



To: Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health  
Report by: Head of Community Development  
Relevant scrutiny committee: Community Services Scrutiny Committee 1/7/2010  
Wards affected: All Wards

**FUNDING FOR THE CAMBRIDGE REFUGEE AND MIGRANT SUPPORT SERVICE**  
**Not a Key Decision**

**1. Executive summary**

Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum (CECF) provides a range of services, some of which are currently funded by Cambridge City Council and others, such as the CRISP (Racial Incident Support) project and the Cambridge Refugee and Migrant Support Service, are not.

The Cambridge Refugee and Migrant Support Service is funded up to the end of June 2010 by the Cambridge Local Strategic Partnership through a LPSA reward grant in recognition of the important contribution this service makes to economic migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the City.

The Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum is exploring different funding options for the future of the service including its contribution to the 'Prevent' (prevention of terrorism) agenda. However in order to continue the service while the review is carried out this report seeks approval to offer funding on a month by month basis until a maximum period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.

**2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended:  
To fund the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum to host and run the Cambridge Refugee and Migrant Support Service on a month by month basis until a maximum period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011, at a cost of £1,900 a month.

**3. Background**

3.1 The summary report for the Cambridge Refugee and Migrant Support Service April 2009-March 2010 is available as a background paper.

This LSPA funded project is hosted and run by the CECF working in partnership with the British Red Cross Refugee Service, Immigration Advice Service (IAS) and the Refugee and Migrant Justice (RMJ). It has met a need which, particularly in regards to Immigration Advice, was greater than expected. A substantial number of asylum seekers & refugees in addition to some migrant workers have been assisted in order that they were not destitute. Through English Language provision, counselling and the development of outreach the project seeks to meet the needs of asylum seekers, breaking down the barriers of isolation & marginalisation. In addition, help has been given to those asylum seekers that got Refugee Status with integration into the local community. This is the only project in Cambridge which can combine advice, advocacy & practical help when required for asylum seekers & refugees and gives access to support required to a very vulnerable section of the community.

Key information:

- There were at least 1000 contacts received by the CECF for services relating to the project including: immigration advice, counselling, health issues, English language tuition and welfare advocacy. Contacts were mainly telephone calls followed by appointments.
- The majority of enquiries to the CECF from asylum seekers and refugees revolved around issues of destitution. The referrals for this client group came from the closure of the Cambridge Refugee Support Group and Advice for Life, the Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service, Citizens Advice Bureau, Refugee Council, Red Cross, IAS, RMJ, Jobcentre Plus, Cambridge City Council – Housing & Cambridgeshire Social Services. The informal network also played a major part in bringing in clients assisted.
- The British Red Cross Refugee Service in partnership with the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum recorded welfare interventions for 81 people including dependants. These included applications made for UKBA Emergency Accommodation, NASS (both accommodation & subsistence) & Section 4 accommodation.
- CECF established a hardship fund to provide one off cash payments for basic essential living items, transport, food vouchers, and emergency accommodation for those with no recourse to public funds.
- At least 33 asylum seekers/refugee clients (number of dependants not known) also requested immigration advice from the ISA or RMJ. Cambridgeshire Social Services referred over 6 clients (unaccompanied minors) for English language tuition & 3 more age 18+ came to an organised drop in for general advice. This brings the total number of asylum seekers & refugees assisted through this project to at least 123. Most of

these clients were Zimbabwean, followed by Chinese, Afghani, Iranian and Iraqi.

- The majority of all clients for the CRMC services were migrants. At least 373 of these clients were seen by the Immigration Advice Service (IAS) & the Refugee and Migrant Justice (RMJ) during this period. Most of the referrals for this topic came from the Citizens Advice Bureau in Cambridge. Others came from the IAS website, voluntary sector organisations, as a consequence of Advice For Life Closing, as referrals from the Cambridge City MP's office and through the informal network of friends or community. 21 migrants including their dependants were also helped through welfare interventions. Most of these clients were Polish, followed by Ghanaian, Iranian & Pakistani.
- At least 617 people have benefited from the Cambridge Refugee & Migrant Support Project with over another 100 referrals/signposting being made to other organisations for assistance or advice: UKBA, Refugee Council, Social Services, DWP, ABMEC, CAB, META, City Council Housing, Solicitors etc.

3.2 Funding support is required while a review of the service and future funding is undertaken by the CECF. The cost of this service is approximately £1,900 a month and there is sufficient grant budget remaining for advice services to cover this service until March 2011 or earlier depending on the timing and outcome of the review.

#### **4. Implications**

There are no significant implications not already covered in the report.

#### **5. Background papers**

The summary report of the Cambridge Refugee and Migrant Support Service April 2009 – March 2010.

#### **6. Appendices**

There are no appendices.

#### **7. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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