work we are doing now for 25 European cities, including some UK cities, that there is a sense of re-invention of the wheel. Local authorities to some extent feel they are out there on their own, particularly those in areas which do not have decades of experience of migration and that there is a case—and maybe you are going to come on to ask us about this; I do not know—for some kind of agency at the national level being the centre of expertise, the body that has the data which is able to go into the public debate with the authoritative voice to provide the facts, but mostly looking towards the local level to be the source of expertise, the place where they can meet and share experiences, to be the catalyst which engages employers, engages third sector organisations and helps to make things happen, monitors change over time and so on. I am aware that there is now a migration unit in CLG which is beginning to think in those terms, but would wonder

whether an arm's-length agency would have certain advantages in being able to fulfil this role rather than only a central government department.

**Q193 Jim Dobbin:** I want to get your view on the need for a new national body for migration. Do you think it is required?

**Ms Spencer:** I think it is a good idea. I say that partly from the research experience, but also partly from a background as Deputy Chair of the CRE and an awareness from that of what an NDPB or arm's-length agency can do sometimes which a Whitehall department cannot. I agree with Trevor Phillips completely in his evidence to you that this should not be a substitute for a government strategy. It is not the body which is going to coordinate Whitehall, which is so urgently needed. However, I do think there is a case for some kind of arm's-length delivery agency to be a source of expertise—again, there is some advantage to it being arm's-length because Government have a problem in being trusted on their data—to be a catalyst to engage employers, engage third sector organisations, to monitor change, to be an informed voice in the public debate, perhaps also to be the forum where difficult debates can happen over what the Government should do when there are genuine conflicts of interests to do with migration, there are some difficult issues, but also perhaps to research some of the barriers to integration and then act. So for something like the non-recognition of qualifications we need a driver—it has been known for a long time with refugees that this has been a problem—a body which would pick something like that up and be the catalyst which would go out and try to do something about it. Yes, there is definitely a role for such a body, not as a replacement for government strategy but as a way of helping to deliver it.

**Q194 John Cummings:** Do you think it is realistic to expect short-term economic migrants to integrate totally into the host community?

**Ms Spencer:** Integration begins on day one. It actually matters from day one that they get on well with their neighbours, that they have access to information about health care, that they know how to get a national insurance number. Integration is a process, it is not an end state. It is a two-way process; it involves a reaction by others.

**Q195 John Cummings:** I can see that being desirable, but the question is whether it is realistic.

**Ms Spencer:** It is realistic that they start the process and they go down that path. How far they get down that path will depend partly how long they stay, but also how many barriers they face and what support they get. I do not think, from our experience, the evidence we had, that the people who think they are only here for 18 months think they will just do their job, beaver away at that and they do not want to talk to anybody else. They want to be part of the community, they want to experience community life and have a good time, so it is realistic.

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**Q196 John Cummings:** Are you suggesting that they actually target these resources or are you indicating that perhaps they should make the first move?

**Professor Black:** To answer your earlier question, it is realistic and nearly 80 per cent of our sample said they hoped to stay in the UK for at least three years and that seems to me to be a long enough time horizon to expect to have a productive interaction with the communities in which they are living. We need to bear in mind that the British population is also mobile. People move around the UK from one region to another. There is considerable population churn in a number of local authority areas as people move as part of the process of changing jobs and other lifestyle events. The notion that everybody in Britain stays in one community and is loyal to that community and remains loyal to that community for the rest of their lives is a misunderstanding of the dynamic nature of the population structure of Britain. Many people move and also have aspirations to contribute to and benefit from the communities that they move into. Do we need targeted funding to make sure that this is done? In particular instances probably yes. It is also possible to overestimate the extent to which Government need to intervene in this area. Again drawing from my own sample of East European migrants, these are highly motivated, relatively well educated, young people who want to get a job, want to pay taxes in the same way that everybody else does. They want to participate in life. They do not particularly want to join a political party or get involved in neighbourhood associations but most of the British population does not want to do that either. Some people do and some migrants do as well. We need to think about targeting government support for integration in areas where you cannot realistically expect people to do things on their own and that is actually the same test as you would use for targeting any other kind of government support. We have targeted interventions by Government to promote integration of a whole range of different people who for one reason or another are perceived as being vulnerable. Migrants are not, by virtue of being migrants, vulnerable, but the fact that they are migrants may exacerbate some aspects of their vulnerability and that is what we need to look out for.

**Ms Spencer:** I agree that this is not necessarily an area for huge government resources because there are other resources we can mobilise. The evidence shows that migrants rely very heavily on family and friends and their community when they first arrive and there is a whole untapped resource of migrant community organisations, other third sector organisations and employers and trade unions indeed who all play a bit of a role but nobody has really mobilised them to play a larger role and we should look there as well as to the Government.

**Q197 Jim Dobbin:** You touched on this but I was going to ask you about the important role that employers do play in helping to integrate migrants. What else do you think they could do other than provide support for learning English?

**Ms Spencer:** We ran a conference about a year ago for employers to look at good practice in the field and employers who were employing a significant number of migrants were doing all sorts of things, including taking the migrants down to the local schools to introduce them so that the local population did not feel so worried. They were giving them deposits to help get a rent on a flat, this kind of thing, as well as giving them access to English classes. What the employers said was that, with the exception of Northern Ireland where Business in the Community has a code of practice and is providing some framework for good practice, they felt they were on their own in doing it, nobody was giving them a pat on the back or giving them ideas or bringing them together and that they would very much welcome feeling that they were part of something. There was clearly some scope to mobilise more of them to contribute in that way. Having said that, some of the employers we spoke to in relation to the low-wage Eastern European migrants had a very small number of employees and it would not be realistic to think of them as providing major services; some of them also were clearly out to make a bit of money and were perhaps not of a mind to put a lot into it. There, one might be looking just to make sure that the regulation on working hours and minimum pay and things like that were respected before going further and expecting them actually to be proactive in doing more than that.

**Q198 John Cummings:** Do you have any indication of what reciprocal arrangements exist in Eastern Europe for workers from England undertaking work in those countries?

**Professor Black:** To the best of my knowledge we have none.

**Q199 Chair:** You presumably have not done research on British workers in other countries, have you?

**Professor Black:** Our centre has done some work on Brits abroad and we have also looked at bilateral labour agreements, slightly patchily but worldwide. My understanding of the major Central and Eastern European countries is that although there are several developing labour agreements, particularly with Italy, there is none with the UK.

**Q200 Jim Dobbin:** Does it matter, is it good or bad, if people from different backgrounds live parallel lives?

**Professor Black:** Yes, it does matter. Our study does not show that directly, but my understanding is that the research evidence is out there, that over the medium term, if communities live parallel lives, the potential for misunderstanding and tension is greater. I would add that there are at least three dimensions in which people can live parallel lives, so we should not make the mistake of feeling that it is only integration in the workplace, for example, that matters. There is residential integration, there is workplace integration and there is also integration

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in leisure activity. I was very struck by Barack Obama's comments in the American presidential race a few weeks ago saying that the most segregated

hour in American life is ten o'clock on Sunday morning when the different communities go off to their separate churches.

**Chair:** Thank you very much indeed.

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**Tuesday 22 April 2008**

Members present

Dr Phyllis Starkey, in the Chair

Mr Jim Dobbin  
Andrew George

Anne Main  
Mr Bill Olnier

*Witnesses:* **Ms Alison Seabrooke**, Chief Executive and **Ms Melanie Bowles**, Practice Links Manager, Community Development Foundation, gave evidence.

**Q201 Chair:** Thank you for coming. Can I start off by probing the sort of work that you do within communities to improve community cohesion and ask you under what circumstances you think that increasing the contact between people from different backgrounds actually supports community cohesion?

**Ms Bowles:** Our role as a non-departmental public body is as a support organisation for people working in communities. It is not our physical work in communities; we are an umbrella body for neighbourhood workers and community development workers. The work that we have done is around running and evaluating community development projects, running and evaluating funding programmes for community-based organisations and helping practitioners to reflect on and learn from their practice in community development to learn lessons, so we are an umbrella body. In terms of what community development does for cohesion, it helps to maintain and grow cohesion by reaching marginalised people in communities, identifying what people have in common as well as acknowledging differences between people in communities, accepting that tensions, even conflicts, will be inevitable in communities, but working to channel challenges into positive outcomes. Community development also helps to overcome barriers to participation, partnership, collective working and works to sustain cohesion, so it is not just a one-off event or a knee-jerk reaction to a disturbance. Those are the kind of things that community development does to maintain and grow cohesion. Interaction between groups is a major part of cohesion practice in the UK, I would say, and community development works to create opportunities for the interaction, help the dialogue to be meaningful in those spaces for interaction and to work to mediate the tensions and try to channel them into positive outcomes.

**Q202 Chair:** What we would be interested in is specific examples and, in particular, evidence that individual projects have actually improved community cohesion.

**Ms Bowles:** In relation to new migrants and cohesion, for example, community development enables new migrants to become integral members of communities, so specifically and practically helping people to form self-help groups. Community development workers would help with finding other

people who shared your issues, setting up the group, anything around the constitution, funding, the actual mechanics of running a group.

**Q203 Chair:** Have you measured whether that has been effective in specific places?

**Ms Seabrooke:** We have an example here from the North West, for example, which included local visioning events, workshops to highlight the positive outcomes of working together across different communities of interest and identifying issues and looking at the particular solutions. The issues were defined by the communities themselves and so they were more willing and prepared to engage in the discussions that ensued and broke down some of those tensions and barriers. All the agencies signed up to the activities that were considered as objectives of joint bringing people together. As a result of that it is a trust-building process. There are significant one-to-one activities that then took place between the local agencies and the communities that were identified. It is about overcoming the tensions between the public bodies and some of the difficulties of engaging in those communities.

**Q204 Chair:** We are still not getting there. When you were in Burnley there were lots of these sorts of activities going on and the criticism that was made to us was it is all the same people; that it goes on at this level and it does not touch the majority of the community underneath. The second criticism—which was a different one that was made in Barking and Dagenham by the residents' groups—was that all the funding went to migrant groups and there was no funding for what they would class as community groups like a residents' association and therefore it was really difficult for those residents' associations to get their capacity up and to attract in members of all the different communities that were in the locality. How do you answer those sorts of questions? Instead of just measuring activity, how do you measure whether all this activity has had any effect on community cohesion?

**Ms Bowles:** We see cohesion as very much linked to empowerment. The questions about participation and representation, and you say it is the same people who turn up to every event or the events are only reaching a certain tried and trusted cohort perhaps, community development does work to reach marginalised people. Perhaps if you have a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) structure wanting to do consultation, because of the drive of partnership working to work with people you can get on with,

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they might tend to work with a tried and trusted cohort, but community development workers will seek to broaden participation. Community empowerment is the first and foremost aim of community development.

**Q205 Mr Olnier:** I think you are missing the point here. It is a question I wanted to ask as well because, yes, you have all the agencies on board—the CAB, the local authority and so on—how do you get the people on board? It seems to me singly lacking in getting the people on board so that their groups can really interact with other groups.

**Ms Seabrooke:** One of the ways that we do work and we say that community development works is very much through the voluntary and community sector. It is not primarily through the public sector, because the third sector either are delivering programmes directly or they apply them as a portal and that specific local knowledge that is needed to get below the surface.

**Q206 Mr Olnier:** How do you explain the fact that my local CAB ran for three evenings running some courses to encourage Polish migrants to come along and to discuss benefits or whatever and nobody turned up?

**Ms Bowles:** The example that Alison gave shows the difference between how things are done has a difference on its impact. The same event—a visioning event or an open day type event—can be really successfully or unsuccessful, depending on how it is approached. The successful community development practice will deal with people one-to-one; it will follow up if a phone call is not returned what the particular issue is with somebody. A kind of “providing they will come” meeting approach is not going to work but that is not community development.

**Q207 Anne Main:** I do think from what we have heard from Barking and Dagenham and Peterborough—I did not go to Burnley but I gather the issues are the same—is I do think you are somewhat missing the point. It came out very clearly in Barking and Dagenham that people said they were fed up with things being done to them and being offered to them when actually what they wanted was for the communities to mix completely instead of—the Chair touched on it—little groups being targeted with tick boxes because they filled them getting funding and getting things done and as a result they felt this was increasing the divides within communities rather than bringing communities together. I would quite like you to address that. How much research have you done to find out the best way forward? I am hearing a lot of meaningful comments from you but I have not heard anything that has made me feel that the empowerment you talked about is actually empowerment of the whole community rather than maybe disadvantaged individuals that you were talking about, so the whole community being brought together, not just bits of it being targeted to make them have a bit of a voice.

**Ms Bowles:** The point I wanted to make to carry on was that community development is not just about cohesion, it is about strengthening communities. Our organisation has a 40-year history; community development has a history of around a century. One of the mainstream examples of successful community development is through tenants and residents participation where tenants drive up certain standards because they are encouraged to participate, they are supported to participate and they expect their participation to have a difference because of that positive experience.

**Q208 Anne Main:** We were told that tenants and residents groups struggle to find diverse ethnic minority community representatives on those groups because they just did not engage. How much are you doing to, instead of setting up separate groups, make sure that all parts of the communities engage, for example, in tenants and residents groups?

**Ms Bowles:** Community development we are saying is effective in maintaining and growing cohesion. It is effective in increasing empowerment and in supporting engagement and participation.

**Q209 Anne Main:** Why are you saying that? What proof do you have for saying that?

**Ms Bowles:** What I wanted to go on to say was its deployment and implementation in the UK is patchy. There is no national strategy for community development. It works in small pockets on local projects.

**Q210 Anne Main:** Is it driven by what local people think is the right approach? People locally decide the best approach for community development.

**Ms Bowles:** Community development is an occupation but it is about supporting autonomous collective action.

**Q211 Anne Main:** There is no strategy.

**Ms Bowles:** There is no national strategy of community development. It is deployed through Lottery funding projects in some places and it is deployed through health and social care departments in local authorities.

**Q212 Anne Main:** What are you saying should happen or are you happy with that?

**Ms Bowles:** No, we think it should be more strategic and there should be more recognition by central government, local government and other agencies of the contribution of community development to the kind of aims that CLG has and we think that the profession also needs to raise its sights and better evidence its successes.

**Q213 Mr Dobbin:** I think you have just hit on what we wanted to hear. I remember in my early days as a local government member that there was a strategy for community development but unfortunately it was time-expired. You had individuals in the community who were actually doing that work. From what you have just said we have never

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replaced that other than through projects like renewal for communities and one thing and another, those kinds of funding projects, which are patchy across the country. That is what I wanted to clarify because you are telling us that we have never actually replaced that initial way of reaching communities by having specific workers out there in the field.

**Ms Seabrooke:** That is absolutely right. One of the things that we have been trying to do is identify across the lead agencies in terms of voluntary community sector organisations that do community development either as a very specific occupation practice, or through their particular ways of working with their constituent membership groups is to identify the very specific elements that weaken community development practice nationally. You are quite right, much of it is around community development practitioners being employed on a project or programme basis, so the funding is very short term. Community development work tends to be long term but it is not always finite because it is very much about trust-building and bridge-building. It is about working with people rather than doing things to people and also the measurement that was mentioned earlier on, it has been very difficult to encapsulate the measurement because there tend to be very subjective outcomes. There can be some very clear specific areas of activity that might succeed in terms of delivering projects or programmes at a very local level, but the nature of the work is much more to do with softer skills. Certainly we have found that over the last couple of years the empowerment we have said is actually articulating what community development is. It is quite difficult to describe what community development is *per se*, but it is around participation, facilitation, consultation, conflict resolution, preparing public and third sector organisations and local communities for the influx of the different challenges that we are currently seeing. We are very keen to see a cross-government strategy which looks at those very particular skills, not just within the third sector or with the community development practitioners, but within frontline community practitioners within public bodies. The different approaches that are required are very varied and complex and you cannot expect everybody to be able to learn those through simple training courses.

**Q214 Chair:** One of your roles is to advise government. What advice have you actually given to government on a national strategy?

**Ms Seabrooke:** We have been working with CLG around the empowerment agenda and looking at how we can bring different national, third sector and public sector organisations together to look at the issues on both sides of the policy delivery aspects. For example, as a piece of policy is being developed, for example, “duty to involve”, we have been involved in that process in looking at the more detailed issues that might need to be addressed in terms of local authorities being able to meet their requirements and duties.

**Q215 Chair:** Have you specifically given government advice on how to achieve more sustained activity rather than short-term projects?

**Ms Bowles:** We completed a first report called “Community Development Challenge” which was published by CLG which was about trying to spell out challenges for community development. Empowerment has been on the social policy agenda for 40 years under one guise or another but there has never been a time when it has been applied to the whole population. We have been trying to spell out how local government and other agencies will have to use community development more strategically to achieve that kind of increase in the power that they are looking for and also how the community development occupation will need to better demonstrate its effectiveness. That is a piece of work published by CLG.

**Q216 Andrew George:** Can I take you away from the community back to you as an organisation, the CDF. I know that the CDF, amongst a lot of the voluntary sector, are made up of grassroots organisations which operate also at a national level, have often seen the CDF as an arm of the Home Office in the past and perhaps the Department of Communities and Local Government now, and you deliver community local government programmes. I wanted to find out how you, as an organisation, choose which communities you are going to work in and to what extent that is something which is the request of the local community or is advice from government departments, or is it a decision that is taken by yourselves?

**Ms Seabrooke:** We do not deliver work directly in communities. What we do is we work on helping to develop the programmes that are delivered. We either act as a conduit or we work with third sector partners who are working directly with communities themselves. For example, we have been doing quite a lot of work with cohesion and faith units and the Race Equality Unit at CLG. We will develop programmes. We would not just deliver a programme that was given to us to deliver. We would say we need to identify the added value. For example, the programmes we have developed with them we will identify those very specific issues that need to be addressed in communities and the approaches that could be taken have to be woven then into the guidance criteria. It is very much an added value approach in terms of the pre-application for support, so that some of those marginalised communities can feel that they have some support in terms of going through what is quite a difficult process for the first time for very small amounts of money which will just enable them to get on that road of working together in local communities, and advice during the delivery period of a programme and also obviously using the evaluation and research that is built into delivering that activity to go back and give very specific advice to government.

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**Q217 Andrew George:** A lot of what you describe as “soft skills” that are required in order to reach the marginalised communities—clearly you hold a lot of those skills and are able to advise local community groups. You also administer funds on behalf of the Department. I wondered to what extent those funds and that advice is the product of a bidding process? Do you sit back and react to communities that come to you and ask for money and advice, or to what extent you go out and you target certain places or do local authorities come to you? What happens? How do you focus your resource and on which communities?

**Ms Seabrooke:** It is very much a joint process with the sponsor department. They will obviously be aware of their own priorities in terms of particular areas of activity about bringing people together. We had the issue on tackling violent extremism and we have a very different approach in terms of how we think some of those areas could be addressed.

**Q218 Andrew George:** A different approach to the department?

**Ms Seabrooke:** Yes, we have a complementary approach. There will be two sides to it and we recognise the softer through, for example, the faith programme that we have that we have been able to build relationships with some of the community groups that we work with and we see great opportunities in terms of working with young people and women, in using a different approach to identifying some of the issues that might arise in communities.

**Q219 Chair:** Can we just get clear, because I don’t think we are. On the Faith Communities Building Fund, for example, and the Connecting Communities Plus, groups apply, so the initiative comes from the groups and then you decide which ones meet the criteria and are funded?

**Ms Seabrooke:** There is a criteria established through the grant programme, jointly with CLG and ourselves, based on our understanding through the work we do on a practice level—there might be issues that we think need addressing—and we have road shows around the country where we invite groups to come on board. We use our third sector networks to encourage people to make that secondary communication. We have workshops around the country in each of the regions where people can come and ask questions. We then do an assessment process which we actually appoint the assessors through their understanding of cohesion issues. Depending on which programme it is, they have to have very specific skills in that particular area and there is an assessment process that those applications undergo.

**Q220 Chair:** The initiative comes from groups out there deciding whether they wish to put an application in?

**Ms Seabrooke:** Yes.

**Q221 Chair:** You do not go out and say there is a need in this particular area for this particular activity?

**Ms Seabrooke:** No, we do not. If we felt that we had expected applications to come from a particular region or sub-region and we have not received any, we would look at that, and certainly when you look at the distribution of funding as well, we want to make sure that there is a good cover from region to region. We would be concerned if we only got applications from one particular part of the country.

**Q222 Anne Main:** You talk about tensions between migrants and the settled community. I would like to hear a little more about the settled community because one of the things that came loud and clear to us was that it was not that there was any form of anti-migrant view, but members of the ethnic settled community felt that the pace of changes were very difficult for them to adapt to the rapidity at which their community was changing. How do you react to the pace of change? A lot of communities said to us that they felt things were lagging behind. Do you react to the pace of change and how have you done it?

**Ms Bowles:** The proactive part of our work as the Community Development Foundation is not so much waiting for the grant funding, it is identifying practice issues, thorny difficult problems in communities and community development practice—and cohesion and conflict is one of the areas that we have been proactive in and looking at.

**Q223 Anne Main:** What do you think is causing the conflict? You did mention that you accept there are tensions and conflicts. Would you like to say what you think is causing the conflicts in communities?

**Ms Bowles:** We ran a seminar about cohesion and conflict and we brought together community leaders, activists, councillors and community development workers to think about conflict between communities, conflicts within communities and conflicts between communities and authorities, and the primary source of conflict that people identified was resource competition and perceived unfairness, so the sense that a settled community feel that they have been badly served, they have experienced disadvantage or they feel that they have been underserved by public services. The perception then arises that new migrants are receiving preferential treatment. That was the primary cause of conflict.

**Q224 Anne Main:** Did you get any sense that it was the rapidity by which those things were happening that you have outlined rather than just the fact that they were happening?

**Ms Bowles:** I am sure that it is the rapidity with which it is happening and the resource lag; I am sure that that it is the case. The concerns are probably legitimate that people feel that they have been underserved by public authorities but the hostility and tension tends to be focused on the incomer

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rather than on the authorities that may not have served the settled community so well in the past. That is where we are linking the cohesion with empowerment, that if people feel that their participation in communities and community organisations, in community debates, discussions, dialogues will have an impact on resourcing decisions and on service provision, then they will participate. If they feel that their participation will not alter anything, then they will be disaffected and more likely to exacerbate cohesion, tension problems and aim conflicts at other people in their communities.

**Q225 Chair:** What further do you think the Government should be doing to help community cohesion?

**Ms Seabrooke:** We would like to see a cross-government community development strategy which recognises the particular skills that are required in terms of bringing people together, preparing both the receiving community in terms of migrant communities and the local public sector in terms of what they may expect and the difficult questions they may need to address. We would like to see the recognition of the certain skills that are embodied within what we call real community development but it is what is actually being expected of every public sector frontline worker at the moment. We have quite a lot of problems in terms of the measurement aspect because the drive is for very objective measurement rather than some subjective incremental developments that take quite a long time in terms of building trust within communities; that is trust within the public sector, the communities themselves and the individual citizens and then the trust between the public sector and those various groups. That is quite a long process and what we have found is that you just get a good dialogue going within a community but, if it is short-term funded and resourced, then it disappears as soon as it has started.

**Q226 Chair:** Can I touch on one area where you seem to have a difference of opinion with the Commission on Integration and Cohesion which is this issue about single identity groups. Why is it that you think that single identity groups can play a positive role in cohesion while the CIC seems to think the opposite?

**Ms Seabrooke:** Partly from the evidence we have from the programmes that have been delivered about the nature of the organisations that may have a single group identity, but the number of different identity groups that they actually work with or bridge between, the make-up of those single identity groups may be quite varied, although they fall within a particular category. Our concern with that recommendation was that it would provide a very narrow focus if people are unable to interpret the breadth of the single identity work, then it could mean that some of the resources to very

marginalised groups—groups that legitimately need space to work within their own identity group before they can move on to make those bridges with other identities and communities—all of that needs to be recognised.

**Ms Bowles:** The term itself is a bit misleading. Single identity groups usually comprise multiple and complex identities within that group. We have experienced through successive regeneration programmes that people need to belong to something in a community in order to become involved in wider community level debates and discussions. People would not put themselves forward to be representative on a panel if they did not belong to a community organisation and have some sense of belonging to a community. We are applying that to the single identity issue as well that, if people have a stake in a community, they are more likely to engage in wider discussions about future aspirations of that community.

**Q227 Anne Main:** In respect of needing to belong within a community and seek an identity, that actually flies in the face of what we were told by the community groups who said the exact opposite; that by actually focusing on single groups in some way shape or form you are enshrining the difference rather than integrating people into the community. Do you not have any concerns at all that that may be part of what you are doing?

**Ms Bowles:** The second part of what we wrote about—the single identity funding issue—is that it is important to look at the activity itself. If you are saying that single identity groups can be a force for community cohesion, you look at what activity they are proposing to do and whether you think that is an outward-looking, cohesion-making activity, or whether you think it is something that is insular and putting up barriers.

**Q228 Andrew George:** It is all terribly theoretical the line that you have used so far. Give an example of work with a single identity group. How do you define what that single identity group is and what are the benefits of working with them?

**Ms Bowles:** The controversy that has followed the recommendation about single identity groups is exactly around that issue of what is a single identity group? If local authorities have decided you are a single identity group, hence you are not eligible for funding, that is why the kind of uproar has started. Typically it might be a women's group, and it might be an Asian women's group, which sounds like a single identity, but if you can imagine the different nationalities, religions, different immigration, legal status that might be involved in an Asian women's group, you are talking about lots of identities.

**Ms Seabrooke:** And the need for those women to meet because of their particular beliefs that they have to have that grouping and it cannot be expanded into other areas. They would just not want to meet. It is that first stage of integration.

**Chair:** Thank you very much indeed.

*Witnesses:* **Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP**, Secretary of State, Communities and Local Government, and **Mr Liam Byrne MP**, Minister of State for Borders and Immigration, Home Office, gave evidence.

**Q229 Chair:** Welcome, Ministers. This is the final evidence session in our inquiry on community cohesion and migration. We are grateful to have both of you here as a sign, we hope, of joined-up government. What assessment has the Government made of the effects of A8 migration on community cohesion?

**Hazel Blears:** First of all, to set this in context, our levels of community cohesion in this country are extremely good and I certainly welcome the Committee's inquiry into these very important issues. That statement is absolutely fundamental for us. The latest figures we have are that 80 per cent of people in this country feel that they get along well with their neighbours in their local neighbourhood—in fact, it went up to 82 per cent in the very final figures that we have—and 75 per cent of people feel a very strong sense of belonging to their local neighbourhood. The context is that community cohesion is good. Within that there are variations from 37 per cent to 90 per cent, so there is quite a big variation about how people feel locally, but there are only ten areas that are below 60 per cent. That gives a fairly good picture across the country that, in most places, most people feel that their area is pretty good in those terms. Having said that, I think it is absolutely right that this inquiry is taking place because there are some communities that, because of the scale and pace of change that has taken place, are feeling the impact and it is absolutely right that we acknowledge that and, as a Government and as a local government, who have a key role here, we are preparing, planning, making sure that we meet that impact. In terms of the particular changes in the last couple of years, we have seen an increase in particular areas of migration from A8 countries. I had an excellent meeting last Wednesday with a dozen local authorities from across the country and the situation varies in different places. For example, Haringey were part of that meeting and their main issue is around housing, but a lot of it is about large African families coming to Haringey. If you talk to Boston, in fact now something like 25 per cent of their population is from Eastern European countries. They have said that it is fundamental to their economy, they absolutely need those people for the skills, but equally there is a big impact, so it is difficult to get a national evaluation of that impact. What is really important is to drill down into those communities, look where the impact is and then make sure that government and local government are well prepared to be able to support those communities in coping with that pace of change.

**Mr Byrne:** The two points that I would add to that are that when we think about questions of cohesion I think it would be a mistake to neglect any reflection on the economic importance of migration to this country. We know that tensions can arise in places where there is poverty and so the economic importance of migration has been something that has been a positive in this country over the last ten years. The evidence that we have and which we

presented to the House of Lords is that controlled migration has been good for productivity. It has therefore overall been good for wage and wage increases over the last ten years, it has been good for taxes, and so the overall effect on the economy and on the GDP *per capita* has been positive and I think that that is an important factor in the calculations. Of course we need to take into account the impact of community cohesion when we set immigration policy. That is partly why DCLG and the Home Office together chair the Migration Impacts Forum and community cohesion is one of the issues that we take into account as we launch the new points system. What we try and do when we set the points system up is we do not just listen to the needs of the British business community. We know migration is good for the economy but the British business community is not the only stakeholder in this debate; we do need to listen to other voices too. We need to look at the impact on public services and we need to look explicitly at this question of community cohesion and that is exactly what the Migration Impacts Forum tries to do.

**Q230 Chair:** Can I focus, firstly, on the issue about the quality of data on migration levels and really pick up on the point that was made about the impact being very variable between different regions and localities, which is obviously an issue that we have seen as well, and ask what effect do you think the lack of data at a local and regional level has on the ability of organisations to respond to the social consequences of migration and what, if anything, is being proposed to try and improve the level of data at a local and a regional level which is where it really matters?

**Hazel Blears:** Obviously we used the best data available in the last three years settlement that we had, but I entirely acknowledge that, because of the pace of change that has taken place, our data is not as up-to-date as it could be, or as comprehensive as it could be, therefore we have set in train a whole programme of work led by the national statistician, undertaken by the Office of National Statistics, to try and ensure that when we come to the next three year settlement for local government then our figures are much more comprehensive about the impact of migration in our different communities. I will give you a couple of specific examples: the Office of National Statistics are going to do a rolling household survey which will have questions about migration in it. I think the labour market survey is now going to have more questions around migration in it so that we get better data. We will certainly have better data from the e-Borders scheme, from the points scheme and I am working very closely with the Local Government Association who have suggested a series of more local measures about how we can get better data: whether or not we look at national insurance numbers from workers' registration, we look at GP registration numbers, all of these are not perfect measures and the LGA will agree that there is no magic bullet about getting to

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this, but the more measures we can draw in, the more comprehensive the figures will be. The LGA have recently suggested that we look at footfall in supermarkets. They reckon that Tesco has pretty accurate information about the people who use their stores and I welcome that kind of imaginative thinking if it can help us to get a better and more accurate view at the very local level of what the impact is. That work is being overseen by Liam and by John Healey in my Department jointly to make sure that we really do press to get better statistics and better figures.

**Q231 Chair:** Even if you do, do you think that there is a need for some additional funding, given that the pace of change is very rapid? Even if you improve the data from which the three year settlements are made, do you think there is a need for some additional pot of money that can be drawn on if there is rapid change that occurs in between?

**Hazel Blears:** First of all, there is a real terms increase in local government funding over this period of the three year settlement, and you would expect me to say that, to try and meet a whole variety of pressures that are in the system, particularly around social care and other issues. Having said that, in addition there is also the £50 million cohesion fund that our Department has for the next three years, £34 million of which is going out through the area-based grants to local authorities for them to be able to deal with the impact, not just of new migration, but also of settled communities, so there is some extra money in the system now. Under the Citizenship Green Paper there is the proposal that we would have a transitional impact fund financed by some increase in terms of the fees that people pay which would be a flexible fund and be able to be directed in areas of particular need at particular times. I think that is a very welcome proposal.

**Mr Byrne:** In essence, the responses to this question that the Government has put forward fall into the short term period now and the medium term. In the medium term, the £1.2 billion programme to be put in place, Border Information Systems, will reintroduce the capability of the Government to count people in and out, a capability that we lost back in 1994 when exit controls were phased out. That deals with flows. You then have the question about stocks. Over the longer term, ID cards for foreign nationals, which will be introduced on a compulsory basis, will probably be the best indicator available of where migrants are living and moving around. In the short term, there is, as Hazel says, changes to the international passenger survey, changes to the household survey, changes to the labour force survey which will all add migration aspects to their work, so that over the next one to two years we get a much better sense of where people are living. As the LGA says, there is not a silver bullet in this calculation. What we have to do in a world where migrants do move faster than ministers is to make sure that we do have the best possible information about where people are and, if we recognise that there can be transitional pressures on

public services, which we do, we need to do something about it, which is why we do think that there is a case for asking migrants to pay a little bit extra as they journey towards citizenship, if that is what they want to do, towards a fund which can help alleviate some of those transitional pressures that frontline public servants are telling us about.

**Q232 Anne Main:** I note your comment with interest: “Migrants move faster than ministers” and that you acknowledge the pace of change and the problems with that rapid pace of change. Part of the problem that we understand from the communities that we have talked to is that you did not see this coming; it was not predicted. There is not the funding in place. Do you acknowledge the fact that the figures, whatever they are now, were totally unanticipated by the Government so there was not the infrastructure in place to welcome the migrant communities as they come in and help them settle in properly?

**Mr Byrne:** Let me put one point on the record because it is a point that is important. This question of unanticipated inflows comes up a lot and people point to a survey that I think was produced some years ago that said if certain things happen then 13,000 people from Eastern Europe will come to the UK. It was not a Home Office study, it was a University College London study and, as ACPO accepted last week, it was subject to so many caveats that it is incorrectly held out to be the Government—

**Q233 Anne Main:** What were the Government’s anticipated figures?

**Mr Byrne:** If you look at what Des Browne, the Immigration Minister at the time said, he was absolutely assiduous in saying that it would be foolish to forecast. What the Government had to do is to make sure that there was sufficient funding in the CSR period to support not just the pressure of changing communities, but actually a pretty sustained programme of investment in public services. As Hazel says, that programme of reinvestment is going to continue in local government. If you look at the Police Service, for example, there has been an extraordinary increase in police funding over the ten years to the CSR period.

**Q234 Anne Main:** Do you not accept that part of the problem of the communities that are expressing concerns about the tensions is it has been too fast too quick without the infrastructure, the money lagging too far behind, and no real proper accounting of numbers. That is a key part of the problem for the councils dealing with this. It is not ill will on behalf of the settled communities of whatever their own ethnicity, but they were saying this was the key problem: far too many people too quickly coming into areas where councils and infrastructure cannot cope. Do you not accept that that is the problem?

**Hazel Blears:** In the meeting that I had last week with a dozen local authorities, which is part of a series of meetings that I have been having over the last 12 months, what came across to me very clearly

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indeed was that some areas are coping better than others, that there is some excellent practice out there where local authorities are reassuring the settled community. If you look at Cornwall, for example, which is a rural area—Andrew will know far better than I do—that is an area that could have had enormous tensions. What a series of local authorities there have done is brought together the will to address these pressures across every single public service. They have a thematic approach. It is in their local area agreement. The local strategic partnership is absolutely focused on it. They have welcome packs, they have work with the settled community, they have the myth-busting going on to try and make sure that blatant untruths are not told about the impact of migration and what they will say is that in many ways the migrants coming to the county have made a positive contribution and they have managed it in an excellent way. I do not profess to say that that is happening in every part of the country and therefore one of the challenges for us is how do we get the different local authorities to share that good practice? How do we get our specialist teams, which we are committed to in our response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, to go out to these areas to make sure that they can help with that impact?

**Q235 Anne Main:** Are you saying that these communities are wrong in saying that it is the pace of change and actually it is just they are not good at handling the change because they do not exercise best practice? Is that what you are saying?

**Hazel Blears:** I would certainly not say that the communities are wrong in terms of how they feel about this issue and I think it is vitally important that we as ministers acknowledge that there are concerns and uncertainties and that change has been very fast but the change is also global. It is not just this country that is experiencing this rate of change; it is the rest of Europe, it is many countries across the world and therefore the challenge for us is to make sure that we are on top of it and that we are planning. The second message that came out from my meeting last week was that what local authorities really do want is better horizon scanning to be anticipating now what the changes will be like over the next five years; what is happening in those other Eastern European economies which might mean that people start to go home and then how do we plan for some of that?

**Q236 Chair:** Some of the local authorities that we visited seem to have been caught incredibly unawares by what has happened in their own local community. How far do you think that it is the responsibility of national government to do this horizon scanning and how far is it the responsibility of individual local authorities, who must know their own local economy better than national government ever can?

**Hazel Blears:** As in every bit of this area, there is a role for national government, there is a role for the regions and there is a role for local government and unless we get that together we will not get the right

approach. National government has to help with whatever research capacity we can bring to do that horizon scanning, but you have to have the real information of the impact at local level fed into that. The message was very strong to me last week that local authorities are good at coping with change in their communities provided they have the ability to anticipate and to plan and I think we have a responsibility to help that.

**Mr Byrne:** That is absolutely right. You have to remember that this is one of those questions where sweeping generalisations do not really help anybody. If you take, for example, one of Anne's colleagues, Peter Luff from Worcestershire, he is somebody who has been lobbying me to relax immigration control in Eastern Europe because he is talking to local farmers, local agriculture workers, and they are saying we want to make it easier to bring in low-skilled migration from outside today's EU. When I was in Newcastle recently I think it was a Liberal Democrat lady on Newcastle Council said we want to try and grow the population of Newcastle by 100,000 over the next ten years. As hard as we try, we are not going to achieve that by encouraging the good citizens of Newcastle to breed faster. We are going to need people to come in from outside. The truth is that there are some communities and there are some local economies in this country which are ambitious for growth over the next decade—Birmingham wants to grow its population by about 100,000—and we do not think that all of that population growth is going to come from the resident population. What government has to do is manage immigration policy for the good of the country overall, which is why we have to balance off economic needs and social pressures, which is what will happen in the new points system, but it has got to be local authorities that think about the future of their own communities and prepare for those because to have civil servants in Whitehall and ministers in Whitehall second-guessing that, I do not think would be a recipe for good policy-making.

**Q237 Mr Dobbin:** The points-based system was mentioned in an earlier contribution. Has the Government had time really to measure the impact of the points-based system on community cohesion? Further, how is the Government going to monitor that impact?

**Mr Byrne:** The way we have decided to organise the points system is that instead of having decisions about the technicalities of it taken in a dark room in the Home Office we think that that policy-making process should be transparent, it should be based on evidence, not anecdotes, and that is why we set up two independent committees: the Migration Advisory Committee chaired by David Metcalf to look at what the business community said that it needs, and that is a pretty controversial issue. Many of us will have seen the demonstrations in London on Sunday about some parts of the community saying that we need more immigration rather than less. The second committee is the Migration Impacts Forum which is designed to look at wider impacts of migration. We were very careful in the way that that

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forum was set up. Its members are frontline public sector managers from all over the country. The direct answer to your question is that the points system is only just coming into effect now and so we are not able *de facto* to monitor the impact on community cohesion so far but we have studied this question of community cohesion. The Migration Impacts Forum will advise us on the statements of intent that we publish which will explain how the points system will work. We will publish those six or seven months before the points system actually comes into effect so that there is plenty of time to make adjustments if we have not got things quite right. The Migration Impacts Forum will be absolutely crucial going forward because, having set the policy, having set up the new systems to monitor the flows of people in and out of the country, we will want to form our own views about whether we have got the points score too low or too high and community cohesion will be one of the things that we ask the Migration Impacts Forum to report on. What becomes possible, to take a hypothetical example, is for the Migration Impacts Forum to report back to us with a conclusion that community cohesion is coming under sustained pressure because of the pace of migration. We would then be in a position to actually increase the number of points that a migrant would need in order to come in. That would reduce the number of people coming in and alleviate the problem that MIF identified. For the first time we have a much more transparent, evidence-based process for managing and controlling migration into the country. The chief advantage of the points system is its speed and flexibility. It is much faster now to move a points score up and down in order to control migration flows than the system which we are replacing which consisted of 80 different routes into work and study in the UK, very complicated, very difficult to manage in that kind of flexible way.

**Q238 Chair:** It does not affect A8 migrants at all, of course.

**Mr Byrne:** No, but we are using non-EU migration almost as a balancing item. We are obviously looking at the total flows of people coming into the country. The scope of the Migration Impacts Forum is to look at all immigration rather than simply migration from outside the EU.

**Q239 Anne Main:** I was very interested in the phrase that you have just used—“We are using non-A8 countries as a balancing formula”. Does that mean you are taking a particular group of people and saying that they are going to be used as a counterbalance to maybe a huge influx, or maybe not a huge influx, of migrants from European countries? Is that how you are working your system?

**Mr Byrne:** I put it in a slightly different way. I think there is a pretty well-developed consensus now about free movement within the EU. After all, the 2004 Free Movement Directive consolidated nine free movement directives, seven passed under Conservative administrations, two passed under Labour administrations, but when we are setting

overall immigration policy we have of course got to look at what the inflow is from the EU because that will have a—

**Q240 Anne Main:** That suggests you have a number in mind that you find acceptable and will top up or reduce according to whatever economic migrants are coming in from the EU. That suggests you have a sort of figure.

**Mr Byrne:** No, what we have is a system for looking at what the economy needs in any one particular year and a system for monitoring what the wider impact on public services is so that we are able in any given year to come to a conclusion about whether the points score for non-EU migrants needs to go up or go down.

**Q241 Anne Main:** You have touched on the restaurant trade and concern about the points-based system across Chinese restaurants, Bangladeshi communities and so on and they have been talking about to me about this as well. It could be that we will need a whole load of Bangladeshi chefs for the curry houses which we all love in our high streets but if we have enough from the EU countries we will not be able to do that.

**Mr Byrne:** No-one has said it would be an easy decision.

**Q242 Chair:** I suspect that almost all MPs have been to their local Bangladeshi restaurants to assess the extent of the problem. Can I pick up on a remark one or other of you made about the council tax and ask two questions. One is whether any data is available on whether, in particular, A8 migration has actually increased the council tax base of the communities into which they have gone? I say that because, anecdotally, A8 migrants seem to live in houses of multiple occupation, which would suggest that however many you cram in you do increase the council tax base. The second issue is that there has been a suggestion—I am not quite sure whether it is from the LGA or whether it is from Tony Travers—floated that maybe a way of getting additional finance into authorities which have experienced a very rapid population growth might be to allow some authorities to retain all the council tax of some of the ethnic population. Are you considering that?

**Hazel Blears:** I am not aware of any specific data in relation to particular areas. This is part of the need to improve our data and our figures and that is why we have this big programme of work going on. Tony Travers comes up with a number of innovative suggestions about how local authorities might have more control over the taxes that they raise and this is clearly one of them. I continue to work with the Local Government Association on making sure that we do manage the impact of migration in their communities, not just for local authorities, but for the health service, for schools and for a whole range of public services as well. I am not specifically looking at this option at the moment. I have no doubt that the LGA will want to discuss various issues around finance with me as we take forward those discussions.

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**Q243 Anne Main:** Have you considered establishing a contingency fund to assist local authorities who have experienced rapid migration because, if they are not reflected in national statistics, this could help integration more if the funding was there?

**Hazel Blears:** The Local Government Association suggested several months ago that there should be a fund I think for £250 million for various authorities to bid against. We have not adopted that approach because what has been really important is to give local authorities the stability and predictability of having a three year settlement. If you were to create a contingency fund that money has to come from somewhere. That could have meant undoing the three year settlement that had been worked out. Local government themselves have welcomed the predictability and stability of that three year settlement. As I said earlier in one of my replies, that gives local authorities another real terms increase over the next three years of something like £9 million to cope with a whole range of contingencies. In addition to that, we have the £50 million funding going out to support cohesion, particularly in communities across the country, and we have the possibility of the transitional impact fund from the Citizenship Green Paper. I think that is a better approach than simply having a pot of money which the LGA themselves were prepared to admit that they do not have the specific evidence, data and ability to be able to quantify this, and to some extent I think that that kind of approach is a very temporary, short term approach. What is important is to improve the data, make sure that when we do the next three year settlement and the next CSR we get that embedded in mainstream public services because this change is going to be with us for quite a long time to come.

**Q244 Anne Main:** Therefore do you think it would be advisable to have a national strategy then for integration, leaving aside funding pots directed at certain groups? Do you think there should be some strategy to try and improve integration?

**Hazel Blears:** That is a wider question beyond the funding. Obviously we have had the report from Darra Singh and the Commission for Integration and Cohesion which I thought was an extremely useful report. I have read his evidence that he gave to this Committee. I was pleased that Darra thought, I think his phrase was, “the glass was more half full than half empty” in terms of the Government response. We have agreed to follow up all 57 recommendations from the Commission and indeed we are getting on with implementing very many of them. I think that has been a very useful piece of work. What we do need to look at further, and Darra talked about this, is not simply having cohesion, but having a stronger emphasis on integration on bringing people together. I think the measures we have taken around translation, around speaking English, around the funding for various voluntary sector groups to try and ensure that we are moving not just to support people in the same conditions as when they come to this country, but move them on a journey so that they become fully active citizens in

their own communities, is going to be one of the most pressing challenges over the next few years. I therefore think that we have more to do but I think the basis set out in that report gives us a very strong foundation.

**Q245 Anne Main:** Do you believe that the links between CLG and the Home Office and the communication is good enough to achieve what you have just described?

**Hazel Blears:** Yes, I do, and I think it is improving day by day, dare I say. My Department now is taking the lead on preparing a cross-government impact plan for migration and that is working not just with the Home Office—the Home Office are fundamental partners here because of the borders and because of all the measures and their responsibility for migration as a whole—but it is really important to work with the Department of Health to look at the impact on the NHS. We are working very closely with DCSF to look at the schools’ position. They obviously have the emergency grants that they can bring in to reflect very quick changes in the number of school children. We are working with DIUS around English as a second language, trying to refocus the provision of English as a second language towards cohesion, so that cross-government approach I think is fundamental to getting it right here and making sure that we work with the local authorities when we work on our cross-government plan.

**Q246 Anne Main:** You have mentioned an awful lot of bodies then and departments. Do you think there would then be a case for having a single body that was a national body for integration for migrants?

**Hazel Blears:** That was one of the recommendations from the Commission. We have not accepted the recommendation to simply have a new body. What we have said is that we want to do some further work, let us look at the business case. Is it right? What I do not want to do is to add extra layers of bureaucracy with more bodies that then have to be serviced. I want to make sure that we can spend our money on actually making a difference on the ground, but we are willing to explore whether or not that might be a useful way of taking this work forward. What we do not want is simply to create a plethora of administrative bodies because we have to make sure that we make a difference.

**Q247 Andrew George:** You mentioned earlier that you congratulated the local authorities in Cornwall for a number of things which included being able to rebut myths in relation to migration. I noted that you rejected the recommendation of the Commission on Immigration and Cohesion to set up a rapid rebuttal unit to counter myths about migrants. Why is it that Government feels that it is not its role to rebut the myths? Is it because you believe that the Government is not in the best position and that it should be done by others?

**Hazel Blears:** On much of this agenda it is important that it is done very locally and it will be different in different places, different approaches will work.

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Those communities will be unique and I think Darra Singh agreed with that in his Commission's report and that therefore the one-size-fits-all and having a national rebuttal approach is not necessarily the right thing to do. A lot of places have done myth-busting leaflets. Some of them have worked; some of the evidence is that in certain circumstances it can be counterproductive because, unless the information comes from a source that you are actually going to be able to depend on, and clearly is absolutely being independent in some ways, then you can add to some of the difficulties and conflicts that are out there. I think it is a more complex picture than simply the Government issuing ten points of why you are wrong. I think you need a dialogue with people about this. You need to build relationships, you need to build trust and the best way of doing that is for the settled community to come into regular contact with the new community doing practical things at a local level rather than simply issuing what could be seen as propaganda on this very sensitive agenda.

**Mr Byrne:** I would underline that point. In preparation for the publication of the Green Paper I spent three or four months going around the country meeting quite large groups all over the UK talking about what are the British values that we want to put at the heart of immigration reform? What consistently came back to me was a sense that people in this country want to be more welcoming; they actually want the Government and local authorities to do a little bit less. Very often people would say we bend over backwards to welcome people into this country and what people were actually saying is that they wanted government and local authorities to do a little bit less and they wanted to create more space in which they personally could take on a bit more of that job of extending a great British welcome.

**Q248 Andrew George:** A lot of the myths are also expressed at a national level as well through national tabloid newspapers and others, so you cannot simply say that the local authorities have a responsibility to respond to that as well. Surely there is a role for government there?

**Hazel Blears:** You can do this in a whole range of ways. The recent report from the Commission on Equality and Human Rights looking at allocation of social housing, their interim findings are that people are not given an unfair advantage from migrant communities and over 90 per cent of the people coming to this country in the last few years are in the private rented sector, many of them are not eligible for social housing and where they are they are treated in exactly the same way in terms of their needs and allocation process. I think that it is really helpful that you have a body like that looking at the evidence and then reaching their own conclusions. I think there is a responsibility on all of us to make sure that the facts are out there, but I think it is at local level through building those relationships that you get beyond headline rebuttal into something that is far more meaningful for people. I think that is the challenge for us.

**Q249 Andrew George:** Taking that a stage further, the Commission's report identified a great deal of variability in the success of integration in terms of the measurements which they established between 38 per cent and 90 per cent in terms of the success of the immigration policy, depending in which local area one is in. The Government's Public Service Agreement 21 describes quite detailed performance indicators. I wondered to what extent the Government can deliver on its targets to improve community cohesion, given the way in which the Government appears to be perhaps micro-managing, perhaps dictating too much from the centre. Do you think that the balance is right in terms of local initiative and government direction?

**Hazel Blears:** The way in which you have framed those two questions really illustrates the dilemma. Are we going to have a national rapid rebuttal unit? No, I do not think that is the right thing to do—I think we need to do that locally—but absolutely we have to, as a government, have a national framework to assist local authorities to be able to make a difference in their communities that we all want to see happen and therefore our response to the Commission's work does commit us to producing a delivery framework by the summer, bringing together analysis, evidence, best practice, helping those local authorities to take it forward. We have already issued the guidance on translation, which I think local authorities have found extremely helpful; not to say do not ever translate but think carefully, use your common sense, check whether you need to translate. Can you use translation as a way of getting people to learn English? Do it with your partners, do not repeat things and, for goodness sake, do not translate annual reports which nobody will ever read in English, let alone in other languages, so that has been very welcome. The guidance that we have issued on the funding of voluntary sector groups, again, not saying that in no circumstances will you fund a single issue group, but when you are funding groups think about how you can get them to bridge to other communities as well as looking after the particular focus that you were working with. I think all of that from a national level is hugely helpful and I take responsibility personally on this agenda that we will be absolutely supportive. The key to this for me is in those local communities which are experiencing change for them to be able to have enough flexibility to bring people together. What I am very pleased about is we have got the first cuts of the local area agreements at the moment and I think 85 local areas have chosen cohesion as one of their top 35 priorities. That is hard for local authorities because you want to do everything on education and all the rest of it, but they are saying cohesion is really important to us and we are going to make it a priority. I am optimistic that people really do see how fundamental this is to making the place a great place to live and government has a responsibility to help them to do it.

**Q250 Andrew George:** Would you say that that is the reason why there is such variability in terms of the success of some local authorities in achieving greater

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success with cohesion than others which are clearly failing? What are the key ingredients as far as you are concerned?

**Hazel Blears:** I do not simply put it down to whether or not the local authority is any good at dealing with this issue. I think there are a number of underlying factors and the analysis that the Commission's work undertook was extremely useful. They set out a kind of typology of areas that would be likely to suffer extra impact and it was the places that were not very affluent, the places that have experienced manufacturing decline, the places that were urban that were likely to have a bigger impact, and then if you look at the different nature of the numbers of people coming to different areas, some places have had a bigger challenge than other areas. If you are used to diversity, if you are an inner city, if you look at the piece on Birmingham in the Sunday papers at the weekend, very encouraging, two-thirds of people think it is great to live in such a diverse community. If you go to a place which has never had immigration then the stresses and strains will be that much greater. Yes, there are things people can learn from each other, but I do not think it is simply a matter that this local authority is excellent and this local authority is poor. Some places have different challenges.

**Q251 Andrew George:** There is one very specific issue which is raised by Slough Borough Council and by others where there is a tension between the settled minority ethnic community and the newly arrived migrants, particularly where the settled minority ethnic community finds that the claim is that their jobs, wages and economic opportunities are being very much affected by the recently arrived migrants, particularly from Eastern Europe. What is the Government doing to reduce the tensions between those two communities?

**Hazel Blears:** I meet with Slough regularly—it is on my agenda—including Members of Parliament as well as the local council, and rightly so. It has to be said that Slough is still a thriving economy. It is a place where people want to live, it has very high employment levels and is a very large contributor to the regional economy where they are as well. Clearly there are issues between different communities. The Mori polling that we did initially about 18 months ago said that 45 per cent of established migrant communities felt that there was too much immigration. This is an issue out there and we have to bring those communities together as much as we do the white community and the Eastern European community. This is basically a matter for all of us. We are all in this together and therefore in those particular areas it will be the local authority that is best placed to know what their communities are like. They will have data, they will have information and then how can they proactively try and bring people together and support particularly the voluntary and community sector, who are often better at this than statutory organisations. Certainly the local authorities are saying to me that the churches, the faith groups, the people who are absolutely the grassroots, can be tremendous contributors on this

agenda. The challenge is how do we make sure that local authorities are in a position to support that voluntary sector activity in a more sustainable way?

**Mr Byrne:** I have nothing to add only to underline that I do not think this is a race issue in the way that it was debated in the 1960s. That is the great thing that has moved on in the immigration debate. If you read back over the Hansards of the 1961 Immigration bill, which is something that I did over last summer, you can see former Members of this House openly talking about the need for immigration control in terms of race. They are extremely unpleasant passages to read. I think that the immigration debate has now moved on immeasurably since then and I think it is a reflection of something Trevor Phillips said in a speech to the CRE last year that actually Britain is a very tolerant place where we are comfortable with the difference in this country, but it will be the local authorities that are in a better position to think these plans through because they are going to have that insight into their communities in a way that, frankly, ministers and civil servants will be unaware.

