



29 January 2009

FAO Mr K Lambert
Director of Central Operations, UKBA
UASC Central Operations
UK Border Agency
Immigration Group
10th Floor West
15 Wellesley Road
Croydon, CR9 1AT

Dear Mr Lambert

Re: UKBA Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) Reform Programme

You recently wrote to individual local authorities in our region seeking expressions of interest to participate in the UASC Reform Programme. Several of these local authorities, and Government Office, approached us here at the Regional Migration Partnership to help co-ordinate a regional response, and to consider whether there were merits to a regionally co-ordinated approach to delivery, not unlike the current arrangements for adult and family dispersal.

Whilst the region, and individual local authorities, are not yet in a position to make a firm commitment to participate, I thought it would assist your planning to provide an initial update on how our discussions are progressing.

To move the debate forward, on 13 January 2009 we hosted a joint regional information event with GOYH, at which we discussed the merits of the reform programme and a proposed outline of what a regional specification might look like.

The event was well attended by representatives from both existing asylum teams and from a number of Children's Services Departments. An attendance list is attached. The aim of the event was to understand, at officer level, the potential benefits of participating in the programme, and to identify the potential political and practical barriers that would need to be addressed to move this issue forward.

The key message from the event was a positive one which recognised the merits of the approach set out in the Reform Programme, and expressed a willingness within the region to begin to develop a potential proposal, coordinate a regional cost evaluation exercise and begin to engage with strategic managers on this issue within individual LA's.

However, in order to do this it would be helpful if UKBA was able to provide three things:

- A draft specification to allow LAs to understand clearly what is required – the present lack of clarity is viewed as a major block to successfully engaging LAs in our region.
- A small amount of development funding to progress a regional proposal to deliver to UASC – because at present no organisation has the capacity to co-ordinate work across local authorities, at a senior level.
- Clarity on the issues of post18's – which we believe is the key political barrier to engagement of LAs. The UKBA promise of increased removals is not sufficient to convince individual authorities to take a substantial financial risk around this issue. Until this issue is resolved any cost analysis will include leaving care support costs in the core unit price.

I believe that there is potential for a regional proposal, but this is a process that requires careful planning, development and management. We are keen to continue to have a meaningful dialogue



with UKBA to move this programme forward, but we can only do this within a realistic timetable that recognises some of the practical and political complexities that this involves.

I think it would be helpful to meet with myself and a couple of members of our Strategic Migration Group sub-group dealing with UASC issues to discuss this in more detail. My office will be in touch shortly to arrange a suitable date.

Yours sincerely

Rob Warm
YHRMP Manager



UASC Reform Programme Information Event

Bewleys Hotel Leeds

January 13th 2009

Attendees:

Name	Organisation	Email
Sharon Hague	Leeds CC	Sharon.hague@leeds.gov.uk
Anne James	Leeds CC	Anne.james@leeds.gov.uk
Hajra Bhamji	Hull CC	Hajra.bhamji@hullcc.gov.uk
Nawa Ahmed	Hull CC	Nawaahmednari@yahoo.co.uk
Lisa Hunter	Hull CC	Lisa.hunter@hullcc.gov.uk
Julie Wingfield	Barnsley MBC	juliewingfield@barnsley.gov.uk
Pete Williams	Barnsley MBC	peterwilliams@barnsley.gov.uk
Jackie Wray	Barnsley MBC	jackiewray@barnsley.gov.uk
Judith Shalkowski	The Children's Society LEAP Project	jds@childsoc.org.uk
Joan Parr	Calderdale Council	Joan.parr@calderdale.gov.uk
Ted Brown	Bradford MDC	Ted.brown@bradford.gov.uk
Liz Shingler	Leeds CC	Elizabeth.shingler@leeds.gov.uk
Jill Stuart	Leeds CC	Jill.stuart@leeds.gov.uk
Brian Walsh	Wakefield Council	bwalsh@wakefield.gov.uk
Jane Dykins	Refugee Council	Jane.dykins@refugeecouncil.org.uk
Penny Bartlett	North Yorkshire CC	Penny.bartlett@northyorks.gov.uk
Barbara Newton	Leeds CC	Barbara.newton@leeds.gov.uk
Vicky Williams	YHRMP	Victoria.williams@leeds.gov.uk