



Inclusive Cities Action Plan Update

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

Autumn 2022



Developments during 2022

Like our partner cities, we experienced a series of operational challenges in our work with newcomers during 2022, including – amongst others:

- the rapid mobilisation of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme,
- continuing to source and retain accommodation for those evacuated from Afghanistan and beneficiaries of the UK Resettlement Scheme in the context of an acute shortage of affordable housing,
- engaging with the growing population of Hong Kong BNOs arriving in the area and understanding their needs and expectations
- Responding to the standing up of asylum contingency accommodation in the city with no notice, as well as the complex negotiations around the sourcing of asylum dispersal accommodation in our area.

In this context, the more reflective and strategic work required to create an agreed Inclusive Cities Action Plan has had to take a lower priority and the resource has not been available to maintain Brighton & Hove's Inclusive Cities Task Force.

However, the increased focus on forced migration and the additional resource that comes with the Homes for Ukraine scheme and the resettlement work is enabling an environment where a joined-up approach to newcomers is being progressed.

A lengthy report detailing the different strands of refugee and asylum related work and setting out priorities for the coming year (see below) was presented to and well received by the Tourism, Equality, Communities and Culture Committee (TECC – chaired by Councillor Steph Powell, strategic lead for Inclusive Cities) in September 2022.

The council's project management team was tasked with examining the current governance of migration work in the council and has made some proposals for better cross-council collaboration and lines of accountability. These will be examined in more depth.

This month Sanctuary on Sea, the local City of Sanctuary Group is hosting an in-person consultation event with the local migrant sector, sanctuary seekers and the local authority to continue the process of the city's re-accreditation as a City of Sanctuary which will form part of a future Inclusive Cities Action Plan.

Analysis of local Census data on migration will be shared when available and discussions facilitated about how the findings can shape service development and delivery.

A new communications officer will be working on the response to Ukrainians but will also help shape the city's narrative of newcomer inclusion.

The May 2022 convening in Oxford provided Brighton & Hove operational and strategic leads with valuable time away from the office for reflection and learning, especially as the Ukraine response was still very new and requiring a great deal of resource and sharing of ideas amongst authorities.

COMPAS's Inclusive Cities briefings and publications have provided guidance for council colleagues new to this area of work.

Find out more

info@compas.ox.ac.uk

Case Study: the Multi-Cultural Employability Support Hub (MESH)

This project started life as the Migrant ESOL Support hub which operated between April 2019 and December 2020 and initially had three local partners: a community development organisation (Trust for Developing Communities – TDC), a specialist migrant rights organisation (Voices in Exile) and an ESOL provider (the Friends Centre). The original project was funded by a grant from the government's Controlling Migration Fund to the local authority with some additional project management funding from the local authority community grants programme, recognising that the collaboration between the three partners was innovative and would lead to a more co-ordinated offer of Information, Advice and Guidance for newcomers in the city, as well as skill sharing and knowledge exchange between the organisations involved.

The delivery of the second iteration of the MESH (from October 2021) – the Multi-Cultural Employability Support Hub – has been taken on entirely by the Trust for Developing Communities, using expertise and experience gained from the earlier project. This project was funded by a 12 month grant to the local authority from the Department of Work and Pension's (DWP) Flexible Support Fund. The DWP was keen to build trust and confidence in their services amongst marginalized populations, including migrants. MESH has provided personalised support to move people quickly into work, alongside holistic job clubs providing training, CVs, job application and peer support. In the first year 50 people have found work and 250 have moved closer to employment, far exceeding targets of 12 and 150 respectively. Clients also benefit from integration with TDC's other work – social

prescribing, mental health support and community groups.

A successful aspect of the project has been the relationship between the project's advisors and Job Centre staff. With TDC staff having a regular Job Centre presence, they directly support customers alongside work coaches. Long standing engagement from TDC has built trusting relationships with excluded communities – so the outcome is that those communities, including migrant communities, have increased trust in Job Centres and their services.

A bid has been submitted to the DWP for the continuation of the project and this is under consideration. Meanwhile the City Council has invested in a specialist employability advisor to work at TDC with Ukrainians alongside the other staff on the project.

An associated development has been a recent *Inclusive Employer jobs fair*, hosted by the DWP, TDC and Brighton Chamber of Commerce for Ukrainians and others with English as an additional language. The Homes for Ukraine funding and renewed attention being paid to the recruitment of newcomer job seekers has the potential to progress further Brighton & Hove's work on the integration of newcomer populations through employment. This is to be prioritised over the coming 12 months as outlined in the TECC committee report mentioned above – see appendix priority H. The local authority was present at the jobs fair as a recruiting employer, alongside others with high vacancy rates and a desire to diversity their workforce to reflect the local population.



Inclusive Employer Jobs Fair

Wednesday 12 October 10am – 12pm
Brighthelm Centre, North Road, BN1 1YD

You are invited to a jobs fair designed for people with English as an additional language.