**Q252 Anne Main:** Specifically on the myth-busting, I would like to reiterate that the settled ethnic communities, for example, in Peterborough did say to us that there was a degree of flight from the City Centre because of the churn, of the pace of change, people coming into private rented accommodation, led to them feeling this was not their community anymore. I think that is something that needs to be addressed, that London and other areas placing their communities where they cannot house themselves in rapidly changing communities elsewhere adding to the tensions. It is not always just best practice within a community; it is also best practice within neighbouring communities that will use the resources. I think that area needs to be really looked at because that came across loud and clear.

**Hazel Blears:** I understand that. I do think there is a challenge as well for local authorities to be working together in their areas and working across boundaries. People do move around—as Liam said, migrants move faster than ministers—and I think it is important that local authorities have means and mechanisms to share abilities. One thing I would say about houses in multiple occupation, because this is a significant issue for us, we obviously have a licensing scheme that applies to three-storey buildings and if there is more than five people and then a discretionary scheme if it is a two-storey building and it is four people. We have a review going on at the moment about the effectiveness of those licensing schemes because there are management regulations as well. What I want to try and make sure is that the scheme that is in place is sufficiently flexible and easy for local authorities to use because one of the problems is where you get landlords who are possibly exploiting people, you get to a situation of overcrowding and that can cause difficulties for people and therefore we need to make sure that the housing and multiple occupation licensing framework is actually in the right place and a practical and useful scheme for local authorities.

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**Q253 Andrew George:** I note the Government claims that migration into the UK makes a £6 billion contribution to the economy. In those circumstances why is it that the Government is not able to find a portion of that, if it is making that contribution, to actually deal with the social challenges and consequences which we have been talking about?

**Mr Byrne:** I think it is. Let me start with the economic contribution. The £6 billion figure is the Treasury estimate of the contribution of migration in 2006 to output. Alongside that, probably the best study in this area was by the IPPR of how much migrants pay in versus how much they take out. When the IPPR looked at the 2003–04 period, they concluded that migrants pay in about 10 per cent of taxes and take out about 9.1 per cent; in other words, they pay in proportionately more than they take out. When you look at particular parts of the economy, taking for example financial services, it is inconceivable that the City of London and Britain's financial services sector would be as successful as it is today without migration. Why is that important? That is important because financial services contribute 24 per cent of corporation tax takes. It is with that help—I put it no stronger than that—that government is able to recycle money into public services. If you look at the police, for example, the Police Service funding between 1997 and the end of CSR period has increased by something like 60 per cent; that is £3.7 billion. Not all of that money has come from resident British workers; some of it has been contributed by migrants as well. Hazel has talked about the increases that have been driven into the local government settlement too. The fact that we have a successful economy—remember that in the last decade employment has gone up, productivity has gone up and wages have gone up—that is a triple that the British economy has not pulled off for decades. It is on the back of that economic success to which migration has been a contributory factor that we are able to see the levels of public service investment that we see today.

**Q254 Andrew George:** Do you not think that in those areas, for example, where new migrants are coming in to provide particularly seasonal labour gang workers—I am thinking of my own area there but are many others where there is an extremely serious shortage of local housing—in those circumstances being able to provide housing for migrant workers is an extreme challenge. Is there not a role for government in assisting in those kinds of circumstances, given the fact that you are saying that they do make a contribution to the overall economy?

**Hazel Blears:** Clearly there is an issue about housing supply in general terms. We estimate something like 65 per cent of growth in housing would be needed in any event, irrespective of migrants, and that is why we have a massive increase in the money that we are spending particularly on affordable and social housing—£8.4 billion over the next three years—to try and make sure that we cope not just with migration, but with the increase of the people in the settled community who are increasingly living longer, which is a good thing, and actually living in

single person households. As a country we have to press on with the commitment that we have made to build three million new homes over the next few years and therefore that is what we are doing. We are working particularly with local authorities to try and bring this housing forward, both in terms of the social rented sector, working with housing associations, putting money into all of those programmes that we have—the low cost home ownership, the equity share, all of that—which is important for the country, not specifically just simply for the migrant population. 90 per cent of the migrants coming in are actually in the private rented sector. We are currently again looking at a review of the private rental sector because I do think there are issues, not particularly connected with migration, but in general terms about the quality of that sector and they will be reporting to us in October of this year. Making sure that our housing policy as a whole meets the needs of all the people of this country is an increasingly important priority for us. What you have seen in the last couple of years is that rising up the agenda with appropriate funds to back it up. £8.4 billion is by no means an insignificant sum.

**Q255 Chair:** Can I ask about the £6 million that is available for the preventing extremism agenda and ask whether you think that has any relevance to community cohesion?

**Hazel Blears:** Clearly the agendas of community cohesion, preventing violent extremism and the work that we are doing on faith are connected, overlapping and involve sometimes similar approaches, but I have been very clear, as has the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, that you can have very cohesive communities and sometimes you will still get some problems around violent extremism within those cohesive communities. There is specific work to be done in tackling and preventing violent extremism to keep our communities safe. Again, increasingly local authorities are recognising that and doing specific pieces of work. That £6 million which has been there in the first year for our Pathfinder is going to expand quite significantly and there will be £45 million over the next three years going to local authorities through the area-based grants to work on those issues. What I am keen to do—I know there has been some question should we ring-fence that money so that that money just gets spent on preventing violent extremism—is not only to have the money that is going specifically for that, but also local authorities now I think are seeing the challenges to their communities and may well be able to bring in other resources to try and increase the strength and the ability of their communities to deal with these issues. They are different but they are not completely separate and actually building cohesion and building strong communities where people come together—they share experiences, they do things together, they share food, they share activities—I think can have an impact on making also our Muslim communities more resilient to that violent extremist message, so there is specific work to be

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done. They do overlap, they are not identical and therefore I think it is important to keep a focus on the separate funds that we have.

**Q256 Chair:** Is the Department monitoring the effectiveness of preventing extremism, the faith funding and the community cohesion funding and when will you review the effectiveness of those three streams?

**Hazel Blears:** Clearly we have the PSA 21 which Andrew referred to earlier on which is building cohesive, active and empowered communities and that is a cross-government PSA. Underneath that we have three indicators, but two of those indicators are actually in the local authority set so we will be able to measure the cohesion side through the Places Survey which will take the place of the best value performance indicators which were previously measured. There is a very good performance framework around the cohesion. We are expecting those 85 local authorities who have put it as one of their top 35 priorities to achieve a statistically significant improvement in cohesion in their areas but we will be monitoring all local authorities because it is one of the 198 indicators, so all local authorities will be monitored on their cohesion levels. What I do not want to see is a really good improvement in the 85 who have made it a priority coupled with a national decline; I want to see everybody going forward. In terms of the preventing violent extremism moneys, clearly because this is a relatively new area of work for local authorities are now increasingly focused on it, working with their police services, again we put the money into the area-based grant but I said that after the first year of the LAA I want to take a fresh look at that to see exactly what has been done. Is it making a difference? We are working now on how we are going to be able to measure our PSA on preventing violent extremism. This is one of the most complex areas, as you can imagine, to try and get a proper measure of, but our task is, and I am determined that we will, be able to show that, particularly Muslim communities, have increased their resilience to be able to stand up and condemn and tackle violent extremism. We have got to do this cross-government with Home Office and with the FCO. Our Prevent strategy is completely a cross-government strategy but we will be ensuring that we keep a very close eye through the regional offices on where that money is being spent and the effectiveness of it.

**Q257 Mr Dobbin:** We paid a very interesting visit to Peterborough and we were welcomed at the New Link Centre which is a newly opened centre for migrants. We were told that the transient migrant population were a bit reluctant to integrate because they were not going to be stopping in that particular area. How is the Government going to try and aid and help other local authorities to create those kinds of facilities—welcome centres—to finance that kind of initiative to help coordinate the integration of migrant communities?

**Hazel Blears:** Two things: obviously where people have a significant population then it is important that there are facilities available. Again, that will vary in different areas. Some places will not be seeing the level of changes that places like Peterborough and Boston are experiencing so we have to be flexible enough to work with them. In our ongoing discussions with the Local Government Association we will be looking at exactly the kind of thing that you have talked about, but already so far as a national government we have worked on the welcome and introduction packs that we have said that every local authority really should have as a matter of priority. We have IDeA, who are the Improvement and Development Agency, working and we have just issued a template, we have issued a pamphlet that says the best practice, how you can do an introductory pack that will reassure people but also reassure the settled community, so that is something that we can do nationally. I do not think it is a national responsibility to set up a welcome centre in each of those areas. I do again think it is for local partners but it is not just the local authority and I would make this point that the new system that we are now moving into is local authorities coordinating a range of public services, whether it is health, police, transport, housing, whatever, and that is the way that partnerships can be measured in future on their effectiveness at how they make the place a great place to live. It may well be that you have some facilities through the health service, through the PCT, some kind of community centre that exists in the voluntary sector. That is what has to be explored locally. What I was impressed with in Cornwall was this ability to get this issue as a theme throughout the Local Area Agreement which meant that every partner had to focus on it rather than simply saying: Over to you, local council, it is all your job of work to do.

**Q258 Mr Dobbin:** Moving on to English language, how important is it for local migrant communities to be able to speak and understand English? What sort of representations are you making to the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills to work with ESOL to try and achieve that?

**Hazel Blears:** I could not possibly overestimate how important I think it is. I think if you are going to have a sense of people being comfortable with each other, being together, then the ability to speak a common language is really fundamental to that. If you are going to get a job, if you are going to get on, if you are going to be able to do the normal things we take for granted, then you need to be able to speak English. That is why they give the guidance on translation. That is why I have been working with John Denham to say how can we focus the English as a second language provision on really encouraging cohesion and integration? DIUS have had a consultation over the last three months and they are going to be responding to that in the summer. They are very keen to do this. I also feel quite strongly that employers should be taking a significantly bigger role in helping to fund some of the essential English language classes. The budget

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for ESOL has actually tripled in the last few years; it is now £300 million. We have put a huge amount of money in and because of the scale and pace of change there is still a lot of demand in the system. Employers like First Bus and Tesco are actually doing English language classes either in the supermarket or in the bus garage, people do not have to take time out and it is a better way of working. I know that DIUS are very keen to say to employers: Look, you are getting the benefit from these people coming in, doing the jobs, working hard, making you more productive, you have the responsibility to make a contribution to the costs of learning English and to do much more of it on site in a more flexible way. I think that is the way forward.

**Mr Byrne:** I would add that promoting English is now becoming one of the most important values that is now driving immigration and citizenship reform. As part of the preparation for the Green Paper, speaking to people all over Britain, the ability to speak English is the first value above all others that the British public wants to see absolutely at the heart of immigration reform. That is why in the points system we have said that economic migrants will need to be able to speak English if they want to stay for any length of time. We are consulting on whether people coming in on spouse visas need to acquire some English before they can come in. In the Citizenship Green Paper we have said that people will need to improve their command of English if they want to move from becoming a temporary migrant to becoming a probationary citizen or a citizen. This hardwiring of English into the immigration reform is now absolutely fundamental to our plans for 2008.

**Q259 Mr Dobbin:** How are you ensuring that English language classes are available to all, particularly to women in African and Asian communities?

**Hazel Blears:** I think it would be disingenuous to say that every single person who wants to go to a class will find an abundance of provision in their local area because that clearly is not the case. Expenditure has tripled in the last few years but there has been huge demand out there so there are still pressures on the system in particular areas. That is why the consultation that DIUS have done is to say what are the priorities? Where should we particularly be targeting the provision? There is an enthusiasm to try and make sure that in providing English language provision it is not simply to people who are going to be here on a short term basis, come here, do a job and go away, but actually how do we reach the people who perhaps have been here for some time and are still not able to access the services and to become fully integrated into our communities. We also held two citizens' juries earlier this year—one in Hull and one in London—to try and get to the views of local people. If you have to make choices where do you think the priorities should be? That has helped to inform our thinking as well. If employers could make a bigger contribution that would free up some of the resource to direct it at people who genuinely cannot afford it; people who can afford it

should make a contribution and we have to get the balance right here. One of the things I know that John Denham is thinking about is how to make it more flexible. If it is simply in an FE college is it in the right place where people go to? I went to a centre recently where there were women from a whole range of different ethnic backgrounds and they would go to that centre: it was local, there was childcare on site, it was in their community. I do not know whether they all would have travelled some distance to an FE college but they were reaching people who would be called hard to reach, but they were very enthusiastic. You have to have more flexible solutions as well.

**Q260 Chair:** Is it the case that CLG have told DIUS to reverse the changes to ESOL funding that were made in 2007?

**Hazel Blears:** No, we would not be in any position to tell DIUS what to do. What we are seeking to do is to work together as part of a cross-government action to use our resources in the most effective way that we can to ensure that people who need to learn English have the ability to access that, people who can make a contribution should and that people who get the benefit from migration should also make a contribution.

**Q261 Chair:** Specifically has CLG got a view about spouses being given access to English language teaching as soon as they arrive and not waiting for 12 months?

**Mr Byrne:** DIUS's view is that there is an argument for greater local flexibility and prioritising ESOL spending locally. If you look at my community, for example, Hodge Hill has the fourth highest unemployment in the country. A great deal of that unemployment is concentrated amongst Pakistani women and there is a lack of access to English. The priorities that I might argue for in my part of East Birmingham may be totally different to the priorities that Hazel would argue for in Salford and they may be different to Cornwall. There is a consultation which is exploring how local priorities should be set. We need to approach this question with absolute clarity that this is an important part of progressive politics. We know that command of English is good for wages, and for many of the communities that we came into politics to serve that is an effective route out of poverty, but second guessing that from Whitehall would probably be an error.

**Q262 Anne Main:** May I say that on extremism within the settled population, Barking and Dagenham felt that it was a particular case because it has 12 BNP councillors. Would the Government accept that that is a barometer of the failure of communication that we have 12 BNP councillors and indeed that they managed to put across a message that is evidently believable to a large number of people who then elected them. I feel that the Government has to accept that failure and improve that communication and improve that myth-busting because that is a form of extremism that we cannot ignore. We cannot tackle extremism

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that we believe we may have imported and unfortunately Barking and Dagenham made that very clear. They felt that they were a special case for having put themselves now in a position of a council that may well not be working towards that agenda that we also wish to happen because the councillors have a fundamental problem with it.

**Hazel Blears:** First of all, I think it is a responsibility of all of us—national government, local councillors, civic leaders—as citizens to stand up, to be absolutely implacably opposed to the people who peddle messages of hate, whatever kind of extremism that is, who seek to divide people rather than bring them together and I think that this is a really serious challenge for a liberal democracy. I am hugely proud of our democracy in Britain, but I think in some areas it is under challenge and therefore the responsibility on all of us to redouble our efforts, and I do think it is about communication, but it is also about being active out there on the streets in touch with people, talking to people from every single community and bringing people together. I think it is much more difficult to hate someone if you have had an experience of working with them, of sharing a community project, of having your children come together. The new duty, for example, on schools to promote community cohesion, to bring those young people together I think is extremely important.

**Q263 Anne Main:** What the Honourable Member for the area says, that the majority of people are thinking of voting BNP, surely that should have come back to the Government as a message that there are some pockets of our communities who are under severe tensions, severe pressures, and that is addressed as a fundamental issue and they need support, not pretending the problem is not there.

**Hazel Blears:** I would not, Mrs Main, for one moment pretend; I am not that kind of politician. You have to be having the same debate as the public are having, you have to be in touch with people, you have to be prepared to discuss it. I read Trevor Phillips' speech last night at 11 o'clock, all 44 pages of it, and what Trevor was saying was that we need to be prepared to talk about this in very straightforward language and recognise that people have concerns and that is absolutely where I am, but equally I would say there is a responsibility on all of us not to contribute to things that are simply not true; not to sustain this view that communities are under siege because they are not; to say that there are practical measures that we can take to meet the impact on public services, whether it is health, education or housing; to dispel the myths around particularly council housing because over 90 per cent of new people in this country are in the private rented sector, they get no priority in housing and I think that is our responsibility, yes, to recognise the pressures, but to redouble our efforts to tackle the insidious and pretty vile messages that extremists of all kinds put out.

**Q264 Andrew George:** Following on the point that Jim made, talking about supermarkets and large bus companies and large employers addressing the issue, but there is a lot of informality out there, a lot of small businesses and a lot of one-man businesses which may not be covered by your efforts. It is making sure that you are getting the message across of the opportunity to learn English to the families and to those smaller businesses as well as the larger ones. I think a lot of us are very concerned that a lot of those families living in those circumstances, living relatively isolated from the whole community, and I wondered what could be done; whether you are actually integrating the voluntary sector enough to actually assist you in the process of getting to those people?

**Hazel Blears:** I think it is a very fair point and I think often big organisations are able to set up a system for being able to do it when small organisations will struggle. That is why the consultation that is going on is very important—how can we put a significant amount of money, £300 million, to best use in order to give people the maximum opportunities? It might be that small employers want to cluster together to do some work; it may well be that the FE college needs to be more flexible and send its tutors out to people rather than expecting them to come in. That means you have to have less time out of the business which has a significant impact on small employers. Those kind of practical measures I think are very important. The other area that I do think is worthy of exploring is we have now got through our Government's policies a huge number of trade union learning representatives out there in organisations, not necessarily in the very small organisations, but across the piece and whether or not they could be a resource in this area as well. We have to try and think more creatively rather than a traditional classroom setting where people would come for a set period and also to make the English language training more relevant so that it is maybe a very short course but absolutely fit for work. If you work in a particular sector you need to learn the words that are relevant to your particular sector, particularly for health and safety, so much more flexibility and creativity about how we get best value out of the money that is going in which is a significant amount.

**Mr Byrne:** Alongside those supply questions has to come the very clear expectation and a very clear message from government and from others that if you want to stay for any length of time in the UK—if you want to make the UK your home—then we expect you to be able to speak English.

**Q265 Chair:** Are you suggesting any compulsion on employers to contribute to the English language?

**Hazel Blears:** DIUS are currently in dialogue with employers and they hope very much that they will get a positive response. I do not think that they have ruled out the possibility of legislation if absolutely necessary but they are currently in dialogue at the moment.

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**Q266 Chair:** Can I finish off by picking up on a question that we skated over earlier on which is about the number of national bodies that seem to have responsibility for different aspects of migration policy? Apart from CLG and the Migration Directorate, the Home Office obviously has the responsibility of immigration and secure borders, the Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Integration and Migration Advisory Committee, the Migration Impacts Forum and obviously DIUS. Is there any concern at this multiplicity of bodies and any plans to simplify it?

**Mr Byrne:** I think there is an important message here which is that actually in the modern economy migration is a lot of people's business. As Hazel said earlier, this is not something that is somehow confined to the UK. If you look at the patterns of global migration, migration (defined as the number of people living outside their country of birth) has doubled since the 1960s and the UK is around the OECD average in terms of migration. That is not sometimes the impression you would get from the media, but nonetheless people do move around a lot more than they used to and that means that all parts of government will need to be equipped with a response. In terms of the way that we set up and coordinate migration policy, I think there is a constitutional nicety about not talking about Cabinet subcommittees, but obviously policy is coordinated in the relevant Cabinet subcommittee. There are then some key advisory bodies around key pieces of the architecture so the Migration Advisory

Committee and the Migration Impacts Forum are obviously crucial in helping us understand what is the right system for economic migration, but of course it is not just economic migrants who are coming to the UK; there are also spouses, there are also refugees. Over the centuries people move around for three reasons—love, work and war—and therefore you have got to have different approaches to different kinds of movement of people. It is necessarily complicated because actually it affects the whole gamut of public policy.

**Hazel Blears:** I think it is complicated because the issues are complex but I think it is government's task to try and make sure that there is a clear way that people understand how we are dealing with it. One of the reasons we have established the new Migration Directorate in my Department is because we want to try and see can we be a kind of corporate approach across government. That is why we are working with all of our colleagues on the Migration Impacts Plan which we hope to publish in June. I think that people will see that there is a coordinated integrated joint approach for us because I think there is quite a pressing need. I agree entirely with Liam that different bodies will be able to feed in on their particular area of expertise. I am pleased that on the Migration Impacts Forum that is jointly chaired by my Department and the Home Office together with the work on statistics. We will be here to deliver in front of the Committee I hope in a very integrated and joined-up manner.

**Chair:** Thank you very much indeed.

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# Written evidence

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## Memorandum by the Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Integration

1. The Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Integration (ABNI), is an advisory non departmental public body established in November 2004 to advise the Government on the implementation and assessment processes of the requirements set out in Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 2002, that applicants who apply for settlement and British Citizenship should show an understanding of English and Life in the UK.

1.2 ABNI agrees with the definition of community cohesion adopted by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion and believes that knowledge of English can play a positive influence on integration and community cohesion. We have argued that a flexible and adequate provision of ESOL is needed to achieve these policy aims.

1.3 Whilst, the focus of ABNI's work has been on aspirant British citizens and people seeking to settle permanently in the UK, the journey a person takes before settlement and citizenship will impact on their integration and consequently on the communities in which they live. This is particularly the case in relation to the English language, where evidence shows that learning English soon after arrival is more effective than doing so at a later stage.

1.4 Whilst the focus of publicly funded ESOL resources should continue to be on migrants planning to remain in the UK long term, it is important that creative solutions are found to ensure that all migrants with English language needs have the opportunity to access classes. For example, the employers of migrant workers should bear a greater responsibility for supporting the English language needs of their workers.

## 2. THE EFFECT OF RECENT INWARD MIGRATION ON COMMUNITY COHESION, AND PUBLIC CONCERNS ABOUT THE EFFECTS

2.1 At the level of public services, demand for ESOL classes has soared leading to competition for classes and long waiting lists in many areas. Practitioners in Cardiff<sup>1</sup> report that due to the inability to access the most appropriate provision, migrants have sought to access courses at a less appropriate level with the resulting mismatch causing disengagement by fellow learners. Whilst this issue has been recognised and action has taken to ensure that learners are placed in classes appropriate to their needs the impact of this is only to increase the waiting lists as there is not the level of ESOL provision to meet the demand.

2.2 In a recent report about the impacts of migration in local authorities across England by the Local Government Association (LGA)<sup>2</sup> language was identified as one of the key issues faced by local authorities. This related to basic information needs, translation and interpretation, supporting complex advice needs and communicating in emergencies. The report also pointed to an insufficient provision of ESOL (English language teaching) to meet the increasing demand, stemming from a shortage of teachers and funding rules.<sup>3</sup> Councils surveyed for this report also commented on the inability of A8 nationals to qualify for free lessons.

### *Kensington Liverpool<sup>4</sup>*

The diversity of some areas has increased significantly, In Kensington, Liverpool the BME population increased from 4.7% in 1991 to 18% in 2004 and now estimated to be over 22%. The new arrivals are mostly migrant workers and asylum seekers.

Under the new funding arrangements, migrant workers don't have access to free provision, and asylum seekers only after six months if their asylum claim is still pending.

Recently arrived asylum seekers who are not allowed to work or attend ESOL classes are therefore unlikely to be able to relate to the local community, where they must spend all their time.

Migrant workers, many of whom are on minimum wage and working long hours, are unable to access ESOL classes, which they cannot anyway afford, and for which there are waiting lists, and therefore they are inclined to mix only with their own language community.

The cultural and linguistic diversity of the community is continually evolving. The range of educational and employment experience is also increasing. (The local Liverpool born community has generally lower education and employment levels). This has caused tensions in the local community, which is identified as one of the poorest areas in Europe.

2.3 Whilst many local authorities have been able to demonstrate flexible and responsive approaches to new migration, there is an urgent need to address the issue of appropriate levels of funding to enable them to meet the changing needs and demands; in turn, services need to keep pace with changing demographics and population.

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<sup>1</sup> ABNI Board member Samina Khan and Helen Adams, Cardiff Essential Skills Service.

<sup>2</sup> Estimating the scale and impacts of migration at the local level, LGA November 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Estimating the scale and impacts of migration at the local level pg 45, LGA November 2007.

<sup>4</sup> Comment by Jan Luff, ABNI Board Member and Former head of ESOL at Liverpool Community College.

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### 3. THE ROLE, RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIONS OF DIFFERENT BODIES ON COMMUNITY COHESIONS AND MIGRATION, INCLUDING THOSE OF LOCAL AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND OF EMPLOYERS

3.1 Many local organisations have a vital role to play in contributing towards community cohesion and integration. This role has been explicitly recognised as regards public authorities as they have specific duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

3.2 Local FE colleges as the centres of ESOL training are in the “front line” for new arrivals in particular, as they are often the first official agency encountered. ESOL teaching-staff give support and help to new arrivals and referral to other agencies, and we believe that this should be recognised in funding. Along with schools they provide opportunities for social interaction and joint activities amongst adults and young people from different communities.

3.3 Given the vital importance of employment in the integration process, we also consider that employers should do more both to recruit and train people from excluded communities, and in the case of new immigrants, to provide or facilitate language training and other integrative support.

3.4 Citizenship ceremonies currently organised by local authorities provide an excellent opportunity to link new and existing British citizens and could be broadened to involve a wider representation of the local community.

3.5 Local authorities can also play an also important role through Citizens’ Days by linking new migrants to their local communities by providing information about the local area, including services and opportunities for local volunteering.

3.6 ABNI believes that some of the pressure for English language classes could be alleviated by employers taking responsibility for the language needs of migrant workers.

3.7 Some employers have demonstrated good practice with regard to supporting the English language needs of migrant workers:

3.8 Moy Park, a poultry processing manufacturer in Northern Ireland ensures that documents such as instructions, handbooks, induction and training records and contracts are translated into first languages. English classes are provided free of charge on site and provision of free English classes off site is advertised.

3.9 Noon Products (whose Chairman Sir Gulam Noon is an ABNI member) manufactures ready-made Indian meals for supply to supermarkets. The company holds free ESOL classes on-site.

3.10 Bernard Matthews Foods Ltd, is the largest turkey processor in Europe and based in East Anglia employs a large Portuguese workforce, employs bi-lingual interpreters and provides language training on site.

3.11 ABNI believes that large employers of migrant workers should be encouraged to follow the example of the organisations cited above. We argued in our response to the proposed points based immigration system (“A points-Based System: making Migration Work for Britain” Home Office. TSO March 2006) that the provision of language training should be one of the criteria for being rated as a Grade A sponsor.

3.12 In a survey of 223 employers of migrant workers for a report about the economic impact of migrant workers in the West Midlands,<sup>5</sup> the majority of employers cited English language skills as important when employing migrant workers. Over three-quarters of employers in the sample indicated that migrants’ English language skills were adequate or better than needed to do the job that they were employed for. This could help to explain why the majority of employers did not provide English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training or provide other help with English language skills for those workers whose English language skills needed further development. However, the report also found that migrant workers were interested in improving their English and in learning and skills development more generally. It also noted that English language skills were important for employment progression, engagement and social integration.

### 4. THE ROLE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS A TOOL IN PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS

4.1 ABNI believes that language is essential for economic and social integration and that exposure to language training as soon after arrival as possible is the most effective means of achieving this.

4.2 Meaningful social interaction between different ethnic groups is more effective at building good relations and fostering understanding between different groups than other more formal means yet language is cited as one of the reasons why this does not happen more often.<sup>6</sup>

4.3 In addition, lack of proficiency in English impacts on the entire family group. Children’s levels of educational achievements are directly correlated with parents’ ability to communicate in English and their levels of educational achievements. The current low levels of achievement among some ethnic minority groups are a cause for concern for the government and education providers across the UK.

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<sup>5</sup> Migrant workers in the West Midlands, West Midlands Regional Observatory, November 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Mori 2006, CRE 2006.

4.4 Due to the role reversal that can result where children who become proficient in English become advocates for adults with poor English, this can lead to social and cultural issues that can manifest as cultural clashes between generations within families and in the wider community.

4.5 Lack of sufficient levels of ESOL perpetuates the high level of need for interpreting and translation services. The rising cost of translation and interpreting services has been recognised by many public authorities.

4.6 Given the importance of English language as a tool for promoting integration and cohesion, ESOL funding needs to be maintained and increased to support stable and sustainable improvements in quality provision. This should be part of the Government Skills for Life commitment to level 2 for all.

4.7 In addition, local Learning and Skills Councils need to continually re-assess local needs with reference to demographic changes and needs. The Government programme, Train to Gain, should be extended to include ESOL tuition.

4.8 The ancillary costs of training need to be addressed for example child care and travel as well courses in literacy and numeracy.

## 5. ACTIONS TAKEN TO FORWARD THE COMMISSION ON INTEGRATION AND COHESION'S RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO MIGRATION

5.1 In their final report,<sup>7</sup> the Commission on Integration and Cohesion recommended "that there is a national body to manage the integration of new migrants, sponsored by the DCLG, but independent of Government. The model might be that of ABNI, sponsored by the Home Office, but an independent voice in the debate".

5.2 The report envisaged that this body would:

5.3 Clarify the objectives of a strategy for new migrants (ie temporary and permanent, family members, labour migrants, refugees and students) to focus on employment, social and democratic engagement, good community relations, access to essential services, and cultural diversity.

5.4 Baseline the evidence, clarifying current evidence and building an evidence base of local population changes. Working with ONS and others to improve understanding of migrants' motivations and address issues of information.

5.5 Consolidate and take forward the good practice work being developed by IDeA, setting up a helpline for local practitioners to access advice, and staffed with specialist support teams who could be called out to areas to offer support.

5.6 Provide guidance on how to work with settled communities in areas experiencing high immigration.

5.7 Explore whether asking new migrants (from EU or elsewhere) to attend the local town hall on arrival to register at the local town hall.

5.8 Secure the buy-in and joined up policy making from Whitehall and the Third Sector; acting as a catalyst for policy development, and an independent voice for new migrants and those in settled communities experiencing rapid change.

5.9 ABNI believes there could be a role for a new body. The particular strengths of the new body would be in its ability to coordinate and communicate with local authorities and advise on good practice on matters of community cohesion. The new body should not duplicate existing arrangements but rather act as a medium for communication from the existing bodies through to local areas and back.

5.10 The new body could advise local authorities in relation to:

- Information, for new migrants and existing communities.
- Resources for service providers.
- Language classes.
- Education services.
- Health services.
- Intercultural dialogue.
- Community Safety and Policing.
- Media handling.

5.11 The new body could collect and disseminate good practice with regard to the above and share information about relevant national and other local contacts.

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<sup>7</sup> A Shared Future, Commission on Cohesion and Integration 2007.

5.12 ABNI has recommended to the DCLG, that a draft strategy is produced for consultation which sets out policy and structural options for taking this recommendation forward. ABNI believes the Migration Impacts Forum which is chaired by the Home Office and DCLG should be tasked with this responsibility for developing the strategy.

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### Memorandum by the Audit Commission

The Audit Commission is an independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively, to achieve high-quality local services for the public. Our remit covers around 11,000 bodies in England, which between them spend more than £180 billion of public money each year. Our work covers local government, health, housing, community safety and fire and rescue services.

As an independent watchdog, we provide important information on the quality of public services. As a driving force for improvement in those services, we provide practical recommendations and spread best practice. As an independent auditor, we ensure that public services are good value for money and that public money is properly spent.

#### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### *Summary*

1. The Audit Commission welcomes the opportunity to provide evidence to the House of Commons Community and Local Government Committee inquiry. Our submission is based mainly on our recent research on the local impact of migrant workers, published in January 2007 (**Ref. 1**). This research did not cover broader migration issues.

2. The Commission supports an approach to community cohesion that covers more than race relations or issues of faith and we stressed this in our response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (**Ref. 2**). The Commission sees cohesion as a key factor in building sustainable communities and considers this in the delivery of local services assessment and inspection work. Since 2005 corporate assessments for single tier and county councils have specifically considered the question of what the council, with its partners, has achieved in its ambitions for building safer and stronger communities. Evidence for this response has been drawn from corporate assessments (**Ref. 3**).

3. The Commission submitted evidence to the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee relating to the impact of immigration on local public services (**Ref. 4**). This response does not repeat that work. Our previous evidence covered:

- local economic impact;
- the importance of place, given local differences in impact;
- the limitations of local population estimates and associated data about recent migration, and the lack of quantifiable information about demand for, and use of, public services by different groups of migrants;
- the different kinds of demand on public services that can be associated with migrants;
- the contribution of migrant workers to public services, particularly in the health and care sector; and
- the lack of data on possible compensating savings to local authorities resulting from British citizens moving abroad.

4. This submission adds information on:

- the role, responsibilities and actions of different bodies on community cohesion and migration, including local and central government;
- the effectiveness of local and central government action and expenditure in promoting community cohesion and responding to inward migration flows; and
- the role of the English language as a tool in promoting the integration of migrants.

##### *Recommendations*

5. The recommendations made in our January 2007 report still apply.

6. Local authorities need to take a lead role in coordinating and delivering locally tailored responses by:

- understanding how local populations are changing by analysing national and local sources of data and intelligence;
- balancing enforcement of regulations with encouragement for employers and landlords to improve standards;

- 
- addressing language, advice and information issues;
  - minimising local tensions, responding swiftly to emerging problems and maintaining contingency plans; and
  - modifying services to meet the diverse needs of a changing population.
7. The government and regional bodies could help local areas more effectively by:
- coordinating activity across government departments to support local areas in respect of data and information and to prepare for future increases in migration;
  - analysing trends and demand for skills and training regionally and coordinating regional information, advice and guidance; and
  - developing a regional approach to address the issues raised by migrant workers in housing, planning and economic development strategies and teaching English to adults.

#### DETAILED RESPONSE

##### *The role, responsibilities and actions of different bodies on community cohesion and migration*

8. Community cohesion issues raised by inward migration are normally best dealt with collaboratively by a group of local partners. The group should include local public agencies, community and faith organisations and employers. The Commission found no best pattern of coordination and, in different areas where coordinated work takes place, leadership came from different partners. Normally it will be provided by the voluntary and community sector, police forces or local authorities.

9. Local authorities have a number of specific responsibilities to promote equality and a community leadership role. They should ensure that an appropriate joint response is taking place in their areas.

10. Much recent migration is driven by the needs of labour markets. Employers and employment agencies will often know most about likely future change and will be well placed to support their employees or pass on relevant information from public agencies. Local authorities and their partners agencies should therefore seek to work with employers and trade unions in local partnerships. There are local and regional examples of such partnerships, such as the regional Migrant Workers North West. Consideration should be given to the impact of large scale recruitment by local public services, particularly the health and social care sectors.

11. Labour markets frequently cross local authority and other public agency boundaries. The link to economies means that it is often appropriate for a wider lead to come from relevant economic agencies. The East of England Development Agency has taken a particular lead on migration within its region and across all the Regional Development Agencies. Regional observatories are well placed to lead on the analysis of available national and local data; the South West Observatory was an early pioneer.

12. There are other regional initiatives, but overall regional and sub-regional coordination is patchy and recent population changes related to inward migration are not all reflected in regional strategies. There is no clarity as to which agency has the responsibility to ensure that appropriate and coordinated regional responses are taking place.

13. There is continuing local evidence that standards in employment and housing are not all being met. Responsibility for enforcing such standards is shared across a number of national and local agencies and needs to be coordinated. Collaboration is also more likely to be cost effective.

14. At a national level at least six departments of state have a direct interest in inward migration and cohesion. Local agencies are not always clear about where to go for what information or support.

##### *The effectiveness of local and central government action and expenditure in promoting community cohesion and responding to inward migration flows*

15. In general, councils' approach to community cohesion is not well developed. This was reflected in the summary report published on Comprehensive Performance Assessment work carried out in 2005–06 (**Ref. 3**) (see below). Strategy was a particularly weak area, with individual council work on community cohesion often not part of a wider strategic framework.

Councils and their partners are delivering visible improvements to community safety and some are linking this well with other shared priority areas. But measuring outcomes, managing performance and coordinating work in relation to community cohesion remain areas for improvement (paragraph 2).

Community cohesion work, in particular, is not being brought together in a coherent way, reducing its impact and lessening the sharing of learning (paragraph 37).

*Learning from CPA 20045–06*

16. There has been some improvement in 2006–07. The diversity of local populations is changing rapidly in many areas and councils are placing increasing importance on developing frameworks for addressing community cohesion. Councils that are improving their approach are starting to gather good quality intelligence about community cohesion issues and acting on them to make practical improvements, for example, better monitoring of racial incidents leading to effective action as a result.

17. However, a number of councils still do not have an overarching strategy resulting in uncoordinated or untargeted activity. Community and service user involvement in developing cohesion priorities is inconsistent in many councils and there are only limited examples of effective working with local communities to address community cohesion.

18. Over the past 18 months in particular there has been an increase in joint work and shared learning about inward migration flows at a local level and about ways in which local partners can best anticipate and/ or respond to related local issues. For example:

- The Local Government Association set up an officer advisory group on migration and cohesion in 2007 and has widened the remit of its Member group on asylum to one that looks more broadly at inward migration.
- Local Government Analysis and Research now host local authority based data from the Worker Registration Scheme that can help inform local work.
- The Greater London Authority are leading a group of local and regional partners in working with an Economic and Social Research Council sponsored group to look at improving regional data on migration.
- There are more conferences focusing on relevant issues such as measuring local change and the local impact of migration, and tailored workshops at service specific conferences. Both allow local areas to share good practice.
- There are now a number of electronic communities of practice and information sharing groups.
- Communities and Local Government funded the Improvement and Development Agency to develop a peer support/mentoring scheme.

19. The Commission plans to undertake a national study on community cohesion in 2008–09 to improve our understanding of the effectiveness of local responses.

#### *The role of the English language as a tool in promoting the integration of migrants*

20. Evidence from a range of sources, including research carried out by MORI for the Commission for Integration and Cohesion, shows that language is critical to communication and better integration and is the single greatest driver of improved cohesion in relevant areas. Immigrants with English language skills are less likely to be exploited and more able to help themselves. They are less in need of interpreters or translators (which are a cost to public services) and will have a wider range of better paid job options.

21. In January 2007 the Commission recommended a number of improvements to help address concerns about the quality, quantity and content of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes and gaps between local needs and local provision.

22. In the past year there have been some changes in arrangements that may help. For example, more appropriate courses have been designed; expectations about employer contributions have been increased; and authorities are currently being consulted on proposals for locally determined strategies and for targeting subsidised courses in English.

23. However, there is an ongoing significant shortfall in supply that is not being addressed. There is no legal requirement on employers to fill this gap and in many cases they do not have a direct financial incentive.

24. In January 2007 the Commission suggested the investigation of options to boost quality supply. Without this, the inadequacy of supply will continue to undermine improvements to local cohesion in certain areas.

25. Nationally and locally, the annual pupil census returns identify a continuing increase in the percentage of children in maintained schools for whom English is a second language.

26. More appropriate training is still needed for teachers and schools who are inexperienced in the most effective ways of teaching pupils for whom English is a second language. At a school level issues are not just about language. Recent work by the Institute for Community Cohesion identified rapid turnover as an important associated concern (**Ref 5**).

#### *Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)*

27. The Local Government White Paper, *Strong and Prosperous Communities*, announced the introduction of joint assessments of local public services. The Audit Commission, Commission for Social Care Inspection, Healthcare Commission, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, HM Inspectorate of Probation and Ofsted are jointly developing Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) which will be implemented in April 2009.

28. The CAA assessments will draw on the new national indicator set, currently being consulted on by the government, and will also be heavily influenced by the views of residents and those using services. At the heart of the new framework will be a joint inspectorate assessment of the prospects for the local area and the quality of life for local people, referred to in the White Paper as the area risk assessment.

29. The improvement priorities in the Local Area Agreement (LAA) will be key. The area risk assessment will judge the likelihood of the targeted improvements being achieved and, where appropriate, will identify barriers to that improvement. Community cohesion is likely to feature as a key priority in many LAAs and the CAA joint inspectorate assessment will consider how effective the local services are in promoting and building community cohesion in their local area.

#### REFERENCES

1. Audit Commission, *Crossing borders: Responding to the local challenges of migrant workers*, Audit Commission, 2007.
2. Audit Commission, *Response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion*, 2007.
3. Audit Commission, *Learning from CPA 2005–06*. Audit Commission, 2007. Publication of a similar report for 2006–07 is imminent.
4. Audit Commission, *Evidence to the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee relating to the impact of immigration on local public services*, September 2007.
5. Survey for the Local Government Association by the Institute for Community Cohesion, 2007.

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#### **Memorandum by Professor Richard Black (Sussex Centre for Migration Research, University of Sussex) and Dr Eugenia Markova (Hellenic Observatory, European Institute, LSE)**

#### BACKGROUND

1. The Sussex Centre for Migration Research is an interdisciplinary research centre, established in 1997, and focused on research into the experience of migrants and host societies in the UK and overseas. It carries out research funded by UK research councils, government, charities and others.

2. Researchers in the centre conducted a study into the experiences, perceptions, and aspirations of new immigrants from five Eastern European countries living in the London Boroughs of Harrow and Hackney, and the City of Brighton & Hove in 2005. The research also explored how the presence of these new immigrants—from Albania, Bulgaria, Russia, Serbia & Montenegro, and Ukraine—affects community cohesion. This memorandum summarizes some of the findings from this study, that are relevant to the effect of this recent inward migration on community cohesion.

#### MAJOR FINDINGS

3. The East European immigrants interviewed in this study included both men and women, with an average age of 34. Most were married or cohabiting, and over 80% of their spouses were living in the UK. Over half of the women interviewed were university-educated, but only 33% of men. Nearly 40% had been working as professionals before migration, whilst a quarter were students.

4. The immigrants in the study were found to have extremely high levels of employment in the UK, but most were working in low skill and low wage jobs—notably the hotel and restaurant sector, construction or “other services” (mainly cleaning).

5. Both immigrant and long-term resident respondents reported quite high levels of social interaction with each other, and generally with people from other ethnic groups. However, immigrants interviewed were found to have a relatively low sense of belonging to their neighbourhood, and few participated in community activities.

6. Further analysis is currently seeking to explain these patterns of community cohesion; however, some outline points can be made in more detail.

#### EDUCATION AND HOUSING

7. The immigrants sampled were relatively well-educated, with 54% having completed secondary education or college, 40% having University or above and just 6% having no qualifications. Women were better educated than men.

8. More than two thirds of the new immigrants interviewed described their level of English on arrival as “none” or “basic”. However, by the time of the interview, English proficiency had improved significantly amongst all groups, with men reporting higher levels of fluency than women.

9. More than half of the immigrants interviewed were living in private rented housing. However, some, notably Serbians and Albanians, had secured council accommodation, whilst a small number, notably Serbians, had become owner-occupiers.

#### EMPLOYMENT

10. Over half of all immigrants interviewed had entered the UK labour market either in the hotel and restaurant sector, construction or in “other services” (mainly cleaning). Employment rates were extremely high amongst the immigrants interviewed, with just 3.6% unemployed—less than the national average.

11. However, immigrants were significantly more likely to be employed in low skill jobs, whether compared to their own situation prior to departure, to long-term residents, or to the population as a whole in the localities studied.

12. The majority of those immigrants who were working, were doing so legally. However, some 64 individuals were interviewed who were working illegally, many in the construction sector.

13. Around one in five of the immigrants in employment reported earning below £5 an hour—most of them women.

#### SENSE OF “BELONGING”

14. Amongst our sample of new immigrants, only half as many expressed a sense of belonging to their neighbourhood as amongst long-term residents, and the population as a whole in the 2005 Citizenship survey.

15. This appears to be a specific “neighbourhood effect”, since nearly twice as many said they did feel they belong to Britain. Those who felt they belonged strongly to their neighbourhood had lived there on average 18 months longer than those who said they did not belong. Those who felt they belong strongly in the UK had been in the country on average three years longer than those who felt they did not belong.

16. Those with children living with them in the UK were also more likely to say they belonged, as were men, those with less education, and those living in council accommodation.

#### VALUING DIVERSITY

17. Both immigrants and long-term residents agreed that the neighbourhoods they were living in were places where different people get on well together—more so than the population as a whole in the 2005 Citizenship survey. However, very few felt their neighbourhoods were places where people help each other.

18. Immigrants were less likely than long-term residents to say they talked frequently to their neighbours, although at least half of both groups reported talking to a neighbour at least once a week.

19. Both immigrant and long-term resident respondents reported quite high levels of social interaction with people from other ethnic groups, especially at the workplace.

#### EXPECTATIONS OF LIFE OPPORTUNITIES

20. Around half of the immigrants surveyed reported that they wish to return to their home country at some stage. However, few felt this return was imminent—just eight individuals had fixed a date.

21. Age, family status, educational background, length of stay in the country and intentions for repatriation were all significant factors shaping immigrants’ expectations of future life opportunities in Britain.

22. Young people also often wanted to get good education and improve their English language qualifications.

#### COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

23. Under 25% of the immigrants interviewed felt that they could influence decisions at a local level, much lower than amongst long-term residents or for the UK population as a whole.

24. Relatively few immigrants interviewed had volunteered, undertaken an action to solve a local problem, or had given money to charity. Similarly, few immigrants were members of an association. Those who were, had mostly joined sports clubs.

25. Those who had been in the UK longer were more likely to have joined an association. Also important in influencing community participation were accommodation status and language ability.

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 FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT THE PROJECT

26. The study on which this memorandum is based was coordinated by Eugenia Markova and Richard Black, and was funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. It was based on a questionnaire survey of 388 new immigrants and 402 long-term residents conducted between June and November 2005, complemented by a range of qualitative research methods. A snowball sample was used to identify both immigrants and long-term residents living in the same neighbourhoods, and interviews were carried out in immigrants' own language by a specially-trained team of immigrant researchers.

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**Memorandum by Burnley Borough Council**
**1. DESCRIPTION OF ORGANISATION**

Burnley Borough Council is a district local authority within East Lancashire.

**2. DETAILS**

The following details are to provide a response to the inquiry on Community Cohesion and Migration announced on 5 December 2007. The points reflect and express the established policy position of the Council.

2.1 As part of its' work of responding to and managing the effect of migration and managing the public concerns that this generates, Burnley Borough Council's Economy Scrutiny Committee considered a report about the position of migrant workers in Burnley; information about local initiatives underway to address the needs of migrant workers; and points identifying issues for further consideration and discussion by Members. The key points in the report were:

- 2.1.1 Our Committee recognised that it is not possible to accurately identify the numbers of migrant workers who have come to the borough, either from the Accession Eight countries or from other countries. We found that the numbers of local registrations under the Workers Registration Scheme and applications for National Insurance Numbers, however, represent useful indicators in relation to the Accession Eight. Between May 2004 and December 2006, there were 205 registrations under the scheme in Burnley, with Polish nationals representing the largest group of those registering (69), others being from Lithuania (55), Slovakia (43) and Latvia (20). Between 2002 and 2006, there were just over 100 applications for National Insurance Numbers from migrant workers from the Accession Eight countries. Our Committee recognised that these figures will not include dependent family members who may have moved with the worker, or followed when the worker was established in work and accommodation. Nor will they include any people who have registered to work in the United Kingdom in other towns and cities and then moved to Burnley. They may also not include self-employed workers, to whom different registration criteria apply. It should also be noted that the figures do not enable us to identify how many workers, after registering and working in Burnley for a while, have left the borough, either for other places in the United Kingdom, to another European country, or to the country from which they originally migrated.
- 2.1.2 Our Council recognised the wider East Lancashire context to the position of migrant workers in Burnley—and, of course, a wider national and international context. Migrant workers registering in one borough may work in neighbouring boroughs, or live in one borough and work in others.
- 2.1.3 Our informal research across East Lancashire shows that the majority of migrant workers are male (around 64%), with most aged between 18 and 34 years old. Their occupations are generally in manufacturing sectors (process operators, packers, food processors), the building trade, and hospitality. Virtually all the migrant workers work between 35 and 40 hours a week, although some work longer hours. The average hourly wage they earn is between £4.50 and £5.99, which is broadly in line with the National Minimum wage, which currently stands at £5.35.

**2.2 Initiatives to address the needs of migrant workers:**

- 2.2.1 Public agencies and voluntary organisations in Burnley and across East Lancashire have been involved in a range of positive initiatives to address the needs of migrant workers. In Burnley, the Council has been taking part in these initiatives as an expression of our policy, expressed in the Sustainable Community Strategy of Burnley Action Partnership, "*Burnley's Future*", to "promote and welcome immigration, but [also to] manage and plan for demographic change".
- 2.2.2. In 2006, a partnership of 12 different public bodies across East Lancashire collaborated to produce a "Welcome Pack" for people moving to East Lancashire, including people from countries that have recently joined the European Union. As well as being produced in

English, the pack was produced in translated versions in Polish, Lithuanian and Czech. The pack provides residents with information about key services that are available to them, and about where they can get advice on a range of issues, including housing, employment, policing, health, banking and education. It also sets out clearly the law and the responsibilities that all residents have on such issues as driving motor vehicles, drugs laws and tax liabilities. By bringing all this information together into one publication, the pack helps ensure that information on peoples rights and responsibilities and on relevant services is provided in an efficient way.

2.3 Organisations in the voluntary, community and faith sector, especially the Catholic churches, are playing a crucial role in establishing positive contact with these new members of the local community:

2.3.1 One key initiative has been pro-active work to identify and communicate with migrant workers. The Police have led on this, particularly through developing links with employers, recruitment agencies, housing providers and schools.

2.4 Burnley Borough Council has been working with partners to help identify the effect of inward migration and the impact on service delivery. This has involved working in partnership with other district councils and the Lancashire County Council in order to undertake a local survey to which will help to understand the needs of the newly arrived to Lancashire, and to assist the management of migration across Lancashire. An issue, which has already been identified and commented on in a number of national reports, is the recording and accurate statistics in data for Migration.

2.5 The survey of district councils and the County Council in East Lancashire will have the aim of identifying how:

2.5.1 We should apply good practice guidelines as identified in the Improvement and Development Agency, the Institute for Community Cohesion and the Audit Commission, both in our survey work, and in ongoing work to manage migration and to take account of public views about issues of migration.

2.5.2 We should establish the extent of activities which are currently being undertaken to manage migration throughout Lancashire.

2.5.3 We should review these activities to identify gaps in service provision and then to move to developing and applying support mechanisms and good practice in dealing with changes in the community.

2.6 Discussions in a Lancashire-wide group have also taken place on the need to work across the sub regional area to collate and disseminate credible data on population changes, including data on levels of migrant workers and good practices. This still needs developing at this stage and will be managed safely and securely.

2.7 The countywide approach also involves supporting those in leadership position in order to promote agreed messages in line with established policy, and to engage residents around those. This support will include information sharing, training and mentoring.

2.8 In responding to the recommendations of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, Burnley Borough Council are:

2.8.1 Undertaking a survey to help identify service needs; monitoring community tensions and responding to these through positive initiatives such as multi-agency monitoring, and the Burnley Good Relations Programme; working with voluntary and interfaith organisations and other agencies on projects to contribute to the development of cohesive communities; mainstreaming integration and cohesion into the Local Strategic Partnership's sustainable community strategy, through our work in the cross-cutting theme group on Social and Community Cohesion.

2.8.2 Burnley Borough Council, also in partnership with other district councils, has helped to produce a "Welcome to East Lancashire" booklet, which provides vital information about services such as police, housing, education etc. It has currently been produced in English, Czech, Lithuanian and Polish to meet the needs identified migrant workers in this area.

2.8.3 The Council is committed to ongoing work on these areas. We feel that activity of this type is an integral part of carrying out our duties and of our community leadership role. These responsibilities, and the work that comes with them, need to be acknowledged and taken into account in the considerations that government gives to setting the grants to Burnley Borough Council and other district councils facing similar issues, including Rate Support Grant, Area-Based Grants and special programme grant.

**Joint memorandum by The Chartered Institute of Housing and The Housing Associations' Charitable Trust**

The Chartered Institute of Housing is the professional organisation for people who work in housing. Its purpose is to maximise the contribution housing professionals make to the wellbeing of communities. The Chartered Institute has over 20,000 members across the UK and the Asian Pacific working in a range of organisations—including housing associations, local authorities, arms length management organisations, the private sector and educational institutions.

The Housing Associations' Charitable Trust (hact) pioneers solutions to issues concerning people on the margins of mainstream housing provision, including as an important element of its work a refugee housing integration programme.

## INTRODUCTION

This is a joint submission by the CIH and hact to the Committee's inquiry into Community Cohesion and Migration. Both bodies welcome the inquiry, which raises important issues with which they have been directly engaged over the last few years.

CIH and hact decided to make a joint submission because of our partnership in the project Opening Doors, jointly-funded by CLG and the Housing Corporation, which works with six housing association partners in different parts of England to improve their services to migrant and refugee communities. Community cohesion is a key element of this work.

Both organisations have had a leading role in issues of community cohesion and housing. Both made submissions to, and were involved in the work of, the Independent Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC). CIH has (with the Housing Corporation) published a new good practice guide on community cohesion and housing, with a particular emphasis on new migration, and has given guidance to housing organisations on issues such as translation and interpretation. Hact has recently completed its Accommodate refugee housing partnership project, working in five areas to improve housing and integration of refugee communities. Hact also has a project Communities R Us which focuses on building community cohesion in three communities which have experienced inward migration by migrant workers, refugees, or both.

We can make our publications on this issue available to the Committee and they are referred to in the bibliography.

### 1. *Overall effects of recent migration on diversity in the UK and on communities*

1.1 The effects of migration and growing diversity have affected the make up of communities in the UK in many different ways, for example:

- *Languages spoken*—in London schools, children speak in total about 300 different “home” languages. As an example of the changing population picture, in Tower Hamlets, which has a large Sylheti-speaking Bangladeshi population, the demand for East European language services now exceeds that for Sylheti.
- *Religion*—while many migrants come from countries with a Christian background, all the other major religions are also represented. An important aspect is that people may come from different traditions within Christianity, Islam, etc. Somali people may want separate religious facilities to people from (say) Pakistan, even though both communities are traditionally Muslim.
- *Population make-up*—new migrants tend to be younger (concentrated in the 25–44 age group), and are more likely to be male than female—a reversal of the pattern of migration a decade ago. (One consequence is that migrants are helping to rebalance the country's population, which is of course aging).
- *Reasons for coming here*—there are currently about 1.4 million foreign workers in the UK and over 300,000 foreign students. In 2006, almost 100,000 people were granted settlement as relatives (mainly spouses and children) of people already living here, and just short of 20,000 as refugees. In the same year, about 42,000 asylum seekers were receiving state support.
- *Legal status*—migrants vary widely in their legal status. There may be wide differences within groups of the same national origin. For example, among Somalis in the UK—and in any single town or city—we will find British citizens, refugees, asylum-seekers, persons granted exceptional leave to remain, undocumented migrants (often people who have stayed beyond the period allowed), and people granted refugee status in another European country but who subsequently moved (legally) to Britain. Among workers from EU states, immigration status also varies widely depending on country of origin, employment status, etc.

1.2 Of all the recent factors which have produced what some are calling “superdiversity”, work-related migration is probably the biggest and one which is difficult to forecast with any certainty. EU expansion, in particular, has created a transient workforce, subject to varied (and changing) restrictions to its movement within the EU. Its size and where it locates also depend heavily on the relative prosperity of different member

states and factors such as cheap transport links. Some forecasts suggest, for example, that the rapid growth of the Polish economy means that in a few years the large émigré Polish community in Britain will stop growing or even get smaller.

1.3 Growing diversity has considerable implications for community cohesion. These range from the sudden changes that can take place in neighbourhoods as new groups move in, to the interactions (sometimes problematic) between different minority communities, to the changing expectations of younger people in minority communities, particularly those born in the UK who in many cases may still feel that they are not fully accepted as British. There is a much wider range of needs and circumstances, which vary from place to place across Britain, than there was 20 years ago.

1.4 We believe that it is essential to view these issues from the perspective of the different neighbourhoods and communities experiencing migration and growing diversity. Long-established communities may see “new” groups moving into their areas without necessarily being aware of their reasons for being in Britain or their varying legal status. Policy tends to focus on categories of people, for example “migrant workers” or “refugees”. But at neighbourhood level such categories may well be irrelevant or (often) misapplied: the important issue is people, their differences, and how greater cohesion can be achieved—regardless of status or why they are here.

## 2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

2.1 Until recently, there was little coordination of responsibility for the different aspects of policy on migration and on community cohesion, and this point was made in the CIC report (paragraph 5.20). We believe that the transfer of responsibility for community cohesion to CLG in May 2006 was the right move, but it has still not fully resolved the issue of getting a properly integrated and comprehensive set of policies. For example:

- 2.1.1 Migration policy is seen predominantly as an economic issue. While the economic advantages of migration are clear, decision-making tends to divorce the economic issues from the social issues and the impacts on public services. For example, the government’s Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) has a remit and work plan which focus entirely on issues about the demand for migrant labour, without considering the wider implications of greater migration.
- 2.1.2 While it is true that the government has also established a Migration Impact Forum (MIF) to consider these wider issues, its work does not feed across to that of the MAC. Also, its terms of reference do not allow it to make recommendations.
- 2.1.3 Both bodies focus on work-related migration but, as we have emphasised, many communities are affected by and are concerned about all forms of migration, without necessarily distinguishing their origins. There is no mechanism (as far as we are aware) for looking in the round at the impact at local level of the range of policies on migration and settlement—whether work-related, asylum-seeking, by established refugees, for family reasons, etc. An example of the policy confusion that results is the bewildering range of entitlements to public services and welfare benefits (which we return to later).
- 2.1.4 Neither are we confident that these mechanisms will allow adequate planning for the impact of migration on demand for services. As we have seen, migration is having both a perceived and actual impact on housing and other services, as demonstrated by the debate over housing allocations in Barking and Dagenham. Legitimate concerns about housing shortages can very easily be racialised and fuel considerable discontent.

2.2 We therefore believe it is vital for government to have a mechanism for reviewing policies related to migration that takes into account all types of migration and the full range of its impacts, particularly on public services and on communities, and the way these are changing over time. This is of course a very challenging task, but unless faced the government will continue to make policy which is only based on part of the evidence and which fails to address the full range of concerns of people in their neighbourhoods.

2.3 The current Public Service Agreement relating to cohesion and the integration of new migrants is PSA 21. Government issued a new “delivery agreement” for this PSA in October, 2007. However, it is worth pointing out some weaknesses about the PSA as a mechanism for focussing government policy:

- Community cohesion is only part of the PSA (covered by two of the six indicators).
- At national level, it will be assessed through the “Places” survey. Previous results have been consistently good and may not therefore identify lack of cohesion in particular local areas.
- At local level, it is up to local authorities whether they include one or more of the indicators in their Local Area Agreements LAAs), and set targets accordingly (see below).

2.4 However, we believe that the community cohesion “challenge” needs to be given even greater weight, so that it is “mainstreamed” across all departments (in the way that, for example, child policy is being mainstreamed) and is a key driver of government policy. It should be an important test of any policy decision or government announcement that it promotes community cohesion (or at the very least does not act against it). This should include policies and announcements on the contentious issues of migration and asylum.

### 3. ROLES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER AGENCIES

3.1 Coordination of the response to new arrivals in localities, as within central government, needs to be “joined up” as no one organisation currently has the overall responsibility for assessing or dealing with the impacts of migration or integration, and this has led to a fragmented and mostly uncoordinated response. A coordinated response is critical to champion the benefits of migration and respond effectively to the worries created by migration such as access to housing. A single lead and voice in each locality is essential to ensure a clear direction and support to achieve strong sustainable communities—and clearly it is the local authority that is in the best position to take this role.

3.2 Local authorities need both incentives and resources to take on this task. Although there has been publicity around the demands which new migrants put on local services, the reality is that many migrants are either not entitled to many services or are unaware of their rights. It is therefore easy for their needs to go unrecognised or to impact in areas which receive less attention from local authorities (eg in the case of housing, making use of the private rented sector rather than the social housing stock).

3.3 In this context, a welcome decision has been the priority afforded to community cohesion in the new range of national indicators, following the recommendation from the CIC. The main indicator (the “percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area”) is the first on the new list of indicators for local government issued for consultation by CLG in October, 2007. While this gives it prominence, it is up to the authorities whether they adopt this indicator as one of the 35 (out of 198) to which they will give priority. It will therefore be vital that in the dialogue between government offices and local authorities over LAAs that both sides look to prioritise this indicator in areas where community cohesion is a key issue.

3.4 The CIC emphasised that, as well as a national indicator, local communities should be encouraged to develop their own definitions and measures of community cohesion, reflecting local needs and priorities, and encouraging constructive debate as to what obstacles to cohesion exist and how to tackle them. We believe that this is very important and has in fact taken place in some areas (see examples in the CIH guide, including the experience of the hact *Communities R Us* project in Bolton).

3.5 Beyond the indicator on community cohesion (NI 1), there are only two others which relate to migration in the consultation document:

- NI 12 links immigration enforcement activity to licensing of houses in multiple occupation. CIH has objected to this, on the grounds that it is not the role of licensing schemes to enforce immigration law.
- NI 13 is more positive in measuring migrants’ language skills, but CIH has commented that the proposed method of measurement (the percentage of applicants for English courses who complete them) does not address the issue of people who are unaware of courses available, or whose applications are not accepted because courses are full.

We therefore believe that the indicators in themselves are unlikely to act as sufficient incentive to local authorities. The key will be to persuade local authorities, and Local Strategic Partnerships, of the importance of cohesion for the future of their areas and the costs of not giving it sufficient priority in both strategic planning and the different aspects of service provision.

3.6 Finally, it is worth emphasising that it is usually poor neighbourhoods which experience the effects of migration, whether it is asylum seekers dispersed to areas of low housing demand, or EU migrants living in multi-occupied accommodation. Perhaps the biggest single impact on community cohesion will be if the objective that “no-one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live”, set out in the Government’s National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal in 2001, were to be achieved.

### 4. EFFECTIVENESS OF RESPONSE TO MIGRATION IN DIFFERENT LOCAL AREAS

4.1 As indicated by the Committee’s terms of reference for the inquiry, there is a range of types of area affected by new migration and the impacts are different in different areas. As part of our joint project *Opening Doors*, we have carried out a review of regional and local studies on the impacts of new migration, and this informs our brief comments below.

4.2 *Areas of Rapid Increase in Inward Migration.* One characteristic of inward migration in the last few years, especially since the expansion of the EU from 2004, is that it has both increased and has affected a geographically wide range of areas, including areas with limited previous experience of accepting migrants. Migration nationally has, according to official figures, more or less doubled in the last decade from around 300,000 or fewer people per year to approaching 600,000. These figures are known to mask greater short-term movements, especially of migrant workers, who are often concentrated in particular areas (see below). However, the main point to be made is that migration is now such an important factor that it affects the majority of local authorities to some degree. Even if actual numbers in a particular district are small, the impact can be considerable if the authority concerned had little or no previous experience of minority communities, and (for example) has few staff with relevant skills. In our experience the response from

authorities has been very variable indeed, with some responding well (including some in the “inexperienced” category) but the majority lagging behind or reliant on inadequate advice services never intended to deal with the demands they now face.

4.3 *Areas with a Lack of Experience of Diversity.* Many rural areas and small towns have been affected by new migration, not only across England but across the whole of the UK. The evidence is documented in the Audit Commission’s excellent appraisal *Crossing Borders*, which was published in January 2007. Good practice in responding to migration in such areas with little experience of diversity has included:

- *Cornwall*—has a multi-agency migrant workers group which has produced a “Welcome to Cornwall” pack and developed a responsible employers scheme, as well as responding to poor conditions in temporary housing.
- *North Somerset*—commissioned a specific survey looking at the housing needs of migrant groups.
- *South Holland*—worked with partners to survey a large number of migrant workers and also members of the long-established community, to test cohesion issues as well as needs for services.

In all cases, there are issues of resources and skills to follow up these initial studies and ensure that they are fully reflected in service changes.

4.4 *Areas where Migrant Communities mix with Settled Migrant Communities.* There are also many areas where migrants are absorbed into settled communities, adding to the diversity that already exists. It is probably fair to say that the majority of cities and towns with an ethnically-mixed population have experienced further migration from new groups, in part because of their cosmopolitan nature and in part because they offer support networks to newcomers. Although local authorities in these cases, and bodies such as housing associations, are often better equipped to deal with diversity, this does not necessarily mean that the new needs have been identified. Indeed, existing diversity—plus factors already mentioned such as lack of eligibility for services—may mean that new groups’ needs remain hidden. However, some authorities (eg Southampton) and some housing associations (eg Willow Park Housing Trust in Manchester, Wakefield and District Housing in Yorkshire) have responded in imaginative ways.

4.5 The message from the work which CIH and hact have carried out is that there is “good practice” in dealing with new migration, but it is very scattered and the agencies concerned are having to learn quickly and in many cases acquire new skills. The resource climate for local government in particular is not conducive to new initiatives or service expansion in the directions often required.

## 5. IMPACT OF NEW MIGRATION ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES

5.1 Under this heading we deal with the impact on neighbourhoods, under the following heading the impact on housing services.

5.2 Given the scale of change which has taken place in some local areas, accompanied by hostile media coverage and often unhelpful political comment, it is perhaps surprising that there has not been a greater negative impact of new migration at local level. Recently, the number of incidents has been quite small (eg clashes between communities in Wrexham in Wales, and in Boston in Lincolnshire), although there were more serious problems (including murders) associated with the first stages of asylum dispersal from 2000 onwards. Most recent surveys of migrant workers have reported some problems for individuals but, in general, not major ones. The issues are therefore often lower-key but nevertheless important, for example:

- Poor conditions, overcrowding and associated problems in private rented housing and for seasonal workers on caravan sites.
- Destitution suffered by people who lose access to welfare services and both suffer deprivation themselves and have an adverse impact on the communities where they live.
- Friction between communities, eg between long-established BME communities and newer ones competing for resources in the same area.
- Problems related to age differences, eg migrant workers being mainly younger people, often male, perhaps moving into areas where the indigenous community includes a lot of older people.

There are several examples of local authorities and housing associations, and of tenants’ and residents’ groups, brokering better relationships and defusing tensions. The CIH guide to Community Cohesion and Housing has several migrant-related case studies. It is important that (following the work of the CIC) good practice continues to be encouraged and disseminated.

5.3 Destitution is a particularly significant issue for community relations—and there is growing destitution reported from local studies in Coventry, Leicester, Leeds and Newcastle, as well as specific evidence of destitution in London among migrant workers who lose their jobs. We urge the Committee to recommend government to review policies which lead to destitution or—in the case of asylum seekers—which use it as a tool to enforce immigration policy. Not only does it cause hardship to individuals, it has a considerable impact on neighbourhoods because of the obvious risks of people (often young men) having nothing to do, no accommodation and no money.

5.4 It is vital to emphasise the role that is or could be played by community-based groups working with migrant and refugee communities. Such groups already play an important role in London and other large cities, and often have a nascent role in smaller towns. It is very important that local authorities and other agencies work to identify and support such groups, if possible investing in building their capacity. The work which CIH and hact are doing through Opening Doors is intended to encourage this and is already developing good practice examples.

## 6. IMPACT ON HOUSING SERVICES

6.1 The evidence of the impact of new migration on social housing is, so far, that it has been very limited. For example, the latest “CORE” returns on lettings by housing associations show only 1% going to accession state nationals in 2006–07, and the equivalent proportion for local authority lettings is only 0.7%. In round figures, this accounts for about 1,500 lettings across the whole social housing stock, out of total lettings in that year (included in “CORE” data) of around 170,000. So far, new EU migration has therefore had little direct impact on social housing.

6.2 Nevertheless a number of authorities and associations have reported a growing number of inquiries about housing from EU migrants, and as more decide either to stay long term or bring family members, demand may increase. At this stage however there is still time for government, and for social landlords, to plan their responses to possible increased demand for housing. (We will be making these points to the joint inquiry by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission and the LGA into the fairness of housing allocations.)

6.3 All of the local studies reviewed by CIH and hact have indicated that the overwhelming proportion of EU migrants is accommodated in the private sector, either directly through employers, through agents, or through landlords. This has had a considerable impact on housing supply, especially in small towns, affecting not just the private rented market but also the lower end of the home owner market, as landlords buy property to let to migrants. There is a widespread problem of poor conditions, excessive rents and overcrowding, especially in smaller places where authorities do not have sufficient staff to enforce standards/rent levels in the private sector. Poor management of properties exacerbates the problems, and can affect community cohesion in an area (eg if rubbish accumulates, if people are coming and going at night due to shift work, etc).

6.4 In a joint submission by various agencies (including CIH and hact) to the Migration Impact Forum, in January, we suggested that CLG should consider ways to support local authorities to gear up their enforcement activities in the private rented sector, especially in areas with high inward migration.

6.5 Regardless of tenure, there is considerable evidence of need for better advice facilities for migrants, accessible to them and with advice available in appropriate languages. Although there are some advice services of these kinds (notably New Link in Peterborough) in many areas they are unavailable or not attractive to migrants. It also important that any nationally-developed “welcome pack” for migrants adequately covers housing issues.

6.6 There is also an issue about the complexity of entitlements to housing and other services, according to immigration status. CIH and hact are currently developing an online resource which will be available to individuals and to housing professionals, advice workers and migrant/refugee community organisations, later this year. However, the complexity of the rules is in itself a barrier—for frontline workers it may be safer to tell someone that they are not eligible (for example, for help as a homeless person) rather than risk assuming an eligibility which does not accord with the rules.

6.7 A related issue is access to choice-based letting schemes, which require computer access and literacy, competence in English and familiarity with local areas where accommodation choices might be made. There is already evidence of the difficulties CBL schemes pose to refugee groups; it is important that social landlords take account of the needs of all new migrant groups, as indeed some have done.

6.8 Finally, there is the important issue of identifying new migrant populations, and assessing their circumstances and needs. The Opening Doors work has identified a number of examples of local surveys, but there are problems about data availability and also expertise and costs for undertaking local surveys. Surveys may need to be repeated at intervals because the situation is so dynamic. There is a need for guidance on undertaking such surveys, and a clear expectation that this information will be included in local housing strategies and other strategic plans.

6.9 There must be recognition that the impact on housing resources is threefold:

- housing revenue accounts;
- LA and HA capital resources; and
- LA General Fund (strategic housing role, homelessness and housing advice, support for the voluntary and community sector and work with the private rented sector).

The greatest impact is on the General Fund, which in most LAs is the most constrained.

## 7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYERS

7.1 CIH and hact are concerned that, while the overall economic benefits of migration are recognised, there are few mechanisms to ensure that a proportion of the benefit is reinvested locally to meet the costs associated with the presence of migrants. This is particularly the case in housing where (as we have explained) migrant workers often have inadequate accommodation (with knock on effects for the neighbourhoods where it is located) or may increasingly look to the public sector for advice or for housing.

7.2 We would like to see this issue addressed, possibly in the following ways:

- Consider how to work with employers to improve tied accommodation and/or provide alternatives.
- Consider the potential role of housing associations as managers of accommodation on behalf of employers, to ensure higher standards, and how this could be financed.
- Consider an exploratory programme with say six LA/HA partnerships to examine options for improved/better managed accommodation with local employers and encourage a range of different solutions.

## 8. ACTION TO TAKE FORWARD THE CIC RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 CIH and hact support the majority of the CIC's recommendations, the initial response to them by the Communities Secretary in October, and the Housing Corporation's strategy *Shared Places*. We comment here only on exceptions to this.

- 8.1.1 We were concerned that the CIC's final report did not place sufficient emphasis on the importance of housing, given that community cohesion is fundamentally about neighbourhoods and where people live. We look for this to be addressed in the CLG's full response to CIC later this year.
- 8.1.2 Although welcoming the CIC's proposed new definition of community cohesion, again it omits the "neighbourhood" dimension which is included in the current definition. We believe that it is important that any changed definition reflects this.
- 8.1.3 We support the CIC's recommendation that there should be research into "what works in different neighbourhoods, and why". While there are now numbers of different local projects addressing cohesion issues, there is little evidence of what works in different circumstances.
- 8.1.4 We were concerned about the strength of the CIC's comments about "single group funding" and were pleased that the Community Secretary's letter called for a more balanced approach. The guidance to housing organisations in the CIH guide to *Community Cohesion and Housing* aims for such an approach.
- 8.1.5 We endorse the CIC's views about the need for clear government messages about cohesion and the need to respond rapidly to myths. Again, there is guidance on this, and practical examples, in the CIH guide.

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## Memorandum by the Department for Communities and Local Government

### INTRODUCTION

1. This Memorandum is a response from Communities and Local Government to the Select Committee's call for evidence as part of its inquiry into Cohesion and Migration. It has been collated with assistance from the Home Office, the Department for Children, Schools and Families, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, the Department of Health and the Office for National Statistics. This evidence should be read alongside the Department's full response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's report *Our Shared Future*. The response was published on 4 February 2008 and a copy has been made available to the Committee.

2. The Memorandum follows the terms of reference set out by the Committee, namely:

- (a) the effect of recent inward migration on community cohesion, and public concerns about this effect;
- (b) the role, responsibilities and actions of different bodies in community cohesion and migration;
- (c) the effectiveness of local and central government action and expenditure in promoting community cohesion and responding to inward migration flows, with particular regard to:
  - areas that have experienced rapid increases in new inward migration;
  - areas that have a lack of experience of diversity;
  - areas where new migrant communities mix with existing settled migrant communities;
- (d) the role of the English language as a tool in promoting the integration of migrants;

- (e) the impact of recent migration on local communities, including the impact on housing, education, health care, and other public services; and
- (f) actions to take forward the Commission on Integration and Cohesion’s recommendations relating to migration.

The Memorandum also includes additional information requested on the allocation of Government funding to support cohesion at the local level.

3. It is worth, however, beginning by setting out some basic facts and figures. At the national level, cohesion is measured through the Citizenship Survey by asking people “to what extent do you agree or disagree that this local area (within 15–20 minutes walk) is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?” In the 2003 and 2005 Surveys, 80% of people in England and Wales agreed that their local area was cohesive. The most recent findings for the Survey (April to September 2007) show that 82% of people agreed. In 2006, the question was also included in the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) Survey for England. This enables us to measure cohesion at (lower tier) local authority level as well as at the national level. The BVPI Survey found that cohesion rates in authorities ranged from 38% to 90%—but in only 10 out of 387 areas was it under 60%. Cohesion indicators have been carried through to the new Places Survey to allow us to continue this local analysis.

4. On migration, the latest ONS estimates show that in 2006 591,000 people arrived to live in the UK for at least a year. At the same time, an estimated 400,000 people left the UK to live abroad—up from 359,000 in 2005. For this reason, net migration—the difference between immigration and emigration—fell from 244,000 in 2004 to 191,000 in 2006. The increase in emigration since 2004 has exceeded the rise in immigration. Of all immigrants in 2006, 510,000 (86%) were non-British while just under half of those emigrating were non-British (194,000). As a result, net migration to the UK among non-British citizens was 316,000 in 2006. Among British citizens, emigration from the UK exceeded immigration by 126,000.

#### A. THE EFFECT OF RECENT INWARD MIGRATION ON COMMUNITY COHESION, AND PUBLIC CONCERNS ABOUT THIS EFFECT

5. MORI polling conducted in January 2007 to support the work of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion found that 18% of people surveyed identified migration as the main issue facing Britain.<sup>8</sup> 68% of people agreed with the statement that there were too many migrants in Britain, and 47% of the Asian and 45% of the Black respondents felt that there was too much migration into Britain. More than half (56%) of all respondents felt that some groups get unfair priority when it comes to public services like housing, health services and schools—although this figure falls to 26% when asked specifically about the situation in their local area.

6. Despite this headline data, there is not a straightforward relationship between inward migration and community cohesion. The level of cohesion in any particular area is based on the complex interaction of a number of factors—and the combination of these factors will be specific to local circumstances. Research for the Commission on Integration and Cohesion by DTZ Consulting identified the main negative factors as deprivation; crime and anti social behaviour; “urbanness”; recent migration into an area; past industrial decline and lack of community facilities. The table on the next page shows the DTZ analysis, setting out “family groups” with the lowest average cohesion to the highest:

<i>Type (changing means high levels of new migrants; stable means low levels of new migrants)</i>	<i>Average perception of cohesion</i>	<i>Number of areas</i>
1. Changing less affluent rural areas	72.2	27
2. Stable less affluent urban areas with manufacturing decline	73.3	20
3. Stable less affluent urban areas without manufacturing decline	74.1	29
4. Changing less affluent urban areas	76.3	32
5. Stable deprived rural areas	79.9	49
6. Stable affluent urban areas	80.5	35
7. Changing but affluent urban areas	80.6	47
8. Stable affluent rural areas	82.9	65
9. Changing but affluent rural areas	83.0	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>78.9</b>	<b>353</b>

7. The Commission suggested that attention should concentrate on the first four of these groupings (plus an additional category of single issue areas with poor cohesion). This analysis illustrates some of the complexity of the drivers of poor cohesion. Areas facing the greatest potential challenges to cohesion are likely to be rural and deprived locations experiencing migration for the first time. It also recognised that in some places past migration had not fully bedded down—usually in areas which have since suffered deprivation. Equally there were areas where there was low diversity and cohesion was poor, again primarily because of deprivation. Deprivation promotes competition for limited public resources and creates divides

<sup>8</sup> This was the highest rated issue; crime and disorder/ASB was identified by 15%; defence/foreign affairs/terrorism was identified by 10%.

where people perceive someone from a different group is getting special treatment. Affluent areas experiencing migration usually have higher than average cohesion. The relationship between migration and cohesion is not therefore simply a question of the number of new migrants. It also helps to explain why our collective focus needs to be not just on new migrants but on existing residents too—and how well each of these groups adjusts to each other.

## B. THE ROLE, RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIONS OF DIFFERENT BODIES ON COMMUNITY COHESION AND MIGRATION

### *Central Government*

8. At the heart of the Government's approach to cohesion is the belief that cohesion must be understood and built locally. Much of the responsibility for delivering sustainable and cohesive communities therefore lies with local authorities and the local partnerships which they lead. Central Government's role is to set the national framework within which local authorities and their partners operate. That framework involves:

- Recognising that a “one size fits all” approach is not appropriate.
- Mainstreaming cohesion into wider policy areas.
- Establishing a national framework for local support and guidance.
- Facilitating the integration of new migrants and existing communities, starting with new guidance for local authorities in developing information packs for migrants.
- Helping to build positive relationships between different groups and communities.
- Providing a stronger focus on what actually works in practice.

9. Communities and Local Government has the lead Departmental responsibility for cohesion, although the breadth of engagement with the local level on such issues necessarily involves a range of partners from across Whitehall—covering for example education, employment, crime and disorder, citizenship, health and social security. The Communities Department also provides a focus for Government's relationship with local authorities, who are central to delivery of improved cohesion at the local level, and for new approaches to community engagement and empowerment. Over the CSR07 period, the Department will work with local authorities on how they should use the new Local Area Agreement arrangements and local government performance framework to support their work to improve cohesion.

10. On migration issues, the Home Office has lead responsibility for work on immigration, secure borders and asylum seekers. Alongside this responsibility, however, Communities and Local Government has an important role, reflecting its own responsibilities for local government and for cohesion, in co-ordinating work across Government to support local authorities and communities in identifying and managing the consequences of migration at the local level, both for cohesion and the provision of services. The Department has established a new Migration directorate to take this work forward. It is currently working on an action plan to draw together different strands of work across government and ensure a co-ordinated approach to the impacts of migration on communities. Details of the key current cross-government migration structures are set out at **Annex A**.

### *Regional Government*

11. Regional Government Offices have a key role to play in delivering cohesion in local areas, including in their role as lead negotiator for LAAs. This includes:

- helping to drive local authority performance through LAAs;
- sharing best practice at the sub-national level;
- collating information on community tensions;
- informing national policy on community cohesion; and
- working with the Regional Cultural Consortia to maximise delivery of cultural and sporting opportunities.

GOs have also advised and assisted in the selection of a lead body in each region for a cross-sector National Empowerment Partnership supported by CLG, which in turn will support local empowerment champions from within local authorities and their LAA partners, including the third sector.

### *Local Government*

12. Each city, town and neighbourhood is different. Local authorities, as leaders of their communities, are best placed to understand the particular challenges and opportunities their communities face. It is only at a local level that the underlying drivers of tensions between different groups can be understood, and where sustainable solutions, with active participation from individuals, community groups and partner organisations, can be found to meet the aspirations of people living in those areas. Building cohesive communities should be at the heart of what confident local government does. Local leadership, therefore,

is vital. Not least because only local authorities have the democratic mandate to offer and develop a shared vision, through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Sustainable Community Strategy, LAA, or other thematic plans for the area.

13. The Local Government White Paper 2006 committed central government to working with local government to spread good practice on how partners can build cohesion in their communities. It set out eight guiding principles for success in building cohesion locally: strong local leadership and engagement; developing shared values; preventing the problems of tomorrow; good information based on the mapping of local communities; visible work to tackle inequalities; involving young people; interfaith dialogue and social action; and working with partners, such as local third sector organisations. This chimes with research undertaken for the Commission on Integration and Cohesion which found that no single activity on its own is likely to improve cohesion by more than a very small percentage. Real improvement is gained through a range of approaches.

14. *Community Cohesion—An Action Guide: Guidance for Local Authorities*, issued by the LGA in 2004, provides practical advice to authorities about how to build community cohesion. Much of the guide echoes the importance of user engagement, for example, it encourages the development of an effective vision with local people and partnerships. The accompanying *Leading Cohesive Communities—A Guide for Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives*, issued by the LGA and IDeA, also reinforces the importance of user engagement. For example, in terms of delivery, it underlines the importance of active partnerships bringing people with particular roles in the community together, such as faith leaders, chairs of sports clubs or local GPs, as well as with political leaders and other community representatives. Moving beyond this guidance, the Department has undertaken to produce a Cohesion Delivery Framework for local areas bringing together the best of existing and new analysis, guidance and best practice—for summer 2008.

### C. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ACTION AND EXPENDITURE IN PROMOTING COMMUNITY COHESION

15. Central government activity over the CSR07 period will be shaped by two cross-cutting PSAs—PSA 3 on migration on which the Home Office is the lead Department and PSA 21 covering cohesive, empowered and active communities on which Communities and Local Government is the lead; **Annex B** sets out an initial indication of how we shall evaluate the effectiveness of activity under PSA 21. The Department will be publishing performance information against the cross-government SR04 PSA on cohesion and race equality (PSA 10) as part of the annual reporting cycle. But as context, and notwithstanding the need for national and local action to tackle new and complex challenges to cohesion, it is worth remembering the headline data from the Citizenship Survey and BVPI results—covered at the beginning of this submission—that the overwhelming majority of people get on well together.

16. Following the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review settlement, Communities and Local Government is substantially increasing its investment in direct support of cohesion activities: our cohesion budget will amount to £50million over that period. The majority of this funding will be allocated to councils through Area Based Grant. This will help local areas to promote community cohesion and integration as core business. Those receiving funding under this programme include a range of areas experiencing high levels of inward migration. More detailed information on central government expenditure (past and planned) is at **Annex B**.

17. The additional stability offered by three year settlements for local authorities is also relevant to councils' ability to develop and implement local strategies for sustainable and cohesive communities. While migration may cause some transitional pressure on local authorities, councils have always had a responsibility to plan and budget for contingencies. Government has given significant additional resources to support councils—an average 1.5% real terms increase per year over the next three, delivering an increase of more than £2.7 billion in the first year alone.

18. At the local level, councils are best placed to take the lead in promoting cohesion and managing migration—both through their own direct functions and in partnership with other public sector bodies, voluntary organisation and businesses in their local area. Each local area will experience different challenges and opportunities, and councils and their local partners will know best how to respond. This role will be strengthened as part of the Local Area Agreement process, with inclusion of specific cohesion-related indicators in the national indicator set. It is too early to say how many local authorities will wish to include these indicators in their LAAs (although performance will be assessed against all indicators in all areas whether they are in the LAA or not). In terms of measuring performance at a local level, as mentioned above, there are two cohesion indicators in the new single set of (198) national indicators for local authorities: the percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area and the percentage of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood.

19. The Committee asked specifically for indications of the effectiveness of activity in three types of area: those that have experienced rapid increases in new inward migration; areas that have a lack of experience of diversity; and those where new migrant communities mix with existing settled migrant communities. **Annex C** sets out some examples of effective performance in these types of area. It should, however, be noted that work on issues connected to migration is but one aspect of what local authorities should, and will, be doing to build cohesion.

#### D. THE ROLE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS A TOOL IN PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS

20. Speaking English is vital to integrating into British society. Language skills help people get on in the workplace and make a contribution to their local community. In its consultations, the Commission on Integration and Cohesion heard from a range of people including local communities, researchers and practitioners that lack of English was a critical barrier to cohesion. The Commission was conscious that lack of language skills in settled communities can create social distance, hamper people's efforts to integrate economically and prevent them from developing a sense of belonging. MORI polling has 60% of respondents identifying language as the main ingredient of "being English".

21. The Commission concluded that "English is both an important part of our shared heritage, and a key access factor for new communities to the labour market and wider society . . . it binds us together as a single group in a way that a multiplicity of languages cannot". It highlighted in its recommendations the role of employers in dealing with the integration and cohesion issues arising from the growing number of migrant workers they employ.

22. The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) has lead responsibility in government for the funding and management of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision. ESOL policy has been a success—2 million people have been helped to improve their English language skills and take vital steps towards employment and social inclusion. Between 2001 and 2004 ESOL spending tripled, and is now just under £300 million.

23. Developments which it is worth the Committee noting include:

- (a) In October 2007 DIUS launched a new suite of ESOL for work qualifications. These are shorter and more work-focused than traditional ESOL qualifications, giving learners practical English skills in essential workplace matters, such as health & safety and customer service. They are aimed at people who have come to the country for work and who need skills to function in work, as well as those seeking work at the end of often short periods of employment. The cost of the new ESOL for work courses will continue to be funded by Government but a contribution of approximately £330 will be required from employers who directly benefit from the provision. DIUS are engaging with employers to promote this qualification.
- (b) On 4 January DIUS published the consultation document "Focusing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) on Community Cohesion", which sets out our aim that ESOL funding should be more specifically targeted to foster community cohesion and integration in our communities. As with work to build cohesion and promote integration more generally, we believe local authorities and their partners are best placed to determine how ESOL funding allocations are best aligned against community need and national priorities; and are considered as part of wider local planning arrangements such as Local Area Agreements. The consultation period will run for twelve weeks and DIUS will be publishing a next steps document outlining the findings from the consultation and policy proposals in summer 2008.
- (c) The consultation follows two joint CLG/DIUS citizens' juries on ESOL in December 2007. These juries in London and Hull provided useful input from the general public and the findings will influence our thinking when considering the outcomes of this consultation.

#### E. THE IMPACT OF RECENT MIGRATION ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES INCLUDING THE IMPACT ON HOUSING, EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES

24. Recent macroeconomic studies conclude that the increase in the number of migrants into the UK at a national level has brought benefits to the economy. The Treasury estimate that new migration added about £6 billion to economic growth in 2006—around one sixth of the total growth in the economy in that year. The cross-departmental submission to the House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs provides more details of the impact of immigration on public finances.<sup>9</sup> In national and local surveys, employers are very positive about the economic contribution of migrants. It is not just the private sector that has benefited from migrant workers. Many work in the public services sector meeting demands for both skilled and unskilled workers. Most migrants are self sufficient, privately housed and contribute to the local economy. Studies show that they draw less on public services than existing residents, mainly due to the younger demographic profile of migrants.

25. In some areas, however, rapid migration has presented challenges to local authorities and local service providers. Areas with limited experience of diversity and change may have had limited arrangements for providing migrants with support both in the short term and in the longer term to help them fully integrate into communities. In particular, migrants from the A8 have settled parts of the country which have not previously experienced large scale migration or diversity and this raises issues of integration with existing communities. Some types of migrants like unaccompanied minors can create real, short-term pressures on public services.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm72/7237/7237.pdf>

26. The Government recognises that some local authorities are experiencing more challenges than others and that central government needs to work with and support those authorities in addressing those issues. Local Authorities have an important leadership role in managing the local impacts of migration and in supporting greater integration of new migrants into existing communities. Central government and other agencies can support local authorities in fulfilling this role. As an example, Communities and Local Government has commissioned the IDeA to lead a programme for local authorities experiencing migration from East European countries. The Department has worked with IDeA and the Institute of Community Cohesion to identify good practice in managing migration from A8 and A2 countries, and has published a toolkit with the IDeA that provides good practice guidance on these issues. Alongside this, 20 local authorities will be provided with formal peer mentoring support provided by more experienced local authorities.

27. To provide support effectively, central government recognises that it needs to enhance its understanding of local populations. Migrants arrive in different areas for different reasons, for example, some for seasonal work, others to be with family members. Some migrants settle permanently in an area and some move on very quickly. The Inter-departmental Task Force on Migration Statistics which reported in December 2006 recognised these challenges and made a number of recommendations for improvements in population and migration statistics between 2008 and 2012. The Office for National Statistics (ONS), which is responsible for population statistics, has also made a number of improvements to the methods used to estimate international migration in 2007. These fed into the projections used in the recent three year local government finance settlement. This used the best and latest data available on a consistent basis across all local authorities at the time. ONS is also undertaking further work to improve population and migration statistics based on the recommendations of the Task Force. An inter-departmental group of high level officials and senior officers from local government will oversee this work programme. A Ministerial group, chaired by John Healey and Liam Byrne, will be established to support this group.

### *Housing*

28. Foreign nationals living in England are significantly more likely to own or privately rent their home than live in social housing (there are about 570,000 owner occupiers and 600,000 private renters compared to 310,000 social renters). Only a small proportion of social housing is allocated to foreign nationals. Foreign nationals from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) are not eligible for social housing unless they are:

- an asylum seeker granted refugee status, or an asylum seeker or other vulnerable person granted humanitarian protection or discretionary leave; and
- a person granted Indefinite Leave to Remain.

People from countries within the EEA may be eligible to apply for social housing in some circumstances, for example if they are working. However, EEA nationals' rights to live in the UK are based on an expectation that they should be economically active or self-sufficient and not place a burden on UK social assistance.

29. In 2004, the Government strengthened the regulations in respect of EEA nationals' access to social housing to coincide with accession to the European Union of 10 new member states, including the eight Eastern European countries (A8s). Broadly speaking, these changes mean that EEA nationals who are not economically active or self sufficient (ie not reliant on state benefits) will not be eligible for social housing. British nationals who live and work in another EEA country will have the same rights to social assistance there as the nationals of that country.

30. In order to qualify for social housing, foreign nationals must not only be eligible but must also have sufficient priority under the local authority's allocation scheme. Their priority is considered on the same basis as all other applicants. Local authorities must publish a local allocations scheme which reflects the statutory allocations framework and equalities legislation. Social housing is allocated on the basis of need. Local authorities can decide to take waiting time into account and to give lower priority to people who do not have a local connection. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has commissioned a review of the fairness of the allocation of social housing. Trevor Phillips has already said that he believes there is "no reliable evidence" to back up claims that councils are unfairly allocating housing but we agree that it is also important to deal with perception and welcome the EHRC review.

31. Around 90% of people who arrived in the UK in the last two years and currently living in England are in the private rented sector. The Government is keen to promote a strong and well-managed private rented sector that contributes to the vitality of the housing market. Our strategy is to improve provision by licensing those sub-sectors where the worst conditions are found (eg HMOs) and tackling the worst abuses in the system (eg unreasonable retention of tenancy deposits) whilst also assisting those who operate in the sector to improve standards through agreement and co-operation.

32. On 12 December CLG announced an independent policy review of the private rented sector. The review will be broad ranging and will cover a variety of sub sectors within the private rented sector including issues that are faced by both tenants and landlords. In addition it will look at the delivery of good quality

homes in the sector and will examine the impact of demographic and social change on the future demand and supply within the sector. The review will be conducted by Julie Rugg of the Centre for Housing Policy, University of York and will report in October 2008.

### *Education*

33. Migrants are important in delivering many public services including those in the education sector. There are also benefits from attracting overseas students to the UK. Overseas students provide a valuable source of income for UK institutions, and after studying in the UK many will remain here to work. It has been estimated that education and training exports are worth nearly £28 billion per annum to the UK (£8.5 billion of which is generated by students who enter the UK to study).<sup>10</sup>

34. As far as the children of migrants are concerned, many newly arrived in the UK may speak little or no English. Government policy is to encourage rapid English language acquisition as this is key to successful integration into the UK education system and the wider community. In England, the government provides funding to schools for newly arrived children to the UK and those for whom English is an additional language (EAL) through two main routes. The first is an element within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The second is a substantial provision for EAL through the ring fenced Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), which has risen from £162 million in 2004–05, to £179 million in 2007–08 and will continue to rise to £207 million by 2010–11.

35. The three year financial settlement for local authorities in England for 2008–09 to 2010–11 will enable schools and their partners to plan further ahead, to take better long term decisions, to use their budgets more efficiently and strategically over a three year period. For authorities experiencing rapid growth in pupil numbers, or a significant influx of children with English as an Additional Language, there will be an exceptional circumstances grant, paid out every autumn to reflect changes in Local Authorities' pupil numbers which occur after the three year indicative allocations for Dedicated Schools Grant have been announced.

36. The Government is aware that some local authorities and schools need additional support with strategies for offering excellent provision for children learning English as an additional language (EAL). The New Arrivals Excellence Programme (NAEP), launched in July 2007 by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, is an initiative which the Primary and Secondary National Strategies are taking forward to build capacity in local authorities and schools to welcome pupils to school and offer the most effective provision for learning EAL. This will ensure they can access the curriculum as quickly as possible. NAEP offers advice, guidance and training as well as a comprehensive list of websites and resources for local authorities and schools.

37. As discussed in the Children's Plan,<sup>11</sup> Schools are well placed to become a focal point for the local community and to foster better relationships between diverse communities. The introduction, in September 2007, of the duty on schools to promote community cohesion recognises the good work that many schools are already doing to encourage community cohesion and aims to achieve a situation where children:

- (a) understand others, value diversity, apply and defend human rights and are skilled in participation and responsible action;
- (b) fulfil their potential and succeed at the highest level possible, with no barriers to access and participation in learning and to wider activities, and no variation between outcomes for different groups; and
- (c) have real and positive relationships with people from different backgrounds, and feel part of a community, at a local, national and international level.

38. The curriculum can play a key part in promoting community cohesion. Citizenship education, history, geography, religious education and personal, social and health education can all help young people develop a sense of identity. Links between different schools, whether on a local, national or international basis enable sharing of experience contributing significantly to schools meeting the new duty.

### *Health*

39. In the UK free NHS treatment is based on residence in the UK, not on nationality, the payment of UK taxes or National Insurance contributions. Migrants who are ordinarily resident here, that is living in the UK lawfully and for a settled purpose or who are long-term visitors (eg workers, students) are eligible for free NHS treatment.

40. When planning services for their local populations, including migrants, Primary Care Trusts in England, and their equivalents in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, along with their partner organisations, should demonstrate that they have taken account of different needs and inequalities within their local populations, in respect of area, socio-economic group, ethnicity, gender, disability, race, age, faith

<sup>10</sup> Johnes, G. (2004) The Global Value Of Education And Training Exports To The UK Economy, British Council <http://www.britishcouncil.org/global-value-of-education-and-training-exports-to-the-uk-economy.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan/downloads/The\\_Childrens\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan/downloads/The_Childrens_Plan.pdf)

and sexual orientation. This should be on the basis of a systematic programme of health equity audit and equality impact assessment. Decisions as to what healthcare an individual should receive is then a matter of clinical judgement in each individual case. It is difficult to generalise about the impact of migrants on health services. The demand that migration places on health services varies from area to area and depends on the type of migrant, their needs and eligibility for treatment.

41. Migrants make a major contribution to the workforce in the health and social care sectors. In 2005–06, migrants made up 13.3% of the workforce in the social care and 17.8% of the health care sectors. Migrant care workers in the UK labour markets, presentation to the workshop on human resources for health and migration, May 2007, Sussex. The number of migrants coming to work in the health and social care sectors has increased since 1997. This has been linked to the Government’s drive to increase the NHS workforce. The numbers are now falling as the Government’s investment in education and training pays off and the NHS moves to a position of relative self-sufficiency.

#### F. ACTIONS TO TAKE FORWARD THE COMMISSION ON INTEGRATION AND COHESION’S RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO MIGRATION

42. The Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC), an independent fixed term body, published its report “*Our Shared Future*” in June 2007. The report included a new analysis of what influences integration and cohesion; a new definition of integration and cohesion and a new typology of local areas. In terms of recommendations with a specific migration “flavour” to them, it called for:

- large employers to recognise that they have a responsibility to deal with the integration and cohesion issues arising from the growing number of migrant workers they employ. In particular, they should offer English classes for new migrants (and should promote understanding of different cultures and groups by providing cultural training in the workplace);
- new guidance on translations removing a presumption in favour of translation;
- new guidance on single community funding;
- consideration of an expansion of citizenship ceremonies to include all young people, perhaps after passing a citizenship GCSE; and
- a national independent body to manage the integration of new migrants.

43. Hazel Blears offered an initial response to the Chair of the Commission, Darra Singh, in October 2007. This is attached at **Annex D**. Since then, Communities and Local Government has:

- published its *Community Empowerment Action Plan* in October 2007;
- launched guidance from the Citizenship Foundation on how to run effective Citizens’ Days. The *Citizens’ Day Framework* was published in November 2007;
- published guidelines on translation in local services; and
- jointly with DCSF, held two Citizens’ Juries—in Hull and London—on English language.

44. On 4 February, the Department published the formal Government response to all 57 of the Commission’s recommendations. The response sets out what has already been achieved and what further actions the Government will take over the coming months and years to support strong cohesive communities, backed by the £50 million spending commitment over the next three years and the practical focus of PSA21 on cohesive, empowered and active communities. Central government actions include a range of support to local authorities, to help them deliver improved and sustained cohesion at the community level, including:

- the establishment of specialist cohesion teams to provide advice and support to local authorities facing cohesion challenges—particularly those areas facing rapid change or experiencing migration for the first time;
- drawing on the Commission’s work on the mapping of cohesion “family groups” to help councils experiencing similar issues share practical ideas and solutions;
- the issue of new guidance for local authorities on developing Information Packs for migrants. Misunderstandings and conflict can arise when people coming from abroad behave in a way that is out of step with the normal way of doing things or in extreme cases, against the law. Information packs can be an effective way of providing new arrivals with information that will help them to integrate successfully and understand what is expected of them;
- consultation on Cohesion Guidance for Funders—analysis of data from the Citizenship Survey shows that cohesion is strongest when people from different backgrounds interact with each other. The Commission highlighted that that where funding is used to support a single group only it can create barriers to cohesion. The new guidance encourages local authorities to consider how funding can better be used to support greater interaction and suggests that single groups should only be funded where there is a demonstrable case for doing so;

- publication of a cohesion impacts tool for local areas to use in assessing whether the activities they are planning will have a positive impact on cohesion in their neighbourhoods. This tool will enable local authorities to input information around the activities and events they are planning in order to test whether they are going to have a positive impact on cohesion; and
- production in summer 2008 of a Cohesion Delivery Framework for local areas bringing together the best of existing and new analysis, guidance and best practice.

## Annex A

### EXISTING CROSS-GOVERNMENT MIGRATION GROUPS

A1. The Cabinet Committee on Domestic Affairs (Borders and Migration) (DA(BM)) brings Ministers from across government together to consider progress on delivering the PSA target and to hold departments to resolve inter-departmental issues. The Borders and Immigration Agency chairs a Senior Official PSA Delivery Board, comprising all lead and supporting departments to monitor and review progress on delivery and report back to DA(BM).

A2. An important part of Government's approach to considering migration issues is to seek information and advice from other stakeholders to inform government thinking. This is why Communities and Local Government and the Home Office have established the **Migration Advisory Committee** (MAC) and the **Migration Impacts Forum** (MIF). The MAC is a non-statutory advisory non-Departmental Public Body which met for the first time in December 2007. It provides independent and evidence-based advice to Government on specific sectors and occupations in the labour market where shortages exist which can sensibly be filled by migration. The MAC comprises independent experts, academics and other specialists on the labour market and migration.

A3. The purpose of the MIF is to provide a forum for proper, regular and organised dialogue with interested parties outside Government, focussed on the wider impacts associated with migration experienced by local areas. Its terms of reference are to:

- Consider information from forum members about the social benefits of migration and any transitional impacts and/or adjustment requirements which derive from migration.
- Identify and share good practice in managing transitional or adjustment requirements.
- Bring together existing evidence about the impacts of migration.
- Suggest areas for Government research on the impacts of migration.

The Forum meets quarterly and is chaired jointly by Ministers from the Home Office and Communities and Local Government. The forum's findings are shared with all relevant Government Departments.

A4. The Home Office has also established the **Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Integration** (ABNI) to advise and report on the processes of initial and final assessment of understanding of language and civic structures as required by the Nationality, Immigration & Asylum Act 2002 for those seeking to become British citizens. This body advises on:

- the implementation and processes of initial and final assessment of understanding of language and of civic structures as required by the Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 2002;
- ways in which language and citizenship education resources and support services both in the public and in the voluntary sectors might be developed and better co-ordinated;
- future development of the programme of studies and suggest changes in light of feedback from early participants; and
- aims to publish an annual report on the administration of the learning and teaching processes involved in naturalisation on the integration of immigrants and on immigration law and procedures and educational regulations that can directly affect assessment for naturalisation.

## Annex B

### GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON COMMUNITY COHESION

#### 1. *A breakdown of Government expenditure over the past few years on community cohesion*

B1. Of the £7 million community cohesion and faiths programme budget for the 2007–08 financial year we have committed (or plan to commit) approximately:

- £380k towards support for local projects;
- £170k towards tackling hate crime and conflict resolution work;
- £85k towards monitoring community tensions;
- £75k towards citizens' day and citizens' juries;
- £75k towards capacity building work;

- £380k towards faith and interfaith engagement work;
- £130k towards the costs of the independent Commission on Integration and Cohesion;
- £210k towards research—which has informed the work of the independent Commission on Integration and Cohesion;
- £75k towards work following on from the independent Commission on Integration and Cohesion’s report;
- £500k towards the Holocaust Memorial Day; and
- £5 million towards the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund and its administration.

B2. Community cohesion and faiths programme expenditure in 2006–07; 2005–06; 2004–05 was approximately £9 million, £7 million and £2 million respectively.

*2. A breakdown of the committed or likely Government expenditure on community cohesion from the £50 million investment announced by the Secretary of State on 6 October 2007, including information on the local authority area for the expenditure, project types, and proportion allocated for work to integrate migrants*

B3. As part of the Government’s response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion’s final report *Our Shared Future* a £50 million investment has been announced over the next three years to promote community cohesion and support local authorities in preventing and managing community tensions.

The Local Authority Finance (England) consultation upon revenue support grants and related matters of 6 December illustrates how £34 million of the £50 million investment in community cohesion announced on the 6 October is intended to be committed. The table at the following link shows how it is proposed that the £34 million will contribute towards the Area Based Grants for individual authorities:

[http://www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/0809/specgrant/abg\\_dclg.xls](http://www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/0809/specgrant/abg_dclg.xls)

B4. Local councils will use the money to respond to their own particular challenges—some focussing on new migration, others looking more at how to promote interaction between people from different backgrounds. Activities might include—youth projects bringing people from different backgrounds together; involving young people in community activities through volunteering, mentoring or becoming neighbourhood wardens; school or places of worship twinning programmes, local pride in the community campaigns; conflict resolution; award ceremonies to celebrate local people and local achievements. However, as the new Area Based Grant is a non-ring fenced general grant it is not possible to specify proportions to be allocated for particular work such as to integrate migrants.

B5. A further £4.5 million of the £50 million is intended to be invested in providing positive activities for young people, given the underlying community cohesion objectives of this work. Under the National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy, we are also proposing to channel £3 million of the £50 million to local government led Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships to develop local capacity to tackle community cohesion challenges.

B6. Decisions about the future use of the remaining £8 million of the £50 million which relates to the Connecting Communities Plus grant programme which has community cohesion as one of its four themes and runs till the end of 2008–09 will be taken next year.

*3. Details of how the Government intends to evaluate the effectiveness of the £50 million investment on community cohesion*

B7. This investment will support delivery of the cross-government PSA 21 on cohesive, empowered and active communities. This PSA will be supported by six indicators:

1. The percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.
2. The percentage of people who have meaningful interactions with people from different backgrounds.
3. The percentage of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood.
4. The percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality.
5. A thriving third sector.
6. The percentage of people who participate in culture or sport.

B8. Indicators 1–3 are directly related to cohesion (the PSA itself is broader in its focus, looking at how strong and vibrant communities need to be not just cohesive but ones where people are engaged, empowered and actively involved in the life of their communities). Communities and Local Government is the lead Department for this PSA, but its Delivery Agreement sets out the range of other government departments that have a role in contributing to its delivery: Office of the Third Sector; Department for Culture, Media and Sport; Home Office; Border and Immigration Agency; Ministry of Justice; Department for Children, Schools and Families; Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills; Department for Work and Pensions; and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

B9. Two of the cohesion indicators in the cohesive, empowered and active communities PSA flow through directly to the single set of (198) national indicators for local authorities and local authority partnerships:

National Indicator 1: The percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.

National indicator 2: The percentage of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood.

The Government will not be setting a national target for these, but will expect to see an improvement in the majority of the local authorities who adopt the indicator as part of their Local Area Agreement (LAA). These indicators will also be measured on a national basis to ensure that improvements at the local level are not accompanied by an overall decline. The baseline year for the national element of these indicators will be 2007–08, and the local element of these indicators will be measured using the 2008 Places survey. Local authorities' performance against these indicators will also be assessed regardless of which indicators are agreed as designated priority improvement targets for the authorities' Local Area Agreements. This will aid in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the investment. Furthermore given the likelihood of uptake of the cohesion indicators in Local Area Agreements we believe that Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships will also wish to focus upon improving practice within areas that are underperforming on community cohesion.

B10. It will also be possible to identify local authority projects that demonstrate good practice in building community cohesion. In the 6 October announcement we gave the commitment to set up a cohesion web based “one-stop shop” so that any individual, group, or organisation who needs help, advice or support on how to develop their cohesion policies or respond to cohesion issues are able to access expert help and guidance. And we committed to make a new community cohesion impact test available as a tool to “cohesion proof” policies. Additionally there is some case study evidence from the evaluation of the Positive Activities for Young People programme that it furthers the underlying community cohesion objective of the programme.

## Annex C

### EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

#### 1. *Areas that have experienced rapid increases in new inward migration*

C1. **Boston** in Lincolnshire is going through a period of rapid change. Recently, it has experienced a rising number of economic migrants moving into the Borough, particularly those from Portugal and Eastern European countries, who have secured work in the agricultural industry. In a short time, the number of languages spoken in the borough has risen to 65. The council and its partners realised that the initial information that is so crucial for newcomers to settle into the local community, was not readily available. Working with outside groups, the Council has helped to create a “Welcome to Boston” pack and CD for new arrivals.

C2. This is just one project underway in Boston to promote cohesion, which is high priority for the Council following a spate of negative national media stories about migrant workers in Boston in 2006. Since then, a suite of projects have been implemented over the past three years, following strategic work with the IDeA and others, that included a peer review of council services, Best Value Review of Community Cohesion, and leadership development for cohesion.