We will have Arabic and Ukrainian interpreters available.

We have local employers eager to meet you and show you their opportunities.

There will be support available from community-based organisations.

Brighton & Hove City Council and the Department of Work & Pensions will be there to answer questions about benefits and housing.

If you already have a CV, bring it along on the day in print or on your phone.

Employers are looking for friendly, enthusiastic and reliable employers which could be you.

For more information contact
info@trustdevcom.org.uk
01273 234769

Extract from report to Tourism, Equalities, Communities and Culture Committee September 2022.

- a) Further develop the city's coordinated, flexible and holistic package of support for all Ukrainian refugees in partnership with the Third sector and business community (see paragraph 3.14 above for some examples). The city will use the government funding and the heightened interest and awareness of how to help and safely accommodate Ukrainians to benefit all those seeking sanctuary in the city wherever possible within the constraints of the funding instructions issued by government.
- b) Develop pro-active and positive communications in partnership with the Third Sector, including Sanctuary on Sea, celebrating Brighton & Hove's welcome to refugees and other migrants, including at a neighbourhood level, and enabling the voices of individual refugees and other newcomer residents (adults and children) to be amplified. This is a key objective of the Inclusive Cities work: Leading in the development of a shared local story of inclusion.
- c) Review the support package for refugees arriving on the current resettlement programmes (UKRS, ARAP and ACRS), learning from the experiences of beneficiaries of the programmes to date (including the above schemes and the experiences of those who have been here significantly longer through the VPRS and even the GPP). The package will be improved in line with this review, which will include consultation on the specification of the integration and support services to refugees commissioned by the city council.
- d) Continue to work collectively with partners in the Third Sector to improve housing pathways for all non-UK nationals; this includes reviewing the current package offered to landlords interested in renting their properties to refugees, learning from best practice in other Inclusive City local authorities. This will maximise the chance of recruiting and retaining interested landlords whilst offering accommodation solutions to newcomers which are as sustainable as possible in the current housing crisis, and do not impose further pressures on council housing and homelessness provision.
- e) Continue the partnership work between the local NHS, BHCC and third sector to improve mental health services for refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants, including children. For adults this has already been taking place through the work of the Migrant, Refugee and Asylum Seekers Mental Health Working Group, which feeds into the transformation of community mental health services. Some of the work already undertaken by this group includes the development of a trauma screening protocol as well as training for primary care staff.
- f) Work with local Third sector partners, the two universities, existing providers of legal advice, funders and neighbouring authorities (through the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration) to progress initiatives to increase access to free immigration legal advice for newcomers on a low or no income. This will prepare the city for the possible future advice needs of the Ukrainians as well as help other adults and children with insecure immigration status.
- g) Continue to support the local Third Sector to create a culture of welcome for adults and children seeking sanctuary in the city, through the council community grants programmes and ring-fenced funding for refugee resettlement and asylum seeker support.
- h) Review the infrastructure, which supports English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) to strengthen connectivity between ESOL and pathways to employment. This includes ensuring there is joined up and sufficient provision of ESOL from pre-entry to Functional Skills Level 2(English for Speakers of Other Languages) and exploring opportunities to prepare learners for jobs where the city has labour shortages such as the visitor economy, voluntary sector, and health and social care. A new 'Refugee Employment workstream' will pick up the employability work with the Ukrainian arrivals and bring this together with other employment initiatives to maximise the benefits of learning and good practice in this area.
- i) The local NHS in Brighton & Hove is identifying their PLUS groups to support the Integrated Care Board in its delivery of the NHS Planning Guidance, working jointly as a Place-based partnership (ICP) under the new Integrated Care System structure. The council is setting out plans for reducing health inequalities (poorer access, experience or outcomes) experienced by these groups, and are proposing interventions to support them in navigating and accessing complex health and care systems. It is suggested that 'globally displaced communities' form one of these PLUS groups and if this is agreed, the local authority will continue to work with the local NHS to develop those interventions for refugees, asylum seekers and other globally displaced adults and children resident in the city.

INCLUSIVE CITIES

Inclusive Cities is a knowledge exchange initiative supporting UK cities and their local partners to achieve a step-change in their approach towards the inclusion of newcomers.

Drawing on innovative ideas and practices from Europe and the United States, Inclusive Cities aims to support the development of an approach to inclusion which is strategic across the city administration. This approach consistently uses positive messaging to develop an inclusive narrative for the city which informs and drives practice and is local authority led, working in close partnership with business, public and voluntary sector organisations to achieve shared goals.

Inclusive Cities is supported by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

www.compas.ox.ac.uk/inclusive-cities

THE GLOBAL EXCHANGE ON MIGRATION AND DIVERSITY

The Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity is an ambitious initiative at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), University of Oxford, opening up opportunities for knowledge exchange and longer term collaboration between those working in the migration field.

www.compas.ox.ac.uk/global-exchange