C3. **Arun** is a largely rural area in West Sussex, with some pockets of deprivation. It has recently experienced a wave of migrant workers, many with limited English which has created some barriers to integration into the local community. The Arun Cultural Ethnic Diversity (CED) Forum has played a key role in trying to fill this gap. As a multi-agency forum, the CED has championed community cohesion through its key partners which include Arun District Council, Sussex Police and Councils for Voluntary Service. In demonstrating its commitment to migrant workers, the CED has:

- Commissioned mapping research to identify changes in the locality and growth of migrant workers.
- Used both translation and visual images to overcome language barriers through multi-lingual newsletters.
- Created the Eastern European Advisory Group.
- Promoted a two-way interactive learning and communication process with the new settlers—eg the migrant workers learn English and the neighbourhood policing team includes languages as part of its professional development, so officers can communicate and build community trust.
- Produced a “myth-busting” leaflet addressing misconceptions about migrant workers to reduce tensions between settled and newly arrived groups.
- Produced a web based “welcome pack”, that is available in main languages.
- Led a conference on A8 integration in the region.

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## 2. Areas that have a lack of experience of diversity

C4. **Langport**, a small town in Somerset, has recently attracted an increasing number of migrant workers. The Langport Area Development Trust, working in co-operation with other local bodies, has proactively taken steps to integrate migrant workers seeking employment into their community. With support from the local authority, and a grant from the Together We Can community development scheme, the Trust launched a series of initiatives with the purpose of welcoming and befriending newcomers and raising awareness to, and promoting the benefits of, diversity in the local area amongst the established local community. A programme of work was delivered to create awareness amongst the settled local community that migrant workers—mainly of Polish and Portuguese origin—were arriving to live and work in the local area, and why. It offered practical support to help the newcomers to overcome problems with their day-to-day integration and provide a key contact: the Trust employed a dedicated Link Worker to act as focal point for integration.

C5. The Responsible Employers Scheme (RES), supported by a wide-ranging group of partners in **Cornwall**, makes a sound and robust commitment to ensuring the rights of Migrant Workers are protected and promoted. A “kite mark” acknowledging good practice is awarded to employers, to reward commitment to equality opportunities, providing information to migrants on health and safety and access to service provision and promoting rights and responsibilities.

## 3. Areas where new migrant communities mix with existing settled migrant communities

C6. All Saints High School in Dukinfield, **Tameside**, organised an Anglo-Polish summer school to support newly arrived Polish pupils at Key Stage Three. The scheme created a platform for integration between English pupils with the new arrivals. The presence of English pupils provided support for Polish pupils to develop their language skills and facilitated their access to school life. Activities focused on language development and communication and included elements of geography, history, traditional tales and drama.

C7. **Pendle** Council, along with other Local Authorities in East Lancashire, found that following the enlargement of the EU, it faced an influx of new residents predominantly from Poland, Lithuania and the Czech Republic, who posed new questions for the delivery of public services in the area. The issues new residents raised led to a co-ordinated response across East Lancashire involving the members of the sub-regional partnership East Lancs Together, the East Lancashire councils, the local PCTs, Police (Pennine Division), and local community networks, to develop a joint welcome policy and booklet for new migrant workers.

C8. The booklet aims to help new arrivals integrate into the East Lancashire area by informing them about key services. Whilst the booklet was being developed, Pendle Council produced leaflets on key services in appropriate languages, and worked with the Pennine Division Police to inform new migrants of laws, rights and responsibilities. Through effective partnership working, the creation, design and production of the booklet was jointly procured by the parties involved, reducing cost and potential replication of similar material. Published in a pocket-sized format, it is available in Polish, Lithuanian, and Czech from local authorities, libraries and employers in East Lancashire. In addition, an English version is to be made available for English speaking newcomers. Widespread distribution points reflect the mobility of migrant workers, who often have flexible contracts and move where the work is. The pack follows the acclaimed “Myths Over Pendle” myth busting cartoons that challenged untruths and stereotypes of different communities.

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## Memorandum by Community Development Foundation (CDF)

### 1. ABOUT OUR WORK

1.1 CDF is a Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

1.2 CDF is a leading source of intelligence, guidance and delivery on community development, engagement, empowerment and capacity building in England and across the UK; we also operate at European and international level. We provide these functions through: policy and research analysis; administration and evaluation of Government funded grant programmes; links to practitioner networks; publications; training and information; partnerships with statutory agencies and organisations in the voluntary and community sectors.

1.3 CDF’s interest and expertise in migration issues relates to the cohesion implications and effects of migration on communities, and to the community development practice which integrates new migrants with established or receiving communities.

1.4 The evidence submitted here is derived from CDF’s work over the past two years with people working directly with, and in, communities currently experiencing tensions and challenges arising from migration and cultural diversity. This includes a study of community development practitioners’ activities in relation

to new arrivals (both refugees and asylum seekers), a series of workshops with people working to promote cohesive communities generally and the experiences and insights from two grant giving programmes that CDF administers on behalf of the Race Equality and Diversity Division at CLG: the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund (FCCBF) and Connecting Communities Plus, Community Grants (CC Plus).

1.5 We recognise that different legal conditions determine the settlement opportunities for economic migrants from EU accession countries, from outside Europe, for refugees, and for asylum seekers. Their immigration status will determine the extent to which new arrivals of different kinds are able to participate in social, cultural, civic, economic and political life in the UK. However, evidence presented from work to date on the arrival and integration of refugees and asylum seekers has considerable relevance for economic migrants. Extrapolating from this material is relevant for two reasons. Firstly, established or receiving communities often do not make distinction between immigrants' legal status or conditions. Secondly, successful integration into UK communities shares similar characteristics for all incomers: being part of the community, not feeling isolated, having control over their lives, living in relative safety, being recognised for who they are, having cultural differences and traditions accepted, and being able to access services in ways that suit their needs.

## 2. SUMMARY OF CDF'S MEMORANDUM

- Community development methods and values contribute to the growth and maintenance of community cohesion in many ways.
- Community-led organisations are well positioned to connect migrants with one another and with the local communities in which they find themselves.
- Our anecdotal evidence shows new patterns of racial prejudice and hostility emerging; mostly attributed to increased competition for access to public services.
- Preparation of existing populations for new arrivals is key to addressing such tensions.
- CDF's work highlights the importance of responsive and reciprocal actions to community cohesion and migration and the key roles of community development practitioners, community and voluntary groups and public sector providers in the preparation, support, settlement and integration of migrants.
- Settlement support has more impact if a combined or complimentary approach is taken which works with both migrants and service providers.
- Public service providers should try to ensure that engagement strategies are as empowering and accessible as possible for people from migrant communities.
- Government should continue to expand and support targeted grant programmes which support (among others) migrant and refugee community groups.
- CDF's evidence suggests that not being able to speak English was a major barrier to participation within the local community and from accessing local services, engaging with their children and finding employment.
- Single identity groups have an important cohesion and integration role in their local communities.
- Migrants should be encouraged to integrate and yet retain important aspects of their cultures and identities as this is enriching for our society.

## 3. COMMUNITY COHESION

The term "community cohesion" represents that aspect of society that enables people to co-operate and share despite local loyalties and community identities. It is about building relationships across perceived boundaries and encouraging integration on the basis of mutual respect and social justice.

### 3.1 Community cohesion comprises three main components:

- A shared ability to manage diversity and resolve conflicts within and between communities.
- An approach that recognises that divisions and differences within communities are not just about "race" and "religion", but include other aspects of people's lives such as socio-cultural and economic barriers.
- A concern to tackle the inequalities of opportunity and outcome that generate grievances and inter-communal tensions.

#### 4. THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

Community development methods and values contribute to the growth and maintenance of community cohesion in many ways. It is a skilled and strategic way of working that helps people to work together to achieve change. Often this involves identifying what people have in common, for example in relation to housing, education and health, as well as acknowledging differences. Tensions, even conflicts, are inevitable. Key tasks for community development work are to find connections, encourage positive interaction and overcome the obstacles that get in the way of collective and partnership working.

#### 5. THE EFFECT OF RECENT INWARD MIGRATION ON COMMUNITY COHESION AND PUBLIC CONCERNS ABOUT THIS EFFECT

5.1 Whilst we have not, to date, been systematically gathering data about the pace of change in communities experiencing new migration, our work with community groups and community practitioners has uncovered anecdotal evidence about the public concerns and community tensions which arise. In particular we are aware of new patterns of racial prejudice and hostility, whereby some members of settled communities of Asian and Caribbean origin appear to resent the arrival of new ethnic minorities and the consequent competition for “race equality” resources.

5.2 Initial findings from CC Plus research show this is attributable to increased competition for access to public services, such as housing and local amenities. Preparing existing populations for new arrivals is key to addressing such tensions (and is dealt with in the section of role, responsibilities and actions, below). Suspicion was also seen in the form of settled migrant communities having stereotypes about newer economic migrants.

5.3 Recent research conducted by Clarke and Garner at the University of the West of England<sup>12</sup> on the perceptions and identities of working class white communities indicate that most people have a strong sense of “fairness” over who is entitled to state services and support, and that migrants are often (wrongly) perceived as receiving more than their “fair share”, compared to British citizens. These myths can have a damaging effect on community relations, undermining attempts to promote positive interaction and integration.

#### 6. THE ROLE, RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIONS OF DIFFERENT BODIES ON COMMUNITY COHESION AND MIGRATION, INCLUDING THOSE OF CENTRAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND OF EMPLOYERS

6.1 Evidence from CDF’s work to date highlights the importance of responsive or reciprocal actions which:

- enable new migrants to become integral members of communities; while
- developing cohesive communities that are confident, adaptive and resilient, and therefore do not feel threatened by the arrival of new migrants; and
- supporting service providers to understand and respond to the needs and aspirations of new migrants.

6.2 Community development practitioners both in the voluntary and public sector, community groups and public service providers all have key roles to play.

##### 6.3 *The role of community development practitioners*

Community development practitioners can help prepare for new arrivals by working with community groups, partnerships and service providers to increase their cultural and political awareness. This involves understanding the circumstances and motivations of the migrant communities, raising awareness of different cultures and needs, challenging prejudice and discrimination, providing and undertaking race equality training.

6.3.1 Conversely, they have a role in receiving communities to identify opportunities and barriers for new migrants’ involvement in mainstream activities; for example, local clubs, trips or volunteering opportunities.

6.3.2 Equally, community development practitioners, from both voluntary and local authorities, provide essential support to migrant community organisations in organisational and infrastructural development, networking, accountability, leadership and representation.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.identities.org.uk/>

#### 6.4 *The role of community and voluntary groups*

Community and voluntary groups have a key role to play in supporting individual migrants with settlement. In some instances, they provide advocacy services and through the establishment of self-help groups can reduce language and cultural barriers to accessing public services. More settled migrants support new arrivals in terms of finding schools, registering for GPs and dentists and accessing appropriate health care as well as culturally preferred shopping and religious centres. Mentoring is another popular approach, used to support people who are looking to be independent, to get back into employment or start their own business.

6.4.1 However, community organisations also have an essential role in organising community activities, (such as walking groups, cookery, clean-ups, arts and culture). Community and voluntary groups and networks use celebratory events (festivals or street parties) to create occasion for shared socialising and cooperation. These can make an important contribution to integration and cohesion while recognising that in themselves, they don't mean that integration and cohesion have been achieved.

6.4.2 Finally, community organisations have an important role in providing a collective voice within local communities, and at the strategic level. Where these involve people from different ethnic communities, they provide informal opportunities for interaction that foster mutual understanding and friendship.

#### 6.5 *The role of public sector service providers*

Settlement support tends to focus on orienting new arrivals to the cultural and legislative context in the UK and is targeted and delivered to individuals. Service providers such as local government, local health organisations, and employment agencies all have important roles to play in providing information such as welcome packs, how to register for GPs and dentists, what employment rights and responsibilities extend to new migrants. However, community and voluntary groups have a crucial role to play in supporting migrants to access services, and in enabling services to become more culturally sensitive by suggesting new modes of delivery and access.

6.5.1 From Round One of CCplus, for example, we see that some community groups focused their projects and attention on migrants, whilst others worked with service providers to improve their understanding of migrant community needs. Groups that had the capacity to work with both migrants and service providers achieved a bigger impact. We therefore advocate a combined or complementary approach, whereby migrant communities are encouraged and supported to engage with and influence service providers.

6.5.2 Public service providers and local strategic partnerships are responsible for designing their decision-making forums and consultation exercises to encourage engagement by migrant groups. They should try to ensure that engagement strategies are as empowering and accessible as possible for people from migrant communities, and that adequate funding and support is given to individual representatives, including providing interpreters and translations where this is needed.

### 7. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ACTION AND EXPENDITURE IN PROMOTING COMMUNITY COHESION AND RESPONDING TO INWARD MIGRATION FLOWS

7.1 Connecting Communities Plus, Community Grants is a £3 million grant scheme, distributed over three years and is funded by Communities and Local Government. The programme enables organisations to benefit BME communities, which includes migrant communities, broader local communities, mainstream and service providers, as well as supporting individual migrants and their families. Many focused on a particular ethnicity, culture, faith or nationality. Organisations were also concerned with other dimensions of deprivation and discrimination, targeting their work with specific sections of the population, for example, young refugee ex-offenders, refugee women, children and young people, and unemployed refugees.

7.2 Feedback from the funded groups has been very encouraging and reported outcomes include:

- Improved access to local employment, health services, social welfare and education through training, mentoring and advice.
- Increased understanding of community needs and awareness of migration issues amongst service providers/employers/members of a wider community.
- Improved access to information and services for refugees and other migrants.
- Improved self esteem, confidence, clarity about personal development and career goals, motivation, and friendship.

7.3 Employment was one of the priorities for those Connecting Communities Plus projects that worked with refugees. At least 500 refugees attended workshops and gained assistance with applying for jobs, writing CVs, understanding the UK employment and business culture. Support was also provided through certified work placement and mentoring schemes. The source of the support, and the way it was provided personally in an open and unthreatening environment have been key to the success of the projects to date.

7.4 CDF's grant schemes provide added value to funding programmes via our experience of community development approaches and community organisations which underpins the approach. Additional support is provided to those communities/organisations that are in receipt of funding. This helps them achieve better results, consolidate their position and reach their communities more effectively. Personal contact and the individualised approach taken by CDF also helped them to gain confidence and trust.

7.5 Furthermore, some of the funded groups have never received government funding before so the experience of managing a grant enabled them to apply for new funding streams. The activities funded by the grants helped to raise their profile within the local community. More needs to be done by the central and local government to make further funding and support available to refugee and migrant community organisations, particularly in helping them to develop diverse leaderships and a "cadre" of active citizens so that they can contribute to local community agendas. This includes making connections to other communities where there are overlapping interests and, importantly, provide culturally appropriate services to their communities.

7.6 CC Plus is one specific and limited mechanism for responding to inward migration and promoting community cohesion. It shows what can be achieved when community organisations are effectively resourced and supported through community development work that builds the capacity of new and migrant communities. They are enabled to organise themselves, to make good use of opportunities available, to deal positively with tensions, and to make connections with the wider voluntary and community sector.

7.7 To ensure this approach is further improved, CDF would advise:

- undertaking effective profiling and mapping exercises to be able to understand the composition of communities and needs of community members, and how they will engage migrant and receiving communities to identify changing needs;
- resourcing ongoing community development work alongside service delivery work in order to help receiving communities identify opportunities, challenges and barriers for new migrants' involvement in mainstream activities, and support organisational and infrastructure development of autonomous migrant organisations;
- developing a framework for dialogue and protocols that ensure that migrants' involvement in local strategic partnerships and similar decision-making forums is accessible and equitable, and promotes their empowerment; and
- giving consideration at all times (and especially when developing capacity building programmes, or seeking engagement of migrant community groups in policy and strategy forums) to why the groups were established, particularly if it has been related to lack of or inappropriate services or as a result of racism or hostility.

## 8. THE ROLE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS A TOOL IN PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS

8.1 Research findings from CDF work on two programmes highlight the importance of English language in the integration of settled BME communities. Survey findings from the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund (FCCBF) indicate that not being able to speak English was a major barrier to participation within the local community. Not speaking English prevented women in particular from accessing employment, and contributed to their isolation, low self confidence and mental health difficulties.

8.2 Preliminary findings from CC plus fieldwork, suggest similar findings for women within migrant populations who have been settled for some years. Not being able to speak English prevents them from accessing local services, engaging with their children and finding employment.

8.3 It is reasonable to expect that similar difficulties face newly arriving migrants, though new migrants' language needs are likely to vary according to the type of work they are undertaking or seeking, and the length of time they intend to remain in the UK. In addition, different factors such as the employment conditions of new migrants (eg work shifts, urban or rural location) will necessitate a diversity of delivery mechanisms and arrangements in addressing new migrants' English language needs.

## 9. THE IMPACT OF RECENT MIGRATION ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES INCLUDING THE IMPACT ON HOUSING, EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES

9.1 We know from CDF's considerable experience over 40 years of public policy relating to community engagement, including recent work supporting race equality in mental health provision, that services are improved if communities and service users are involved in decision-making about priorities and delivery. The accelerated pace of inward migration requires that public service providers and partnership bodies consider ways to ensure how migrant communities are able to influence decision-making about services they use, including through advocacy and representation channels. In order to do this in ways that are democratic and inclusive, migrant communities must be resourced to organise their own forums and networks.

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## 10. ACTIONS TO TAKE FORWARD THE COMMISSION ON INTEGRATION AND COHESION'S RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO MIGRATION

10.1 We welcome many of the recommendations made in *Our Shared Future*, particularly those which will encourage positive and meaningful interaction between settled and migrant populations. However, we feel that this approach needs more than a national programme of projects and activities. It needs to be embedded in all areas of public life, including community engagement, public services and shared spaces.

10.2 We disagree with the proposals relating to funding “single identity” groups. Our experience shows that “single identity” groups (including new migrant communities) have diverse memberships with multiple and changing identities. We believe that the term “single identity” does not reflect the complex and the multi-faceted nature of these communities.

10.3 Additionally, “Single identity” groups have an important cohesion and integration role in their local communities. The evidence from the FCCBF and CCPlus funding programmes (previously submitted to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion) shows that grants to “single identity” groups contributed to cohesion and integration, rather than reinforcing community differences.

10.4 “Single identity” groups provide a supportive environment for their members to develop the skills and confidence and create a more diverse community leadership. Groups may foster a “cadre” of active members who may move into further education and employment and act as role models for the others willing to take on similar responsibilities. “Single identity” groups know the local need. They need to have the choice of running activities within their own communities or to the wider community or both. They often support the most vulnerable and socially excluded sections of communities by providing culturally appropriate support to their communities, including those which the public services find hard to reach. “Single identity” groups need funding to organise more effectively within their own community, to integrate with wider communities, to engage with public authorities and to address complex needs.

10.5 CDF also has reservations about the proposal to set up a national body to manage the integration of migrant communities. Whilst we recognise the merit in providing a centralised resource offering advice to local authorities and practitioners, we believe that local strategies need to emerge from local experience and circumstances. The processes of developing these might provide the impetus for dialogue, shared learning and initiative which, if carefully facilitated, will in themselves promote integration and cohesion. We also suggest that mapping exercises should be conducted with the full and active involvement of community members, using techniques associated with participatory appraisal and action research, such as those pioneered by the University of Central Lancashire's (UCLAN) Community Engagement programme.<sup>13</sup>

10.6 Finally, we think that it is unrealistic to expect migrants to adopt a “national sense of belonging” such as that underpinning notions of British citizenship. Instead, we recognise that migrants can be encouraged to integrate and yet retain important aspects of their cultures and identities. This is enriching for our society, whilst acknowledging the sometimes transient and mobile nature of people's lives in this country. Providing information to “host” communities about migrants' backgrounds and reasons for being here will create an important basis for mutual respect and tolerance. In particular, CDF believes that community-led organisations are well positioned to connect migrants with one another and with the local communities in which they find themselves. In disadvantaged and marginalised communities, these groups operate more effectively and sustainably if they have access to community development support and independent resources.

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### **Supplementary memorandum by Community Development Foundation**

CDF was asked by the Communities and Local Government Select Committee to submit further evidence of the effects of community development work on community cohesion—and in particular, provide evaluation evidence that demonstrates how the community development work that CDF has funded has improved cohesion levels within a local area.

Part 1 briefly describes the grants programme and CDF'S particular role in the administration of these funds, for clarity.

Part 2 sets out evidence from the evaluations of Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund (FCCBF) and Connecting Communities Plus, Community Grants (CCPlus) and some administrative data gathered by the grants administration team.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.uclan.ac.uk/facs/health/ethnicity/communityengagement/nimhe.htm>

## PART 1

### *The grants programmes*

Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund (FCCBF) distributed over £11m to more than 900 groups and organisations, including single faith and inter faith groups over two years. The fund sponsored any such faith work that would improve community cohesion in England and Wales. The fund is sponsored by the Cohesion and Faiths Directorate (CFD) of Communities and Local Government (CLG).

Connecting Communities Plus, Community Grants (CCPlus) is a £3 million fund distributed over three years. So far, £2.338 million has been distributed in two rounds of funding between 249 groups across England. Groups funded through CCPlus are small voluntary and community groups working on local cohesion and equality issues or improvements to public services. The fund is sponsored by the Race Equality and Diversity Directorate (REDD) and the Cohesion and Faiths Directorate (CFD) of Communities and Local Government (CLG).

### *CDF's role*

CDF does not itself deliver projects at a local level, but acts as the Managing Agent of grants programmes on behalf of Government departments. It has carried out this function for nine years working with four departments to date. CDF works closely with a department (in this case Communities and Local Government) using our extensive knowledge of working with communities and community development to design programmes and deliver them to the audit standards required of a public body.

### *Programme design*

CDF is careful to ensure that the funding programmes are designed to reach, as far as is possible, groups working at the grassroots who may otherwise be out of the grants information loop. We promote the programmes through a range of channels—specialist media, via third sector/faith/BME umbrella groups and through regional road shows which make the programme more personal and locally contextualised.

### *Priorities*

CDF avoids prescription of activities that applicants can undertake. Often the issues that need to be addressed have been identified by communities themselves. However, there are always guiding priorities set by the sponsoring department. In the case of FCCBF, a small piece of research was commissioned by Communities and Local Government which showed that the faith sector had identified capacity building and funding for inter faith activities as a primary need. These became the priority areas of FCCBF, underpinned by community development principles.<sup>14</sup>

### *Assessment*

Equally, assessors and consultants used in all CDF grant administration programmes must have a good understanding of the use of community development approaches. They are recruited from across the country—and therefore have a working knowledge of the priorities in many areas. Local priorities are also taken into consideration through contact with Government Offices.

### *Grant payment*

The grants go directly to community groups, as opposed to via local authorities, or third sector umbrella organisations.

### *Support*

Unusually for a grant administrator, CDF provides direct support to local groups to enable them to apply for funding, sometimes for the first time.

There are many examples of CDF working “with” groups rather than adopting a passive grant giving role. Once community groups receive funding, CDF’s first step is to meet with them—in person, to make a “human” link. We introduce ourselves (as the funder) and make an assessment of their needs. From our support package (email support, one to one mentoring, training, networking and publications), we tailor a package to suit their particular needs. Developing a relationship helps to improve the quality of the programme and reduce potential risks such as the misuse of funds.

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<sup>14</sup> Community development is based on core values of: social justice; learning; cooperation; equality; participation; and environmental justice. It brings people together to address issues of common concern and to develop their skills, confidence and resources to address them. It enables people acting together as partners in development rather than objects of decision and policies made by others.

FCCBF, in particular, was the first of its kind and in our conclusion we have made suggestions and recommendations for how the design of the evaluation of future funding programmes could be linked to more specific cohesion outcomes.

Support is also provided to local groups by connecting them to consultants, encouraging networking at events and resources relevant to the fund, funding ideas, relevant training sessions and sign posting to other relevant organisations. All these activities are provided free of charge to the groups. These additions help contribute to building local groups' capacity.

We also continue the relationship with them after the grants period has expired—by sending them a newsletter with funding information and listings of networking opportunities.

Using community development principles, we carried out a short survey and used the findings to create resources (publications and guides) for FCCBF funded groups which were based on their own needs—another example of how CDF's programmes are rooted in community development.

We know that this is essential to gaining a deeper understanding of issues communities' face, so we can feed this back into future policy and programme design.

## PART 2: EVIDENCE

### *Key findings*

Funded groups believe that they are achieving the aims of the funds in terms of community cohesion and conducting inter faith work.

Funded groups believe that they had a positive effect on community cohesion—such as bringing those of different races, faiths and ages together.

Funded groups are reaching out to users of varied ethnic and faith backgrounds, often beyond that of their own organisation.

Community group users felt that funded groups enabled them to mix with people of different backgrounds.

### *Administrative data*

As part of the evaluation process, reporting forms are sent to groups providing an opportunity for them to say, in their own words, how their project went. These are returned directly to the grants administration team.<sup>15</sup>

Out of 573 groups funded in Round 1 of FCCBF, just under two thirds (330) mentioned community cohesion and/or interfaith cohesion as an outcome.

Out of 140 groups funded in Round 1 of CCPlus, just under a third (46) stated their projects contributed to community cohesion and 12 state they achieved reduced racism/extremism.

### *Evaluation evidence*

CDF uses its Research and Evaluation Unit to work alongside the grant administration team to research, evaluate and learn from the grant schemes—feeding back to government to inform future policy and programme design.

### *FCCBF Round One*

FCCBF has published its evaluation report Faith, Cohesion and Community Development. This report was based on findings from the first round of the fund and this submission features some of the published findings from it. For a full copy of the report, go to [www.cdf.org.uk](http://www.cdf.org.uk)

Part of the rationale behind FCCBF was to build a more cohesive society. This vision was made clear in the guidance note to applicants.

Self-completion questionnaires sent at the beginning of round one showed that the vast majority of FCCBF groups felt their work made a positive contribution to community cohesion within their faith community, between faith groups and between ethnic groups. The figures for all these indicators were over 90% for both small and large grants. Again, it should be noted that indicators on community cohesion generally record high levels of satisfaction.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Please note that information was gathered from groups in receipt of FCCBF round one and two grants and CCPlus round one. However, round two reports have not yet been fully gathered. The information gathered is self evaluated—ie is reliant on an individual assessing their own success.

<sup>16</sup> James, M, 2007. Faith, Cohesion and Community Development: *An Evaluation report from the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund*. Community Development Foundation. London. P 50.

Equally, respondents stated that inter faith forums and councils funded by FCCBF were able to monitor tensions and bring calm should difficulties arise in community relations and to help people understand the changes that happened in their neighbourhoods.<sup>17</sup> Also, inter faith courses run by funded organisations challenged the perceptions and myths that people developed about “others”.<sup>18</sup>

As one worker commented:

*“Inter faith work can help people to understand the changes that are happening in their neighbourhoods. People learn to know other people and start to hate each other less. This is only achievable on a small scale”.*<sup>19</sup>

Specific research into the involvement of women in FCCBF funded groups corroborates a picture of positive contribution to community cohesion. Of the 155 respondents to this research, 150 felt that they had met new people.<sup>20</sup>

Additionally, over 80% of the 155 participants in this survey felt that within 15 minutes’ walking distance from their home, the local area was a place where people of different faith, religions or ethnic groups got on well.

Data from young people painted a slightly different perception of community cohesion. Over 70% of 178 young people felt that, within 15 minutes’ walking distance of their home, the local area was a place where people of different faith, religions and ethnic groups got on well.<sup>21</sup>

These findings show that those involved in FCCBF funded groups believed that the funding brought people into dialogue and into new interactions with each other—a key requisite for cohesion.

### CCPlus

CCPlus is yet to publish its evaluation report. However, the evaluation evidence below was gathered from both qualitative and quantitative research undertaken. A full copy of the evaluation report will be available at [www.cdf.org.uk](http://www.cdf.org.uk) in late autumn 2008.

Evidence suggests that organisations that applied for CCPlus funding believed they were successful in bringing together people of different races, faiths and backgrounds together.

In round one, 121 groups responded to the survey. In round two, there were 82 respondents. Although a small sample size, over the two rounds on average, 81% of groups believed that they were helping people of different ethnicities, 70% of groups believed they were helping people from different faiths and 89% of groups believed they were bringing people of different backgrounds together.

From £2.338 million pounds distributed to under 250 groups, initial evidence suggests CCPlus funded programmes have a large number of beneficiaries. 47% (61 organisations) that were funded in round one stated they had 101 to 500 beneficiaries.<sup>22</sup> Whilst in round two, 36% (35 organisations) stated they had 101 to 500 beneficiaries.

### CCPlus: working with different races and faiths

CC Plus groups were asked about working with different races and faiths when undertaking their project—a prerequisite to building community cohesion. In both round one and two, over a quarter of funded groups stated they involved four ethnic groups in their work.<sup>23</sup>

Equally, in relation to involving faith groups, in both rounds, around half stated they have involved between three to nine faith groups.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>17</sup> James, M., 2007. Faith, Cohesion and Community Development: *An Evaluation report from the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund*. Community Development Foundation. London. P 23.

<sup>18</sup> James, M., 2007. Faith, Cohesion and Community Development: *An Evaluation report from the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund*. Community Development Foundation. London. P 25.

<sup>19</sup> James, M., 2007. Faith, Cohesion and Community Development: *An Evaluation report from the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund*. Community Development Foundation. London. P 25.

<sup>20</sup> James, M., 2007. Faith, Cohesion and Community Development: *A Report on the Survey of Women*. Community Development Foundation. London. P 9.

<sup>21</sup> James, M., 2007. Faith, Cohesion and Community Development: *An Evaluation report from the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund*. Community Development Foundation. London. P 45.

<sup>22</sup> Spratt, E., 2007. *CCPlus, Draft Interim Report—Survey of Organisations Funded in Round 1* [online]. Connecting Communities Plus, Community Grants, Community Development Foundation. Available from: <http://www.cdf.org.uk/services/rea/introduction.asp> [Accessed July 2007].

<sup>23</sup> The largest proportion of organisations 25% (33 organisations) stated that they had involved four ethnic groups in their CCPlus funded work. However, it should be noted that the highest proportion of organisations still stated that they involved four ethnic groups (29% or 26 organisations).

<sup>24</sup> In both rounds 1 and 2, the largest proportion of CCPlus funded organisations stated that they had involved at least two faith groups in their CCPlus funded work (30%, or 38 organisations in Round 1 and 27%, or 24 organisations in Round 2). Over half the organisations in Round 1 (52% or 65 organisations) stated they had involved between three and nine faith groups and in Round 2 just under half (49%, or 42 organisations) stated that they had involved between three to nine faith groups.

*CCPlus priority D—bringing together communities of different races and faiths*

Groups could apply for a CCPlus grant under priority D which funded activities that would bring together communities from different races and faiths, and promote a shared sense of belonging (community cohesion).

In CCPlus round one, 62 organisations who had completed the questionnaire stated they had focussed on priority D. Of these, over half thought their work had been “very successful” at achieving the aim with over 40% stating they thought that they had been “successful”. No organisations thought that their work had been “unsuccessful” or “very unsuccessful”.

In round two, the picture was only marginally less positive. Of the organisations that focussed on priority D (30), slightly over a third (11) thought their work had been “very successful” and 55% (16) stated that they had been “successful” in achieving the aims of the funding priority.

Bringing people of different ethnic groups and faiths together is an important stepping stone to developing community cohesion.

In round one, within those groups (62) doing activities under priority D, a third (21) involved four different ethnic groups in their work and a quarter (15) stated they had involved three ethnic groups.

In round two, the figures for the numbers of those who had involved four ethnic groups were higher (13 out of 29) with an additional seven stating they had involved five different ethnic groups in their work.

In relation to numbers of faith groups involved, in round one, under a third (17 out of 59 organisations) stated they had involved two different faith groups in their CCPlus funded work and the figure was lower for four different faith groups. However, only three organisations out of the 59 said they had involved no faith groups at all.

In round two, out of 30 organisations working towards priority D, only nine stated they had involved two faith groups in their work, and six organisations stated that they had involved five different faith groups. Only five organisations stated that they had involved just one faith group.

Evidence suggests that organisations working towards priority D feel they are successful in achieving the aims of the funding priority and additionally involved a wide range of ethnic and faith groups in their work.

**CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, CDF would recommend that further funding is provided for small community groups for activities which encourage bringing together those of different races, faiths and backgrounds together. Additionally, further evaluations and perhaps a longitudinal study should be undertaken to explore the causal links between community development work and improving levels of cohesion. This would provide Government and others with a far clearer picture as to the long term impact or role of community development in building community cohesion.

**Memorandum by the Confederation of British Industry**

1. The CBI is pleased to respond to the Committee’s request for evidence on community cohesion and the impact of migration. In our response we have focussed on employment issues, where the CBI has a unique insight. Issues such as the impact on public services and on regional policies are clearly also important—but are better addressed by relevant experts.

2. CBI members were broadly supportive of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion’s report “Our Shared Future”. Employers are already addressing many of the key issues raised in the report, but it is important to recognise that a one-size-fits-all solution for all employers is not appropriate. An additional period of leave, for instance, would have limited benefits, and come at a high price for firms, especially SMEs. The CBI has taken an approach of good practice dissemination among employers as the best way to foster workplace policies that are beneficial to integration, but which businesses can adapt to their own unique situation. The CBI has already worked with DIUS and the TUC in the production of a good practice guide on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and we are currently working with the TUC to produce a Diversity Guide for employers.

3. In this response we focus on three key areas:

- employment is a key tool for integration;
- migration policy should balance integration with the needs of the economy; and
- employers are helping to promote integration by addressing English language skills and equality in the workplace.

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 EMPLOYMENT IS A KEY TOOL FOR INTEGRATION

4. The workplace is a key area in which the integration of migrants into UK society take place. It provides both a platform to develop language skills informally and formally—one of the most fundamental drivers of integration—and an environment where migrant and non-migrant workers meet, ensuring interaction in diverse groups, reducing the potential for a divided community.

5. Evidence from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) suggests that, for many migrant groups, high levels of employment are already a reality. For example, the largest group of migrants in the last decade—by country of birth—are from Poland; they have an employment rate of 85%, compared to 78% from the UK-born population. The CBI believes that a high level of employment amongst migrant groups provides three key benefits: firstly, it helps migrant workers to integrate into society through their workplace interactions; secondly, it counters the perception that migrant groups have moved to the UK to take advantage of the welfare system; and thirdly, it means that migrant workers are making a contribution to the Exchequer.

6. Over time, the power of employment as a force for integration can be seen in the career development and increased earnings of migrants as they adapt to life in the UK and succeed with their careers. Many migrants initially take easier-to-find, lower-skilled roles—perhaps in order to improve their English. Over time these workers integrate and take jobs that more fully utilise their skills and growing comfort in UK society.<sup>25</sup>

## MIGRATION POLICY SHOULD BALANCE INTEGRATION WITH THE NEEDS OF THE ECONOMY

7. Employers in the UK have had a greater need of migrant workers over the past few years; 60 quarters of continuous growth have created some capacity constraints in the economy—at both high and low skill levels. Access to migrant labour, which can help to address these shortages, has been a key part of the flexible labour market strategy that allows the UK to compete in the global economy.

8. Employers recognise, however, that the integration of these migrant groups into society is also vital, and that this means that inward flows need to be managed. The CBI is supportive of the principle of the free movement of workers, but we have supported the Government's temporary restrictions on migrants from Bulgaria and Romania, for instance, as it was clear that a longer "pause for breath" after 2004 was needed. For the same reason we understand the current suspension of Tier 3 (unskilled workers) of the new Points Based System.

9. The UK's record on workplace integration is good, but this should not prevent us from ensuring that we properly protect those migrants who might be vulnerable to not having their employment rights respected. This should take the form of targeted education and enforcement—not further new law. Information is now being made available in the newer EU states in the language of migrant workers to explain employment rights before workers enter the UK; for example this guidance spells out the level of the National Minimum Wage (NMW) and the maximum that can be deducted for accommodation. The measures in the current Employment Bill on improving enforcement of Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate and the NMW will also help.

10. In order that the balance of economic need and integration can be maintained, more must be done to improve the quality of the data we have for migration. While large improvements have been made in the quality of the available data—starting from a very low base—more needs to be done to build the public's trust, and develop a sound base for policy making. The development of the E-borders scheme is a very important in step in this direction, but is not forecast to be "live" until 2013. We agreed, therefore, with the proposal in "Our Shared Future" that ONS should "*reinvigorate their work on co-ordinating migration statistics at a national level*".

11. For the UK-born workforce, we must work to ensure that no-one feels "left behind" by the labour market; migration can provide a short term solution by filling shortages, but in the longer term the sustainable solution for business and society is to improve employment and skills levels in all parts of society—in particular, by addressing the issue of economic inactivity. The Freud report laid out a coherent, integrated strategy to address this through delivery of targeted support, which the CBI agreed with. The CBI has been supportive of the Government's policies—such as Train to Gain and the Skills Pledge—to increase skills levels as part of this process, but employability is also about attitude—employers want people who want to work and targeted support should deliver this.

## EMPLOYERS ARE HELPING TO PROMOTE INTEGRATION BY ADDRESSING ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS AND EQUALITY IN THE WORK PLACE

12. English language is a vital driver of social integration as well as labour market integration. While many migrant workers from the EU accession states arrive with excellent English language skills, many migrants need to work on their English language skills when they arrive. Employers are playing their part on language training and are also committed to promoting community integration. Many firms provide

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<sup>25</sup> Dora Iakova "The Macroeconomic Effects of Migration from the New European Union Member States to the United Kingdom" March 2007.

English for their staff—over a quarter (28%) provide English language training to their employees and/or signpost them to relevant courses in the local area. It is also encouraging that one in six (16%) employers is now also providing practical information about life in the UK to help ease the process of integration.

13. The Department for Innovation Universities and Skills has been working to develop a new English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) for Work qualification. This is a new bite-sized, work-relevant programme which will be of benefit to employers and their employees—the CBI has welcomed this. The CBI and TUC have produced, with DIUS support, a good practice guide for employers on ESOL. This highlights the benefits of investing in English language skills to employees, as the examples below demonstrate. It also provides clear information and guidance to employers in how best to respond to language challenges—and where to access the government support that is available. This support must be available in a clear and concise language, setting forth the aims of the scheme and funding arrangements, from a clearly recognisable, easy-to-access source. This will be particularly important for smaller firms who do not use migrant workers on a regular basis.

14. There is a wealth of robust evidence showing that equal opportunities helps businesses draw upon the one resource that in today's knowledge economy gives sustainable competitive advantage—the skills, understanding and experience of people. Discrimination in employment, where ever it exists, squanders effort, ideas and ultimately, business sales. It leads to wasted potential, wasted labour and wasted revenues; the business case underlines the moral imperative. In June 2008, the CBI will publish—with the TUC—a report on equality and diversity in the workplace. This report will include case studies demonstrating employers' activities in promoting equality and diversity at work, and top tips for employers to help them develop their equality policies.

#### EXAMPLES OF EMPLOYER SUPPORT FOR INTEGRATION

##### *Cavaghan & Gray*

Cavaghan & Gray are seafood manufacturers with 1,000 staff based in the North West, who have developed a comprehensive strategy to support migrant workers. The firm offers ESOL courses for employees before or after shifts for 2.5 hours a week for nine weeks. New workers are assigned a buddy for the first few weeks to ease their integration into the UK and the company. Their buddy speaks their language and supports them through the health and safety training. As a further support for new migrant workers, all signage and paperwork, including the company handbook, is multilingual and the structured induction is currently held in a range of languages. The company has also set up a Diversity Forum expressly to monitor the integration of migrant workers, and to identify any future needs they may have. Employees from every nationality and community are encouraged to contribute to the firm's quarterly magazine as a way of promoting cohesion. Staff morale and community cohesion within the firm have improved substantially as a result.

##### *First Group, Bus Division and English language training*

First Group is the largest surface passenger transport company in the UK with a turnover of £3 billion. The Bus Division's European Recruitment Programme has recruited over 1,100 employees from Europe. For three months prior to employment, applicants receive free English language training based on everyday language, relevant for the workplace and linked with health and safety. Applicants are only recruited once they are considered to be able to communicate in English. Once in the UK, employees are encouraged to continue their ESOL training, usually in their own time, but through a local provider or with the support of a Union Learning Representative in an onsite lifelong learning centre. First Group, Bus Division also helps arrange bank accounts for new employees and supports them in their search for rented accommodation in the first six months after moving to the UK. Such an approach has delivered real bottom line benefits—reducing staff turnover and increasing profitability.

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### **Memorandum by the Equality and Human Rights Commission**

#### 1. EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

1.1 This written evidence contains information about the current and planned work programme of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (the Commission) on community cohesion, good relations and integration.

1.2 The Commission was established on 1st October 2007 under the Equality Act 2006. It champions equality and human rights for all, works to eliminate discrimination, reduce inequality, protect human rights and build good relations, and ensure that everyone has a fair chance to participate in society.

1.3 The new Commission brings together the work of the three previous equality commissions, the Commission for Racial Equality, the Disability Rights Commission and the Equal Opportunities Commission. The Commission's remit now covers race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief and the application of human rights. Working across Britain, the Commission has national offices in Manchester, London, Cardiff, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

## 2. GOOD RELATIONS AND COMMUNITY COHESION

2.1 Within the Commission's core mandate under the Equality Act 2006 is the duty to promote good relations within and between different groups in society. The Commission believes that community cohesion is not simply about race or religion. Good relations are about breaking down barriers and ensuring that people from different backgrounds get to know one another. As such they are about every aspect of prejudice and intolerance including disability hate crime, homophobia, and violence against women, as well as racism and xenophobia. A recent campaign led by Commissioner Baroness Jane Campbell has ensured that disabled young people are fully involved in sporting events and is just one example of our work on a broader definition of good relations.

2.2 In relation to migration, the Commission believes that immigration over the last half-century has brought great benefits to Britain. It has fuelled the engine of a more dynamic, prosperous economy. Public services have benefitted from the contributions that migrants have made to our welfare state since 1945. Studies such as the Audit Commission's "Crossing Borders" report (2007:10) have also shown that migrants are less likely to use public services, increasing the benefits while not adding to the burden on the country.

2.3 Rapid migration is also a fact of life and a reality borne of globalisation. In today's global economy, the rapid movement of capital is paralleled by the intense scale and speed in the movement of people. Across the world, the United Nations has calculated that more than 200 million people live and work outside the country of their birth. It is not only the volume but also the diversity of immigration into Britain that is significant.

2.4 The underlying characteristics of migration have changed. Modern communications mean that migrants need never lose touch with their country of birth. The average length of stay—which was over 20 years a generation ago—is also falling dramatically, and circular migration is increasing as migrants from the former accession countries in Eastern Europe regularly commute from east to west.

2.5 Migration has great potential to create and spread wealth. A recent report by the independent Ernst and Young ITEM club, which uniquely uses the Treasury's own economic model, suggests that without migration, UK growth in the next decade would fall from a healthy 3% per annum to a far less robust 2.2%, with all that implies for reductions in public services and employment.

2.6 Britain needs migration in order to sustain growth and prosperity. The Commission believes that migration has to be fairly and sensitively managed. There should be rules governing employers so that the benefits of migration are equally spread: for example, it is vital to enforce compliance with the national minimum wage, ensuring that migrants are not exploited as substitute labour to undercut the native population. Those who suffer most from the pressures created by population growth are often the poorest living in the most economically deprived regions of the country. That is unfair, and also explains why many ethnic minority communities are as concerned about the impact of immigration on British society as the rest of society.

2.7 The evidence suggests that recent migrants are often unevenly dispersed throughout the country especially into areas that have not historically experienced significant immigration. For example, only 10% of workers from the former accession states in the EU reside in the greater London area. Most economic migrants and refugees live in temporary, privately rented accommodation, and their transience and mobility also pose challenges for community cohesion.

2.8 Migration has to be accompanied by a determined and effective programme of inclusion and integration. The Commission will work with local partners and stakeholders to offer practical approaches, building communities' own capacity to become more cohesive and integrated in an age of rapid migration and diversity.

## 3. COMMISSION ON INTEGRATION AND COHESION FINAL REPORT

3.1 The Commission welcomes the final report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC) as a means of assessing progress in cohesion practice since the Cantle Report in 2001. A new definition of cohesion and integration is required to reflect changing patterns of migration, and increasing complexity at the local level.

3.2 The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) developed its own framework for integration based on three pillars:

- Equality—everyone must be treated equally and has a right to fair outcomes.
- Participation—all groups in society should have a stake in the democratic process, as well as reciprocal obligations and responsibilities.

- Interaction—people’s experiences and opportunities should not be constrained by their identity or personal characteristics.

3.3 These are being refined by the new Commission in its work on measurement and analysis. It is necessary to identify new opportunities for central and local government to improve and extend their work in this area. We believe that cohesion has to be understood and built in local communities. We welcome the Department for Communities and Local Government’s proposals to develop a Cohesion Delivery Framework that provides further advice to local authorities who are delivering cohesion, bringing together existing guidance and best practice. We are therefore cautious about the CIC’s plans for a national body to manage the integration of new migrants, and believe it would be preferable to encourage a more strategic approach among existing central and local institutions, including the major role that the Equality and Human Rights Commission can play.

3.4 Integration is best delivered by local institutions. New migrants are often likely to identify with their local community, local council and local school in a meaningful way. Guidance and promoting best practice examples by Government, the Commission and local government umbrella organisations such as the IDEA and the LGA are key.

3.5 We welcome the CIC’s emphasis on a cohesion policy that encourages civility and mutual respect in local communities, as well as a commitment to tackling the root causes of economic inequality and deprivation. This is vital given that deprivation and poverty often increase competition over scarce public resources, breeding resentment and mistrust among sections of the local population that may provide the fuel for political extremism. Any initiative to promote cohesion must recognise that this is a two-way process.

#### 4. THE COMMISSION’S STRATEGIC WORK ON MIGRATION

4.1 Our strategic focus on narrowing gaps in life-chances and outcomes for disadvantaged groups also includes migrant communities. There is a strong link between barriers facing particular communities, and the failure to build and sustain community cohesion. For example, the gap between ethnic minority employment and the overall rate is still 15% according to DWP, yet a recent Labour Force survey suggested there are still a quarter of a million ethnic minority women of working age who would like to work, but do not currently have a job. This accounts for half the ethnic minority employment gap, and remains a major obstacle to greater cohesion and integration. The workplace is a key site of interaction for people from different backgrounds and work is increasingly seen as a key ingredient of full participation in society.

4.2 The Commission’s specific activities relating to community cohesion and integration in 2008–09 will include:

#### 5. REGIONAL ACTIVITIES AND GRANTS PROGRAMME

5.1 The Commission has a regional structure that consists of nine regional teams gathering intelligence about good relations including tension monitoring, and providing effective mediation, advice and support in local areas. The regions are working with the Commission centrally to develop an exemplary grants programme that meets the needs of the Voluntary and Community Sector at national, regional and local level, and helps to deliver our good relations objectives. There is total grant funding of more than £10 million available.

5.2 By strategically supporting good relations projects locally, we hope to widen our reach and ability to identify and tackle issues affecting good relations. We see the VCS as having a key role to play in this area and have traditionally worked closely with community groups to gather local intelligence on the state of equality and community cohesion, and also to enable these groups to represent their own interests. Through such local relationships we have been able to provide a unique source of data to help better inform the community tension reports that are also routinely captured by Governments Offices and the ACPO National Communities Tensions Team (NCTT).

5.3 This capacity has been particularly valuable during periods of heightened community tension, when our predecessor, the Commission for Racial Equality, generated daily reports and worked behind the scenes to bring community leaders and public authorities together to help prevent and resolve disturbances. Regional staff have repeatedly worked with police, local authorities and community leaders to dispel tensions following terrorist incidents at home and abroad.

5.4 The regional teams also work proactively to help prevent minor disturbances and individual incidents becoming larger problems. These disturbances and incidents can often appear random and unconnected, but often this is far from the case. In many of the regions, for example, we work through Far Right Monitoring Groups. Our West Midlands hub helped to set up one such group, which was recognised in the former ODPM’s Conflict Resolution Toolkit as being a model of good practice. The work of this and the other similar networks through which the regions operate includes collecting and sharing information on the activities of far right groups, working to dispel inaccurate myths created to damage good relations and work to monitor and respond to hate crime, which is very often linked to far right activity.

5.5 Gypsy and Traveller groups are often particular victims of the false myths propagated by the far right. The Commission's regional hubs have done much to promote and enforce the interests of these communities. For example, the South East of England team has engaged with national, regional and local Gypsy and Traveller groups to increase awareness about the issues faced by the Gypsy and Traveller community.

5.6 This includes working with local authorities to ensure that they meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in their race equality schemes and through monitoring equality impact assessments, particularly in relation to site provision. The hub has also organised meetings with councillors police and local community groups to help foster cross community understanding and better recognition of the needs of Gypsy and Traveller Groups.

5.7 This work is leading towards the establishment of a regional network for Gypsy and Traveller groups and the voluntary sector. The network will improve systems for the monitoring of racist incidents, exclusions, decisions around accommodation and sites, and impact assessments.

## 6. ENGAGING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE TO PROMOTE GOOD RELATIONS

6.1 The first of these projects is a series of summer camps that the Commission will be leading in 2008. The summer camps programme is designed to building good relations and "social capital". Participants will include young people from all backgrounds and there will be a strong focus on team-building and breaking down barriers.

6.2 The Commission will invite participants from a range of social and economic backgrounds, ensuring broad and diverse representation. Much emphasis is placed on disadvantaged young people in this type of programme, but not much is done to bring them into contact with young people from more privileged backgrounds. This could be an area of innovation for the Commission and a ground for testing and developing new policies on good relations and community cohesion.

6.3 The Commission will also encourage young people to take on leadership roles in their communities and nurture this potential on an ongoing basis. The Commission will help participants build on what they have learned so that they can take these new skills and knowledge back to their communities.

## 7. SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATION IN ENGLAND

7.1 A recent review of social housing (Hills, 2007) suggested that social housing plays an important role in community cohesion, providing living accommodation for about 4 million households in England. Many people are attracted to social housing because of its potential benefits, but evidence suggests that using social housing to achieve integration and inclusion often leads to misunderstanding and mistrust.

7.2 There are perceptions in some communities that immigrants have an "unfair advantage" in the allocation of social housing and this may impede good relations between communities. Recently, a study conducted by Sheffield City Council (*The Guardian*, 2008) found that 5% of social housing allocation goes to foreign nationals, including 1% to EU nationals from the 2004 accession countries.

7.3 The Commission is undertaking a two part study to improve understanding of the impact of social housing allocations on good community relations, and to seek policy solutions that will promote good relations. The first phase of the study will seek to determine whether current "needs based" allocations policies have the effect of giving unfair priority to new immigrants. This will be completed by the end of March 2008.

7.4 The second phase—to be undertaken in close collaboration with the Local Government Association and with the support of the Economic & Social Research Council—will address more fundamental questions such as the core principles of current allocation policy, criteria used, eligibility standards, and decision making processes. It will also consider what is the rationale behind the needs based system, and how is the rationale regarded by different sections of the population? The second phase will be completed by the autumn of 2009.

## 8. RESEARCH ON THE EXPERIENCE OF NEWLY ARRIVED MIGRANTS: THE IMPLICATIONS OF BEING A MIGRANT IN BRITAIN

8.1 Research evidence is becoming available about the experiences of new economic migrants to Britain, including from the expanded EU. We will be undertaking a review to collate the evidence in order to understand the inequalities they experience. Key issues are likely to include housing, income, social attitudes, healthcare, and barriers to social participation. Any data about the impact of new legislation, such as the introduction of the new points system for immigration, will also be included. It will take account of the experiences of short-term migrants who have been in Britain for only a few months, and longer-term migrants who are beginning to establish themselves in this country. We expect the review to indicate which categories best identify groups experiencing inequalities, including refugees and asylum-seekers. The review should set out the available data on the numbers of migrants within the selected categories. It will situate the available evidence within the context of equality and human rights legislation, principles and practice.

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## 9. CROESO PROGRAMME IN WALES

9.1 In Wales, the Commission has inherited a good relations project from the Commission for Racial Equality: Croeso (“Welcome” in Welsh) which is funded as a partnership between the Commission and the Welsh Assembly Government. It seeks to develop debate around issues of diversity in suitable forums across Wales with a strong emphasis on young people. It works across all equality mandates.

9.2 The Commission is currently seeking a renewed three year funding arrangement with the Welsh Assembly Government. Its priorities over the coming period are activities to build improved relations between travelling and settled members of local communities and peer-led education work with school councils in secondary schools.

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### Memorandum by Fenland District Council

#### COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT INQUIRY

Thank you for your letter of 17 December sent to our Chief Executive, he has passed this to me to respond on his behalf.

No one in Fenland knows exactly how many migrant workers are contributing to our economy and society. Over the past three years, Fenland District Council and our partners have supported the integration of the migrant population in the Fens and this has enhanced our practice and understanding of their values, attitudes and beliefs.

This interaction has shown an increase in the number of people from our migrant population in vulnerable situations turning to council services and partners for help and advice.

They are entitled to access mainstream and voluntary sector services in the area. This has had practical and resource implications for ALL mainstream and voluntary sector services.

New (communities) arrivals are varied and not homogeneous. They bring skills, economic cultural benefits to the area. The increase in the migrant population has led to community tensions in other parts of the Country but these have been constrained in the Fens through the work of the Council and its partners working through the action plan of the strategy developed to address this issue.

In Fenland, the heightened awareness of the migrant population has also been ensured by their increasing numbers in the labour force, an increased visibility in the local community, especially in rural market towns, and on, occasions, reported incidents of harassment and racial tension involving members of the migrant community.

The issues that migrants present in rural locations seldom exist in isolation. Issues are inter-related and often form part of a wider, more complex set of factors which need to be understood. For that reason, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a discrete, free standing problem and one which is a symptom of a wider set of variables and factors.

It has become apparent that, in order to support development of a community free from racism and to promote effective integration and cultural diversity, all players need to participate and be resourced. To start the process we developed a strategy and action plan to look at the issues.

This strategy and its actions, has been developed in close liaison with members of the new communities. New arrivals have been difficult to contact and have shown greater reticence in being interviewed due to a lack of understanding and trust of authority, and in some cases language skills.

The key issues are:

- Employment
- Housing
- Education and Training—including ESOL
- Public service, benefits and entitlements
- Health
- Law and Order

Having highlighted the issues, in the attached memorandum and ways to address via the Migrant Population Strategy, the next challenge is to identify resources and finance to address the issues.

Manager  
Traveller & Diversity Team

17 January 2008

## FENLAND CONTEXT

Fenland is a district in the County of Cambridgeshire, in the East of England Government Office Region. Fenland comes within the sphere of influence of the cities of Cambridge and Peterborough. The four market towns of Wisbech, March, Chatteris and Whittlesey are our main service, commercial and social centres and all of them have strong local character.

## INTRODUCTION

Migrant workers and their families have formed the largest single group of new arrivals in Fenland over the last three years. Migration is a key theme of our age. Its role in a modern 21st century economy is likely to intensify not diminish.

This change in profile impacts on:

- Statutory service provision in terms of the increase in and varied demands being made on services, their relevance and accessibility.
- The ability of the district to benefit from the contribution that people from New Communities can make to its economy, civic, cultural and social life.
- Potential tensions between different parts of the community which supports these developments.

The key areas of this strategy are therefore:

- To assist people from new and emerging communities to settle and integrate effectively into the district.
- To enable service providers to ensure services are inclusive and responsive to increasingly diverse sectors of the community in the district.
- To provide the established community with accurate information on migration and immigration issues that can promote inclusion and reduce community tensions.
- To involve new community organisations and individuals in delivering this strategy and its action plan.

## FENLAND'S MIGRANT POPULATION

The population dynamics of Fenland have changed recently because of the increasing number of economic migrants and their families who have come to work and settle. It is widely recognised that the migrant population are vulnerable to social exclusion and there are many reports of exploitation and isolation. Partners such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, Police and Primary Care Trust are well placed to respond to this situation. In particular they can give visibility to the situation of the migrant population, develop good practice and models for action, lever more appropriate service provision from state agencies and support the collective organisation of migrant communities.

Migrants work in horticulture, agriculture, food packing and processing, but they also work in other sectors, including health and education. Many migrant workers are professionals and have skills that are needed in other employment sectors that have shortages of skilled workers.

Many are in Britain legally and with the legal right to work, including European Union nationals and workers through the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWs will move towards exclusively recruiting Romanian and Bulgarian nationals by 1 January 2008). This is due to insufficient numbers of British nationals willing to fulfil the demand of the industry. This is exacerbated by the economic upturn of recent years, modern supply practices in horticulture, food processing and packaging including peaks and troughs of labour demand.

### *How many migrant workers are there in the Fens?*

The worker registration scheme states that since May 2004 3,355 people from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia have registered with them as working in the Fenland area. This does not include those who work in the area or the large number of Portuguese and other nationalities that work and/or live in the area.

### *Future patterns of migrant labour in the Fens*

Patterns of labour migration are often analysed in terms of pull and push parameters. Pull parameters include factors such as wage levels and living conditions that make places particularly attractive to potential economic migrants. Increasingly, pull factors also include the policies and programmes of countries that encourage migrant labour as a means of addressing skill shortages in the indigenous labour force that would otherwise act as a barrier to economic growth.

By contrast, push factors are analysed in terms of the perceived disadvantages of the migrant's home country including unemployment, low wage structures, limited opportunities for career progression etc. Push factors can also include wider considerations such as political instability, poverty and underdevelopment.

In the current Fenland labour market, employers continue to identify serious problems in recruitment that prevent them from keeping abreast of the market and/or adapting to new technologies.

Whilst the most acute shortages are recorded in the skilled trades and associated professions, vacancies are not confined to high-skilled areas alone. Increasingly, vacancies are being recorded in unskilled sectors including land work, food processing, construction, hotel and catering.

Although it is unlikely that migrant labour will be capable of filling all such vacancies, in the short term, it is clear that local companies regard migrant workers as key components in their strategy for the current and future economic prosperity of the Fens. There are concerns that migrants are now less willing to do the low skilled jobs required by some employers. They are now more interested in longer term posts so are moving into (for example) the hospitality sector.

#### *Issues raised by the migrant population in Fenland*

Migrant workers have been the subject of increasing interest and concern in recent years. Nationally, that interest has been generated by matters such as the Government's initiatives to control the activities of gangmasters and unscrupulous employment agencies in the labour market and the wider political debate around the Government's policies on immigration and sustainable economic growth. Individual events such as Morecambe Bay in 2004 have provided a tragic human interest dimension to the wider policy agenda.

In Fenland, the heightened awareness of the migrant population has also been ensured by their increasing numbers in the labour force, an associated increased visibility in the local community, especially in rural market towns, and, on occasions, reported incidents of harassment and racial tension involving members of the migrant community.

The problems and issues facing migrants in Fenland have not been the subject of any comprehensive or systematic study and analysis. However, a sufficient body of evidence exists which can demonstrate the nature and scale of some of the problems migrant workers face and the challenges which this poses for service providers.

It must be emphasised from the outset that the problems and challenges faced by migrant workers are not uniform across all sectors of society or of occupation. Whilst unskilled and semi-skilled migrant workers and their families are perhaps the most vulnerable members of the migrant labour force, higher status professional migrants also experience difficulties, albeit of a different kind and intensity.

#### *Migrant Population issues*

The issues that migrant workers present in a rural location seldom exist in isolation. Issues are inter-related and often form part of a wider, more complex set of factors which need to be understood. For that reason, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a discrete, free-standing problem and one which is a symptom of a wider set of variables and factors.

For the purposes of identifying these, a thematic approach has been taken for the identification of migrant population problems. Although such an approach runs the risk of underplaying the inter-connections between issues, it reflects the fact that issues and problems are often presented as discrete matters. Moreover, despite widespread acknowledgement that these issues need to be addressed in an integrated, holistic manner, pragmatism more often determines to the contrary.

### 1. EMPLOYMENT

Migrant workers range from the highly educated and skilled, to those who are highly motivated but have no formal education; from migrants who come as seasonal workers, to those recruited by overseas companies to work in international or local businesses, to others who came with their families, because there were no employment opportunities in their countries of origin.

The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) have conducted research into this and their survey report seeks to convey the scale and demographics of migrant workers in the East of England, their age and gender, the workers' levels of education and skills and the transferability of these skills, issues related to language and communication, as well as a range of work related issues.

Some of the recent migrants to the region possess high levels of skills and qualifications but they are unable to offer these to the region's labour market, perhaps because the schemes under which they enter the labour market confine them to working in particular types of employment. The EEDA research in 2005 states:

- Most migrant workers are working in the region at below their skill level even though the skills they possess can be in areas where there are major skill shortages.

- Migrant workers possessing professional qualifications, particularly in medicine, have difficulty in obtaining employment.

Migrant workers bring £360 million to the Region's economy. One in three are employed in food, agriculture, construction, hotels, catering, cleaning and manufacturing, making them a highly significant element within Fenland's local economy. Although migrant workers play a key role (as temporary or seasonal staff, skilled workers and supervisors) in parts of the food and farming supply chains, they also have a large and growing presence in tourism/leisure, manufacturing, haulage/distribution and construction. Increasingly, skilled and professional staff are recruited to such sectors as health and social care.

It is perhaps obvious that employment and employment-related issues should feature prominently on the agenda of migrant workers. Migrant workers can face a number of problems and difficulties in the labour market, which include:

Problems with employment agencies and gangmasters such as:

- inaccurate representation of the nature of jobs available to the migrant worker, levels of pay, and holiday entitlements;
- inadequate information, provided on matters such as the migrant worker's rights, entitlements and obligations;
- a lack of transparency and proportionality surrounding the deductions made by the Agency from earned income to cover costs of housing, transport, administration etc;
- failure to honour commitments on matters such as skills development and training.

National problems with employers include:

- refusal to honour holiday and sickness entitlements and statutory wage rates;
- provision of poor quality working conditions and standards;
- refusal to recognise qualifications and work experience of migrant workers in terms of the status and wage levels of the jobs allocated unfair dismissal; and
- denying to migrant workers the small privileges enjoyed at work by local workers.

As an example: Wisbech CAB reports the case of a client who had worked several months for his employer and had an accident at work, breaking his arm. His employer told him that he was not entitled to Statutory Sick Pay, even though the legislation confirmed that he was entitled. The CAB helped this individual to challenge this and it is now being investigated by HMRC. However, when our client raised the issue with the employer, he was dismissed without notice or pay in lieu so he now has to take the employer to an Employment Tribunal. In the meantime, he has no income. He is making a claim for his injury against the employer but this will not be dealt with quickly.

Problems with fellow workers including:

- harassment and racially prejudiced behaviour; and
- exclusion from staff social events.

It is important that new arrivals from overseas understand about life in Britain, including key aspects of the law and of the operation of public services. This not only benefits the person coming to live in the UK: it minimises pressure on services, businesses and reduces the risk of misunderstandings that can cause problems or concerns for existing residents. For this reason we have begun to look at how all service providers can communicate more effectively with migrant workers.

## 2. HOUSING

The impact of the migrant population on housing demand is cushioned by the fact that agencies and employers often arrange initial accommodation. Migrants in the hospitality industry sometimes live in hotel annexes. In the Fens with a lot of seasonal agricultural work, individual caravans, caravan sites and converted farm buildings are frequently used to "house" migrants.

All of these pose challenges and can result in substandard or even illegal provision; housing issues figure prominently on the list of problems that migrant's experience. Housing options available to migrant workers can be classified under the following headings:

- Tied housing (housing that is only provided so long as you work for your employer).
- Private rented/social housing.
- Owner occupation.

This has impacted on the housing market in Fenland in the following ways:

- Of the 8 Houses of Multiple Occupation that the Council are in the process of licensing in response to the new mandatory licensing powers which came into force in 2006, 75% are occupied exclusively by migrant workers.

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- The council is estimating that there are 500 plus houses in non-mandatory licensable HMO use with the vast majority occupied exclusively by migrant workers.
  - We continue to receive reports of properties converting to HMO use for the purpose of housing migrant workers.
  - There have been several serious fire incidents in these HMOs over the last few years. And there are on-going concerns about fire safety within this tenure.
  - There appears to be a landlord preference to let to migrant workers to increase profitability as it is done on a per head basis.
  - There is anecdotal evidence of an increase in migrant families accessing private rented accommodation.
  - The increasing migrant population locally may be impacting on the ability of the indigenous population to find accommodation in the private rented sector. For many this is not a tenure of choice but a tenure of necessity whilst waiting for affordable housing. However the pressure for affordable housing becomes greater if more households are living in overcrowded accommodation as a result of reduced access to the private rented sector.
  - There have been a number of unauthorised caravan sites developed for accommodating migrant workers in recent years. Relevant enforcement action has been and is being undertaken to address such unauthorised use.

#### *Owner occupation*

Higher income, often professional, migrant workers wishing to enter owner occupation can face problems from banks and building societies which are reluctant to provide loans to clients on a time-limited work permit with no guarantee of extension or renewal

### 3. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Migrant workers who are unable to speak English face significant barriers in relation to employment, accessing services and integration within local communities. They are also at more risk of exploitation.

There are common challenges in the provision of language and other courses to migrant workers. These include:

- Many migrant workers work a shift pattern and return home for visits regularly. Therefore, regular attendance at courses can be difficult.
- Delivering these courses is relatively expensive and providers are often unable to find funding to support appropriate courses that are short and non-accredited.
- For some courses, students require a National Insurance number, which prevents some of them from attending classes.

In addition to adult education, there are some migrant workers who bring dependants of a school age with them. This trend is increasing. Teachers at local schools may have very little knowledge of many, of their student's educational backgrounds, and many children will have a limited command of the English language.

The Head of the Nene School (Primary) in Wisbech states that the needs of migrant children are those of the more settled indigenous community, but that language is the main barrier to integration. They also have the same needs for play as any other child. Play is seen as a key area as it will help:

- Interaction with other children.
- Social interaction.
- Relaxation.
- Build friendships.

Frequently these needs are not being met for migrant children because circumstances at home mean that:

- Many families share the same premise.
- Both parents are working long hours.
- No safe place to play.
- Children looked after by adults other than parents.

*College of West Anglia—Learning needs of migrant workers and issues regarding English as a Second Language (ESOL)*

ESOL learners, exact status details will determine funding availability.

The most experienced ESOL providers have historically been, in the cities. There is a capacity issue in Fenland, as is the case in most rural areas, at present where all providers are struggling to find enough ESOL provision to meet current demand.

Some providers are setting class sizes at between 12–15 which is not best practice for beginner and advanced levels. Also workplace learning groupings often result in a mixed level group, not always the ideal learning situation to make the fastest progress.

*A range of needs and interests*

Not all migrant workers need ESOL; some professions will require applicants to pass an English language exam before acceptance. However once in work some may choose to develop higher English language levels to develop their career.

Many migrant workers come with excellent English language skills and often conversant in several languages.

Some will get involved in acting as unofficial interpreters for their colleagues, police, hospitals and other local services. There could be an interest in gaining appropriate qualifications in Interpreting. In parts of the country where there has not historically been a history of immigration, local agencies have not previously had need for interpreters. Qualified interpreters will be in demand in these areas and this may offer alternative employment for some, enabling them to make better use of their language skills.

Many migrant workers have higher-level qualifications from overseas, which they are not using in their current job. Some may seek recognition of their qualifications to improve their employment situation. There are agencies that can provide information on equivalence of qualifications.

For many better knowledge of English language would greatly improve their experience by reducing their vulnerability.

#### 4. PUBLIC SERVICES, BENEFITS AND ENTITLEMENTS

For migrant workers coming to work in the Fens, the acquisition of a National Insurance Number is a priority consideration. It not only legitimises their position in the labour market but it also enables them to access a range of state benefits and entitlements. The possession of a National insurance Number can also be vital in terms of workers' ability to open a bank account, open a pension fund or even work as a volunteer as a National Insurance Number is often required for security checks.

Migrant workers can face a number of problems relating to National Insurance registration. These include:

- lack of knowledge/awareness of their need to obtain a National Insurance Number and/or the procedure for doing so;
- misinformation by employment agencies and employers on the need for registration; and
- protracted procedures and delays in the process of National Insurance registration with resulting problems and difficulties in accessing benefits and entitlements.

#### 5. HEALTH

There has not been a significant use of the health services by temporary migrant manual workers in the recent past. This was assumed to be because the majority of such workers were young men, a sector of the population who typically have a low level of health care needs. Owing to the highly mobile nature of their work patterns it was assumed that workers were accessing services in other parts of the Eastern region and possibly beyond.

This however, does not mean that there are no issues surrounding migrant population's access to health care.

Where contact has been made with migrants it has revealed a number of on-going medical conditions, including stomach ulcers, asthma, heart and back problems and arthritis, some of which have been exacerbated by field or pack house labour or living conditions. There have also been cases of severe mental illness, and an ongoing problem with sexual and reproductive health, including miscarriages and the need to access terminations by women.

To date it has not been possible to discover the extent to which mental health problems are either experienced or acknowledged within the migrant worker community. Given the high degree of uncertainty, exploitation and fear in their lives, the level of isolation from any wider community, poor housing conditions and cultural dislocation, it would be reasonable to assume that there are ongoing and unrecognised mental

health issues among foreign migrant workers. There appears to be a degree of confusion among local agencies over exactly what they are and are not able to provide in these circumstances, with the result that migrants are left in an unacceptably vulnerable position.

There was anecdotal evidence that significant health issues might exist in the migrant population but there was little data to confirm. A health care needs assessment was therefore carried out in Wisbech, in December 2005, to form an evidence base about newly arrived workers and those whose first language was not English.

Interviews were carried out with a total of 21 people from the migrant population (13 men and 8 women). Their ages ranged from 18 to 60 years. The duration of stay in the UK ranged from 3 months to 7 years. Participants were from Portugal, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, South Africa, Namibia and Iraq.

The size of the migrant population at that time was estimated to be about 2,000 and approximately 60% of these were likely to have registered with GP's in Wisbech.

The largest settled population of migrants in and around Wisbech were Portuguese. This has altered somewhat with large numbers of Eastern Europeans now living in the town which are made up of Lithuanians, Poles, Latvians, Czechs, Slovaks and Estonians. Another group identified are from southern Africa, mainly from Namibia and South Africa.

The major source of social support was from family members or close friends who often migrated together. The next source were members from the same country of origin. These did not necessarily live in Wisbech.

Health information came mainly through friends and less often through families.

Nine of the 21 migrants interviewed were not registered with a GP. Most of these participants would go to the hospital if they required medical attention. At the time of the needs assessment migrant workers had to call a number at Vinery Road, Cambridge to be assigned a practice in order to register with a GP. Telephone conversation requires greater fluency in language because visual cues and gestures cannot be used to aid communication. As a result the majority of participants found the process challenging.

Two areas were identified as priorities for the health of the migrant population—mental health and sexual health/ family planning. The stressful nature of migration and the fact that migrants from Eastern Europe come from countries with high levels of suicide suggest the potential vulnerability of these individuals in whom homesickness was very common.

A growing number of migrants in their late teens and early 20s will begin to form relationships in the near future as they become settled. The lack of awareness of local sexual health/family planning services in this group was seen as a cause for concern by the Doctor acting on behalf of the local Primary Care Trust who conducted the survey.

### *Specialist Health Issues*

Bridgegate in Peterborough and Wisbech have already spent five years working towards developing drug services for local diverse communities and their community engagement model has enabled a greater understanding of the risks associated with migration and complex needs around drug misuse including: racial discrimination and exploitation, employment issues and poor working conditions, unemployment and no benefit entitlement (destitution and homelessness), social and economic exclusion, difficulty accessing services, and language support, poor family support and social networks, pre-conceptions of treatment and legal systems.

These include:

- Providing appropriate preventative education to reduce risk and raise awareness.
- Supporting and encouraging treatment pathways.
- Involving members of the community to signpost and support potential service users into treatment— language support.
- Action research: Informing and improving practice: creating a greater understanding of the needs of diverse communities around drug misuse including cultural and religious implications. (*A study of Black and Minority Ethnic Communities*).

## 6. LAW AND ORDER

Small incidents, such as tensions over other resident's parking spaces if HMOs do not have adequate parking, can escalate. Cohesion and community safety cannot be taken for granted.

The main issues for the Safer Fenland Partnership and the Migrant Population are:

- To ensure continued engagement to build relationships with permanent and transitional migrant communities by all partner agencies, this will also give the migrant communities confidence to report any perceived hate crime to the police, FDC and other appropriate agencies.
- Continue to improve access to information via one stop shops, police, libraries, web sites.

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- Awareness raising of Fenland culture throughout the Migrant Community and visa versa (via fairs, migrant worker packs, Fenland Eye, schools and colleges). Many of the issues raised by Fenland residents against the migrant communities are regarding excess rubbish, drinking on street corners, gathering in large numbers, taking employment opportunities away.
  - Crime—due to differences in culture we have seen an increase in the number of people carrying of knives.
  - We have seen foreign national on foreign national murders (Friday Bridge) and professional hits (Wisbech van fire). Meaning all the witnesses are foreign resulting in a huge increase in interpreter bills.
  - Drink Driving has increased as well a Road Traffic Accidents (this also includes run off's after accidents).
  - Interpreters—as already identified costs have escalated regarding language line. However, language line cannot not be used under the drink drive procedure. Therefore the police have to use local accredited interpreters to undertake interviews which cost more. They also have to use this service for interviews. This has resulted in the police now employing five interpreters in order to cut costs.
  - Dispersal Orders—the Wisbech Dispersal Order was set up as a result of violent conflicts/fights occurring in the town centre between foreign nationals. The main cause of this was the tradition of young men sitting in public places drinking spirits. This is a tradition that the police are trying to prevent through the dispersal order.
  - Neighbourhood make up—these are traditionally hard to reach people as they work hard, do not go to social events and read little English. There are lots of initiatives that are being used to help build bridges . . . for example going into factories, putting up posters, running surgeries with interpreters and having joint events with the local churches.
  - Racial crimes—due to the number of people from minority groups increasing, there has been an increase in minor racial incidents. Due to the police's hard stance on this, it has had a major resource impact, as we now have a dedicated racial crime officer.

## 7. BENEFITS AND ENTITLEMENTS

EU Regulations enable workers and members of their families who move within the EU to take with them their acquired rights to social security and health care. Such arrangements also apply to members of the EEA and Switzerland.

In the context of the current EU Member States, the Government introduced the Workers' Registration Scheme in May 2004, for EU nationals from the eight East European accession countries Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia and Slovak Republic (Cyprus and Malta are not included in the scheme). Nationals from these eight accession countries coming to work in the UK are required to register which will prove that they have permission to reside and work in the country. Entitlement to benefits such as income support, job seeker's allowance, state pension credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit for Accession 8 Countries is governed by the need to satisfy the right to reside conditions.

Work permit holders and working holidaymakers are admitted to the UK on the condition that they do not have recourse to public funds. In effect, this means that they cannot claim certain benefits that include child benefit, disability living allowance, working tax credit, housing benefit, income support and allowance. Work permits for these workers are stamped "No recourse to public funds".

The issues surrounding access to and eligibility for benefits and entitlements are often a source of problems and challenges for migrant workers. These include:

- difficulties in understanding the full range of benefits and entitlements available and the eligibility criteria and procedures for accessing them;
- employers' lack of understanding/refusal to acknowledge a range of employees' rights in relation to work and related issues; and
- procedural delays.

## 8. IMMIGRATION ISSUES

Given the diverse range of criteria and conditions governing the rights (or not) of migrants to work in the Fens, issues surrounding their immigration status can sometimes feature prominently on the agenda of migrant workers.

Although many of the reported issues surrounding immigration status often relate to undocumented workers, a number of situations and circumstances can present problems to those who are in the country legitimately.

Key issues and concerns include:

- problems with getting change(s) to a work permit and associated difficulties of changing jobs;
- provision of incorrect information/advice about the immigration status of a worker; and
- lack of clear and concise explanations from departments and agencies.

#### 9. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

In addition to the catalogue of specific issues identified above, the problems migrant workers face are often exacerbated by:

- communication problems due to insufficient command of English;
- insufficient understanding of procedures, practices and legalities of matters such as motor insurance and certification;
- a culture of fear which often prevents the worker from seeking help lest it results in loss of job, accommodation etc. [The right to work/right to reside regime has, to an extent, exacerbated this problem due to the migrant worker's need to avoid having a break of more than 30 days in employment during the first 12 months.]; and
- a work-dominated existence which curtails opportunities to develop social interaction with local communities who themselves are sometimes cautious of or even hostile to any such interaction.

#### 10. COMMUNITY COHESION ISSUES

Positive interaction between migrant communities and existing residents is key to promoting cohesion. However, a range of practical and attitudinal barriers to interaction are likely to exist. At the practical level, language is all important. Many migrants arrive with little or limited English.

The arrival of significant numbers of foreign language speaking migrant workers in Fenland's market towns can be a source of tension and conflict with the host community. Tension is evident in the reports of overcrowding in waiting rooms due to high numbers of migrant workers seeking help and advice.

As well as language, other practical barriers to interaction between migrants and existing residents stem from separation that comes from busy and separate working and social lives.

Tensions between new and settled communities are often caused by myth and misinformation circulating and gaining currency. In the absence of any other information, media reporting can define local perceptions about migrants.

#### 11. THE CHALLENGES POSED FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS BY MIGRANT POPULATION

Notwithstanding their growing importance in the economic life of the country, the employment of an increasing number of migrant workers has resulted in an increase in demand on a number of service providers.

Like many service providers, the Wisbech Citizens Advice Bureau report that the scale of that increase has been very significant in recent years, as evidenced, in the first quarter of 2007 by 38% of the people coming into the Wisbech CAB drop in sessions being migrant workers. Although they see a few people from the migrant population in March and Chatteris, the numbers there are very small. Hardly any migrants access their services by phone, letter or e-mail.

The percentages by nationality were: Lithuanian, 47% Latvian 20%, Portuguese 13%, Polish 12% all others amounted to 8%. Whilst much of that growth has been the result of self-referral, there is evidence to suggest that a proportion is due to decisions by other bodies and agencies to redirect/refer requests to them for help and advice.

This raises important questions not only about the implications of this growth for Citizens Advice Bureau and other community and voluntary organisations but also about the ownership of the migrant worker agenda and the extent to which it is shared (or not) by all the bodies and agencies who need to be involved:

- Communications.
- Availability of the service.
- Management of business.
- Staff related issues.
- Changing nature of problems.

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**Memorandum by the “Governance and Diversity” Research Team at Goldsmiths,  
University of London**

As a team of researchers concerned to produce knowledge and understanding about participation and community engagement in the context of superdiversity and population churn, we very much welcome this opportunity to submit evidence for the Committee’s consideration. We believe that our research on “Governance and Diversity: Fluid Communities, Solid Structures?” (commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation) has relevant implications for community cohesion agendas, illustrating some of the gaps in the current policy context whilst providing examples of promising ways of addressing these challenges.<sup>26</sup>

There are new opportunities for “community engagement” in structures of governance: communities being represented on planning and decision-making bodies, such as Neighbourhood Forums, Foundation Hospitals and Local Strategic Partnerships. But community representation is complex. And increasing diversity and population change pose new challenges. Our research set out to explore these and to identify their implications for policy and practice.

Our key findings:

- Government policies for community engagement have been high profile and so have community cohesion agendas—but these have been developed in parallel. There is an urgent need for the two agendas to be developed in closer interaction with each other.
- Participation in governance arrangements (including the governance of public services such as housing, education and health care) can be a way to increase cohesion, rather than increasing competition and conflict.
- The voices of new arrivals need to be heard, along with the voices of established communities, and resources (including services such as education, health care and especially housing, as well as resources for community development and regeneration) need to be allocated with visible fairness. The research found that new communities are keen to get involved and have their voices heard on such a basis.
- New communities are diverse themselves. But despite this diversity, new arrivals experience a number of common barriers, making it more difficult for them to get involved or make their voices heard. These barriers include lack of confidence, difficulties in the use of English or lack of time (eg for migrant workers, due to pressures to work long/unsociable hours) lack of rights (eg for asylum seekers) and barriers to recognition (eg not having formally constituted community organisations so not being consulted).
- These barriers are exacerbated by the growing fluidity and fragmentation of governance structures. This complexity poses problems enough for established communities, already used to navigating their way around. For newer arrivals the shifting landscape of service provision and governance is even more bewildering, making community engagement correspondingly more problematic.

Addressing such barriers must be a key element in strategies for integration and cohesion, and there are encouraging signs of progress here.

#### PROMISING WAYS FORWARD

The research identified a range of approaches to enable newer voices to be heard whilst promoting strategies for community cohesion and social solidarity. These promising practices included:

- **Welcome packs**, providing information about where and how to access services and how to express users’ concerns: there was evidence of their usefulness although they need to be regularly updated, together with regular training on how to use them effectively.
- **Outreach work** to engage with new arrivals, including outreach work with informal leaders and networks.
- **Community development support**, from both statutory and voluntary sector anchor agencies, including support to enable new groups to constitute themselves formally and so gain increased recognition.
- **Myth busting exercises**, to challenge negative stereotypes, used most effectively when part of wider strategies to promote increased understanding between communities.
- **Shared events**, including community festivals, sports events, outings and welcome events as part of wider strategies to promote community cohesion.

We welcomed the report of the Commission for Cohesion and Integration (CIC), whose work took place at the same time as our research. There are a number of areas where our findings resonate with the conclusions of the Commission.

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<sup>26</sup> Further details of the research are included at the end of this document. The publication date is 23 June 2008.

CIC's understanding of **the dynamics of diversity** in terms of the relationship between *settled* populations, on the one hand, and a range of new residents, on the other, resonated with our case study research. We did not find a single, homogeneous "native" white community in any of our case studies, but rather a range of settled populations, including long-established Black and Minority Ethnic populations, who we found were no more likely to welcome new arrivals than other settled residents. On the other hand, we found that churn and diversity did not relate simply to new migrants from abroad, but to a great variety of population changes, including new patterns of long-distance commuter residents, student populations, and better off private tenants and owner-occupiers in previously working class areas.

CIC's **definition of cohesion and integration** in terms of *principles of hospitality and common ground*—rather than in terms of cultural assimilation—resonated with our findings. In our case studies, we found that the presence of cohesive communities working together to achieve a better future for the area did not map on to cultural sameness or to a strong sense of shared cultural values. In at least two of our case studies, we found that a commitment to what the CIC described as "an ethics of hospitality" was a key element in place-based identity, which had the potential to be harnessed as part of place-shaping agendas there.

CIC's emphasis on **visible fairness** resonated with our findings, which suggested that resentments against new communities on the part of established communities often revolved around perceptions (often inaccurate) of resources being allocated in unfair ways to newer residents. We heard such resentments voiced not just by white community members, but by members of settled BME communities.

**Our report includes recommendations relating to national government policies and approaches and recommendations relating to local government and local strategic partnerships. These recommendations are attached as an appendix, together with further details of the research upon which they are based.**

## APPENDIX 1

### RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO NATIONAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND APPROACHES

The following recommendations relate to the role, responsibilities and actions of *central government* on community cohesion and migration.

1. To ensure that all activities to deliver PSA 21 to "build more cohesive, empowered and active communities" takes account of the needs of new communities and migrant communities, and supports activities to engage and empower them and to ensure that all activities to deliver PSA 15 "to address the disadvantage that individuals experience because of their gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief" include members of new and migrant communities and take account of their particular experiences of disadvantage and the barriers to expressing their needs.

2. To prioritise the provision of reliable and standardised data on population churn, enabling local structures of governance to ensure that they have holistic understandings of change, in order to facilitate effective service planning and equitable resource allocation.

3. Building on the Green Paper *Governance in Britain*, the Local Government White Paper and the Department for Communities and Local Government's *Action Plan for Community Empowerment*, to ensure that the impacts of demographic change as a result of migration, population churn and increasing local diversity are taken account of in the design of policy, guidance and central government initiatives related to citizenship, community empowerment and community engagement.

4. To ensure that the Department for Communities and Local Government *Action Plan for Community Empowerment* considers the findings of this report and:

- ensures that one of the promised roundtables (Summary of Actions 15) is dedicated to exploring the issues of engaging and empowering migrant and mobile communities;
- extends the National Empowerment Partnership and other key strategic bodies to include representatives of new communities, refugees and other mobile communities not represented by mainstream community groups; and
- explores ways of giving voice and choice, and improved service accountability to new communities, specifically in relation to their main service contacts (including rented housing services, environmental health, police, gangmaster licensing authority and schools).

### RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

*Local authorities* and *LSPs* have a key role in facilitating cohesion and integration. The following recommendations are aimed at them, and we believe these should be included in central government guidance to local authorities and LSPs, but also that they might require a commitment of resources to local government to be realised.

1. To ensure that community engagement strategies should take into account diversity within existing populations, but also plan for the dynamics of population change and churn, taking account of the social, political and cultural diversity within and between communities.

2. To ensure that local place-shaping policies take account of the impact from and the impact on changing demographics.
3. To provide clear and comprehensive guides, drawing on the template being developed by IDEa explaining where, at what level and how different community and service user concerns can be addressed, including the provision of Welcome Packs, for new arrivals, regularly updated, with training to use these packs effectively.
4. To maintain maximum stability and coherence in the structures for community engagement, with the aim of strengthening mutual confidence and trust within and between local communities and service providers.
5. To develop proactive communication strategies, including, but not limited to, carefully targeted myth-busting exercises, proactively identifying and responding to local concerns, responding proactively to symptoms of tension.
6. To prioritise the PSA 15: addressing equalities issues comprehensively via Local Area Agreements.
7. To ensure that the criteria for the allocation of resources (including funding for particular groups) are clearly set out, coherent and transparent and to ensure that information about the basis for resource allocation decisions are effectively publicised and disseminated, demonstrating “visible fairness”—and providing accessible feedback on why decisions to fund, or not to fund have been taken.
8. To recognise the economic and other barriers, and to provide practical support (including support with caring responsibilities, transport, access to training and support in addressing linguistic barriers), to enable community representatives to participate effectively in structures of local governance. This will require holistic local strategies, geared to the particular strengths and needs of diverse communities.
9. To provide community development support, both directly and via Third Sector anchor organisations, including faith-based organisations, to engage with new arrivals as well as with more established communities, promoting networking within and between communities—and adequately resource this.
10. To work proactively with new communities, both directly and via Third Sector anchor organisations, including working through their informal networks, whilst taking account of equalities issues, ensuring that all voices are effectively heard, including the voices of relatively marginalised groups such young women.
11. To provide outreach support, on a sustainable basis, to support negotiation and conflict resolution.
12. To value and support the role of local anchor organisations in facilitating harmonious use of shared amenities, where relevant, and to promote understanding and solidarity within and between communities, enabling communities to self-organise, to access resources and to make their own voices effectively heard.
13. To support the organisation of shared community events, including festivals, sports events, community outings and welcome events, as part of wider strategies to promote community cohesion and community engagement.
14. To provide support to councillors facilitating the development of strategies to engage new communities inclusively whilst promoting community cohesion, encouraging new communities to engage with formal structures of governance, including individuals to stand as councillors themselves.
15. To recognise that neighbourhood participation structures cannot address all issues and so to support the development of effective city/borough wide structures too.

## APPENDIX 2

### ABOUT THE GOVERNANCE AND DIVERSITY RESEARCH PROJECT

Our research team included Professor Marjorie Mayo, Dr Ben Gidley and Dr Kalbir Shukra of Goldsmiths, Geraldine Blake of Links UK, Kate Foley (in the first half of the project) and Martin Yarnit (in the second half), based at Renaisi, Jane Foot, an independent consultant, and Dr John Diamond of the Centre for Local Policy Studies at Edge Hill. The project had an Advisory Group, including academics, practitioners and policy-makers.

#### *Our methodology*

Three case study areas were identified, for further investigation, in Coventry, Oldham and Newham. These case study areas were selected to illustrate differing patterns of population diversity and churn—a Northern town with relatively long-established minority communities and relatively little experience of extreme diversity (at least until recently), a city with established minority communities and considerable population fluidity through to a London borough with one of the most rapidly changing populations in Britain. Given the research focus, the emphasis was upon the areas with most population churn, comparing and contrasting their experiences with those of the area with rather less population churn. The case study areas were also chosen to illustrate varying approaches to the development of community engagement in local structures of governance. Finally, the case study areas were selected for their potential to offer the

opportunity of identifying examples of good practice. It should be emphasised that these case study areas are all in England and refer specifically to the English policy context. Given the variation in structures, elsewhere in Britain, the research findings cannot be taken to apply more widely, although many will do so.

Once Coventry, Newham and Oldham had been selected for further study, the researchers interviewed a range of stakeholders from local structures of governance and from the voluntary and community sectors, including faith-based organisations and groupings. More detailed interviews were conducted with a number of individuals whose experiences illustrated differing patterns of engagement in structures of local governance. And preliminary findings were checked back with individuals and via focus groups. In addition, the researchers observed a number of meetings and events, over the eighteen months of the project's life. The aim was to build as rounded picture as possible.

*For further information*

We are happy to provide further information or discuss our findings and conclusions more. We can be contacted at the Centre for Urban and Community Research, Goldsmiths University of London, London SE14 6NW <http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/cucr/> 0207 919 7390 [cucr@gold.ac.uk](mailto:cucr@gold.ac.uk)

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### **Memorandum by the Improvement & Development Agency**

#### INTRODUCTION

The Improvement & Development Agency (IDeA) for local government welcomes this inquiry and is pleased to submit evidence.

The IDeA works for local government improvement, so that councils can serve people and places better. It uses experienced councillors and senior managers as peers to support and challenge improvement in the sector, it enables the sharing of good practice, its Leadership Academy helps councillors to become better leaders, and it supports the development of local government's management and workforce. The IDeA is owned by the Local Government Association.

The IDeA manages England's only national support programme to help councils and their partner organisations manage the impacts of migration. Our evidence is based upon the experience to-date from that programme, working with a wide range of councils engaged with this policy agenda.

#### MIGRATION EXCELLENCE PROGRAMME

The IDeA is managing and delivering this programme, which is funded by the department for Communities & Local Government and which builds upon findings in the Audit Commission's Crossing Borders report. The programme is helping councils across England to manage effectively the local impacts of migration. It has a particular focus on recent migration from EU Accession States. The objectives of the programme are: to promote learning and develop good practice; and to build capacity and capability for managing migration within supported councils.

Early outputs from the programme include a good practice guide, containing case study examples and a self-assessment checklist for councils (copy enclosed), and an online "community of practice", allowing its 250 members to access key migration documents, share knowledge and seek advice.

The programme is now beginning delivery of 11 migration support projects, which will benefit 23 councils. These provide tailored support to meet local migration needs, delivered using experienced peers from the sector and other means (training, etc). This support will be delivered over the coming six month period, with the aim of creating self-sustaining benefits.

The most frequent issues where councils have sought support through our programme are:

- Developing leadership capacity and partnering arrangements, especially with the voluntary sector.
- Developing understanding of migrant numbers and characteristics, by improving local data and intelligence.
- Improving standards in housing and employment, and building links with landlords and employers of migrant workers.
- Engaging with new migrant communities, to provide them with local information and understand their service needs.
- Encouraging integration, by supporting opportunities for migrant and existing communities to meet and mix.
- Reducing community tensions, including work with local media and myth busting.
- Developing the economic potential of migrant workers and assessing the economic risks if the supply of migrant labour were to dry up.

Another relevant and linked programme, managed by the IDeA, is its Cohesion Programme. A Community Cohesion Benchmark is being developed, for launch in Summer 2008, which will include monitoring and guidance on many aspects of migration of concern to local authorities. The programme is also hosting a series of forums, run in partnership with local authorities. These cover the spectrum of authority areas—from diverse metropolitan through to rural districts—and all have highlighted new migration and population churn as significant issues, impacting on resource use and community cohesion.

#### RECENT MIGRATION

In 2006–07 some 263,000 migrants from EU Accession States registered to work in England (National Insurance registrations data). Seventy per cent of these were from Poland, around 10% each from Slovakia and Lithuania, and the remaining 10% from the other seven states (including 3% from the most recent EU members, Romania and Bulgaria). This continued the pattern since 2004, when most of these states joined the EU, though the most recent Workers Registration Scheme data indicates that a peak in the numbers may now have passed.

This wave of migration has some fairly distinct features:

- The speed with which it came about following the 2004 extension of the EU.
- The degree of churn among this population, with large numbers coming over here to earn for relatively short periods of time and then returning.
- The geographic spread of this population. Whilst the largest absolute numbers have arrived in London and other large cities, many have gone to small town and rural areas with little history of international migration. Herefordshire experienced a tenfold increase in registered migrant workers over a three year period. The challenges in such areas can be more fundamental, because the institutions lack experience of managing such issues and because the existing populations are relatively homogenous.

Nevertheless, whilst EU Accession State migrants predominate in some areas, it should be noted that they comprise a minority of migrants arriving in the country as a whole.

#### ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

We agree with the conclusion in last year's report by the Commission on Integration & Cohesion (Our Shared Future), that the impacts of migration vary considerably from local area to area and, therefore, that local government has a critical role to play. It is best placed to identify local priorities and find appropriate solutions. This agenda cuts right across the role of local government and its partnerships with other local bodies (including Local Strategic Partnerships).

In the IDeA's view the local government sector has performed well on this challenging agenda. There are many examples of local authorities acting quickly, providing local leadership, demonstrating its capacity to innovate and developing good practice. This includes councils in areas where international migration is a relatively new phenomenon.

However, the scale and speed (and, for some, newness) of migration is a significant challenge and there is undoubtedly considerable further scope for learning and capacity-building within the sector on this issue. Moreover, the impacts of migration are subtly changing over time, for example as more EU Accession State migrants choose to settle or bring across dependents.

#### STRATEGIC ISSUES

Key strategic issues for local government resulting from migration are:

*Leadership*—acting effectively to manage migration requires both political and managerial leadership by councils, to recognise the importance of the issue for their area, ensure it is built into relevant policy or strategy documents, prioritise actions and, perhaps, allocate resources. A challenge for councils is to get onto the front foot, in terms of managing and planning for migration impacts, so they are not simply driven by more immediate issues.

*Partnership*—the impacts of migration go well beyond the direct responsibility of local councils and managing them effectively requires a partnership approach. Some local partners will be obvious, such as the police, health service and voluntary sector, but other (less traditional) partners, such as the landlords and employers of migrant workers, also need to be engaged. A good example of such partnership working is that developed through the Responsible Employers Scheme in Cornwall.

*Communications*—councils need to establish the means to communicate with new migrant communities to ensure they understand the needs and issues for that part of their population. Frontline councillors have an important role to play in this respect. Engagement and communication can also take place through intermediaries, such as the voluntary sector and churches, and (where they exist) via migrant community networks or organisations. However,

councils should ensure that they communicate about migration with the whole of their population. They should strive to be seen to be fair and need a means of identifying migration-related issues for existing communities that require early action eg noise, rubbish.

*Information*—a sound evidence base allows councils to identify the main issues in their area, devise appropriate strategies and plan service delivery. A recent piece of research, commissioned by Local Government Analysis and Research (LGAR) from the Institute of Community Cohesion, highlights some of the flaws in official data sets about migrants and migration, and the difficulties in sourcing accurate information. Whilst there is no easy solution, councils need to work with local partner organisations (developing data sharing protocols and adopting common data definitions) to make best use of local administrative data sources alongside national ones. For example, school pupil numbers, higher education data and GP registrations. Frontline services and voluntary sector bodies can also be a good source of intelligence about migrants, as can employers and landlords (see above). West Lancashire District Council undertook a questionnaire survey of employers in its area. Newcastle City Council funded research to better understand the aspirations of their migrants, including how long they intended to stay.

## OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Key operational issues for local government resulting from migration are:

*Adapting services*—the demands upon local services made by new communities (what they use, where, when and how they access them) will inevitably be somewhat different from that of existing populations.

*Providing information*—there is considerable evidence that migrants want more information when they arrive in this country and benefit from having that information, including about their rights, about accessing local services and about some cultural norms.

*Regulating standards*—most EU Accession State migrants live in private rented accommodation, many in houses in multiple occupation, where councils have the role of regulator. Councils may also work with others, like the Gangmasters Licensing Authority, to address migrant exploitation by employers.

*Community activities*—council support for community events and activities can help encourage opportunities for integration between migrant and existing communities as a means to develop understanding and address tensions.

## KEY SERVICE IMPACTS

Arguably the local service areas that have been most affected by recent migration are:

*Information services*—many councils and local bodies have developed migrant information or welcome packs, to provide newly arriving migrants with information about the area. These are typically available in the main migrant languages and at places where migrants are most likely to visit. Making them available at workplaces can be particularly effective. The IDeA will shortly publish some guidance and a template for organisations producing migrant information packs, to promote good practice. The voluntary and community sector is also a major supplier of information and advice to migrants—preferred by some because it is not seen as “authority”. Other key providers include Citizens Advice Bureaux, churches and organisations established by migrant communities. The PIP project in West Wiltshire made use of previous migrants to provide new migrants with information.

*English language training*—a big rise in demand for courses of English as a second language (ESOL) is frequently reported. Many EU Accession State migrants arrive with a reasonable grasp of the English language, but this is not universal. This is an issue, given evidence about the importance of learning the language quickly and the preference for learning English over providing translated material. Other issues include the variable quality of ESOL courses and the fragmented nature of its provision, with few obvious pathways or signposting between providers and levels of training and with few links made to employers’ needs. Our programme’s support project with the London Borough of Ealing is seeking to address just such issues.

*Housing regulation*—where there are concentrations of migrant workers in houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) this can place considerable demands upon district and unitary councils, as the regulators. Their statutory powers to licence HMOs under the Housing Act 2004 are fairly limited,

but a number of councils are now looking to make use of their discretionary powers to extend licensing in neighbourhoods that are particularly affected. Gateshead Council has already established such a scheme.

*Policing*—some police forces have reported significant workloads resulting from the influx of migrants and that their dealings with migrants can be made more complex by language difficulties. It would appear that migrants are more likely to be the victims of crime than the perpetrators of it, but this all adds to the policing workload.

*Education*—increasingly the arrival of children of migrant workers from EU Accession States with limited English is being reported as an issue and a cost. This can be disruptive where it involves large numbers or pupils arriving in mid-term. For some rural schools having children with no or limited English can be a new experience. One interesting example of good practice guide is Wrexham's use of pre-school classes for new migrant children, where they can gain sufficient grasp of the language before being placed in a school.

There is also evidence of impacts on other local services, such as healthcare where migrants with minor ailments are often reported as going straight to hospital A&E departments, rather than using a GP surgery.

#### FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

The significant flow of migrants looks set to remain as a trend. As noted above, there remains considerable scope to support local authorities in their learning about this policy agenda, so they can continue building capacity to manage migration issues and to plan for future population change. But the developing nature of that migration, as some groups settle and other groups arrive, means that approaches and solutions will need to keep evolving.

The IDeA, therefore, welcomes the £50m that was announced for local community cohesion projects by the Government in its initial response to the Commission on Integration & Cohesion. Our Migration Excellence Programme has shown that tailoring local support to meet migration needs is a sensible approach. It has also built up resources that could be drawn upon in future, such as its pool of experienced peers, its good practice material, its community of practice and its training modules. This could help to spread good practice more widely and drive further innovation on this agenda. Some ongoing support for the network of peers and resources, beyond the lifetime of the current programme (the funding for which ends in September 2008), would therefore seem useful and cost-effective.

Our observation of local approaches also leads us to believe that some modest up front investment to help establish local support networks and services for new migrant communities would be worthwhile. This would help new migrants to settle and integrate faster, providing them with a place to go for information and support (including someone who speaks their mother tongue). This preventative approach can try to address the issues faced by some migrants before they become more serious. The New Link project that offers advice, mediation and training to migrants in Peterborough is a good example. It is an umbrella organisation that hosts and brings together groups representing the area's different migrant nationalities and backgrounds.

#### CONCLUSION

The IDeA manages England's national support programme to help councils and their partner organisations manage the local impacts of migration. Local authorities have been leaders in developing approaches and good practice on this policy agenda, but the scale, speed and spread of recent migration has created a variety of challenges—both strategic and operational. These vary from area to area, with the more fundamental strategic issues being more keenly felt in small town and rural areas which have not been traditional destinations of international migrants. Key local service impacts include those on information services, English language training, housing regulation, policing and (increasingly) education. The IDeA's programme has created lessons and resources, including experienced peers, which could be built upon in any future support. Some seed corn funding for local migrant community support networks would also seem a sound investment for the future.

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#### **Memorandum by the Institute for Public Policy Research (ippr) Migration, Equalities and Citizenship Team**

The Institute for Public Policy Research (ippr) is the UK's largest independent policy think tank. In recent years, the ippr has published several reports that cover community cohesion and migration and make, *inter alia*, the following observations that may be of interest to the Committee:

## 1. DEFINITION OF SOCIAL COHESION

1.1 Community cohesion is a contested term. Based on our research, ippr defines cohesive communities as communities where there is:

- progress towards equality;
- the integration of community members in economic activity;
- a sense of belonging to a locality and nation;
- trust and reciprocity between members of the community;
- social integration of community members, facilitated by social networks, and thus the development of social capital; and
- shared values.

## 2. MIGRANTS' PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL COHESION

2.1 ippr's research indicates that the vast majority of migrants feel integrated. They tell of making friends with people from a range of social backgrounds: from their own community, other migrants and members of established communities. These friendships are forged in the workplace, at school, college, places of worship, through sport, the arts, and other leisure activities such as volunteering and political activities, or by visiting bars and restaurants<sup>i</sup>.

2.2 Many migrants, however, feel their neighbourhoods are rather unwelcoming. Many migrants do not know or have never spoken to their neighbours. Our interviewees felt the biggest barrier to community cohesion was the unfriendliness of their neighbours, which in some instances amounted to overt hostility<sup>ii</sup>.

2.3 Many migrants have experienced racial harassment in their neighbourhoods, such as name-calling, verbal abuse, damage to their property and to a lesser extent physical attack<sup>iii</sup>.

2.4 The role of race, ethnicity and religion influences how migrants are perceived and received, with white eastern European migrants reporting a more positive reception than non-white migrants.

2.5 ippr research showed that some migrants feel that the responsibility for integration is placed solely on migrant communities but the problem lay with the majority community who were unfriendly and did not integrate. Debate about integration and community cohesion has the potential to alienate migrant and minority communities and therefore must be approached sensitively by Government.

2.6 Migrants who were interviewed in a number of ippr research projects felt that the UK had become a more hostile place for migrant and visible minority communities since the terrorist attacks of 2001 and 2005. Those who had come to these conclusions included observant Muslims, Muslims who were less observant and interviewees who were not Muslim or were secular.

## 3. PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS AND PUBLIC CONCERNS ABOUT IMMIGRATION

3.1 ippr research shows concerns about migration are intimately bound together with issues around "race", belonging, identity and security, as well as fears about Europe and globalisation. In the UK, migration, as opposed to "race" issues, has increased as a public concern since 1990<sup>iv</sup>.

3.2 Public concerns about migration are rather fluid, nevertheless, since 1990 a number of recurring themes have emerged as concerns:

- Threat of uncontrolled immigration.
- Concerns about the accuracy of immigration statistics.
- Abuse of the asylum system.
- Irregular migration.
- Abuse by migrants of welfare benefit system.
- Strains placed on public services such as healthcare and education and cost to public purse of services to migrants.
- Competition for social housing and other concerns about the allocation of social housing.
- Terrorism and threats to national security posed by asylum-seekers post 9/11 and 7/7.
- Threat to "British" culture and values.
- Over-population.
- Concerns over job displacement and wages levels<sup>v</sup>.

3.3 There is often a wide discrepancy between the actual impacts of migration on community cohesion and perceived impacts, as reported by local communities and the media. This discrepancy is overshadowing a more productive discussion that could be taking place among policymakers on how better to support and improve social cohesion.

3.4 There has also been little discussion about the positive benefits of migration at a national and local level. For example, while much recent media coverage has focussed on the strains placed on public services by migration, there has been little discussion of the positive impacts on public services, notably the staffing of key public services by immigrants. Some 60% of the Philippines-born population resident in the UK work in public services<sup>vi</sup>. Many migrant populations make greater tax and National Insurance contributions than does the UK-born population<sup>vii</sup>.

3.5 Communicating the benefits of migration to a sceptical public requires considerable skill, as does facilitating debate about migration. Teaching about diversity in the UK—a component of the citizenship programme of study in schools also requires considerable skills. A range of staff such as local authority communication teams, teachers and youth need to develop greater skills in communicating and debating migration.

3.6 Arts, cultural and sports funding might be better directed towards initiatives that bring communities together, particularly in areas experiencing conflict.

3.7 Public hostility and about negative media coverage may circumscribe Government's ability to stand up for the principle of asylum, as well as to fund interventions for new migrants.

3.8 Negative public perceptions about migrants and unbalanced media reporting have the potential to increase racist attacks on migrants and visible minority populations, as well as prevent the integration of new migrants<sup>viii</sup>. However, there are a number of factors that determine how media messages on migration will be received by individuals. These include the individuals' prior awareness of migration, their personal experiences and the prominence and repetition of messages.

3.8 There are no reported widespread conflicts or patterns of violence between established and new migrant communities. Conflicts that do occur appear to be isolated and often triggered by local critical incidents. Other factors that may contribute towards the racial harassment of migrants comprise:

- high unemployment and bad housing in socially deprived areas: hostilities may stem from perceived economic injustice and are most prevalent among economically vulnerable groups, white and ethnic minority alike;
- the language used by national and local political leaders (see 3.9 below);
- the ill-planned dispersal of asylum-seekers and no local consultation over plans to house asylum-seekers or other migrant groups;
- little previous settlement by ethnic minority communities; and
- failure by the police and other key actors to pick up on growing tensions and to protect victims effectively.

3.9 The language used by Government ministers and others associated with the Government can also increase public hostility to migrants. Research shows that “talking tough” statements used by Government Ministers (For example, “*We turn back two jumbo jet loads of immigrants every day*”.) have the potential to construct a social problem in the eyes of the public. We would recommend that Government and the Border and Immigration Agency adopt a communications strategy that aims to defuse public hostility to migrants.

#### 4. IMPACTS OF MIGRATION ON PUBLIC SERVICES

4.1 Migrant communities tend to have a different demographic profile to that of the overall UK population. Recent migrants tend to be younger than the overall UK population. Higher proportions of migrants are male than the overall UK population. For example, Government data on migrants from the eight new EU accession states (A8) suggests that 82% of A8 migrants were aged between 18 and 35 years. Only 7% of A8 migrants registered with the Workers Registration Scheme stated that they had children living with them in the UK<sup>ix</sup>.

4.2 The age profile of migrants is likely to be the prime determining factors impacting on their overall use of public services. Their younger age profile of means places less of a burden on healthcare and adult social care. One the other hand these younger groups of migrants tend to be relatively great users of services used by similar age cohorts among the general population, for example policing, sexual health services and maternity services.

4.3 Migrants manifest greater residential mobility than do many UK-born populations—usually moving to work. Migrant populations in rural areas are usually more mobile than are migrants in urban areas, because of the seasonal nature of much agriculture work, as well as food processing and tourism<sup>x</sup>. This residential mobility has a cost for public services—there is an additional administrative cost in enrolling children in new schools, for example. Residential mobility can also make the delivery of English language courses for adults challenging.

4.4 Migrants may disproportionately use particular public services related to their ethnicity or region of origin (for example services for those with haemoglobinopathies), as well as services associated with lack of English language fluency (ESOL provision for adults, English language support in schools and translation and interpreting services).

4.5 The geographical dispersal of recent immigrant groups, especially into areas that have not seen much immigration in the past, may place particular strains in particular parts of the UK. The absolute scale of immigration in particular localities may present challenges to service delivery. Where resource allocation and delivery capacity cannot respond quickly, local services may be placed under pressure.

4.6 The complexity of migration flows (many different countries of origin and many different immigration statuses including groups such as asylum seekers, highly skilled workers from outside the EU and low-skilled workers from inside the EU) will have differential impacts on public services and will often require differential policy responses.

4.7 Counting and predicting migration flows is extremely difficult, making resource allocation and planning difficult. Most public services depend on annual population estimates to allocate funds.

4.8 There have been a number of criticisms of the ways in which ONS produces population estimates. ippr is of the opinion that present methods of population enumeration and proposals to improve population enumeration over a seven year period will not capture significant groups of migrants such as very short-term migrants, transient populations, most irregular migrants and those outside the taxation system. The solution to problems relating to population enumeration and public services funding might be to have a component within public service funding formulae that is a proxy for international migration, such as population mobility or proportions of population in Homes of Multiple Occupancy. Additionally, ippr suggests that central government initiate a contingency fund for local authorities, NHS and policing, to which public services might apply if they experience population change.

4.9 Schools funding in England does include a contingency fund. The Dedicated Schools Grant, which meets mainstream school funding, now includes an Exceptional Circumstances Grant. However this grant is only triggered when there is a mid-census increase in EAL pupil numbers in the *whole* local authority of more than 2.5%. What this means in practice is that West Sussex, a local authority educating 91,000 children would have to enrol more than 2,275 new children with English language needs to trigger the grant. However, migration into West Sussex has been focussed in a small number of schools in particular areas. Most local authorities in England are unlikely to be able to secure access to this grant.

## 5. THE ROLE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN PROMOTING COMMUNITY COHESION

5.1 English language fluency is essential for the successful integration of migrants in the UK. It enables confident and unmediated access to public services. Research has shown that English language fluency is an important factor in determining labour market participation<sup>xi</sup>. English language fluency also facilitates social interactions between newcomers and the receiving community, thus contributing to the development of cohesive communities.

5.2 ippr welcomes the increased central funding of adult ESOL<sup>xii</sup> classes through the Skills for Life programme in England. We welcome the new DIUS consultation on ESOL and community cohesion and the intention to reprioritise subsidised ESOL provision. However, recent ippr research found evidence of substantial unmet demand for ESOL courses. This problem is most acute in London and in some rural shire counties<sup>xiii</sup>. We are concerned that the policy changes aired in the DIUS consultation will not address this problem.

5.3 In addition to the unavailability of college places, work and child care commitments also prevented students in urban areas from enrolling on courses. The distance from teaching bases prevented many migrants in rural areas from enrolling on ESOL courses.

5.4 Migrants who were least likely to have enrolled on an ESOL course comprise:

- less-qualified EU migrant workers, less qualified refugees and other migrant groups including those with limited prior education;
- migrants living in rural areas;
- seasonal migrants and those who came to the UK for repeated short-term work; and
- males, although males are more likely to speak English on arrival in the UK.

5.5 There are significant numbers of migrants who do not speak fluent English. Many in this group have attended English language classes, but have failed to gain qualifications, or to gain Entry Level One or Two qualifications. This group appears to be unable to break out of a “good enough to get by” level of English that is sufficient for the basics of everyday life and some low-skilled work, but insufficient for more complex conversation or many types of employment.

5.6 The impact of fee changes introduced in 2007 appears difficult to judge. Some colleges appear still to have the long waiting lists for ESOL courses that have been typical of the last 15 years. Other colleges reported to us that waiting lists had shrunk; a few colleges also stated that they were having difficulty in filling some ESOL courses. Our research showed that a key factor affecting demand for ESOL and waiting lists was the cost of the course. Colleges that charge higher fees appear to have the smallest waiting lists.

5.7 There is little evidence of employers paying for ESOL courses. One employer stated that he was unwilling to invest in basic training for a work force that was “unlikely to stay around”.

5.8 There is little evidence of colleges and adult education services developing alternative models of provision to meet the needs of a rural working population. Difficulties in securing capital funding for projects working with rural migrant workers were cited as one reason for this lack of provision. Learning and Skills Council (LSC) requirements for a minimum class size of 10 persons were also cited as deterrents for developing initiatives such as mobile classrooms. We recommend that the LSC revise its guidance on minimum class size.

5.9 Funding for English language teaching in English schools has not kept pace with numbers of children needing English language support entering English schools. In England, most English language support is funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG). The new EMAG settlement for 2008–11 is at a level slightly above the rate of inflation. Many local authorities who have received substantial numbers of migrant children arrivals have seen their monies frozen. There is no contingency funding within the new EMAG settlement—yet the movement of international migrants to particular local authorities can be sudden. This is most challenging in local authorities with the smallest numbers of staff, thus the least potential to redeploy teaching resources.

5.10 Despite extensive lobbying from local authorities, most local authorities are still obliged to devolve 85% of EMAG monies to schools. This obligation means that there is little flexibility in deploying English language teachers to schools that see the sudden arrival of migrant children. It should be noted that refugee and labour migrant populations experience greater levels of pupil mobility than the majority population. A school with no EAL staff may suddenly find it has enrolled significant numbers of children with EAL needs.

5.11 Government has argued that schools themselves should meet some EAL needs. Its latest guidance on EMAG (2007) just issued to local authorities, states that “EMAG is only one source of support for bilingual pupils”. The same guidance argues that the formula used in calculating mainstream funding is weighed in favour of EAL and ethnicity. However, the amount of the weighting is very small. Of course, EAL support is also the responsibility of classroom teachers. But the concentration of migrant children across local authorities means that in some schools, classroom teachers have many demands placed on them during lessons.

5.12 Lack of English language support, and thus a lack of academic literacy, appears to be a major cause of underachievement among some migrant groups such as Somali children many of whom have experienced severe interruptions to their prior education. Somalis are among the migrant and minority communities who experience low levels of labour market participation, another component of poor community cohesion.

## 6. FACTORS WHICH PROMOTE POSITIVE SOCIAL INTERACTIONS IN AREAS EXPERIENCING MIGRATION

6.1 ippr welcomes the publication of good practice in relation to community cohesion, by CLG, the Commission of Integration and Cohesion and other bodies. We do, however, have concerns which we do not think are being addressed at present, which are set out below.

6.2 Political leadership, nationally and locally and the language used by political leaders, emerges as a key factor in promoting a more positive reception of new migrants. We would urge Government and local political leaders to stress more publicly the benefits of immigration.

6.3 Public bodies could make better use of the race equality duty in promoting social cohesion and integrating new migrants.

6.4 The built environment—housing design—and the existence of soft infrastructure such as parks, sports and community facilities, may facilitate positive social interactions between different groups of people. However, the role of public space in promoting social cohesion has received less consideration, particularly at a local level. Planning departments are not always included in discussion about social cohesion strategies. The impact of new urban developments on social cohesion is not always considered. Today, large housing developments are being planned in south east England, with very little consideration given to soft infrastructure and thus to social cohesion<sup>xiv</sup>. We suggest that central government might provide guidance so that local authorities, commercial developers, the Housing Corporation/English Partnerships and registered social landlords to ensure that building design promotes community cohesion. Locally, a broader range of actors should be brought into discussions about social cohesion, including local authority planning departments and relevant Registered Social Landlords should always be included in discussion about social cohesion strategies. Local authorities should ensure that where their housing is transferred out of the public sector, new management organisations have clear responsibility for social cohesion and community development. Central government must provide a lead and ensure that the new housing development in Growth Areas make provision for soft infrastructure such as parks and sports and leisure centres.

6.5 Irregular migration challenges community cohesion. Home Office calculations, based on the 2001 Census, suggest that there may be 310,000–530,000 irregular migrants living in the UK, the majority of whom are visa or asylum overstayers. They are a group of people with very limited rights and are usually living in the poorest and most overcrowded housing. Research on this group suggests that they are disproportionately employed in the informal sector where they will not have the protection of the National Minimum Wage<sup>xv</sup>. Home Office policy focuses on sanctions for those who employ irregular migrants, coupled with the detection and removal of irregular migrants. We question how practical large-scale

removal is as a policy objective, given the large population of irregular migrants and a limited Home Office removal budget. We recommend that Government should consider regularisation for some irregular migrants.

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### Memorandum by the Institute of Community Cohesion

#### BACKGROUND

1. The Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo) was established in 2005 to provide a new approach to race, diversity and multiculturalism. Our work focuses on building positive and harmonious community relations.

2. iCoCo represents a unique partnership of academic, statutory and non-governmental bodies, which combine the experience and expertise of four Universities—Coventry, Warwick, DeMontfort and Leicester, with practitioners from a range of diverse backgrounds and professions.

3. iCoCo works with local and national organisations, advising on the best ways to promote community cohesion. In recent months, it has undertaken much work in the field of migration, mapping population change, assessing impact of new communities upon service delivery and wider issues of cohesion in rapidly changing communities.

4. The Institute of Community Cohesion works to build a more cohesive society. We believe that:

- Diversity is good for society—socially, culturally, economically.
- But, diverse societies work best when they have a sense of social solidarity and mutual responsibility.
- Every individual will benefit from a richer notion of citizenship and fuller involvement in civil society.

5. We work to develop policy solutions that enable us to live together rather than side by side; that promote greater shared identity; that support new migrants to adapt to life in Britain, that define what it means to be citizen and instil a greater sense of civic responsibility amongst all those in our society.

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## THE CHANGING PATTERN AND NATURE OF MIGRATION

6. Recent migration has undoubtedly had an impact upon community cohesion and, judging from opinion polls and our own field research, opinion has become more opposed. However, the economic case is nevertheless generally recognised and much of the opposition relates to the failure to resolve resource conflicts in a timely manner and to tackle relatively minor social and cultural misunderstandings and to provide the necessary resources and re-assurance to existing residents (see for example, the iCoCo research for the LGA, *Estimating the Scale and Impacts of Migration at a Local Level*).

7. We will not use this submission as the place to repeat well-established statistics upon the changing migration patterns the United Kingdom is experiencing. However, there are some larger thematic points that we believe it is important to raise.

8. Migration is not, in any case, simply a matter of numbers. We now have a much greater diversity, with over 300 languages in London schools. This is replicated on a smaller scale across the country—for example, in Middlesbrough, 60 languages and 14 faiths can be found. We have also witnessed a growth in diaspora communities, which are now much easier to sustain, often with the benefit of new technology, across national boundaries and aligned with faith as well as ethnicity.

9. As well as increasing in size and diversity, migration *flows* have become more complex. For example, while the numbers of asylum applicants has decreased, there is some evidence of forced migrants using other migration pathways to enter and remain in the UK, as overseas students or with work permits.

10. There is also increased temporary and circular migration. In the past, most international migration to the UK was permanent or semi-permanent in nature. Today there is much more temporary migration to the UK, usually of a circular nature. We believe that circular migration poses particular challenges for schools and those involved at a local level in promoting long-term cohesion.

11. It is also crucial that migration is not separated from wider issues of cohesion. Perceptions about race, ethnicity and religion are at the heart of how well new migrants are received into communities. Many migrants face the same issues as previous migrant and minority communities, such as racially aggravated violence, workplace discrimination, and educational under-achievement.

12. In this respect, we find it disappointing that migration issues have remained primarily with the Home Office while wider cohesion policy is now with Communities and Local Government. We believe that this leads to an over-emphasis upon the control rather than integration side of migration.

## COMMUNITY COHESION

13. Migration should not be seen outside some of the wider challenges to community cohesion. Equating community cohesion solely with one aspect—be it the impact of migration or the desire to combat religious extremism can be unhelpful. Community cohesion is multi-faceted and should be seen as a positive programme to promote understanding and respect between different communities, as well providing a response to a wide range of divisions in society—for example, those based upon ethnicity, age, faith, nationality, sexual orientation, within and between minority ethnic communities and in respect of travellers and existing residents.

14. Longer term structural issues also need to be addressed. Breaking down segregation in housing, schools and employment is necessary not only to ensure that inequalities are tackled, but also that interaction takes place in the course of everyday life, rather than manufactured through special compensatory schemes and projects. Positive action programmes to break down ethnic/cultural stereotypes associated with particular occupations have already been validated in a number of public and private spheres. There has been less experience of such schemes in housing and education, but they do exist and require more support and development.

15. It is vital that community cohesion is linked to wider social policy initiatives such as development of citizenship education, building social capital and enhancing democracy and local accountability.

16. Community Cohesion programmes are becoming increasingly established at both the national and local level. But capacity and skills are still very limited and we are concerned about how national and local agencies can combine in future to provide the necessary infrastructure to ensure that these challenges are met. ICoCo has been established to fulfil at least part of this role and we see this as being increasingly necessary, particularly in the light in the demise of the Commission for Racial Equality. At this stage, it is essential a small number of clear priorities are established and are properly resourced national programmes.

## IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON COHESION

17. It is clear that rapid and diverse migration has an impact upon community cohesion. Natural movement of people and instability within a community can have an impact upon the social networks and the level of social capital in an area. Research from Prof Robert Putnam, amongst others, demonstrates that this impact can be negative in the short-term.

18. iCoCo, however, does not believe that this negative correlation is intrinsic to the more diverse societies and feels strongly that many of the negative impacts are due to inappropriate policies and procedures for accommodating this change.

19. In particular, we believe that the greatest threats to community cohesion are caused by:

- an unhelpful and negative national discourse around migration which impacts locally;
- the inability of service providers to accommodate the pace of change;
- insufficient data on population mobility and therefore inappropriate funding mechanisms; and
- difficulties around the English language and a general lack of clarity about the requirements of citizenship.

20. We set out the issues and some potential solutions around each of these areas through the course of this submission.

21. In addition, one of the primary challenges posed to community cohesion from migration is the inequality and high levels of social exclusion faced by many refugee and new migrant communities. This is characterised by educational underachievement, unemployment and labour market segregation. Somalis, for example, are a particularly marginalised refugee group. Their numbers include many young people who have undertaken most or all of their education in the UK, speak fluent English, yet leave school with few qualifications and are unsuccessful in finding work. The 2001 Census indicated that 83% of adult Somalis were economically inactive.

22. This is also acute inequality in housing provision. Most labour migrants and many refugees are living in temporary, privately rented accommodation. Their transience and mobility may compromise community cohesion.

23. Programmes to help socially excluded migrant communities find work—for example, job clubs offering long term support rather than short term courses—are therefore needed.

#### MIGRATION POLICY

24. Migration has many beneficial impacts, particularly in the economic sphere, and these are generally recognised by business and public services providers. However, migration is undoubtedly leading to an increase in the general population and thus placing additional demands upon service providers.

25. Public and political debates about the impact of migration services are gaining prominence, often fuelled by media stories on acute strains on public services. The highly contested nature of these debates circumscribes the scope for policymakers to respond.

26. Too much of the public and political debate has concentrated upon numbers and securing borders, rather than making the positive case for migration and policies to support the integration of migrant communities and to provide adequate resources to areas which are coping with population change.

27. iCoCo believes that the government's failure to provide the context for migration is having a detrimental impact on community cohesion. It is also counter-productive. Despite all the rhetoric about "clampdowns" and stringent new announcements, public concern about immigration has increased in recent years. Therefore, it would be helpful if to deflate tensions rather than add to perceptions that migrant communities are here illegally or are a drain upon the state when they are here.

28. This negative attitude is carried into policy which can also be seen to be counter-productive. For example, the limiting of the period of settlement to those granted Convention refugee status to a period of five years, revocable at any time during this period is hugely damaging to long-term cohesion. There is a clear expectation that those with refugee status would return if conditions improved in their home countries. This compromises the integration plans of many of those granted refugee status and serves as a negative incentive for them to learn the language, develop social networks or get involved in civic life.

29. We also believe that a more realistic policy in relation to irregular migrants is needed. This group comprises clandestine entrants to the UK, migrants who use false documents to gain entry to the UK, visa over-stayers, asylum over-stayers of which there may be as many as 400,000 in the UK, as well as irregular inter-EU secondary migrants who have secured legal status to remain in one EU state, but move to reside illegally in another EU state.

30. The hidden nature of irregular migration makes the scale of it difficult to estimate. There have been a number of attempts to do this, using different methodologies. In 2005, the Home Office commissioned research that aimed to estimate the irregular migration stock—the total population of irregular migrants—in the UK. It estimated the irregular populations as 310,000–570,000.

31. When considering what policy solutions to pursue with regards to irregular migration, it is also worth calculating the costs of deporting irregular migrants. The financial costs are likely to be significant given that they must include the cost of apprehension, detention, as well as transport. As an example, in the UK, the average cost of carrying out the enforced removal of a failed asylum seeker is around £11,000. If we assume

that the Government were to deport all irregular migrants at this rate, this would imply a total removal cost of around £4.7 billion, which compares to the enforcement budget for removals, which was £270 million in 2006–07.

#### IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON SERVICE DELIVERY

32. The absolute scale of immigration may present challenges to service delivery. Poorly funded public services have the potential to act as a focus point for racial tensions.

33. Central Government needs to reassess current funding formulas for local authorities to assist those areas experiencing rapid population change.

34. Even if the increased local demand is recognised in local population estimates and thence by increased grant from the centre, there is often a lag between the additional grant and the immediate demands upon services. In addition, many areas are experiencing high levels of both in and out international migration, and internal migration, which may have little effect on net population but significant impact on service provision and administration.

35. We also believe that there should be some recognition of the short-term impact of high or rapid levels of migration, independent of any net impact on population. We have previously suggested greater use of discretionary funding for authorities who are consistently the focus of migration as well as the establishment of mobility fund which would enable areas experiencing short-term changes to bid for one-off payments.

36. Schools are frequently central points for dealing with the short-term impacts of migration. “Churn” and mobility in class populations has been consistently seen as placing additional demands upon education provision. These pressures include translation services, teaching numeracy and literacy, understanding cultural differences, mid-term arrivals, and the lack of records and assessments. In this respect, iCoCo views the reduction in Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant funding as a significant cause for concern.

37. Our work tells us that some of the demand upon service is due in many cases to confusion or the lack of clear guidance. For example, some migrants make inappropriate use of A&E services and enter the health system at an emergency stage rather than through earlier, preventative care. Also, vehicle crime can come from a lack of awareness around correct documentation or legal initiatives such as drink driving laws.

38. These can be addressed in part by greater language provisions (see below) but also by dedicated information and awareness campaigns. However, too often this is left to individual public authorities at the local level. Greater national programmes to help new migrants understand British laws and customs are needed.

#### DATA COLLECTION AND FUNDING

39. We are concerned about the lack of adequate resources in this area and believe that the economic benefits of migration have not been invested into essential public services and social programmes, which are essential if conflicts and divisions are to be avoided and the barriers broken down to allow tolerance and respect to develop.

40. There is general recognition that official statistics on migration are inadequate and need to be improved, particularly at a local level. The International Passenger Survey (IPS) is the principal source of data for movement in and out of the country but the sample is very small. Local allocation depends ultimately on the 2001 Census rather than more recent local data (although the Labour Force Survey (LFS) was used for the first time in 2006 to allocate the IPS to regional level and below this in London).

41. A range of evidence from administrative data (such as NINO and NHS “Flag 42” data) and local studies seriously questions the robustness of the national, and particularly the local, estimates.

42. There is a range of administrative and other data available which relates to migration, including NINO; the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS) for A8 migrants; first health registration of new arrivals—Flag 4; the annual School Census (PLASC); the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) count of students; Electoral Registers (ER); and the LFS, a sample survey of 60,000 households per quarter. All have limitations, particularly around recording de-registration, but taken together they can offer a fuller picture and pick up, particularly, rapid change and flows of migrants. There is also scope to enhance these sources and make better use of the information they collect.

43. iCoCo therefore believes that agencies at national and local level must work together and develop data sources that provide more information about the size and composition of local populations. This may well require data to be collected in a slightly different way, to a common standard, or on the basis of a common timescale.

44. It is essential that local authorities, the police and many partners have up to date, reliable and accurate data which can assist service planning and tension monitoring. However, we feel that this should be supplemented by the re-introduction of the mid-term census, (ie every five years), even if only on a scaled down basis. With more detail on ethnicity than has hitherto been collected to respond to the configuration of heritage groups in specific localities which is becoming ever more complex. In an era of ever more mobile people and dynamic populations we see this as being essential.

45. As an interim measure, better use should be made of NINO, PLASC, Flag4, HESA and Electoral Registration data. We would suggest that key players should be brought together to look at what data is available, how it can be used and what enhancements might increase the usefulness of these sources for monitoring.

#### LANGUAGE

46. Our work locally consistently tells us that language remains one of the primary barriers in both advancing the opportunities for new migrants and also bringing about social integration. It is vital that the basic needs of new migrants can be met—communicating essential information, supporting their advice needs and communicating in emergencies.

47. The ability to communicate in English (or Welsh) is, however, an essential skill without which full participation in British Society is not possible. In particular, job opportunities are very limited and the prospects for moving out of poverty and low paid work are poor. Further, the opportunity to understand and participate in democratic debate and discussion is very limited.

48. We believe that English language classes should be made freely available to all new migrants as well as those who still rely solely upon their heritage languages.

49. It is right that there should be a clear expectation that all citizens and denizens (residents without citizenship) will learn English to a high standard. Such provision is clearly not available in many areas at present and there is no real expectation to either provide or acquire such skills, other in respect of the longer term and limited “citizenship test”.

50. iCoCo has welcomed the recent announcement by the Government that they will be targeting English classes towards migrants who need language skills in order to integrate with society.

51. However, we would urge the Government to move further upon the requirement for businesses to contribute to the costs of this service. Employers must accept their responsibilities and agree to provide English language teaching for all employees. This is needed not only for Health and Safety purposes and general communications within the workforce but also for cohesion. As employers are often getting the advantage of migrant labour, it is only right that they should pay for at least some of the costs incurred.

#### THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY COHESION

52. It is clear to us that the policy and practice of community cohesion has greatly advanced over the last five years or so. The recent Commission on Integration and Cohesion report has helped to consolidate that progress. A great many local authorities now have community cohesion strategies and plans, often set within the wider partnership context of sustainable community strategies. Such strategies have been adopted across the political spectrum and by voluntary and private sector agencies and are succeeding in breaking down barriers, misunderstanding and trust. It is essential, in our view, that this progress—and the political consensus—is maintained and built upon with an even greater level of commitment and resources.

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### Memorandum by the Local Government Association

#### 1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Local Government Association (LGA) promotes better local government. It works with and for member authorities to realize a shared vision of local government that enables local people to shape a distinctive and better future for their locality and its communities. The LGA aims to put councils at the heart of the drive to improve public services and to work with government to ensure that the policy, legislative and financial context in which they operate, supports that objective.

#### 1.2 *LGA work on cohesion and migration*

- The LGA is represented on a number of key government groups set up to discuss the impact of recent migration, including the Migration Impacts Forum and National Migration Group.
- We have initiated an extensive research programme on migration. This has produced an influential preliminary report scoping the difficulties in estimating local populations from current national statistics and providing a preliminary description of the current impacts on cohesion and public services. The programme continues to work with the ONS regarding the national statistics issues and is developing work on current and future impacts on localities and their services.
- The LGA works closely with the IDEa in relation to its work on cohesion and migration and would like to endorse the IDEa response also submitted to this Inquiry.
- The LGA has produced a range of key publications with key national partners on cohesion—see appendix 1 for further information.

## 2. SUMMARY

- The LGA believes that local authorities have a key role in building and promoting community cohesion and integration.
- We feel that central and local government need to continue to have an open dialogue about challenges in relation to migration and cohesion so that the solutions developed reflect local circumstances.
- We believe that in the main councils have successfully risen to the challenge in responding to large flows of in migration. However, funding has not followed actual numbers and in some areas services are becoming very stretched.
- Although there are clear and welcome economic benefits from migration, we welcome further work with government to address issues around population data. This would develop a more effective understanding of the composition of present and future communities; assist with the planning and targeting of services; and explore appropriate levels of funding for local service delivery and local work on cohesion.
- As gaining English language skills are a key tool in promoting the integration of migrants, we have concerns about the proposed move of funding away from new arrivals.

## 3. LGA RESPONSE

### Q1. *The effect of recent inward migration on community cohesion and public concerns about this effect*

3.1 *Estimating the scale and impacts of migration at the local level*, the report commissioned by the Local Government Association from the Institute of Community Cohesion (ICoCo) and based on submissions from more than 100 authorities, has identified that:

- The officially-calculated total population has significantly increased and in addition, there are many more short term migrants coming for 1–12 months that aren't counted.
- In-migrants are not homogeneous. Some come to work, some to study, some to retire, some travel as family groups, some come to join family already here and some travel alone.
- However, councils show a broad consensus about the nature and challenges resulting from recent international migration.
- Evidence clearly shows that the effects of recent inward migration are geographically widespread. This is a national issue.
- Substantial numbers of European migrants go to towns and rural areas with little previous experience of international migration, alongside significant movement into places such as London boroughs and areas in the South East.

3.2 Migration can have an impact on cohesion both where recent migration, especially from A8 countries, affects areas not used to population change and where the host community (including settled migrant populations) can feel threatened by new arrivals. Tensions and levels of conflict can depend on, for example, the extent to which migrants are perceived to be “competing” for jobs with the host community, the extent to services are being stretched across larger numbers of people and previous local experience of migration.

3.3 We believe that, in the main, councils have successfully risen to the challenge in responding to the inevitable pressures that sudden population increase has brought. There are many examples of good practice across councils and agencies in tackling any cohesion issues. However, we are concerned that funding has not followed this population increase.

3.4 The inaccuracies in the data on recent migration (see response to Q3 below) can make it difficult to have a properly informed national and local discussion about the real impacts of migration and therefore to rebut some of the claims by anti-immigration groups. This may have adverse effects on community cohesion.

### Q2. *The role, responsibilities and actions of different bodies on community cohesion and migration, including those of local and central government and of employers*

#### The role of local government

3.5 The LGA believes that local authorities have a key role in building and promoting community cohesion and integration, for these reasons:

- Community cohesion must be underpinned by a shared local vision, developed by local people and partners. As a result of their community leadership role, local authorities are best placed to start developing this vision through consultation throughout their communities.
- Local authorities are best placed to ensure that all sections of their communities feel that part of their identity stems from belonging to their local area as well as their faith, race, age group etc.

- Strong and successful local partnerships are key to building consensus and reaching out to the whole of communities. Local authorities can be a focal point for the range of local organisations working on cohesion in order to develop an agreed, coherent local strategy and approach. As local leaders, they also co-ordinate key strategic partnerships such as Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreements that are key mechanisms for tackling a cross-cutting issue such as cohesion.
- Leadership is essential in building cohesion at a local level. Local authorities have a democratic mandate from all of the local community and are accountable and visible to local people.
- Many people’s experience of local organisations is in their service delivery role. Through “mainstreaming” cohesion issues, councils are increasingly designing and delivering services with cohesion in mind. Ensuring that no-one in our communities feels discriminated against in how services are delivered is essential in building a sense of common citizenship and belonging.

3.6 Delivering integration in the future must be based on a recognition that a range of well-established work undertaken in local authorities is supporting integration and cohesion. Any future work must build on this strong foundation developed within local authorities.

#### Local authority actions on cohesion

3.7 There are many examples of good practice across councils and agencies in tackling cohesion issues—specific examples are given in the publications listed in Appendix 1. Areas of work can include:

- *Measuring cohesion:* Local authorities bring local partners together to develop a series of indicators that can provide a clear understanding of local cohesion challenges and can measure any changes in community tensions.
- *Conflict resolution:* Local authorities bring organisations together to monitor tension, to make community links with hard to reach groups and look at community mediation when appropriate. Local authorities bring local partners together to provide a co-ordinated response if there is an increase in community tension and to work together to aid community reassurance.
- *Working with faith communities:* Local authorities actively encourage projects which increase inter-faith understanding and cooperation and to ensure faith groups feel that they are key local partners.
- *Working with the media:* Local authorities can develop a communications strategy that looks at dispelling myths and stereotypes and promoting a positive picture of diversity.
- *Working with young people:* Young people need to have a sense of belonging, ownership and responsibility for their area. If young people are disenfranchised from mainstream society, this can reinforce divisions between different groups. Local authorities can ensure that young people have a bigger stake in local decision making and can also draw together local partners to ensure that there are sufficient local facilities that encourage cross cultural contact at all levels.
- *Local employer and service providers:* As major local employers and service providers, local authorities can impact on community relations by provide diversity awareness, race equality and community cohesion training and support for its own staff and encourage local partners to do the same.
- *Regional working:* 11 Regional Migration Partnerships across the UK are funded by the Home Office to promote community safety and cohesion through a multi-agency approach. This is partly achieved through facilitation of strategic co-ordination groups whose role includes monitoring the impact of migration on community cohesion and various activities specifically impacting upon cohesion.

#### The role of central government

3.8 Central and local government need to have an open dialogue about challenges and solutions and the freedoms or support needed by local authorities to foster cohesion and integration effectively. As each local area is unique in its demographic and social make-up, work on integration and cohesion needs to reflect particular local circumstances, rather than government using a “one size fits all” approach.

#### Central Government actions on cohesion

3.9 Work undertaken by central government can include:

- Central government, together with the local authority central bodies, can engage organisations at a national level in order to facilitate the difficult discussions needed around recent migration, Islamophobia and tackling extremism, isolation and racism.
- Government also has a role in ensuring that good practice is shared and can bring together people from across areas and regions to discuss issues and develop appropriate responses.

- Government can provide further targeted funding to facilitate local authority work on community cohesion. This needs to be flexible enough to be used to meet specific local needs, such as the recent Community Cohesion and Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder funding and should not divert from current funding streams.
- As well as large, national interventions, small scale, local initiatives are important in bringing about change and must be recognised and supported.
- Ensure that a cross-government rather than departmental response is provided.

*Q3. The effectiveness of local and central government action and expenditure in promoting community cohesion and responding to inward migration flows*

3.10 The section of the response focuses on issues around population data. This is key for understanding present and future communities, the effective planning and targeting of services and for national and local government funding of these services and the community infrastructure.

3.11 Councils, the National Statistician, the Governor of the Bank of England and Ministers across government departments share the view that current population estimates, nationally and locally, do not fully account for the impact of migration, especially with the increase in migrant worker from EU accession states since 2004.

3.12 The fact that migration is (using currently available methods) relatively difficult to measure is compounded by the fact that, for most of the last decade, it has been the major component of population change.

3.13 Estimates of international migration and its allocation to localities, are widely seen as the principal source of inaccuracy. This inadequacy has many facets but can be summarised as:

- Inappropriate definition—only those expressing the intention to stay for at least 12 months are counted, as noted above. Short term migration and “churn” is not picked up in the statistics but it is large.
- Inaccuracies in estimates at the national level.
- Inappropriate allocation of in-migrants to the local level.

3.14 Local authorities therefore need to use other sources of local data to help inform their understanding of their local population. No one source, on its own, is currently likely to provide an entirely accurate and comprehensive population estimate, especially as none of these is specifically designed to measure all migrants or all population, but are by-products of systems designed for other purposes. However, sources of local data might be enhanced to provide more pertinent data, at least for validating official population estimates and perhaps for integration in the estimation procedure. For more information on this subject, the LGA’s evidence to House of Lords Economic Affairs Select Committee Inquiry on the Economic Impact of Immigration and Local Government Association response to the Treasury Select Committee Inquiry into Counting the Population, November 2007 are attached as Appendix 2 and 3 respectively.

3.15 As these population estimates are used by central government in the funding formulae to determine the allocation of the central grant amongst authorities, central grant does not adequately reflect the impact, nationally and locally, of migration. There are clear and welcome economic benefits from migration but tax and national insurance contributions from recent migration flow to the centre. Migration is placing demands on services and community infrastructure which are then not fully recognised in the funding formula.

3.16 In consequence, services are being stretched and some authorities feel they are unable to fully fund the pro-active work they would wish to undertake both with the host community (including settled migrant communities) and the new migrants. CLG’s cohesion fund will help with the latter.

3.17 In areas where migration inflows have been very marked according to local data and experience, but the additional increase in population has not been recognised in national statistics, there are concerns about whether the stretch that councils are achieving is sustainable. Additional resources are needed to address this stretch in services and the need to tailor services to new migrants’ needs, such as translation and English teaching. Without adequate funding, there may be an adverse effect on community cohesion.

#### Possible solutions

3.18 ONS plans for improvements in population statistics are welcome but they need accelerating. They currently estimate that it will take seven years. There are also short term steps that could improve matters by systemizing use of administrative data to check and adjust ONS estimates of local population. The LGA is now working with ONS to identify sources and approaches which might be used to improve the quality of local population statistics.

3.19 CLG could support this work by urging the key departments—DWP, Home Office, DCFS and DH—to support the plans and give them priority within their own departmental work plans and to contribute to the funding, estimated at £50 million in total.

3.20 In addition, as Lyons indicated, if we had a more locally based way of raising revenue for councils rather than central grants based on out of date population estimates, this might better reflect recent pressures on local authorities.

3.21 Estimating the scale and impacts of migration at the local level suggested a contingency fund where there are particular shorter term pressures on local services. This could be modelled on the extra funding for schools or the recently announced £50 million from CLG to address cohesion issues. The LGA requested £250 million as this represents 1% of the overall funding allocation and reflects an approximate 1% underestimate of actual population.

*Q4. The role of the English language as a tool in promoting the integration of migrants*

3.22 Estimating the scale and impacts of migration at the local level also noted the need for enhanced provision and funding of English as a Second Language (ESOL) to meet the increasing demand, as the costs of translation and interpretation and communicating in emergencies are being picked up locally.

3.23 Many migrants over estimate their proficiency and face challenges of learning a new language with consequential impacts on information advice services. Problems over the provision of ESOL (stemming from a shortage of appropriate teachers and LSC funding rules) inhibit the progress that recent migrants can make in learning English.

3.24 As English language is a tool in promoting the integration of migrants, the LGA believes that there is also a need to provide new arrivals with English language training. Language skills are needed to ensure migrants are fully able to contribute to the British economy and to ensure that they are able to access local services. In addition, access to language classes for new arrivals is key to addressing cohesion to avoid language acting as a barrier to a successful introduction into British life and affecting relations between all groups of people living in the local area.

3.25 The LGA therefore has concerns about the recent DIUS consultation that will move funding to those who have made a long-term commitment to live in Britain, rather than an equal focus on new arrivals.

*Q5. The impact of recent migration on local communities, including the impact on housing, education, health care and other public services*

3.26 It is important to note that the LGA is keenly aware that migration has many positive impacts. Some authorities have specifically encouraged migration to tackle imbalances in the local population and workforce profiles in order to sustain local businesses and fill hard-to-fill occupations.

3.27 However, the Estimating the scale and impacts of migration at the local level did include reference to the following impacts on local services:

- *Children's Services:* The impact of "churn" in schools can involve the problems with the numeracy and literacy of young children, the disruption caused by mid-term arrivals and the lack of records and assessments. Local children's services can find it difficult to investigate and monitor transient families.
- *Community Safety:* migrants are more likely to be victims of crime than perpetrators but there are some offences with a significant incidence amongst new groups such as absence of driving documentation, non-use of seat belts and drink driving.
- *Health:* impacts depend on the nature of migrant population but issues highlighted include inappropriate use of accident and emergency services instead of GPs.

3.28 In particular, specific housing issues were raised in this and other work:

- Most migrant workers live in private rented sector housing because they are not eligible for social housing and cannot afford to buy their own properties. Whilst most landlords take their management responsibilities seriously, there remain a small minority who continue to offer poor quality housing to some of the most vulnerable people in society—including migrants. Many migrants may live in overcrowded properties in a poor state of repair with attendant fire or other health and safety problems.
- There are also emerging housing market issues (eg sharp price rises in cheaper properties for buy to let), with ripple effects to neighbouring authorities.
- LACORS—the national local government organisation dealing with regulation and enforcement—has taken a keen interest in this issue and has been liaising with the Gangmaster Licensing Authority (GLA) to ensure migrant workers are not mistreated. Information how local authorities can work with GLA compliance officers on sub-standard accommodation for migrant workers is available at [www.lacors.gov.uk](http://www.lacors.gov.uk).

- LACORS has also surveyed English local authorities to establish how many authorities were experiencing housing issues linked to migrant workers. Most cited the complexity of the problem and whilst councils are generally aware of their enforcement powers under the Act, many find these difficult to take forward as migrant workers are often reluctant to complain and when they do, are simply moved on by their landlord.
- LACORS will continue to monitor this issue and to collaborate with the GLA and local authorities.

#### LGA Next Steps

3.29 The immediate impacts of recent increases in migration have been urgent and therefore the key focus for council activity. Councils are only just beginning to consider longer term impacts, for example, the population projections, the cohesion requirements for future diverse communities and the longer term planning needs for all public services and community infrastructure.

3.30 Therefore, the LGA is currently scoping an ambitious research programme with CLG, the IDeA, Research Councils and councils to explore in-depth the current impacts, including on population, services and community cohesion and to help councils to anticipate future population changes and how they can work with partners to best address these. As part of this, we have a conference planned for 30 January 2008 with Ministerial participation.

#### Q6. *Actions to take forward the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's recommendations relating to migration*

3.31 In response to this question, the LGA would like to endorse the IDeA's response to this Inquiry which addresses the key service impacts, key operational issues for local government and the future opportunities, as evidenced through its joint work with CLG on the toolkit and peer support for councils.

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#### **Memorandum by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham**

The Council has focused its response around the terms of reference of the inquiry, as follows:

##### *1. The effect of recent inward migration on community cohesion, and public concerns about this effect*

Barking and Dagenham has the fastest changing demography in the country. This is not simply as a result of migration from outside the UK, but also resulting from the move eastwards of multicultural London in pursuit of (relatively) affordable housing to buy.

In 1991, only 6.8% of the borough's population was non-white: this had risen to nearly 15% by 2001, and is now, it is estimated, approximately 25%.

PLASC data provided by the Department for Children Schools and Families shows that Barking and Dagenham had the greatest percentage increase in the country of pupils whose first language was not English between 2003 and 2006: an increase of 10 percentage points, from 14 to 24%.

This pace of change in a borough which had previously seen itself as removed from the challenges of urban living, has led to strong, yet unfounded, concerns amongst many white residents that public services disproportionately favour black minority ethnic residents as well as new arrivals to the UK.

While members of BME communities are generally optimistic and positive about living in the borough, white residents were pessimistic in a recent survey, seeing the area as "getting worse". Some reported that they aimed to leave the borough as a result.

There are therefore significant implications for community cohesion as a result of migration into the borough, whether from outside or inside the UK.

##### *2. The role, responsibilities and actions of different bodies on community cohesion and migration*

The Council clearly understands that it has a number of roles in relation to community cohesion and migration:

- *Service provider*: the Council has a legal obligation to provide services to those who are entitled to receive them. Clearly, the more people living in the borough who have this entitlement, the harder the task of matching demand and need, if resourcing does not follow the pattern of new arrivals.
- *Community leader*: the Local Government White Paper, *Strong and Prosperous Communities*, (2006) proposes changes which will enable local government to "use its role as community leader to champion the interests of those who are disadvantaged and discriminated against". The Council has an important role, as community leader, in ensuring that all those living in the borough are able to live free from fear of discrimination.

- *Wellbeing*: the Local Government Act 2000 gives local authority the power to do anything which they consider will achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the area. This Council believes that the promotion of community cohesion is included within this definition.
- *Race equality*: the Council has specific legal duties, both as an employer, and also as a public authority, in relation to ensuring and promoting race equality.

3. *The effectiveness of local and central government action and expenditure in promoting community cohesion and responding to inward migration flows, with particular regard to:*

- *Areas that have experienced rapid increases in new inward migration.*
- *Areas that have a lack of experience of diversity.*
- *Areas where new migrant communities mix with existing settled migrant communities.*

The second scenario most closely represents Barking and Dagenham's experience: while change has been rapid, there has not been a sudden influx of one non-UK community, as has been the case elsewhere.

The Council has worked with the rest of the Local Strategic Partnership to develop a community cohesion strategy, based on extensive local engagement, which articulates the main actions it can and will take to promote community cohesion. It is confident that its actions will be effective because they are based on a detailed assessment of local needs and concerns. Actions include:

- Delivering excellent services which are most important to local people, thus removing cause for antagonism between communities due to perceived competition for resources.
- Demonstrating that it is a listening Council which responds to people's concerns and needs.
- Giving people opportunities to influence decision-making and get involved being part of the solution in improving the local community, via our new, borough-wide neighbourhood management service.
- Demonstrating that improvements are happening at a local level, where people can see the evidence for themselves, again, via neighbourhood management.
- Creating and supporting the development of opportunities for people from different backgrounds to come together (encouragingly, local research demonstrates that people are keen to see the provision of such opportunities).

The Council would argue that central government has not responded as effectively as possible to inward migration flows, as set out in more detail at 5, below.

4. *The role of the English language as a tool in promoting the integration of migrants*

This Council believes strongly that English language skills are an essential component in enabling new arrivals in the borough to integrate in the community, and has been alarmed to see a reduction in government funding (via the LSC) for this important activity. The Council has been encouraged to see more positive recent announcements in relation to funding for English as an Additional Language and looks forward to these being followed by appropriate funding improvements.

5. *The impact of recent migration on local communities, including the impact on housing, education, health care and other public services*

A major issue in relation to inward migration is the disparity between official population statistics and the actual numbers of population in local authorities. This exacerbates the impact on local public services.

The Council believes that the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has undercounted the borough's population significantly. The ONS data for the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham's population in recent years is as follows:

2001–02	165,851
2002–03	167,302
2003–04	165,862
2004–05	164,572
2005–06	164,521

These statistics suggest that the borough's population has actually fallen by 1,330 since 2001–02. In that same time period, a range of other statistics suggests that the borough's population has been rising. For example:

- *National insurance data* in Barking and Dagenham shows that there were 2,600 registrations in 2004–05 and 3,200 registrations in 2005–06. This compares to in-migration figures from ONS of 1,906 and 1,910 for the respective periods, suggesting a significant undercount for the ONS data;

- **PLASC data** from 2003 to 2006 demonstrates that the proportion of white British pupils in schools fell from 72.2% to 61.6%, suggesting significant migration into the borough (the school roll increased by 760 in that period). The percentage of black African pupils increased from 8% in 2003 to 15% in 2006;
- since 1999, the total people on the *electoral roll* has grown from 115,000 to over 119,000 in 2004/05; and
- the number of people on *GPs registers* in 2003 was just under 170,000, by 2006 it was in excess of 176,000.

None of these datasets on their own provide sufficiently robust data to estimate the borough's population. The ONS, and Department for Communities and Local Government from which the funding is provided, argue that the ONS data is the most accurate source of information available.

However, all of the data for Barking and Dagenham, as shown above, with the exception of the ONS estimates, show that the overwhelming trend is that borough's population is rising. Against this backdrop, the ONS data increasingly seems to lack credibility.

The key implication for local authorities of this inaccuracy is that population statistics feed into the grant that the Council receives from central Government (via population projections), with approximately £500,000 received by this Council for every 1,000 resident population. If the borough's population was undercounted by 10,000, this would mean the Council is receiving at least £5,000,000 less grant than it is entitled to per annum.

Many of the implications of population increases in terms of service delivery will be invisible, until the increase becomes so great as to provoke a crisis. Greater and greater weights of rubbish will continue to be collected. However, a more accurate method of recording population and of relating grant funding to it, would ensure that the risk of crises occurring is greatly reduced.

In 2006 London Councils commissioned work by the LSE to study how local communities are affected by population movement (*Fairer funding for councils with population mobility*). The Council endorses the findings of that report. The issue of public assistance costs for migrants with no other means of support is a particularly significant one in this borough.

Mental Health is a particular area of concern as a result of changing demographics. People from BME communities (a) are greatly over-represented within those using hospital and specialist mental health care generally, (b) experience different healthcare outcomes compared to other ethnic groups eg—BME clients receive more and high dose psychiatric drugs and are more likely to be involved in control and restraint and (c) far fewer BME clients get easy access to mother tongue counselling and psychotherapy than would be expected for their proportion in the population. All London mental health services, particularly in the Barking area, are reporting step change demand for post-traumatic stress disorder in the full range, often relating to adult survivors of abuse, torture, family separation in relation to war zones etc. Some of this talking therapy is highly specialist in nature—for example we have developed intercultural therapy. More and more people of Eastern European origin are coming to our attention via their homelessness, sofa-surfing and mental health needs/welfare needs. We are observing solicitors acting for asylum seekers/refugees awaiting repatriation, raising mental welfare as a human rights issue and demanding that we provide treatment prior to any deportation.

The Council is encouraged that work is underway by the ONS to improve the quality of their statistics, by looking at extending samples within the International Passenger Survey (which informs migration estimates).

However, attempts to address the implications of new arrivals saying, on arrival, that they are going to settle in one area, but going somewhere else, give this Council more concern. This has been done in London by taking the ethnic make-up of London boroughs in the 2001 census, and using this as a way of distributing international migration across London. This raises serious concerns for Barking and Dagenham, as the data above, particularly the PLASC data, demonstrates that the ethnic make-up of the borough is fast changing, and is almost unrecognisable since 2001.

Work by ONS also does not take into account short term migration, indeed, the DCLG grant calculation does not take into account any short term migration. This is an increasing funding issue for areas such as London since the accession of a number of Eastern European states to the EU in 2004.

Further, the grant figures currently have no mechanism for addressing the funding implications of the estimated 300,000 to 500,000 illegal immigrants in the country.

A final concern is that the grant does use "population projections" when calculating three year settlements. However, it uses historic data rather than data projected forward based on, for example, new housing developments. This penalises boroughs with an expanding population, even if the Councils are supporting the Government's Building Sustainable Communities agenda, as is the case in the Thames Gateway and Barking and Dagenham.

The scale of this increase can be demonstrated by a recent study which has forecast an increase of 11,595 additional primary aged pupils over the next 10 years: this is an additional 55.21 forms of entry. Planned new housing developments in the borough are the largest factor contributing to this high demand. Over the same period, 2,875 secondary aged pupils, or over 19 forms of entry are forecast.

In conclusion, while the Council supports the work that the Office for National Statistics is doing to improve the country's population statistics, the work currently underway has addressed very few of the critical issues that Councils up and down the country face.

#### 6. *Actions to take forward the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's recommendations relating to migration*

The Council welcomes recommendations in *Our Shared Future* in relation to migration, specifically:

- The creation of a national body to manage migration.
- The provision of English classes for all new migrants.
- That ONS should co-ordinate migration statistics with the new Migration Impacts Forum.

The Council, with its partners, is strongly committed to a challenging programme of work designed to build community cohesion in Barking and Dagenham. The recommendations of *Our Shared Future* will support this work, but needs to go further, to address the concerns raised above.

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### **Memorandum by the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham**

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hammersmith & Fulham is an inner London borough with a high annual turnover in population. The Borough has strong historic links with the Eastern European community going back many decades and has, therefore, attracted large numbers of eastern Europeans since 1989, the numbers having increased significantly since 2003.

Eastern European, and particularly Polish, migrants make a valuable contribution to the local economy. Many, if not most, of recent visitors are employed in jobs requiring low to moderate skill levels—according to Home Office statistics almost half are employed in the hotel and catering trades. There is no evidence that they are having a negative impact on the local labour market, as many of the jobs they are taking up do have significant vacancy rates. There is evidence, however, that a minority of new A8 migrants are arriving unprepared for life in a foreign country and unable to find employment and accommodation. Some have alcohol problems and have boosted the local population of street drinkers. They tend to be younger and more prone to anti-social behaviour than the more traditional street drinkers in the Borough.

This minority of new migrants, who find themselves unemployed and living on the street or in squats, have been placing a burden on public services. The street drinkers were tying up the resources of the police Safer Neighbourhood Teams, in some areas, which were having to deal with complaints of anti-social behaviour and public drunkenness. These problems have been significantly alleviated, however, as a result of a joint initiative between the Council and a Polish charity, although funding for this initiative has now ended.

Homeless migrants have been placing greater burdens on local day centres funded by the Council and central Government. The largest local homelessness project has recruited Polish speaking workers to deal with the increased demand from new Polish migrants unable to find work or accommodation.

The additional burden on local public services and community organisations is compounded by the inadequate migration data currently collected by the government, which greatly understates the numbers of migrants moving through the Borough.

The data does not even seek to capture short-term migration (those staying less than 12 months) yet these migrants will make use of public services, particularly those that are unable to find work.

The Office for National Statistics has, this year, changed the way in which the migrant population is calculated, which has led to a reduction in the estimated population of Hammersmith and Fulham of almost 9,000 people. Bizarrely, the revised "official" figures suggest that there was less overseas migration to the Borough in 2005–06 than before A8 accession. In terms of net gains the new data suggests a figure of only 1,180 compared to a figure more than twice as high, 2,580, in 2001–02. Given the obvious substantial increase in the numbers of Polish migrants in the Borough over recent years, this reduction in the estimate is clearly wrong and it will result in a significant shortfall in the Council's Formula Grant from this year. The Council is facing an increasing burden on its own services, and on those provided by local voluntary sector agencies which it funds, as a result of increased migration from Eastern Europe, yet the Government's inadequate and inaccurate data collection on the local migrant population will result in cuts to the Authority's annual budget.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Hammersmith and Fulham is a small and densely populated west London borough with a population of 171,400 people (Office of National Statistics [ONS] Mid Year Estimate 2006). It is a popular place to live and work with over 70% of local people satisfied with the area (2006 Best Value national survey). The Borough offers a range of cultural attractions in the three town centres of Hammersmith, Shepherds Bush and Fulham and on the Thames-side. It has a net revenue budget of £180 million.

1.2 Between 2001 and 2006 the population is estimated to have grown by a moderate 1.2%, which is a lower increase than Inner London (4.0%) or Greater London (2.6%). The Greater London Authority's 2006 projections indicate that the Borough's population will grow at a steady rate in future years, but these projections will be revised in the light of recent ONS revisions to population estimates. The current data suggest a high projection of 184,800 in 2011 and 189,000 in 2016 and a low projection of 181,000 in 2011 and 183,000 in 2016. Over the next ten years, the largest percentage population increases are projected in the 40 to 54 age group, followed by the 5 to 19 age group. This growth in population and the changing age distribution will place new demands on local public services such as education, health and housing.

1.3 The Borough has a relatively young and ethnically diverse population with a higher proportion of young adults aged 25–39 (37%) than London and the rest of the country. 27% of households consist of a single person under pensionable age and only 22% of households contain dependent children. Just over one in five residents are from non-white ethnic backgrounds, 5% were born in Ireland and there is a well-established Polish community. Some ninety different languages are spoken in local schools. London's place as a world city means that the Borough will continue to be home for many diverse groups of people, of different nationality, ethnic origin, religion, and culture.

1.4 Hammersmith and Fulham has a very visible presence of Eastern European nationals on its streets. By far the greatest majority are Polish. This reflects the fact that the Borough has a long and proud history of Polish migration to the area and a wide range of Polish businesses and services have developed in Hammersmith and Fulham as a result.

1.5 The Polish Cultural Centre, within sight of Hammersmith Town Hall, is the largest Polish cultural institution outside Poland. The close historical tie between Poland and Hammersmith and Fulham is demonstrated by the fact that there is a Polish eagle on the Council's mayoral regalia. The Council is proud of the established Eastern European community, which is an essential part of the fabric of the Borough's life, and welcomes the beneficial contribution of the new accession state nationals to the local economy and to the social and cultural diversity of the area.

## 2. THE IMPACT OF RECENT POLISH MIGRATION ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES

2.1 These historical ties, along with the various Polish businesses, services and community organisations, act as a magnet for new Polish migrants arriving in the Capital. Since the 2004 EU accession of the eight Eastern European (A8) states, minibuses have arrived in the Borough on a regular basis from all parts of Eastern Europe. Regrettably, this migration, whilst making a very welcome contribution to the Borough, has also carried with it a number of associated problems. In 2006 the Broadway Centre (a local homelessness project) recruited some Polish-speaking volunteers to help with the engagement of clients at their day centre. The Broadway funds an employment project to assist people who have found it hard to get work and this project has been seeing an increasing number of Polish migrants.

2.2 The area has become a locus for people seeking casual non-registered employment. Last year police estimated that around 150 new people were arriving in the Borough each week. Until a year ago, "gangmasters" turned up daily in the early morning to pick their workers from those 50–70 assembled in King Street, Hammersmith. This happened within sight of the town hall and led to many complaints from local residents and businesses. Due to a dispersal order, issued by the council, and the focused attention of the police, the public nuisance created by congregations of men hanging about for long periods on street corners has now been reduced. Although less visible this activity still continues, albeit in a more dispersed manner.

2.3 Many of the new migrants resort to sleeping in squats in large numbers or, if employed in the building trade, sleeping on site. An eviction from one property in Hammersmith pushed 30 people into short term rough sleeping behind Marks & Spencer's—to subsequently disperse slowly over the next few days.

2.4 Earlier in 2006, the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea and the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham commissioned a joint strategic review of rough sleeper services which revealed that 150 clients of the Broadway Centre were Polish and that 78% had no usable English. This equates to approximately one third of the clients attending the centre. The evidence at the Broadway Centre suggests that people unable to find work are resorting to street drinking. The number of A8 clients using the Broadway Centre in Shepherds Bush who have been verified as sleeping rough in the Borough increased from 11 to 38 from 2005 to 2006. Most of those people seen by the Broadway Centre have alcohol issues and some have mental health problems. Most would have come to the UK with these problems and more are likely to drift into rough sleeping if unable to find work.

2.5 A year or so ago, street drinking by this group was regarded as the most troublesome and the most likely to result in anti-social behaviour and complaints from the public. A street count on one day in August 2006 revealed 106 people street drinking, 38 of whom were identified as of Eastern European origin. Over the course of the past year, with the introduction of a borough wide controlled drinking zone and a unique partnership arrangement between the Council and the Polish charity, the Barka Foundation, this problem has been greatly reduced. Over the past six months a total of 44 Eastern European street drinkers have been assisted to move off the streets of Hammersmith and into Barka community facilities back in their native Poland. Paragraph 3.6 elaborates on this initiative, which has alleviated a potential threat to community cohesion in the Hammersmith area.

### 3. THE IMPACT ON PUBLIC SERVICES

3.1 Migrants from the A8 countries access the full range of local authority services. Examples are set out in this section of particular service impacts. A serious concern for Hammersmith and Fulham is that the current local government funding regime does not adequately recognise the demands placed on the council from A8 migrants. If this situation is not rectified it may mean the loss of certain services or a reduction in the quality of the service, where it is coping with demand it is not resourced to meet. This, in turn, could impact on the wider population and affect community cohesion.

3.2 Population data is a key driver of the amount of government grant support that local authorities receive through the Local Government Finance Settlement. Our view, as expressed in the section on data improvements, is that the current data provided by the Office for National Statistics has failed to keep pace with the population movements associated with the A8 countries. No allowance has been made for the impact of short-term migrants, those that reside in Britain for less than a year, whilst the data on inward and outward migration appears to be flawed. The net result is that government grant support has failed to keep pace with the demand for public services. This could result in negative outcomes for community cohesion if migrant communities are seen as a drain on local public resources.

#### *Education and Schools*

3.3 Schools data shows a degree of increase in Polish pupil numbers 2002-07, though not of the same scale as increases in numbers of voters or NI registrations. Among nursery and primary schools, where the great majority of pupils live within the Borough, there has been an increase from 114 in 2002 to 152 in 2006, a 33% increase. Although this is a significant proportional increase, numerically the increase is relatively small. This bears out the assumption that most recent economic migrants from Poland have been single men rather than family units, although this may change over time.

3.4 Data is available for 2007 on the numbers of pupils in Hammersmith and Fulham schools speaking any of the A8 languages. The totals are 8 children in nurseries, 220 in primaries, 241 in secondaries and 3 in special schools. The vast majority of these pupils (89%) are Polish-speaking and a breakdown of the data relating to Polish school children in the Borough, over the past five years, is set out in the following table.

**Table 1**

#### NUMBERS OF POLISH-SPEAKING PUPILS AT BOROUGH SCHOOLS 2002–07

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	<i>Overall % of pupils who live in the Borough</i>
Nursery	0	2	2	6	3	5	98
Primary	114	111	107	138	149	187	95
Secondary	192	186	191	197	198	222	44

*Source:* LBHF Children's Services Dept

#### *Homelessness and Advice*

3.5 Hammersmith and Fulham received a grant from CLG to address issues relating to A8 migrants. It was used to deliver an intervention for A8 street populations who were engaging in rough sleeping, street drinking and begging but who were not entitled to interventions or public funding. Many of these individuals were identified as highly vulnerable. The Council has been working with the Barka Foundation, a Polish social inclusion charity, as a partner in a six month pilot working through the Broadway Centre and the Upper Room, which helps with IT training, employment, legal advice and documentation. The pilot has gone well and has now ended. The Council feels that it is vital that such a support initiative is continued on a wider geographical basis with the participation of other Boroughs and/or the GLA or London Councils to avoid one Borough becoming a magnet for migrants.

3.6 As well as the Broadway Centre and the Upper Room, which the Council provides funding for, the East European Advice Centre is also in the Borough and is another agency which the Council supports. It has been inundated with the demands of the growing group of East European migrants that visit to seek advice and help. Being a London wide resource that just happens to be based in the Borough, however, only a relatively small proportion of its clients are Borough residents and so, again, there is a need for wider collective funding and service provision across a wider geographical area.

#### 4. THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPROVING DATA ON MIGRATION

4.1 Hammersmith & Fulham has a long-standing Polish community, second in numbers only to the adjacent Borough of Ealing, so it is natural that large numbers of Polish migrants, following accession in 2004, would come here. The strong impression from daily life in this area is that this has undoubtedly been the case. This has not, however, been fully reflected in official migration data.

4.2 There is no way of properly measuring A8 migration, or indeed any international migration. The sample used in the International Passenger Survey (IPS) is too small (the total national sample in 2005 was only 2,965 in-migrants and 781 out-migrants), and the same is the case for the Labour Force Survey (LFS), which is now being used to determine geographical distributions of in-migrants and where data is only available for groupings of local authorities.

4.3 Furthermore, official estimates measure only long-term migrants, ie those staying for a year or more. Short-term migrants, of which there are many within the A8 flows, are completely missing. Workers' Registration Scheme data for Hammersmith & Fulham for the period May 2004 to March 2007 indicates that 37% of A8 migrants registering were intending to stay for less than 12 months, so that over one third of A8 migrants would be missing from official counts. Short term migrants, of course, still use public services.

4.4 The Office for National Statistics (ONS) recognises these deficiencies and has been working on their improvement. The necessary improvements, however, have not been fully implemented and an interim solution has been devised by switching from IPS to a combination of IPS and LFS, which substitutes one set of inadequate data for another and there is still no measurement of short-term migration.

4.5 The net result of this change has been a disaster for H&F in that, as a result of adjustments to estimates of international migration, the population of the Borough in mid 2006 is estimated to be 8,500 fewer than the previous estimate for 2005. The adjustment to previous Mid Year Estimates 2002-05 has resulted in a net loss to the Borough over that period of 8,900 people, caused by reductions in estimated in-migration of 4,400 and increases in estimated out-migration of 5,400. This, in turn, will have a potentially disastrous impact on the Council's finances when the Government's 2004-based Sub-National Population Projections are released, which will be used to determine Formula Grant.

4.6 The absurdity of the figures is that the revised official data now suggests that overseas migration to the Borough was less in 2005-06 (a total of 5,680) than before A8 accession (between 6,600 and 7,000 a year in the 2001-04 period). In terms of net gains the new data suggests a figure of only 1,180 compared to a figure which is more than twice as high, 2,580, in 2001-02. This is plainly wrong in the context of the recent wave of A8 migration.

4.7 The main indicators of A8 migration are National Insurance (NI) registrations and data from the Workers Registration Scheme. Since 2004, 4,330 A8 workers have registered for NI in H&F and 4,080 have registered on the WRS. This can be contrasted with the fact that there were only 200 NI registrations from A8 countries in 2002-03, so we know that there has been a very substantial increase in A8 migration. Yet in the latest population estimates by ONS the net gain to the Borough due to international migration for 2005-06 is estimated to be at the same level as pre-accession, in the years 2001-03.

4.8 Among London Boroughs, Hammersmith & Fulham ranks 5th highest in numbers registering on WRS between May 2004 and June 2007 and 12th on NI registrations. In the ONS estimates of international in-migrants 2005-06, however, Hammersmith & Fulham ranks 14th and in terms of net international migrants as a % of total population, Hammersmith & Fulham ranks as low as 19th among London Boroughs.

4.9 The gap may indeed be even wider than this. NI and WRS data has known limitations. Not everybody registers—the self employed for example are not required to register for WRS, and of course dependants are not registered in either scheme. An even greater drawback may be that the place of initial registration may not reflect current place of work or residence. A person registering in Westminster, for example, may actually soon after be living or working in Hammersmith & Fulham. So it may well be that registration data may under-count numbers for this reason, as well as the fact that not everyone registers at all in the first place.

4.10 The indications are, therefore, that for the migrants that ONS purports to measure, ie those staying for 12 months or more, the estimates are likely to be erroneous. Furthermore, there is a large number of migrants staying for shorter periods who are not measured at all.

4.11 As well as reductions in estimated in-migration, ONS has increased the number of estimated international out-migrants so that the Borough has the 7th highest figure among the London Boroughs: in terms of out-migrants, as a % of total population, Hammersmith & Fulham ranks 4th. This is not so much

based on hard data but on a regression model using the 2001 Census. There is no common sense reason for supposing that 5,400 more people have left the Borough over the 2002–05 period than was previously estimated. So here again ONS estimates are likely to be erroneous.

4.12 The above is a demonstration of the fact that although ONS are working to improve estimates of migration, these improvements are by no means fully worked through. The recent revisions are an inadequate interim solution which still produces deficient data and the application of which has had a major negative economic impact on some local authorities, of which Hammersmith & Fulham is one.

4.13 This loss of funding can have a negative impact on community cohesion, if local residents equate the loss of services with inward migration. The lack of adequate data on short term migration also makes it difficult to plan for the needs of new migrants and to prepare communities for their arrival.

## 5. FURTHER LOCAL ACTION

5.1 The Council is developing further action locally, some of which has been informed by the recommendations of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion. A recent review of the Council's funding of local voluntary and community groups, for example, acknowledged the Commission's recommendation that funding should be targeted at inclusive community organisations rather than those that aim to serve single ethnic or faith community groups. The Council has also recognised the Commission's recommendation that resources should be directed at teaching English to new migrants rather than into translation and interpretation services. One of the outcomes of the Council's funding review has been to redirect funding from a local translation and interpretation service.

5.2 To address the lack of data on new migrants, the Council has commissioned consultants to conduct local research into the extent to which local Polish migrants use local services, what their circumstances are and what their experience of the Borough has been. This research will conclude by the end of February and will provide valuable information to the Authority as to the current situation. It will not, however, address the lack of adequate population data being collected on an ongoing basis and this needs to be addressed by the ONS and central Government.

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## Memorandum by the London Borough of Hillingdon

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The London Borough of Hillingdon is the western most borough in Greater London. Its 42 square miles makes it London's second largest borough. It is home to a diverse population, representing a vast range of cultures and nationalities. The borough was formed in 1965 from the Municipal Borough of Uxbridge, Hayes and Harlington Urban District, Ruislip-Northwood Urban District and Yiewsley and West Drayton Urban District of Middlesex.

1.2 Strategically, Hillingdon is the "Gateway to London" and as the home of Heathrow Airport, it is also the world's foremost gateway to the UK. Hillingdon's population has increased considerably in the past few years and this figure is expected to continue to rise. As it grows, the borough's population is expected to become more ethnically diverse.

1.3 Due to its proximity of the world's busiest international airport, Hillingdon receives a diverse range of migrants and faces some unique challenges. We are therefore ideally placed to contribute to this enquiry with regards to the effectiveness and expenditure of local government in promoting community cohesion and responding to inward migration.

1.4 Of particular relevance, The London Borough of Hillingdon statutorily acts as the "corporate parent" for more unaccompanied asylum seeker children than any other borough. We also currently provide for a large number of asylum care leavers who are not eligible for specific grants because they have exhausted all appeals on their asylum applications.

1.5 In this written evidence we would like to draw attention to the responsibilities of local governments in caring for and integrating unaccompanied asylum seeker children. We will explain the importance of the services that local councils provide for integrating these most vulnerable of arrivals, the inadequacy of current Government funding and also the effects that the current funding arrangement may have on community cohesion.

## 2. A CHANGING POPULATION

2.1 Much like other areas of the UK, Hillingdon has seen an increase in migration from the eight Central and Eastern Europe countries since their citizens gained the right to work in the UK after accession to the European Union. The level of settlement of people from the A8 countries in Hillingdon has been relatively high for an outer London Borough. This can be attributed to the location of Heathrow Airport, the favourable local economy and our proximity to Slough which has also seen considerable migration.

2.2 What is particularly unique about Hillingdon, however, is the amount of unaccompanied asylum seeker children that the council statutorily acts as the “corporate parent” for once they arrive in the UK through Heathrow Airport.

2.3 Hillingdon also has a statutory obligation to provide services for approximately 100 asylum care leavers who are not eligible for specific grants as they have exhausted all appeals on their asylum applications.

2.4 Migration has worked in Hillingdon and has benefited our borough. The council, sometimes faced with considerable challenges, has successfully integrated new arrivals into our community. However, particularly with reference to child asylum seekers, integration requires appropriate funding and accurate planning and our integration reputation is now at risk because of lack of funding support from central government.

## 3. UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKER CHILDREN

3.1 Being the home to the UK’s national airport makes Hillingdon distinct from all other London boroughs with regards to the effect of unaccompanied asylum seeker children. Social services at Hillingdon council receive dozens of calls a week from the airport authorities asking them to collect unaccompanied children. Hillingdon also has two Asylum Detention Centres in its borders from which a significant number of referrals are received to undertake assessments of individuals seeking asylum who have been detained by Immigration but who are subsequently believed to be minors.

3.2 Hillingdon is currently responsible for providing services for over 1,000 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children—including accommodation, schooling and disability support.

3.3 For example, the number of asylum seeking children in care under 18 is equivalent to almost 50% of Hillingdon’s indigenous children’s social care caseload placing considerable demand for the limited number of foster care places. It is vital that a good service is provided to these most vulnerable of arrivals in order to integrate them into the local community. This is incredibly challenging for Hillingdon as the grant funding is not adequate to provide for staffing levels required to most effectively support such high numbers of Looked After Children (LAC) and Care Leavers.

3.4 Due to recent changes in funding arrangements, however, Hillingdon has been under increasing pressure in fulfilling this responsibility.

3.5 Changes in the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children Leaving Care Costs Grant in 2004 have detrimentally impacted on the London Borough of Hillingdon and our subsequent ability to deal with pressures associated with increasing numbers of arrivals in the UK. The local Authority is now paying over £5m each year to cover the shortfall in funding by central government.

3.6 Before 2004–05, local authorities that supported more than 44 asylum seeker care leavers aged between 18 and 24, received between £100 and £140 a week from the Department for Education & Skills (DFES) to provide support services for each additional leaver over the first 44. The national sum made available to ALL councils by the (then) DfES was £17 million.

3.7 In October 2005 and January 2006, it was announced these settlements would change to a flat grant of £100 a week for every additional asylum seeker care leaver over the first 25. Crucially, this new settlement would apply retrospectively and the national pot was reduced by some 35% to £11 million.

3.8 The impact of these settlement changes—and the fact it applied retrospectively—were that Hillingdon had to find an extra £1.6 million for the financial year 2004–05 which was not planned for. It also had to find £3.7 million in the financial year 2005–06 and there will also be an estimated on-going future budget impact of £4.8 million. Budgets in 2006–07 (and now in 2007–08) were set with above deficiencies in mind.

3.9 The costs of providing services under care leaving responsibilities in 2006–07 are around 24% of the national cost (falling on one authority). In effect, Hillingdon is being punished for efficiently carrying out the Government’s own policies on providing for asylum seeker care leavers and seeking to undertake it’s duties to UASC under the Children Acts 1989 & 2004 and the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.

#### 4. EXHAUSTED ALL APPEAL ASYLUM SEEKERS

4.1 At any one time Hillingdon provides for approximately 100 asylum care leavers who are not eligible for specific grants because the young people concerned have exhausted all appeals on their asylum applications. Hillingdon has a statutory obligation to provide these services.

4.2 Whilst Hillingdon meets its obligations under the Leaving Care Act, the cost of doing so falls disproportionately on the council taxpayer due to the operation of the grant regime and the sheer numbers involved in what is a local phenomenon. Based on a survey in 2006, our shortfall funded by local taxpayers was £4.8m a year whereas, for Croydon (which is the gateway for Gatwick Airport) the shortfall is likely to be around £0.8 million.

4.3 The costs to Hillingdon in caring for these exhausted all appeals asylum seekers comes to between £1 million and £1.5 million a year.

4.4 The Home Office has failed to deport these exhausted all appeals asylum seekers, and the Government has failed to take responsibility for remedying this situation. The Home Office actually contacted council officers in Hillingdon in September 2005 explaining that they did not know where these exhausted all appeal asylum seekers were, and asked for a full list of names and addresses.

#### 5. EFFECTS OF FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS ON THE COMMUNITY

5.1 When providing services for and integrating unaccompanied asylum-seeking children it is essential that adequate funding is available. However, as the responsibility to provide this finance lies with the local borough, real difficulty is experienced in areas such as Hillingdon where there is a disproportionately high level of these children in care.

5.2 As a result of the funding arrangements for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and exhausted all appeal asylum seekers, council tax had to be raised in Hillingdon in order to meet the costs. In February 2007, Hillingdon announced a council tax increase of 2.75% with an additional 1% to cover the costs of supporting asylum seekers who have exhausted all appeals and have not been removed from the UK by the Home Office.

5.3 Although the government is reviewing the level of financial support for care leavers through "Planning better Outcomes and Support for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children", it is unclear at this stage whether the grant will be maintained or increased above the level the authority received in 2006/07. In addition the government Care Matters agenda seeks to improve the outcomes for all young people in care, with a particular focus on improving outcomes for care leavers. Given the UASC profile for Hillingdon, this would have a significant financial impact on the authority.

5.4 Local community cohesion, the relations between local residents and arriving asylum seekers, has to date has been successfully managed in Hillingdon. However, local residents are aware that the rise in council tax is due in part to accommodating asylum seekers and there is potential that this will place a strain on community relations.

5.5 Through the work we have done with multi ethnic and multi faith forums we can see that there is a real threat to community cohesion in the borough. Hillingdon's Connecting Communities forum has written to ministers to express their concerns about this issue, giving their full, cross-community support to the council.

#### 6. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government needs to be more responsive to the local authorities facing particular funding pressures. This is particularly relevant on the subject of the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children Leaving Care Costs Grant. Since the publication of the Comprehensive Spending Review and associated documents from the Government there is in fact no reference to this grant continuing beyond 31 March 2008. Should there be no assurances received from Government prior to the council setting its budget in late February, then it will have no choice (as determined by the outcome of the Judicial Review brought by the council against the DfES) but to remove £3 million from its budget plans/raise council tax (1% = £1 million) to cover this shortfall or a combination of both.

6.2 The funding regime should be managed by one Government department to promote consistency and coherence in order to avoid the conflict that currently exists between the Home Office and Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

6.3 It is vital that the Government reassesses the way that funding is allocated for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Funding for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children should be needs based rather than per capita to ensure costs are recoverable.

6.4 Better funding arrangements need to be drawn up for asylum seekers who have exhausted all appeals on their asylum applications and the Home Office needs to be more effective in deportation.

6.5 The Government should urgently share data between departments and use local data sets or local research in order to produce quality population estimates. It is vitally important that population projections are accurate as they play such an important part in managing service delivery. In addition, settlements should not be finalised for 2009–10 and 2010–11 until borough level estimates of short-term migration are available and integrated into population estimates.

6.6 There should be separate funding arrangements in place for local authorities that have large “points of entry” to deal the unique challenges associated with this.

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### **Memorandum by the Refugee Council**

#### SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- Refugees and asylum seekers have a particular set of experiences and entitlements before they arrive and when in the UK which determine their lives and ability to integrate. These need to be taken into account by policy makers when considering issues of cohesion and migration.
- Aspects of government policy concerning asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers directly contribute to community tensions, hinder integration and impact negatively on local, regional and national efforts to foster cohesive communities. If people are subsequently granted permission to remain in the UK their integration from that point is often delayed by their experiences of exclusion when they were pursuing their case. Current policy to grant limited leave of five years and obstacles to applying for citizenship can hinder integration and cohesion and need to be addressed.
- We draw the attention of the Committee to the conclusions and recommendations of the parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry into the treatment of asylum seekers. The implementation of the JCHR recommendations would have a positive impact on community cohesion.
- There are positive examples around the country where settled communities are engaging with newly arrived people, including much excellent work done by Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs), faith groups, schools and youth groups and mainstream organisations seeking to tackle social exclusion. We urge the Committee to consider the contribution to community development of such work, and to highlight the need for resources to be made available to develop and support this work. Central and local government initiatives should be developed in partnership with RCOs and community groups, and be accessible to them.
- We believe that the transition from asylum support to mainstream services and the integration of refugees requires greater cooperation between the Home Office and other government departments and local authorities. Increased cooperation, informed by and based on a good understanding of refugee and asylum seekers’ needs and experiences and better data on refugee populations, would help to increase the effectiveness of local and central government action and expenditure in promoting community cohesion and responding to inward migration flows.
- We believe that it is important that local authorities and service providers are supported (by the government and the voluntary sector) to understand refugee and asylum seeker issues when developing and implementing their plans, and communicating with the wider public about these issues.
- The Refugee Council is keen to use the recommendations of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion to help progress some key areas. Such actions should include specific consideration of refugees and asylum seekers, and be taken forward in cooperation with refugee community and support organisations, in particular activities concerning myth-busting, data collection and population mapping, decisions on translating materials and when implementing guidance funding single groups.

#### INTRODUCTION

1. The Refugee Council is the largest charity in the UK providing help and advice to asylum seekers and refugees. We campaign for their rights and help them rebuild their lives in safety. We work with refugees and those seeking asylum in England, at all stages of the asylum process and after they have been granted permission to stay. The Refugee Council Chief Executive is a member of the Migration Impacts Forum, and the Director of Operations is a member of the National Migration Group.

2. This submission is intended to highlight to the Communities and Local Government Committee some key points relating to community cohesion and migration, drawing on our experience of working with refugees over many years.

3. We welcome this inquiry, in particular the intention to explore the actions necessary to take forward the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's recommendations relating to migration. We hope that our submission will assist the Committee in considering the particular issues relating to refugees and asylum seekers within the broader debate on migration. We would be happy to provide further information on any of the points below, and would be pleased to make oral submissions to the Committee.

4. For information, attached are copies of submissions to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion in May 2007, by the Inter Agency Partnership (Refugee Council, Refugee Action, Migrant Helpline, Scottish Refugee Council, Welsh Refugee Council) and to the Independent Asylum Commission by the Refugee Council in November 2007.<sup>27</sup>

5. We have focused our comments on the particular cohesion issues relating to refugees and asylum seekers. We believe it is important to make clear the distinction between those who have claimed asylum and those who have migrated to the UK to work or study. There are many common experiences for migrants, whether or not they have claimed asylum, for example the need to learn English, find accommodation and access services. However, asylum seekers and refugees have a particular set of experiences and entitlements when in the UK which determine their lives and ability to integrate.

#### ASYLUM SEEKERS AND COMMUNITY COHESION

6. The particular issues concerning asylum seekers that have an impact on the community cohesion debate are set out below.

7. **Being forced to flee and life during the asylum determination process:** Those who seek international protection were forced to flee their homes in search of safety. Many asylum seekers say that they did not chose their destination, and others say they chose the UK for its reputation as a democratic country, and because of historic or linguistic connections.<sup>28</sup> Many of those seeking asylum have experienced torture and persecution because of their political activities, religious beliefs, membership of a particular social group, or have been the victim of conflict. They have often given up homes, children, possessions and livelihoods to seek safety. When they make an asylum claim, aspects of their lives are on hold until the final decision in their case is made. This process can take months or even years. Many people have physical or mental health conditions as a result of experiences in their country of origin. For these reasons, asylum seekers face a set of challenges distinct from other migrants.

8. **Asylum support, forced dispersal, access to mainstream services and the right to work:** Asylum seekers are not allowed to work.<sup>29</sup> If people cannot support themselves while they are in the asylum process, they have to apply for housing and a weekly cash allowance from the Border and Immigration Agency (BIA). Those asylum seekers who are entitled to support receive far less in cash allowances than is paid to other UK residents who are entitled to Job Seekers Allowance, and so asylum seekers are living in conditions of poverty more extreme than most other groups. Some asylum seekers receive no support because they did not claim asylum immediately on entering the UK. Those who do receive support and require accommodation are dispersed around the UK on a no-choice basis. Many asylum seekers have reported that they are housed in places where they do not feel safe, and are subject to harassment and sometimes violence.

9. **English language:** After six months, people with an ongoing asylum claim are eligible for Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funding to learn English. The Refugee Council believes that access to language classes is key to integration, and we believe that asylum seekers should be eligible for funding from the date of their claim.

10. **Refused asylum seekers who cannot leave the UK—destitution, vouchers, lack of access to health care and legal limbo:** Thousands of refused asylum seekers in the UK are living below the poverty line and significant numbers are destitute. After their appeal rights are exhausted, the majority of refused asylum seekers have their support terminated, and the government expects them to leave the UK. Those who are unable to leave can apply for support under Section 4 of the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act, which makes provision for accommodation and vouchers only with no cash support (asylum seekers with children usually continue to be considered as asylum seekers for support purposes until they leave the UK). Eligibility for Section 4 is dependent on meeting certain conditions, including taking reasonable steps to leave the UK.<sup>30</sup> Destitution arises particularly for those whose cases have been refused, but are not departing voluntarily and who are not granted Section 4 support. For those living on Section 4 support for long periods, extreme poverty and deprivation often follow, as Section 4 was intended as a short-term form of support and does not provide for many essentials over the longer term.

11. Many people do not leave the UK because they have no safe or sustainable route of return to their home country, for example Iraqis and Zimbabweans, or because they feel they have not had a fair hearing in their asylum case.

<sup>27</sup> Available at: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/policy/responses/2007/integration.htm> and <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/policy/responses/2007/IACsubmission.htm>

<sup>28</sup> "Understanding the decision-making of asylum seekers", Home Office Research Study, 2002 <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hors243.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> Unless they are still awaiting an initial decision on their case after 12 months, in which case they can apply for permission to work.

<sup>30</sup> See: [http://www.asaproject.org.uk/fact\\_sheets/Factsheet\\_2\\_Section\\_4\\_Support\\_for\\_Failed\\_Asylum\\_Seekers.pdf](http://www.asaproject.org.uk/fact_sheets/Factsheet_2_Section_4_Support_for_Failed_Asylum_Seekers.pdf)

12. Destitution leads to homelessness and ill health, and has an impact on community cohesion, safety, health and welfare among destitute people, and the use of vouchers for those on Section 4 support is inefficient and leads to people being stigmatised. We are also concerned that refused asylum seekers are unable to access secondary health care.

13. The Refugee Council believes that integration takes place from arrival and is a two-way and multi-faceted process. Successful integration benefits everyone, and contributes to the development of safe and cohesive communities. We believe that the above aspects of government policy concerning asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers directly contribute to community tensions, hinder integration and impact negatively on local, regional and national efforts to foster cohesive communities. If people are subsequently granted permission to remain in the UK their integration from that point is often delayed by their experiences of exclusion when they were pursuing their case.

14. The Refugee Council's research report on experiences of integration, published in October 2007, is a two year qualitative research project looking at the social aspects of refugees' integration, particularly in relation to how these were experienced in two different localities, Haringey and Dudley, and across different groups of refugees and asylum seekers.<sup>31</sup> This research provides powerful evidence of the barriers to integration faced in particular by asylum seekers, who are excluded by law from key activities, including work, training, and education, that would enable them to develop social networks and integrate. The report concludes that national policy on integration and asylum policy must be changed, so that asylum seekers are not excluded from society while their cases are being processed and concluded.

15. We urge the Committee to have regard to this point when developing recommendations. In particular, we draw the attention of the Committee to the conclusions and recommendations of the parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR) inquiry into the treatment of asylum seekers. The implementation of the JCHR recommendations would have a positive impact on community cohesion.<sup>32</sup>

16. In addition, we would draw the attention of the Committee to the examples around the country where settled communities are positively engaging with newly arrived people, including work done by RCOs, faith groups, schools and youth groups and mainstream organisations seeking to tackle social exclusion. We know from our work with RCOs that they act as a bridge to other communities for new arrivals. Much excellent work is done, but many smaller organisations, particularly those working at the "grass roots", including RCOs, struggle to fund their work. We urge the Committee to consider the contribution to community development of such work, and to highlight the need for resources to be made available to develop and support this work. Central and local government initiatives should be developed in partnership with RCOs and community groups, and should be accessible to them (See the final paragraph of this submission, regarding our position on the funding guidance for single groups).

#### REFUGEES AND COMMUNITY COHESION

17. There have been some improvements to the asylum determination system in the past year and these have resulted in quicker decisions on asylum claims through the introduction of the New Asylum Model (NAM) which aims to process cases end-to-end within six months. This has reduced the length of time people spend waiting for an outcome on their case, which is positive as it allows people to get on with rebuilding their lives. In addition the government is pursuing a programme of "case resolution" which aims to deal with a backlog of an estimated 450,000 files of people who claimed asylum before the introduction of NAM in April 2007. This is a positive development, provided the process is implemented fairly and transparently. Initial signs in some parts of the UK indicate the BIA is taking a pragmatic and humane approach to families who have been here a long time, granting many indefinite leave to remain. There are challenges for refugees, local authorities and support organisations to manage the transition from asylum support to the mainstream, but many of these can be addressed with coordinated action and clear communication from the BIA.

18. Once people have been recognised as having international protection needs and granted refugee status, or are given some other form of leave to remain in the UK (discretionary leave or humanitarian protection), they are entitled to work, access mainstream services and to vote.

19. We believe that the transition from asylum support to mainstream services and the integration of refugees requires greater cooperation and clarity between the Home Office and other government departments and local authorities. Increased cooperation, informed by and based on a good understanding of refugee and asylum seekers' needs and experiences and better data on refugee populations, would help to increase the effectiveness of local and central government action and expenditure in promoting community cohesion and responding to inward migration flows. We believe that it is important that local authorities

<sup>31</sup> Available at: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/policy/position/2007/integration.htm>

<sup>32</sup> Joint Committee on Human Rights, March 2007, The Treatment of Asylum Seekers, at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt200607/jtselect/jtrights/81/81i.pdf>

and service providers are supported (by the government and the voluntary sector) to understand the specific refugee and asylum seeker issues when developing and implementing their plans, and communicating with the wider public about these issues.

20. In addition, we would like to draw the attention of the Committee to the following key points relating to those recognised as refugees that we believe need to be considered and addressed in the quest for cohesive communities.

21. Five year limited leave: In 2005, the government introduced a qualifying period for indefinite leave to remain (ILR) for refugees, which took effect from 30 August 2005. Before this date, refugees received ILR. However, refugee status is now granted for an initial five years and is subject to active review, which will include a re-assessment of the safety of the refugee's country of origin. The fifth year review will start from August 2009, although refugees in the category can potentially have their status reviewed at any time. The five year limited leave will require those receiving a successful review to apply for indefinite leave to remain. In order to receive ILR, refugees will need to pass the Life in the UK test or gain an ESOL with Citizenship material qualification.<sup>33</sup>

22. It is unclear how many active reviews have taken place so far and what the process will be for challenging any decision that someone no longer needs international protection. However, we are concerned that refugees with five year limited leave may face further distress and anxiety about the permanence of their status in the UK, and may well be placed at a further disadvantage when seeking employment, training, housing and rebuilding their lives. The Refugee Council believes that refugees should be given ILR when they are granted status, and should not be subject to automatic review.

23. Employment, training and adult education: We believe that those seeking asylum should have the right to work. In addition, we believe that refugees should be supported in employment, training and education so that they can use and develop existing skills to lead useful lives, with opportunities equal to others in the UK.

24. However, we are concerned about the impact of the government's decision that from 2 April 2007 all people seeking to live in the UK permanently will have to pass English language and knowledge of life in the UK tests (bringing settlement/ILR in line with the requirements for gaining British nationality). Asylum seekers granted refugee status after 30 August 2005 are affected by these changes. The changes mean that refugees applying for ILR after a successful review will need to have passed the Life in the UK test if at ESOL Entry level 3 or above, or gained an approved ESOL qualification with citizenship materials at a local college if below Entry level 3. Refugees who have not satisfied one of the above will be given an additional two years leave to do so. We are currently waiting to hear from the Home Office as to their plans beyond this point.

25. The Refugee Council considers it unreasonable and potentially discriminatory to restrict ESOL funding for refugees, while at the same time to insist on satisfying English language requirements as part of the granting of ILR. We disagree fundamentally with English language and knowledge of life in the UK tests being compulsory for refugees. The granting of asylum is fundamentally about providing protection and ILR should be given on this basis alone. Once a refugee has had a successful review, they are de facto given indefinite protection as their status will not be reviewed again. To insist on satisfying further requirements not relevant to this decision is unfair. It should be the choice of refugees whether or not to seek citizenship. It is only at this stage that English language requirements would be significant. We recommend that refugees should receive ILR automatically following a successful review of their status after five years or earlier. We recommend that the government ends the **English language requirements for those with limited leave who are applying for settlement or ILR**.

#### THE REFUGEE EXPERIENCE AND CITIZENSHIP

26. The Refugee Council believes that refugees should have equal access to citizenship processes, and be supported to choose whether to apply. We believe that the nature of refugees' experiences mean that they may face particular and unique decisions and hurdles. We are concerned that refugees' needs and experiences have not been fully taken into account in designing citizenship processes, which has resulted in a number of barriers to prospective citizens (cost, access to advice and guidance, and ability to access language learning). To ensure equal access, these issues should be taken into account by policy-makers; the current review of citizenship provides an opportunity to improve access for those who wish to apply. (A copy of the Refugee Council's submission to Lord Goldsmith's review will be copied to this inquiry when it is available).

<sup>33</sup> [http://www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk/htmlsite/background\\_10.html](http://www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk/htmlsite/background_10.html) "If you are applying for naturalisation as a British citizen or for indefinite leave to remain, you will need to show that you know about life in the UK. If you live in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, you can do this in two ways: by taking the Life in the UK Test or by taking combined English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and citizenship classes. You should take the test if you are applying for naturalisation as a British citizen or indefinite leave to remain (settlement) and your level of English is ESOL Entry 3 or above. If your level of English is lower than ESOL Entry 3 and you wish to apply for naturalisation or indefinite leave to remain, you will need to attend combined English language (ESOL) and citizenship classes instead".

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 TAKING FORWARD THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION FOR INTEGRATION AND COHESION

27. The Commission on Integration and Cohesion report “Our Shared Futures” highlights the areas of citizenship, visible social justice, fairness and transparency and positive relationships between communities.

28. All of these themes can readily apply to the refugee experience, and would be useful guiding principles for the Border and Immigration Agency.

29. We have continually highlighted the importance of work with the receiving community to inform and prepare them for new arrivals. A lack of information to receiving communities can be overcome, but this needs strategic thought, preparation and resources.

30. The Refugee Council is keen to use the opportunity of the COIC recommendations to help progress some key areas. We have not included a comprehensive analysis of the conclusions of the report “Our Shared Futures” here, but wish to highlight that actions taken should include specific consideration of refugees and asylum seekers. For the purposes of this submission, we wish to highlight four key areas.

31. **Visible Social Justice and myth busting:** We agree with the COIC conclusions that visible social justice and proactive attempts to provide reliable and accurate information to inform communities about inward migration, including that by refugees and asylum seekers, are important. We believe that these activities should be developed in partnership with communities, and involve refugee communities.

32. The government should demonstrate active political leadership on the issue of asylum. In light of its continuing commitment to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, placing an obligation on signatory states to accept refugees, some effort towards defending and upholding this decision would be in the interests of the government, asylum seekers and refugees themselves, and successful integration and community cohesion.

33. An independent body responsible for the asylum process would help to rebuild public confidence in the system, and allow decisions to be taken that were aimed at ensuring people who were in need of protection were able to access it.

34. Editors must take an active responsibility for ensuring that media outlets are not inciting fear and hostility amongst the public towards asylum seekers and refugees. We are opposed to the curbing of press freedom, but believe that the media must report these issues accurately and responsibly.

35. Politicians should recognise the impact policy decisions have on public opinion of asylum seekers and refugees. Use of detention, for example, suggests that asylum seekers are criminals who pose a risk to society and promotes the idea they are not to be trusted. Improvements in tone and language when discussing asylum are welcome, but should be matched with policy decisions that do not widen the gulf between those seeking asylum and the public.

36. **Data and statistics:** It is very important that statistics about refugee and asylum seeker populations are collected and available to service providers. This is particularly significant in relation to the new Department for Communities and Local Government guidance on translation.

37. **Translation guidance:** It is our experience that many refugees are desperate to learn English and this is very important to their integration. However, we hope that translated material and interpreters will continue to be available for those who have been forced to flee their country. DCLG notes the need for an evidence base and sound data for decisions on translation, and we believe more must be done to provide this evidence for refugee communities.

38. **Single community funding guidance:** Refugee community organisations are incredibly valuable in providing a bridge to settled communities, and are important vehicles for integration and cohesion. We believe that the BIA and the Department for Communities and Local Government must support and encourage RCOs to develop this role. We very much hope that the guidelines on funding single-nationality groups will take into account the role of RCOs as vital providers of a bridge to settled communities and that the new National Integration and Employment service being developed by BIA will include ways of supporting RCOs.

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 Memorandum by Slough Borough Council

## SUMMARY

Migration has had a major impact at a local level in Slough. Councils have long been at the forefront of managing these impacts in terms of local economies, community cohesion, cultural differences and continuity of service provision—not just in recent years.

What is different in the current waves of migration to those gone past is not so much in scale and speed of migration (although this has been unprecedented since EU expansion in 2004) but in the failure of statistics to keep pace and reaction of central government to the management of the impacts resulting from migration.

Slough Borough Council has been responsible for implementing innovative services, conducting research and community cohesion programmes to meet the challenges of the impacts of migration since the turn of the century. The town has successfully integrated migration since the 1920s.

History of migration:

- 1920 migration from Wales, the North, Scotland, Ireland and the South to take advantage of growing local economy.
- Polish migration in the second world war (130,000 Poles arrived in Britain during the first few years after the war).
- Windrush and Indian subcontinent immigration in 50s, 60s and 70s.
- Current EU A8 and A2 migration.

As a result the town has the most diverse ethnic mix outside London with 37% of the population being classed as Black or Ethnic Minority, at the last census.

In a report entitled *Colour and Communities* examining the effects and impacts of migration from Indian sub-continent and the West Indies in 1964 many of the impacts highlighted then mirror those being faced by the council today.

*“The fact remains that Slough has a successful history of accepting large numbers and great varieties of people from other places. Past experience has demonstrated Slough’s ability to assimilate newcomers without severe or lasting difficulties, and in virtually all cases the newcomers have added something of genuine value to the life of the town. Perhaps it is not too unrealistic to think this could happen once more . . .”*

*William H. Israel, Council Officer reporting on migration in 1964*

There are many direct impacts resulting from significant migration to a local authority area such as pressures to schools coping with the influx of new intake, labour market distortions, housing, policing, fire prevention and refuse collection. However, the most significant impact remains an indirect one resulting from poor management systems within the UK and an unresponsive centrally controlled mechanism for local government funding.

Poor measurement of local populations in “hyper-diverse” communities has serious consequences to the management of migration at a local level. The failure to track migration accurately to and within the UK results in inaccurate population estimates with corollary under funding for those areas where official statistics prove inadequate. This in turn results in pressures to all services, community cohesion risks and poor central and local planning of services. The council has published incontrovertible evidence of a population undercount in the town due to the inability of official statistics to measure current migration movement accurately.

It is tempting in the debate around impacts of migration to look solely at the visible effects on the ground. Although this is important they should be viewed with consideration of the indirect impacts of poor management of data and statistics.

The following evidence illustrates these points which results from a series of independent studies and seminars the council has conducted into the impacts of migration to the town since 2002 (see Appendix A).

#### COMMUNITY COHESION IN SLOUGH

The council welcomes the recognition of the challenges of community cohesion in the government’s White Paper and in the setting up of the Migration Impacts Forum. With one of the most diverse communities in the country, Slough is a migration and cohesion success story. Nevertheless, the results of the council’s research and community mapping reveal that to maintain good community cohesion the task over this recent period of significant social change requires more effort and resources at a time when inaccurate population estimates are imposing systemic underfunding over the three year grant settlement period.

Slough has one of the most diverse communities in the country. Inward migration is driven by economic factors. Slough is the 3rd most productive town in the UK outside London with a £2.5 billion output. Although Slough has a thriving job marketplace and continues to be a successful economic hub, it is also comparatively poor. Wages earned by those living in Slough are less than surrounding areas. Slough has comparatively lower house prices than the surrounding area and the presence of existing diverse communities make it an attractive destination for new communities seeking to gain a foothold in Britain. This makes it a classic “churn” town. This is evidenced by the growth in the town’s BME community from 27% in the 1991 census to 39% in the 2001 census. This is nearly four times the national average growth of BME communities over this period.

Slough mirrors the pattern of growth of BME and other new communities that is referred to in the Strong and Prosperous Communities White Paper. Large Indian, Pakistani and Polish communities and a smaller Caribbean community now share an increasingly crowded space with growing Somali, other African, Iraqi, Afghanistani and Eastern European communities. Only a minority of individuals from the various communities are economically or socially successful. In Slough there are low skills, comparatively low incomes and housing overcrowding. As the White paper points out “Those who are already excluded may

feel they are missing out again from access to housing, jobs or health services". This is certainly evidenced from a survey conducted in 2006 that the council has undertaken in order to map and understand the different traditions and ethnicities of the town's communities and their needs. Some key findings from this research are set out later in this report.

As the White Paper points out, communities often vie with each other for services and attention. Slough has a long, successful history of migration and has worked hard to develop and retain good community relations, balancing the consultation, services and interventions needed within and between communities. We already have in place most of the elements of good practice set out in the White Paper. The Audit Commission quotes Slough as an example of good practice in this area: "In Slough local people and partners recognise the role the council plays in meeting the significant challenges of social cohesion, deprivation and inequalities..... The council is strongly aware of its role in enhancing community cohesion. It has a good understanding of the needs of all local communities and through the LSP has built a clear vision with a focus on social inclusion". *Audit Commission, Learning from CPA*.

The council has also demonstrated its commitment to improving its cohesion practices and sharing best practice by holding a seminar, Migration Works, on 2 November 2006. Two speakers, Danny Sriskandarajah, IPPR, and Ted Cattle, IDeA, spoke about cohesion and suggested 22 priorities that councils need to focus on in order to harness the potential of migration.

Ted Cattle's 12 priorities for local authorities:

1. Cope with additional population, services they require and identity issues.
2. And population "churn".
3. Respond to resources required for schools, social housing, health etc.
4. Manage settlement of new communities and work with existing residents.
5. Managing conflicts and disputes.
6. Tension monitoring, with police.
7. Cope with extremism—of all descriptions.
8. Provide a sense of belonging.
9. Initiate cross-cultural programmes.
10. Understand social capital and bridging relationships in community.
11. Leadership for a wide range of partners, knitting together various programmes.
12. All with real vision and political will

Danny Sriskandarajah's 10 priorities for local authorities:

1. Understanding the scale and impact of recent flows.
2. Attracting (and retaining) appropriate migrants.
3. Providing adequate reception services in short-term.
4. Promoting integration over long-term.
5. Catering service provision to meet the range of needs within and between different migrant groups.
6. Engaging employers, migrant communities and others.
7. Tackle exploitation and destitution.
8. Tackle prejudice and hostility.
9. Sharing best practice.
10. Responding to but not pandering to public opinion, and communicating role of migration.

Much of the priorities recognised by our speakers as essential to cohesion are already practiced by Slough. However, the ambitious scope of the priorities illustrates the added resource pressures councils are expected to shoulder with no extra resource from central government. Matters are made even worse where inadequate migration estimates actually financially penalise the very councils that are experiencing significant social change. It hardly needs saying that to lock councils into a three year funding round using inadequate data during this period completely disregards the community cohesion needs of some councils.

Despite this expertise, the fast pace of the changing patterns of our communities has created more pressure on space and resources and is significantly stretching the council (Slough was the 2nd most overcrowded town in the country at the 2001 census). The speeding up of inward and more complex migration has, unfortunately come at a time when ONS figures are erroneously predicting that the population is falling. This is causing a tightening of resources and services at a time when it is critical to invest in order to mitigate the short term effects of new inward migration. If the town continues to attract in poorer communities that cause both white flight and the flight of the wealthier sections of other non white communities, its future sustainability is in doubt.

The nature and mix of migration over the 18 month period to September 2007 is demonstrated on school rolls. 888 pupils from non English speaking countries moved onto Slough school rolls over the 18 months. 200 were from Poland, 185 from Pakistan, 104 from Somalia and 91 from India. The remainder were from other African, European or other Asian countries.

Also, from 1 January to April 2007 it is estimated 400 newly arrived Romanian Roma individuals (including children) arrived in Slough. Families shared often overcrowded and sub standard accommodation.

Eighty-eight unaccompanied Romanian Roma children between the ages of 10–17 years presented to Slough children’s services requesting support in the same period. A temporary dedicated team had to be set up by Children Services. The Roma team provided support to 52 children. Thirty-six were refused support as they have been assessed as being over the age of 18 or the council located family members in the UK.

All children claimed they travelled to the UK by Lorry, the amount paid for this varied, usually around 75 Euros. Most said they left family in Romania or other EU countries and came to the UK for a better life. Each child was individually assessed and children’s services sought to re unite children with their families as soon as possible.

Six young people had babies of their own and seven were pregnant. A high proportion of children had dental problems, including small children who are dependants. Eight children had been implicated in criminal activity such as theft, mugging or begging. A small number of children had been seen cleaning car windscreens at traffic lights.

Slough is an exceptional case in this specific regard and has worked closely with the Romanian embassy to tackle the problem of unaccompanied children arriving in the town. We have now managed down the numbers of children that are looked after by the council. However, this fast and very visual social change to the town causes new and immediate community cohesion challenges. The council had to be proactive and flexible in its response to these challenges meeting both indigenous and new communities and resolving any emerging areas of conflict. Providing local immediate solutions to cohesion issues plus working with central government and the Romanian embassy takes experience and a dedicated resource. This has not been recognised by government.

As a result of concerns about increased migration and how the varied communities are viewing each other, the council has undertaken a number of audits and surveys to “test the temperature”, map the incoming communities and understand their intentions in respect of length of stay in the town. Three pieces of work have been completed to date:

- A community cohesion audit conducted using independent expertise from a Neighbourhood Renewal advisor to DCLG (Raj Bhari) and trained local community researchers.
- An independent set of focus groups with some of the latest incoming communities carried out by Populus.
- Independent survey work of the migrant communities, stakeholders and local employers carried out by the Research Unit.

In addition to this specific social market research, the council continues to work with communities through its service provision, regular consultation and multi ethnic and multi faith forums. This work also enables us to understand the current tensions. Regular information sharing is undertaken with the police and other partners and with the third sector. Community cohesion is a shared challenge for our local strategic partnership. This range of research and community engagement enables the council to be confident that its description of what is happening in and between the communities in Slough is accurate.

#### EVIDENCE ABOUT CURRENT COHESION CLIMATE IN SLOUGH

The research shows that neither the more settled communities nor the newer asylum seeking communities and European migrants are feeling well integrated. In fact, the research exemplifies the challenges set out in the White Paper “. . . established communities can feel uneasy with change. They begin to hear and believe stories about ethnic minorities getting preferential treatment and can develop a sense of grievance”.

Ted Cantle speaking about Slough’s *Migration Works* seminar on 2 November 2006 reinforced this point:

“Slough Borough Council’s seminar is well timed. Migration to the UK works as evidenced in places around the country like Slough. However, building cohesive communities to harness the benefits long term takes resources. It is important that councils like Slough are funded correctly for their population size and complexity to make sure they continue community cohesion work”.

“Community tensions are sometimes caused by the perception of competition between groups over resources and councils have to be able to demonstrate that this is not the case”.

“The government needs to look with some urgency at funding areas appropriately where statistics are not keeping pace with what is happening on the ground”.

Moreover, the situation is more complex in Slough as it is not just the indigenous white community who feels this; it is also the more settled BME communities who are now demonstrating a sense of grievance.

## LONG TERM SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR SLOUGH

As our research shows, Slough is a very challenging community for the council to serve. This is despite Slough's significant experience and success in managing migration and community cohesion up until now. Slough has already been implementing many of the best practise elements set out in the new White Paper—community mapping, engagement and conflict resolution.

We have also responded innovatively to the sharp increase of children new to the UK accessing our schools. It was proving increasingly difficult to place children, particularly at secondary level, into our schools as a lack of recorded educational need of the children meant they were largely an “unknown quantity”. In response to this and in partnership with our head teachers we established the Slough Assessment Centre at Beechwood School. It now caters for newly arrived secondary school pupils without school records.

During the summer holiday period 2006, 89 secondary aged pupils arrived in Slough from other countries. The Assessment Centre can only cater for a maximum of 8 pupils at a time, although 4–6 provides a more effective teacher: pupil ratio.

The children spend Monday to Thursday at the Centre where their English, maths and science are assessed and short-term targets, both academic and social, are agreed. On Friday a report is sent to Slough Admissions Department so that the case can be presented to the next Admissions Panel meeting.

The centre also provides support for newly arrived parents. Many families new to the country have complex needs and require a level of information, advice or support that cannot usually be met by schools. By consulting new arrivals and their parents about their experiences and needs, the Assessment Centre has been able to provide comprehensive and accessible information. The cost of this, not least translation expenses, are considerable.

This single centre costs £92,000 a year to run but is proving to be insufficient. The council estimates it needs additional staffing for the Secondary Assessment Centre to enable more pupils to be admitted during peak times of the year. Two Primary Assessment Centres are also needed to improve the admissions process for younger new arrivals, help them settle in more quickly to the English educational system and provide comprehensive, accessible information for parents.

This is an example of the kind of innovative and responsive thinking that typifies the council's experience and approach to migration. We do not know of any one else offering this service and believe it is a clear example of good practice that could be transferred to other towns and cities under similar migration pressure.

The council has been engaged in “place shaping” for some time and has as its ambition and the ambition for the local strategic partnership a vision to improve the quality of life for people who live and work in the town. This requires the establishment of a sustainable community. It requires the up-skilling of the population to enable them to share in the economic prosperity of the town. This will enable them to become more self sufficient, improve their housing and social conditions and engage fully with the cultural life of the town. The council had some success in achieving this goal in that Slough moved from 107 to 129 in the multiple index of deprivation between 2001 and 2004.

However the high and continuing influx of migration over the last five to seven years threaten this vision. The particular challenges it presents are:

- Increasing competition between communities for work on skills. Should we focus on the Polish community who only need language skills to obtain better jobs and fully utilise the skills they have brought with them (Waiting lists for ESoL classes at every level)? Or should we continue to focus on the Pakistani and black communities who historically have the lowest skills? What about the white community? All communities have far lower skills than either the UK as a whole or the SE. At present 65% of Slough's population have only NVQ1 or above qualifications compared to 81% in the SE and 76% nationally. At present 40,000 people commute into Slough each day, largely to take up the well paid jobs.
- How can we close the disparities of educational attainment, access to work, levels of wages, health et al between communities. The council aims to support these groups, but needs capacity to do so. The evidence of these groups creates community tensions and there are risks that if groups, particularly in access to employment increase community tensions will increase too.
- How can we stabilise and regulate our private rented sector when the local landlords are ready to move quickly to bring small houses and illegal sheds in and out of use rapidly? The current registration system does not work as landlords move these properties quickly in and out of the market and would not pay for the requirements to license, relying instead on not being caught given the levels of resource the council can allocate to private sector housing regulation.
- How can we create neighbourhoods where people want to stay when they become wealthy enough to move on? The current housing mix lends itself to first step housing and the environment of the town is becoming ever more crowded.
- How can we meet the current high level of demand for housing when the town is already the 2nd most overcrowded in the country?

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- How can we prevent tension arising within and between our communities because of competition for overstretched resources brought about by flawed population statistics?
  - How can the council fund new cohesion initiatives such as “twinning” and maintain discretionary cohesion projects without appropriate funding?
  - How can we prevent tensions arising between communities due to perceived iniquity of cuts to existing discretionary services brought about by flawed population statistics?

The council believes this cocktail of issues raises crucial social policy questions that need to be urgently addressed. The council needs recognition for the complex situation it is handling and some guidance about what specific grants the Government could introduce to assist. If Slough continues to be a prime target for incoming migration wealthier residents will continue to leave as soon as they are able to afford housing elsewhere in the Thames Valley. This puts Slough at a crucial “tipping point” that militates against the council and LSP’s vision for a more sustainable and affluent town.

The council would like to see recognition of the complexity and immediate need for community cohesion specific funds for areas let down by inadequate migration measurement. Currently the criteria used to distribute part of the £50 million specific fund announced by the government is too simplistic and does not take into account the complexity of hyper-diverse areas like Slough.

Slough’s position should be recognised in any further orders relating to dispersal. (In the past Slough has not been acknowledged and has become a target for other council’s to place people in Slough’s bed and breakfast market and we have not received any additional funding).

The council would also like to help the government understand the complexities of population movement, its effect on community cohesion, the innovative solutions to immediate problems and the consequences of not recognising the effects of poor migration measurement and corollary underfunding.

#### ADDRESSING THE SKILLS ISSUE

The council has recently undertaken steps to help cohesion through bettering the life chances of our under skilled population. An innovative “Skills Campaign” has been launched alongside key partners within the borough.

The Slough Employer Skills Research project conducted a telephone survey of 502 local employers and depth interviews with 33 companies across a wide range of sectors and sizes of company to inform the Slough Skills Campaign.

Slough is home to around 4,500 employers and 75,000 employees. Transformation in the local economy is seeing a shift away from manufacturing (employment fell by 40% between 1998 and 2005). While manufacturing remains important, the main growth is in service industries and service-related jobs.

The analysis suggests eight key issues to be considered by the Slough Skills Campaign:

- Issue 1: Slough residents’ skills are out of step with local employment opportunities.
- Issue 2: Skills are holding back the local economy and business performance.
- Issue 3: Employer skills priorities appear to reflect growth of high added value services.
- Issue 4: Acquisition of English language skills is a major challenge.
- Issue 5: Tackling recruitment difficulties could benefit from a joint approach, with employers sharing best practice.
- Issue 6: Closer links between employers and local learning and skills providers would be beneficial.
- Issue 7: Slough employers should be encouraged to be more active in developing the workforce.
- Issue 8: Slough residents should be encouraged to take greater ownership of their own learning and career.

The council is taking steps to address these issues and taking a pro-active place shaping role that will benefit community cohesion not just in the short term but for the long term future of the town.

However, this initiative is being conducted without government support. The consequences of a financial settlement based on flawed migration data means that the council is not funded adequately enough to meet its aspiration for cohesion.

It is essential that the government recognise that good community cohesion requires resources. It should also recognise that it is stripping resources away from the very areas that are witnessing significant social change because of a flawed method of migration measurement.

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### **Memorandum by the Trades Union Congress**

Trade unions play a key role in building cohesion and countering prejudice against migrant workers, often from the Far Right, both in the community and in the workplace. Over recent years, trade unions have also provided support for workers with English language needs, particularly in the workplace. Based on this experience, we support the Committee's premise that English language skills are vital for community cohesion but would stress the vital need to include the workplace as a forum for building community cohesion. For many migrants, the workplace will be a place where they meet and interact closely with settled workers. They need language skills to be able to build workplace relationships, which can then be taken out into the wider community.

In early 2007, the TUC established its Commission on Vulnerable Employment (CoVE), which has identified low-paid migrant workers as a particular group vulnerable both to community exclusion and workplace exploitation. Evidence gathered through regional fieldtrips of the TUC's Commission on Vulnerable Employment is demonstrating that poor English language skills are significantly contributing to exploitation at work. Poor language skills means many migrant workers are unaware of their employment rights.

The TUC and unions have been very concerned about changes to public funding of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and in particular the impact on low paid migrant workers. The implications of the changes include that for many people, the cost of paying for ESOL courses has shifted from the public purse to individuals, unless employers make a contribution. Most migrant workers are low paid, so paying for ESOL is unaffordable. Under the current policy, access to free ESOL is triggered by evidence of income related tax credits. However evidence from the Home Office shows that only 3% of workers from European Union Accession States receive tax credits. This is despite the fact that around 8 in 10 earn between £4.50 and £5.99 an hour. Therefore many people that need ESOL support are at risk of exploitation at work and isolation in the community.

While the TUC believes that employers should contribute towards ESOL costs for migrant workers, the reality is that in the absence of adequate levers this is unlikely to occur in most workplaces. This is backed by emerging results from a unionlearn online survey of union representatives that demonstrates employers are largely not willing to pay. Employers are benefiting from employing migrant workers, and the TUC believes it is important to build in mechanisms to ensure that they meet their responsibilities. Such mechanisms could include piloting new approaches to securing a direct financial contribution from employers. For example, additional fees could be raised from those agencies registered under the Gangmasters Licensing Authority that could be dedicated to meeting workers' skills needs.

The TUC believes that ESOL should be free to low paid workers. We are concerned that a failure to ensure low-paid migrant workers have proper access to ESOL will hamper community integration and exacerbate exploitation. I hope that the Committee will take these issues into account in their deliberations, and would be happy to elaborate upon any of the points raised.

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### **Memorandum by the University and College Union**

UCU

The University and College Union (UCU) represents nearly 120,000 further and higher education lecturers, managers, researchers and many academic-related staff such as librarians, administrators and computing professionals across the UK.

UCU represents over 40,000 academic staff in Further Education (FE) colleges and adult and offender education services. This includes staff delivering English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programmes.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

UCU was extremely concerned when in October 2006 the then Department for Education and Skills (DfES) announced changes to funding policy in relation to programmes for ESOL. These restricted entitlement to free courses to those on benefit or income support and meant new fees for those not qualifying. They removed automatic eligibility for free tuition from asylum seekers. These changes alarmed and angered ESOL practitioners and students, as well as many other stakeholders. UCU has taken a leading role in the campaign to reverse these changes.

In November 2007 UCU asked members teaching ESOL about the effects.<sup>34</sup> They told us:

- Enrolments have been affected across the board.
- Learners who need beginner and entry level courses have been turned away as course provision has moved to higher levels. It appears that this switch does not follow the pattern of demand.

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<sup>34</sup> "Increasing exclusion, raising barriers: the real cost of charging for ESOL", UCU, November 2007.

- Those most affected by the new fees and by the cuts in beginner and entry level course provision are the most needy and most vulnerable people in the UK, often women on low incomes in settled communities or migrant workers.
- The funds to support low income learners are complex, inconsistent and patchy in impact and offer no long-term solution.

UCU recommends that:

- ESOL provision must be safeguarded and expanded.
- Free provision for ESOL should be restored up to at least Level 1.
- The resources for this should come from across all those government departments that have a strong interest in fostering and developing community cohesion.
- Action is taken to secure employer funding for ESOL workers through statutory means. Exhortation and relying on voluntarism is no longer enough. If legislation is introduced around agency working, then agencies that import migrant labour should be made responsible for the costs of any ESOL provision that may be required.
- Long term investment will be needed to allow individuals and communities time to build up skills and confidence to access fully not only ESOL provision, but more general learning and skills provision.
- Refugees be allowed to access ESOL provision again from the point they make the claim for asylum. It is then that they need the access to essential services that language gives. The lack of language skills of asylum seekers will only reinforce their isolation and can damage community relationships.
- Spouses and families of migrants be allowed to access ESOL provision without having to wait a year in the case of spouses, and three years in the case of families. There is sufficient evidence to show that such waiting periods are detrimental to language acquisition, and thence to settlement and community cohesion.
- When the responses to the current DIUS ESOL consultation have been received and analysed, UCU would recommend that particular attention is paid to the needs of women from settled communities, as they seem to have suffered disproportionately from the changes to ESOL funding regimes and programmes.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

UCU has made submissions to various inquiries and bodies looking at the various issues around migration, community cohesion and ESOL provision. UCU welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence to the CLG select committee.

A number of important reports over recent years have stressed the importance of English as a key element in terms of integration of migrants and some groups within already settled communities; and in demonstrating that English language programmes are a crucial element in equipping arrivals to this country for a full social, civic and economic life and diminishing deprivation which the Commission for Integration and Community Cohesion<sup>35</sup> identified as a key component in building community cohesion.

“English is both an important part of our shared heritage, and a key access factor for new communities to the labour market and wider society. It binds us together as a single group in a way that a multiplicity of community languages cannot . . . we are therefore committed to the importance of English language training for all communities”.<sup>36</sup>

The National Institute for Continuing and Adult Education (NIACE) in its report “More than a language: the final report NIACE Committee of Inquiry on ESOL”<sup>37</sup>

“English language learning has an impact on individuals, communities and the productivity and safety of workplaces in England. For individuals it makes a difference to the way we relate to each other and it impacts on our children. Without doubt there is for many a correlation between their self-esteem and the level of confidence they have in spoken English. For many, confidence in English language opens doors and helps people engage in and contribute to civil society. Lack of fluency in the language condemns many people to poverty”.<sup>38</sup>

UCU believes that not only is the acquisition of English important for migrants in itself, but also the process of acquiring English by attending structured high quality ESOL learning programmes is a key element in integration and community cohesion.

<sup>35</sup> Commission on Integration and Cohesion—Our shared future July 2007 Department for Communities and Local Government.

<sup>36</sup> Commission on Integration and Cohesion—Our shared future July 2007 Department for Communities and Local Government Page 56.

<sup>37</sup> NIACE “More than a language: the final report NIACE Committee of Inquiry on ESOL” October 2006.

<sup>38</sup> NIACE “More than a language: the final report NIACE Committee of Inquiry on ESOL” October 2006 Preface Page 3.

UCU would argue that the recent changes to ESOL provision have damaged efforts to foster integration and community cohesion. A UCU member and ESOL teacher put it thus:

“their (ESOL students) attendance at ESOL classes is in itself a vital contributor to community cohesion. Their ESOL class is sometimes their only link with the English-speaking world which offers a supportive environment on which to learn about using English”

A TUC report on migrant workers in the labour market<sup>39</sup> reported that ESOL programmes assisted migrants on social inclusion, improved health and safety in those work places where ESOL was provided because of improved communications and improved migrants’ mobility and employability by increasing access to other provision to learning and skills development.

## 2. CHANGES IN ESOL PROGRAMMES

Two sets of changes have impacted on ESOL programmes over the last two years. Whilst the total amount of resources made available for ESOL programmes funded by the LSC has not been cut in overall terms, the change in priorities and introduction of fees have had substantial consequences.

### *LSC priorities and targets*

The first set of changes stem from the LSC moving its funding to support a different set of priorities; that is those programmes leading to qualifications that make up the national targets. This was first expressed in October 2005.<sup>40</sup> For ESOL it meant that some local LSCs moved funding away from low level ESOL programmes because the achievements gained in these courses did not count towards the national targets, despite such programmes often being necessary precursors for progression to the higher level programmes that did count towards the national targets.

### *Imposition of fees for ESOL*

The second set of changes was announced in the autumn of 2006, and came into force in the new academic year starting September 2007. These instituted fees for ESOL programmes for the first time. Until then, ESOL along with the other skills for life programmes in literacy and numeracy had been free. Fees in LSC provision are set to return a percentage of the costs of delivery. In September 2007 the student contribution had been set at 37.5%. However other government policies had already set out that fees in LSC funded provision would rise each year until 2010 when they would amount to 50% of the costs of the programme. These fees would apply to ESOL students in work. Within the LSC funded provision there is a process that allow fees not to be charged for those students and their families that are on various types of benefit. The government also decided when it announced the imposition of fees for ESOL programmes, to remove the ability of asylum seekers to attend learning programmes.

### *Subsequent changes in proposals*

In the face of overwhelming opposition to the changes that were being proposed for ESOL from students, community groups, ESOL teachers and whole range of others concerned about the impact, and the results of their own Race Impact Assessment exercise, the government did make some changes to their proposals before they were implemented.

Over £4 million was added to the existing student support funds for those ESOL learners who could not afford to pay the new fees. Asylum seekers who had not had their cases heard within six months (the time that that the government stated that all asylum claims would be heard) would be able to attend ESOL programmes again.

In London the Mayor’s Office and the LSC were able to find an additional £15 million to support some of the lower level ESOL work that had lost its funding under the LSC re-prioritisation referred to above.

In the autumn of 2007, new ESOL for work programmes were launched to meet the needs of migrants at work.

In January 2008 the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, the successor for FE of the DfES announced a consultation on ESOL provision. The main thrust of this was to propose that priorities for ESOL provision were to be set by local authorities within a national framework. This consultation ends in early April.

<sup>39</sup> TUC Unionlearn Report “Migrant workers in the labour market” December 2007.

<sup>40</sup> LSC Priorities for Success—Funding for Learning and Skills October 2005.

### 3. IMPACT OF CHANGES

In September 2007 with the introduction of the changes in fee policy for ESOL, a number of organisations attempted to survey their members engaged in ESOL work, and/or ESOL providers on the impact of the changes. These included UCU, NATECLA, the organisation for ESOL teachers and NIACE.

This task has not been easy. In September providers are fully occupied in reaching out to potential ESOL students, offering them advice and guidance so that they enter the right programme at the right level and then enrolling ESOL students. In addition ESOL programmes often take some time to enrol students as potential students are often very unconfident and may not be aware of the existence of ESOL courses.

Consequently much of the information on the impact of the ESOL changes has been anecdotal. It also tends to come from those organisations and areas whose provision has been hit hardest by the changes. Surveys attempting to assess the impact of the changes are still in train.

From the reports that have been assembled, it is clear that the changes have had variable impact: some provision and some areas have been hit hard whilst others seemed to have suffered far less.

In December the LSC published the First Statistical Return of students enrolled in its funded provision for the year 2007–08. This is based on a student census carried out by providers in the autumn period. In its published form, this information is at a level which does not allow for detailed analysis of any particular set of programmes. However the census information should be capable of analysis to reveal changes in the numbers at least of those enrolled on different levels of ESOL provision. UCU has repeatedly called for a meeting between the government, the LSC and the ESOL stakeholders so that the census data can be examined together to ascertain the impact of the ESOL changes. This has not yet happened.

#### 3.1 IMPACT OF THE LSC CHANGES IN PRIORITIES

There is evidence that in some parts of the country lower level programmes have been reduced. Sometimes this has led to higher level courses remaining undersubscribed while entry level courses have long waiting lists of learners. Some learners have been turned away because there is no provision for them. One south London college cut 10 full-time and one part-time Entry 1 and Entry 2 ESOL classes. These cuts affected beginner level classes. Overall there was a reduction of 10% in the number of ESOL courses run, despite being hugely oversubscribed. Staff at another London college reported that waiting list numbers had remained high for Beginner, Entry 1 and some evening Entry 2 courses, but there were no waiting lists for Entry 3 and above—where there were still places. In Birmingham an ESOL tutor told the UCU survey that “195 learners were turned away because the classes were full. 147 of these were at pre-Entry to E2 levels, provision of which has been reduced in line with LSC priorities”.

#### 3.2 IMPACT OF THE CHANGES TO FEE POLICIES

The impact of the changes to the ESOL fee policies has been greatest on the most vulnerable groups and individuals in the communities that require ESOL provision. In particular women from low income families, especially those from African and Asian settled communities are hit hardest by the new fee regime. Without English and the support of ESOL courses they face increasing isolation. This can harm the impetus for both integration and community cohesion.

In the Midlands an OFTSED report on an adult and community learning service reported that some learners who had free classes last year who are not eligible for any fee reduction, have not returned—often wives who are just over the threshold for fee reduction who will not spend money on themselves as they cannot take that money out of the family.

ESOL teachers in a college in the North East reported more than 50% reduction in ESOL enrolments in September 2007, with over 50 would-be students expressing an interest in joining an ESOL course, passing the college’s eligibility checks but then not enrolling because they could not afford the fees.

As we have stated above, the government did try to alleviate some of the hardship from imposing fees for ESOL with over £4 million additional funding going into provider learner support funds. However guidelines for the use of this arrived very late and providers seem to have interpreted them in a variety of ways. From the reports reaching UCU, access to this support seems to have been a post code lottery and very dependent on the particular criteria that providers used in September.

The OFSTED report referred to above, stated that the explanation and administration of implementing the new funding system had a huge detrimental effect and led to extra pressure on the tutors. This was in terms of the time involved in talking about funding with learners who mostly have a low level grasp of English. The words of an ESOL teacher in Liverpool capture some of what happened:

“Our biggest problem is getting the relevant, and more complex, documentation for enrolment. Students often don’t understand what to bring and why. Most enrolments here need seven different pieces of paper! Getting the necessary paperwork for enrolment from students has been a nightmare which has left teachers completely frazzled and demoralised”.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> UCU “Increasing exclusion, raising barriers: the real costs of charging for ESOL” November 2007.

The government in its various statements on ESOL since introducing the changes to fees policies, has frequently said that employers using labour whose first language is not English should pay for ESOL provision. A new suite of shorter more employment-orientated ESOL at work programmes and qualifications have been introduced and there are examples of excellent ESOL workplace programmes often introduced with the assistance of trade unions and union learning representatives.

However there still remain considerable problems around obtaining sufficient employer action in taking responsibility for the ESOL needs of their workforce. Despite programmes such as Train to Gain which carry large amounts of government funding, around two thirds of all employers provide no work place training whatsoever, so the likelihood of such employers providing ESOL courses or paying for their employees to attend such programmes is small. There are concerns as to whether Train to Gain in its present form is a suitable vehicle for ESOL in the workplace.

Many migrants are employed in low-wage low-skills work. Much of this may entail long hours, shift work, and temporary work which can change at short notice. Many may be housed in isolated accommodation with poor transport links. All these factors and others can militate against the kind of sustained learning that those without English need. Indeed as providers are judged on their success rates for learners which are calculated on the basis of attendance and achievement, some providers may be reluctant to organise ESOL programmes for potential students who through no fault of their own, have very disjointed patterns of learning.

#### 4. THE WAY FORWARD

The Commission on Integration and Community Cohesion<sup>42</sup> argued that given “the key role immigration now plays in the success of the UK economy, and the importance of interaction in reducing concerns about immigrants, ESOL funding needed to be reconsidered; and that more innovative ways of providing ESOL need to be looked at”.

It recommended that the then DfES should continue to review its allocation of resource for ESOL, to ensure that there is adequate provision, and respond to increasing demand; that local areas should be encouraged to use their money for English language provision more flexibly and that new commissioning structures could enable close partnerships with voluntary sector organisations, and these should be explored further; that money saved on translating written materials should be added to the resources available for English lessons, and that there should be increasing recognition that learning English is not just about formal ESOL classes, it’s about how community groups, places of worship, schools and family learning can be part of a set of pathways that lead to a standard exam. It also went on to argue that:

“it is only right that those who benefit most from migration, including businesses that employ migrant labour, should pay a contribution towards the cost of ESOL training”.

These suggestions and the recommendations at the beginning of this document will form part of the UCU response to the current DIUS consultation on ESOL and community cohesion.

The government has made clear on several occasions that it wants to focus provision on those most in need. In a letter to *The Guardian* on 16 January 2007, Minister for Further and Higher Education and Lifelong Learning Bill Rammell, wrote:

“... I want to ensure those in the greatest need continue to get full support... we must also address the needs of those settled in the UK who have been disadvantaged through poor skills for too long and who will remain a cost to the economy without the means to progress...”.

Our members are committed professionals, serious about playing their part as educators in bringing hope and cohesion to our poorest and most socially excluded communities. Now that the impact of the changes in ESOL provision is becoming clear, they are calling on the government to play its part by thoroughly evaluating the funding regime to ensure that it supports rather than penalises those in greatest need.

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### Memorandum by Westminster City Council

#### SUMMARY

Westminster City Council is pleased to respond to the Communities and Local Government Committee’s Inquiry into Community Cohesion and Migration. Our response focuses very specifically on our concerns in relation to impacts of migration and specifically the impact caused by the use of inadequate population estimates and projections and the implications for the distribution of funding to English local authorities with regard to community cohesion. This response therefore focuses on the first two elements of the Committee’s inquiry focusing specifically on the implications for the distribution of scarce financial resources:

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<sup>42</sup> Commission on Integration and Cohesion—Our shared future July 2007 Department for Communities and Local Government Page 57–58.

- the effect of recent inward migration on community cohesion; and
- the effectiveness of local and central government action.

International migration levels to Westminster and surrounding boroughs have been traditionally significant, and recently published ONS figures, covering the years 2001–06 show Westminster as having the highest volume of international migration per 1,000 population in England & Wales. Westminster is uniquely placed therefore, to comment on the problems caused by non-robust national migration statistics on the resources of Local Authorities and the consequent the benefits of international in-migration as well as the relative impact on community cohesion.

Westminster has been at the forefront of research in a growing consensus within the public sector, that flaws in national migration figures and the current definitions and formulae used to drive local authority, police and health service resources, are so significant that they threaten mainstream services and community cohesion.

It should be noted that although there are direct impacts of migration to local authority areas such as the pressures to the private rented sector, overcrowded accommodation, rough sleeping, increased cleansing and refuse collection, the indirect impacts are greater still. Indirect impacts are those caused by the lack of accurate government management data. In the case of population estimates this is extremely urgent and will cause severe detrimental impacts as they can lead to a systemic underfunding within local government and NHS funding distribution system.

## THE EFFECT OF RECENT INWARD MIGRATION ON COMMUNITY COHESION

### *The Challenges Faced by Westminster as a First Point of Arrival*

Westminster faces particular challenges as it is the first point of arrival for a large proportion of new arrivals from overseas. An estimated 2,000 migrants arrive at Victoria Coach station each week on coaches which originate on the continent. This figure excludes migrants arriving on train, tube, bus and coach services from the major London airports.

Since the 2001 census Westminster has seen rapid population growth linked to increasing levels of international migration. The following research results outline the issues raised by Westminster regarding current population estimates.

- Westminster is the number one destination for working migrants accepted through the Workers Registration scheme—over 16,000 have registered in Westminster between May 2004 to March 2007.
- Over 34,000 residents of Westminster received a New National Insurance Number between 2002–06—equivalent to 17% of our 2001 census population.
- Around half the rough sleepers in central London are now A8 migrants (Council survey December 2006).
- There has been a large rise in the numbers of migrants being supported through voluntary groups. Destitution amongst A2 migrants from Bulgaria and Romania who are not entitled to work permits is becoming an increasing issue in the City according to voluntary bodies in the Victoria and Pimlico areas who support refugees and migrants.
- Our 2006 Housing Needs survey has identified increasing overcrowding and household sizes linked in significant part to a growth in housing of multiple occupation. This is adding further to the acute pressures on affordable housing in the City where 44% of children already live in overcrowded accommodation.
- Thousands of migrants are not being counted within Westminster’s boundaries. Independent research has found that Westminster has over 13,000 illegal migrants within its boundary at any one time and that around 11,000 short-term migrants annually are “hidden” as they are not registered in official statistics.<sup>43</sup>
- Innovative research using ethnographic techniques conducted by ESRO suggests that some migrant communities in Westminster may be twice as likely to register for bank accounts and mobile phones than with the state institutions such as with a GP or for National Insurance numbers that are used either directly or as proxies to estimate population figures.
- The ESRO research also found that the Office of National Statistics’ definition of a “household” does not accurately reflect the complex living arrangements of migrants in the twenty first century. Westminster is increasingly finding multiple fluid households in properties across the housing sector.

<sup>43</sup> Westminster Population Research. SQW September 2007.

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- Research conducted by SQW and Local Government Futures shows that official estimates are not “fit for purpose” in areas as diverse as Westminster. This is backed up by the fact that the Office for National Statistics, responsible for compiling population estimates, refused to include Westminster in a test of the forthcoming 2011 census that was undertaken in May 2007. The ONS said: “our methods might be sufficiently good enough for more typical cities”.
  - Local Government Futures research revealed: “We have found no evidence to suggest that the combination of the City of Westminster’s extreme characteristics have been considered, or addressed, by the current or proposed ONS methodologies for calculating mid year population estimates between 2002 and 2005”.
  - At a population summit held by Westminster City Council and attended by approximately thirty other councils identified the non-measurement of short term migration as a major problem: “Short term migration has a significant impact on the provision of public services in many local authority areas but migrants who are identified by the International Passenger Survey as planning to stay in the country for less than 12 months are excluded from the existing population estimates used to distribute grant funding”. This approach will by definition exclude many international students planning to stay in the UK for a single academic year or migrants from Old Commonwealth nations such as Australia and South Africa as well as individuals from A8 migrant states whose intentions are not firm when they arrive in the UK.
  - In the absence of an ONS short term migration dataset at local authority level (which is not expected until 2008 at the earliest) the government should introduce a specific grant for the CSR07 period to target resources at those authorities most affected by these communities. This grant could be distributed using proxy indicators such as WRS or NiNO data which are available at local authority level”.<sup>44</sup>
  - The summit also found a lack of clarity on the minimum standards of accuracy for population estimates and raised concerns about the relocation of the ONS to Wales linked to inadequate funding of migration estimates methodology.

#### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ACTION

##### *Poor management data impacts on local communities*

The cumulative effect of the population revisions changes announced on 24 April in London was a loss in population of over 60,000 residents between mid-2001 and mid-2005, most of which is attributable to the introduction of the LFS to supplement the IPS at the regional level. Westminster saw a reduction to its previous migrant allocation of around 15,500 which the City Council believes is counterintuitive. This resulting relative loss of population does not reflect our experience on the ground and evidence from a number of boroughs and other authorities to the contrary.

Westminster City Council believes that they will lose up to £12 million before damping in funding per year because the government is not properly counting population—particularly in relation to short term and hidden or illegal migrants.

There is mounting evidence from alternative estimates, the Statistics Commission, the Audit Commission, the Governor of the Bank of England, and the ONS that suggests that the population estimates significantly underestimate the scale of international in-migration nationally. This reflects the weakness of using small sample survey data to generate information on the migration patterns of hundreds of thousands of individuals.

Of those sampled by the International Passenger Survey in 2005, for example just under 3,000 were in-migrants as opposed to permanent UK residents. If the samples from the three largest airports (Gatwick, Heathrow and Manchester) are excluded only 79 in migrants were in fact interviewed by the ONS through the IPS in 2004 for all the other UK airports combined (including Liverpool, Stansted and Luton which have the largest proportion of low cost flights from central and eastern Europe). Similarly in 2005 only 17 migrants coming through the Channel Tunnel were interviewed under the IPS. Westminster questions whether these sample sizes—which will drive the data for the distribution of NHS and local authority funding over the CSR 2007 period—are sufficiently robust to measure the true quantum of migration into the UK.

The current assumptions about migration which are derived primarily from survey based methods need to be supplemented by a more rigorous review of local datasets held by local and central government as well as seeking evidence from the business and voluntary sector. This requires a more proactive approach by government departments to data sharing.

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<sup>44</sup> Westminster City Council Population summit 2nd July 2007.

There has been widespread criticism of the methodology used by the Office of National Statistics to measure migration dating back to an investigation conducted by the Statistics Commission in October 2003—*The 2001 Census in Westminster: Interim Report*.

“... it is a fact that whatever the true population in Westminster on Census night, the population now—two years later—could be significantly different. The churn in population in inner urban areas, and especially in Westminster, is high, with up to a quarter of the electorate on the electoral register changing annually. We know that methods currently used for measuring migration into and out of the UK, and between local authority areas, are unreliable. Particularly unreliable are the estimates of international emigration and immigration into and out of Central London. Without improved methods, up-dating population census figures is liable to error”.

The Statistics Commission has written to government departments alongside the Office of National Statistics to further reinforce the consequences of using “limited” population data.

“There is now a broad recognition that available estimates of migrant numbers are inadequate for managing the economy, policies and services”.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, National Statistician in May 2006  
to four government departments

“Until our research has concluded you may wish to consider how the estimates and projections are used and whether there is any scope for recognising the particular uncertainty for those parts of the country that are affected by relatively high levels of migration”.

Letter from Glen Watson Director Social Reporting & Analysis Group  
of the Office for National Statistics to Lindsay Bell Director,  
Local Government Finance CLG December 2005

### *Community Cohesion Funding*

The recent announcement of the allocation of £34 million of community cohesion funding for local authorities over the next three years by the DCLG applied used questionable criteria to determine funding allocations and fail to consult with local authorities on how this criteria was determined.

The distribution methodology was based on the existing BVPI on community cohesion (% of residents surveyed believing that believe people get along well with each other)—the national average of this BVPI is 81% and only those authorities with a score of 75% or less received a share of the cohesion funding. However because the data is only based on local authority wide information it will not address particular community cohesion challenges at a more local level eg in particular wards. The maximum allocation per authority in year 1 is £120,000 although some eligible Councils will receive only £26,000—insufficient to fund even one full time equivalent post.

At first glance Westminster scores highly on the measure at 84%, likely due to inner London’s successful cohesion as a result of hyper-diversity. However closer inspection reveals that in some of our deprived areas, where a perceived competition for resources is more likely, the score is low as 59%.

### THE ROLE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS A TOOL IN PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS

Westminster faces particular challenges as the borough with the highest net migration in the country. As a first point of stay for new arrivals, many needing English language training, it is essential that ESOL provision is adequately funded. As such we welcome Government’s decision to re-think means testing for ESOL and consult with local authorities on ESOL provision.

### TAKING FORWARD THE COMMISSION ON INTEGRATION AND COHESIONS RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO MIGRATION

The Commission on Integration & Cohesion highlighted the clear links between discrimination and cohesion with perceived discrimination and fear of discrimination preventing people from engaging with those from different groups. Success in tackling and eliminating discrimination, particularly in a borough as a diverse as Westminster, is an essential part of our approach.

It should be noted that it’s anticipated that the proposed Single Equality Act is likely to introduce a positive public sector duty to promote equality across all six strands of equality (Race/Gender/Disability/Age/Religion & Belief and sexual orientation). It is essential that adequate funding is provided to local authorities in order to deliver on this duty.

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 CONCLUSION

Ted Cante, Migration Works Seminar Nov 2006 Slough “Community tensions are sometimes caused by the perception of competition between groups over resources and councils have to be able to demonstrate that this is not the case”.

“The government needs to look with some urgency at funding areas appropriately where statistics are not keeping pace with what is happening on the ground”.

Westminster would like to conclude by noting that the recent three year local government finance settlement published by the DCLG in December 2007 is likely to have been based on inadequate migration data. Unless this is addressed promptly—and before the next three year settlement is announced in 2010—this could create the situation where the perception of communities competing over scarce resources is made worse through the government’s lack of engagement on this issue and a wider failure to generate accurate estimates on migration at local authority level.

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 Memorandum by the West Norfolk Partnership

## BACKGROUND TO KING’S LYNN &amp; WEST NORFOLK

The Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk is predominantly a rural district within the county of Norfolk. The borough is the 8th largest local authority by area in the country at 1,428.8 square kilometres, containing 102 parishes, as well as the unparished urban area of King’s Lynn. The total population of the borough is 142,300,<sup>45</sup> making it the 355th most sparsely populated local authority nationally. The predominant urban area is the town of King’s Lynn (with a population of 41,679<sup>46</sup>), although the distance from the larger cities of Peterborough (38 miles), Cambridge (45 miles) and Norwich (50 miles) means that the town performs the service functions of a much larger centre.

Over the past decade parts of King’s Lynn and the wider borough have received a significant influx of economic migrants, mainly from the accession A8 countries that joined the EU in 2004. Between 2004 and 2007 the borough wide area has received the third highest number of migrant workers in the Eastern region—just behind Peterborough and Luton.<sup>47</sup> The arrival of large numbers of migrants, particularly from Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, as well as Portugal has increasingly become a contentious issue in certain parts of the borough and has put a certain strain on the provision of certain public services, as well as having an increasing effect on existing community relations.

The West Norfolk Partnership (WNP) is the local strategic partnership (LSP) for the borough.

The report “Our Shared Future” published by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion identifies five descriptive types of area where community cohesion issues have been identified. This was done in a bid to highlight local distinctiveness in experiences of migration. We believe that West Norfolk very much falls into the category of “changing less affluent rural areas”—identified by the report as a particular type of area experiencing cohesion challenges. Appendix A, taken from this report clearly shows that data collated from the 2006 BVPI survey indicates that King’s Lynn and West Norfolk is part of a larger area around the Wash experiencing lower than national levels of cohesion. We recognise, as the commission’s report does, the local context and factors that influence responses to migration and contribute to community cohesion. Similarly the invitation for evidence for this inquiry asks for particular regard to areas that have experienced rapid increases in new inward migration and areas that have lack of experience of diversity. We believe the challenges facing King’s Lynn and West Norfolk are very much influenced by these broad criteria and appreciate the opportunity to expand on these further through this invitation.

## SYNOPSIS

We would like to draw the committee’s attention to the following points, which are considered important to community cohesion in King’s Lynn and West Norfolk. In this memorandum these factors are divided into thematic paragraphs, for ease of the committee. However it is worth noting that we recognise and indeed emphasise that many of these factors act in conjunction with one another and do not operate in isolation, particularly when examining their overall impact upon community cohesion.

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<sup>45</sup> ONS (2006) Estimate.

<sup>46</sup> ONS (2004) mid-census figure.

<sup>47</sup> Workers registration scheme approved applications by Government office region, local authorities and nationally (May 2004–07).

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## GAPS IN STATISTICS

It has been noted generally that there is a certain lack of knowledge and confidence in statistics relating to levels of in-migration to the UK over recent years. Although there is a lack of confidence in statistics nationally, the lack of robust statistics at a local level has been a considerable problem facing West Norfolk. Whilst there have been attempts to ascertain a figure for A8 accession migrants in West Norfolk, either via National Insurance number registrations or the WRS (Worker's Registration Scheme) these numbers have tended to under-evaluate the true level of migrants. In 2006 the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Inclusions Project report by the Norwich and Norfolk Racial Equality Council (NNREC) estimated that there was a minimum of 7,000 migrants from the A8 countries registered with an employer in Norfolk. Data provided by King's Lynn Asylum and Refugee Support (KLARS), supported by various anecdotal sources suggest that figures are much higher.

This gap in knowledge of who is moving to West Norfolk is further compounded by the lack of any national data that is collected along grounds of nationality opposed to ethnicity. Census data is collected along predominantly ethnicity lines—ie “White-British”, “Asian-British” and “White-Other”. However this information often fails to highlight differences that can impact substantially upon community cohesion, particularly in an area such as West Norfolk. The category of “White-other” encompasses all of the nationalities of those EU-accession migrants that make up the bulk of those coming to King's Lynn, therefore masking the national and particularly linguistic differences which has a significant impact on planning for service provision and on community relations.

The lack of accurate numbers makes it difficult to predict and plan for change. The difficulty in being able to accurately map the diverse and rapidly changing communities of West Norfolk has implications for strategies for tackling community cohesion.

## RISE OF THE FAR RIGHT

The recent rise of the British National Party in parts of King's Lynn is worthy of note. In the local elections held on the 3 May 2007 one BNP candidate in North Lynn came within 59 votes of being elected, with both BNP candidates picking up 34% of the vote in this ward between them. It has been noted that if the BNP had fielded a single candidate opposed to two in this two-member ward then the BNP probably would have been elected. Such a dramatic rise in an area not normally considered politically extremist attracted national media attention:

For the first time the BNP will be fighting for votes in such areas as King's Lynn, Norfolk, anti-fascists campaigners suspect the BNP is attempting to exploit fears over the arrival of eastern-European workers to pick up support.

(Nigel Morris, Home Affairs Correspondent Independent 13 April 2007)

The near electoral success in one ward in King's Lynn highlights not only the rapidly changing demographics but also the spatial variances in experiences of migration and the small scale that these often operate within.

### *Misconceptions*

Intrinsically linked with the potential for the increase in BNP support in King's Lynn are more widespread misconceptions about the perceived threats of inward migration into the area. Anecdotal evidence suggests that common perceptions amongst members of the resident population are that immigrants are “taking all our jobs”. This perception is contradictory to statistical evidence that overall unemployment across the borough is low and immigration has had limited impact upon this. In fact many migrant workers constitute an important element of the local economy, taking on jobs in the agricultural and food processing industries, contributing to the success of these industries locally.

The committee will be aware that such misconceptions and sentiments are not limited to King's Lynn but have a national resonance and can lead to a resident population feeling not only fear and threat towards migrants but a certain degree of victimisation at the hands of in-migration. In King's Lynn such misconceptions have been fuelled by the local media, who are equally unused to reporting the complex issues and impact of these on society locally. For example headlines related to criminal activity mention the nationality of the perpetrator in the case of people of non-British nationality (see appendix B, taken from the *Lynn News* on 15 January 2008).

The West Norfolk Diverse Community Forum, established by the West Norfolk Partnership, has recognised the impact on community cohesion that the local media can induce. Appendix C to this memorandum is a copy of correspondence sent on behalf of the West Norfolk Diverse Community Forum to a local newspaper in response to the concerns highlighted above.

### *Lack of Knowledge and Skills*

The often provocative prose of the media, as well as the more overtly inflammatory literature distributed by the BNP is often not being challenged enough. As mentioned previously King's Lynn is one of the areas that is experiencing large scale in-migration for the first time in recent history. There is lack of dedicated resource capacity and knowledge and skills to address many of the aspects around community cohesion or to challenge many of the negative impacts upon this mentioned above. As a consequence, the following statement resonates strongly with our experiences:

Those rural areas with clusters of migrant workers can face significant public service challenges. Local authorities and their partners can have capacity challenges (compared to larger and better resourced urban authorities) as well as issues around knowledge and skills they need to respond effectively.

(A8 migrant workers in rural areas, Briefing paper.  
Commission for Rural Communities: January 2007)

We are clear about the challenges this element of local community leadership presents to the council and its councillors, largely inexperienced in handling issues of this nature and sensitivity. Much of the expertise available on managing migration and community cohesion is urban-centric. In West Norfolk and across similar rural authorities, particularly around the Wash, we recognise that there needs to be a greater understanding of the issues involved in service provision and the impacts on community cohesion that the recent migrations from the A8 accession countries are having. The WNP has recently been successful in securing funding and support through the IDeA Migrant Worker Excellent Practice Programme and has been working closely, at both a strategic and operational level, with our neighbouring authority Fenland District Council to jointly promote equality and diversity in a bid to tackle the cohesion issues arising around in-migration. The WNP believes that increased research needs to be undertaken to examine the geographies of migrant workers' lifestyles, as they often differ greatly from that of established populations. Better cross-boundary working would be one way of approaching this, recognising that traditional district; county and regional boundaries are regularly crossed and have little relevance to many of the new migrants, particularly around the Wash area.

### *Language Difficulties*

One of the biggest challenges facing local service providers are issues around translation. The ability to deliver effective translation has significant resource implications for the council and partners, but also has the ability to impact on community cohesion. Norfolk Police Constabulary has spent £192,000 pounds on translation costs in the Western division of the county in 2006-07, mainly on Polish, Lithuanian and Russian. This figure represents two thirds of the police's county-wide spend on translation services. The amount of money spent on translation across local service providers remains a contentious issue, as demonstrated by the reports in the local media:

Translation costs you £100,000 a year (*Lynn News* front page head line 2006)

The scarcity of resource for translation costs, crucial for increased integration and understanding between migrants, service providers and established populations is a concern in West Norfolk and providing an effective and comprehensive translation service is seen as important tool in tackling many of the issues around community cohesion highlighted within this evidence to the committee.

The West Norfolk Partnership, as well as many of the component service providers, has taken forward a number of local initiatives in tackling this issue. A "Welcome Pack" for West Norfolk has been developed since 2005. Supported by the West Norfolk Diverse Community forum, "Welcome to West Norfolk is a booklet, translated in five different languages, containing key information on five key themes of employment and benefits, housing, health, education and community services. Information is included on rules and procedures surrounding ownership and the use of vehicles and on the electoral register and voting. A second edition of the welcome pack is in development and funding has recently been secured from GO-East for an audio version of the pack.

Service providers have also actively recruited from the recent migrant groups in a bid to improve their service provision to new members of the community. Both the local police and PCT have recruited multi-lingual staff as an approach to this problem. The West Norfolk Partnership is also in the process of developing English courses for new migrants in community centres. Despite the positive activity in addressing language barriers, led by the WNP, there is considerable concern about continuing ability to resource such initiatives. For example government funding for ESOL training has been withdrawn.

### *Demand on Services*

The influx of a predominantly young migrant population has impacted on the ability to provide key services and has led to increased pressure on certain specific local services. The rapid pace of this change has increased this pressure too. For example the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has reported that maternity services are particularly under strain from the changing demographics of the local area, as migrant Latvians especially place a greater demand on resources.

A recent report has also highlighted a problem which is difficult to tackle and is becoming increasingly prevalent:

Those with ongoing medical conditions or sudden health needs have occasionally turned to the hospital based services such as Accident and Emergency at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn. Sometimes gangmasters or even the police have been involved in getting such patients seen. Because anyone can access emergency care at A&E without having to produce documentation or proof of address, and because the GUM clinic stresses confidentiality, they are considered safer than other NHS outlets be undocumented migrant workers. Unsurprisingly this involves requests for help with problems beyond the remit of hospital services.<sup>48</sup>

Such increased demand on specific services is by no means unique to West Norfolk, but a consequence of an influx of migrants in other parts of the country. However the rural nature of the borough has magnified the effect of this increased pressure, with fewer access points to key services than many more urbanised areas. Services such as maternity care and schooling experience "bottle-necks" as a consequence and often there is lack of resource to deal with all the issues involved with increased pressure from a new migrant community. The concentration of new migrants in certain parts of a sparsely populated borough can be highly visible which in turn also exacerbates the problem, and can increase community tensions, particularly if perceived inequalities are seized upon by the media. The example of certain key services experiencing increased pressure in certain spatial locations is demonstrated by the increase of Eastern European enrolment in primary schools. In certain parts of King's Lynn, such as the Greyfriars Primary School the percentage of pupils with English as a second language has increased to over 30%, whilst in other parts of the borough it remains extremely low.

Obviously such unequal impacts of migration require more spatial specific solutions than borough-wide initiatives. This has significant community cohesion issues especially when the possibility of unequal allocation of resources between localities and different groups can be viewed negatively.

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### Memorandum by the East of England Development Agency

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In recent years there has been a steady increase in the numbers of migrant workers coming to the East of England, making an essential on-going contribution to the success of the region's economy.

1.2 Following a recommendation within the region's Social Strategy, the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) began to develop a research programme focused on developing a better understanding of the employment patterns of migrant workers in the East of England.

1.3 In 2004 EEDA commissioned London Metropolitan University to undertake a major research project. The project made a significant contribution to the development of a strategic response to the numbers of migrant workers coming to the region by providing as detailed as possible an account of migrant worker trends in the East of England; offering an extensive account of the actual experiences of migrant workers; and presenting recommendations for public policy intervention at local, regional, national level and, in some cases, European level.

1.4 The report led to the establishment of a regional migrant worker steering group, chaired by EEDA. This group has guided EEDA's migrant worker programme, which has included the following initiatives:

- An EEDA funded Migrant Worker Information and Advice Gateway for workers and employers in the region (through a dedicated phone line for migrants available in six languages, a phone line for employers and a web portal).
- An EEDA supported regional interpreter training project.
- An EEDA funded studentship at Anglia Ruskin University to provide up to date analysis of numbers and trends in migrant workers in the region.
- EEDA working with partners in the East of England, Spain, Portugal, Bulgaria and Poland in the only successful UK application to the "EU year of worker mobility" to provide "know before you go" information to migrant workers—linked to the Information Gateway project.

1.5 EEDA is continuing to coordinate the region's response to migrant worker issues and recently led on the organisation of a national Migrant Worker conference on 22 November 2007. The conference endorsed EEDA's role in co-ordinating cross regional and national work in this area. The conference backed calls for more joined up working across central government and the regions; for better migration and population data to enable better service planning and for a national information portal.

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<sup>48</sup> Dr Becky Taylor and Dr Ben Rogaly (2003) Report on Migrant working in West Norfolk.

2. *The effect of recent inward migration on community cohesion, and public concerns about this effect*

2.1 Inward migration in the East of England has had most impact in areas that have seen a rapid increase in the numbers of migrants in a relatively short period of time. Inevitably, this has occurred in communities where there are already established issues for the local community in: accessing public services, for example registering with doctors/dentists; employment or availability of housing.

2.2 Public concerns about migrants are influenced by many factors. The portrayal of immigration in the media, public comments from elected and un-elected officials and the perceived impact that migrants have on public services all play a part; it is rare that the media cover stories that reflect the positive impact migrants have on the communities they join. The reality is that integration of migrants into a community is a complex issue and one that should be discussed in context, within fora designed to improve the lives of migrants and the existing community.

2.3 The New Link Project in Peterborough has a strong record in tackling issues around community cohesion. This project is supported by EEDA through its investing in communities programme and is due to be visited by members of the select committee. An outline document is attached.

3. *The role, responsibilities and actions of different bodies on community cohesion and migration, including those of local and central government and of employers*

3.1 The third sector in the East of England undertakes a lot of positive work to address the needs of migrants and the communities that they join. However, the sector suffers from limited resources and often works within a politically unsupportive environment. Voluntary sector organisations should be encouraged to work with each other and to share resources, including information, in order to promote the work that they do, provide a voice for migrants and support migrant communities to find and use their own voice in the medium to longer term. Advice for Life, Community Action Dacorum and Keystone Development Trust are all examples of VSOs doing just this.

3.2 In the East of England, in areas where there has been a greater number of migrants arriving (including places where turnover is rapid even if absolute numbers are never very high *per se*), it has been our experience that local government has taken some action. Sometimes this has been very positive and timely and sometimes not. Local authorities should work with central government and other agencies to plan their response to the needs of migrants and the communities they live in for the short, medium and long term. There is a need for local government to be more proactive in their response and take the lead in welcoming new arrivals to the region.

3.3 It is widely recognised that there is an economic benefit to the regional economy as a result of increased migration in recent years. While this may also have placed some additional pressure on services it is not by any means the only pressure that services are under and should not be presented as such; something which the media are often guilty of doing.

3.4 Local and central government need to do a lot more to dispel the myths surrounding migration by being very clear about what is actually happening and putting that into the wider context. Central government can support this by providing clearer and more consistent messages across government about migrants and the contribution that they can and do make to communities across the United Kingdom. Currently, migration is presented very much as something that needs to be controlled in order to reduce the negative. Rather, it should be presented as a prospect to be managed in order to maximise the opportunities and the benefits. Local, regional and national agencies should be supported to address the issues surrounding migration. The new migration department in the Department for Communities and Local Government is a positive step and hopefully the beginning of a more welcoming and pro-active stance by government towards migrants.

3.5 Individual employers have rarely spoken out about the importance of migration to their businesses. The single most frequent reason given to us for this is because of the negative press they feel they might encounter as a result. Through the experience of EEDA and partners we know that migrants have provided a pool of willing and able labour that is in demand in the East of England and in doing so they have enabled businesses to grow. Employers and their representative organisations are willing to engage with EEDA on the topic of migrant workers but frequently feel discouraged from doing so as a result of the media and political climate.

3.6 Through the transnational project mentioned above, EEDA has worked with employers to explain the importance of migrants to their businesses. A DVD is being produced to share with other employers as a way to disseminate this message. EEDA has begun working with employers across the region to address their reluctance to speak publicly on this topic and will focus its work on this in the coming months. Failing to address these issues would risk important investment and growth in the regional economy as businesses may look to relocate elsewhere to a location where the required labour is more easily accessible.

4. *The effectiveness of local and central government action and expenditure in promoting community cohesion and responding to inward migration flows, with particular regard to the following:*

- *areas that have experienced rapid increases in new inward migration;*
- *areas that have a lack of experience of diversity;*
- *areas where new migrant communities mix with existing settled migrant communities.*

4.1 As in other regions across the UK, it is widely recognised in the East of England that multi-agency approaches are most effective. Often however, funding and resources target the same areas in the same manner without a great deal of consideration being given to how agencies and organisations can co-ordinate their approaches for maximum effect. In the East of England we are trying to ensure that, as much as possible, agencies work together to address the key issues around migration.

4.2 In 2005, EEDA published the research report “Migrant Workers in the East of England”, which identified the five key issues—access to information; access to services; housing issues; skills issues related to language skills and difficulties in gaining re-qualifications, and research related to the level of information about migrant working.

4.3 Resources should be used to bring together the correct mix of people and skills to appropriately address the issues faced by migrants and the communities they join. Co-ordination and co-operation is key; statutory agencies may have the remit and experience to act, the third sector the community links and trust that is vital to success as well as flexibility in speed of response, and the private sector the resources required to make things happen. Partnerships across all three sectors could be very effective with each sector bringing a different skill set to the mix.

4.4 In addition to co-ordination and co-operation, it is important that action is taken at an appropriate level as there is a role for national, regional and local interventions. For example, a centrally (nationally) provided pool of information—in appropriate languages—that is accessible to regional and local service providers as well as to individuals would be extremely valuable. Regional and local services could then provide additional relevant information for their locality.

4.5 In EEDA we have taken a strategic approach by addressing the issues raised in research and then bringing together the relevant organisations to look at those issues in more detail. This strategic partnership is linked to grass-roots activity through 13 sub-regional multi-agency fora each of which comprises statutory and third sector organisations and sometimes private sector organisations too. Issues and concerns are fed up to the regional partnership which then raises them with government, partners in other regions and so on. This approach has to lead to specific outcomes, eg the pilot information portal project which is delivered by the third sector and provides information to migrants and employers through a combination of website and telephone help lines. Migrants and employers are involved in delivery and evaluation of the work to ensure that it responds to need over its lifetime. There is potential for this to become a national model if funding is made available from central government.

5. *The role of the English language as a tool in promoting the integration of migrants*

5.1 English language is vital if migrants are going to gain and provide maximum benefit from their time in the UK. It is vital that English language training is delivered in ways that are of greatest benefit to the learner. This includes issues of access, content, language of delivery and so on. A separate document is attached bringing together what has been learned about this issue in the East of England.

5.2 To maximise the efficiency of English language learning it is essential that services are bespoke to local community and individual needs. Often the language learning service offered is what is available rather than what is effective or appropriate.

5.3 Many migrants are here for economic benefit—generally that means employment. Place of work is therefore a great opportunity for people to learn and to integrate, perhaps more so than outside of work. While the new ESOL for work qualifications may be a step in the right direction, they are not necessarily at the appropriate level for many learners. Often people want very basic help in order to build confidence to try speaking English and once they have that opportunity and are supported to use their new language skills, then they are more likely to be able to take advantage of the mainstream / off-the-peg courses that are more widely available.

5.4 Sometimes the initial learning may have to be 1:1 or in non-open access groups to address some of the barriers to accessing language tuition that exist. For example, individuals may have been out of education for a long time or have literacy difficulties in their own language that need to be addressed first. Likewise there are cultural issues where, for example, women may not wish to attend classes at which men are also present.

6. *The impact of recent migration on local communities, including the impact on housing, education, health care, and other public services*

6.1 If work is to be done on housing then it needs to look at migration's impact on demand for housing as well as the supply of housing. A piece of work being prepared in the East of England suggests that the demand for social housing from the migrant community is negligible and that the vast majority of migrants access housing in the private rented sector (PRS). It also points out that in line with the target of 350,000 new homes to be built in this region by 2020, in excess of 100,000 individuals will be required to work in construction. Some of these people will inevitably be migrants. The latest draft of this work is attached with a final version due to be published in late February.

6.2 A similar situation exists with other services. The media has presented stories indicating that migrants place undue pressure on accident and emergency departments. However, if new arrivals are not familiar with the GP as gateway to health services (due to lack of information) it is unsurprising that they choose to access services via the accident and emergency unit of their local hospital. Various reports (such as Crossing Borders, Audit Commission 2007; Migrants' lives beyond the workplace, Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2007) have shown that the demand for health and education services is lower among migrants than local communities because they are generally young and healthy adults. We should also remember that many health workers are also migrants and they are needed to ensure delivery of services within the NHS.

6.3 In all of these public service areas there needs to be a balance between public perception, reality and practical solutions.

7. *Actions to take forward the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's recommendations relating to migration*

7.1 The single most important action is for the government to be much clearer and more consistent in its messages about integration of, and cohesion with, new migrants, whoever they are and for however long they choose to come and live and work in the UK. The Department for Communities and Local Government should be leading on this. What is required is a much more co-ordinated approach at the national and regional level with "good practice" being independently reviewed and evaluated so that it can be identified and promoted. Government should consider a cohesion and integration impact evaluation of all proposed action or policy.

7.2 To address the Commission's specific recommendation for a sample welcome pack—this has already been addressed in our region. The East of England is due to publish an interactive guide to welcome packs in late January based on a review of examples from across the East of England and the UK in general. Future investment should be focused on providing national level information centrally and in key languages for everyone to access. The idea of a national information portal was promoted at a Migrant Worker conference on 22 November 2007 and was widely agreed to be a good idea. DCLG could provide seed money to take this forward by tasking EEDA, who are already leading on this subject, with developing that national portal in partnership with other regional and national partners.

7.3 Government policy on the funding of ESOL should be reviewed. English language training should be delivered in ways that are accessible and appropriate to learners' needs and appropriate to their dependence on language for cohesion and integration, both within and outside of the workplace.

7.4 All government departments should make their administrative data available to the (soon to be) independent Statistics Board to facilitate the improvement of population and migration statistics.

ABOUT NEW LINK

New Link is a pioneering centre integrating new arrivals into the Peterborough settled local community. Receiving around 700-800 clients each month, New Link delivers a range of services including information and advice, and employment support. Uniquely, New Link also works with the settled community and other frontline services staff through awareness training and community development programmes. New Link also advises central and regional government, the Police, Health Services and other local authorities on the successful integration of new arrivals into communities.

*Information, advice and guidance*

The Resource Centre provides information, advice and guidance to new arrivals, helping them settle into the community, accessing services in the city and support with issues such as employment, training, crime, benefits, health, housing, and immigration.

20 languages are spoken in-house of which the main nationalities are: Polish (50%), Slovakian (19%), Czech (9%), Portuguese (7%) with around 280 individual client appointments being held each month as well as drop-in sessions and outreach sessions held by, for example CAB and the PCT. 85% of enquiries are dealt with in-house without need to refer to other agencies or service providers

*Community Development*

New Link's Community Development programme assists New Arrivals to gain contact with people from their own community or to develop their own community organisations if they do not already exist. We provide ongoing support and training on how to establish, manage and sustain a community group. So far, over 20 groups have been established. New Link also works with over 15 Muslim based groups and many more individuals delivering the Government's Preventing Extremism agenda. In partnership with Peterborough Mediation and the Greater Peterborough Partnership working between the settled and new communities to resolve conflict, improving cohesion and understanding.

*Employment and Enterprise*

New Link supports both individuals finding work, and employers finding workers to match the jobs they have. The aim is to match more closely the skills of workers and the work available. A mix of individual and workshop support is given eg compiling CVs, completing job application forms, interview skills. In addition, consultancy support is provided for individuals wishing to set up new businesses.

*Awareness Training and myth busting*

New Link's awareness training programme helps cohesion between the host community (including frontline services staff) and new arrivals to the city by providing cultural awareness and "myth busting". The training has been well received and is seen as an important influence in encouraging harmony in the city.

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