

Southwark Brexit Panel

Mimutes of the Southwark Brexit Panel held on Thursday 10 March 2022 at 6.00 pm.
It was a virtual meeting on MS Teams.

PRESENT: Councillor Alice Macdonald (Chair)
Councillor James Coldwell
Councillor Richard Leeming

**OFFICER
SUPPORT:** Danny Edwards, Head of Economy
Matthew Rolfe, Local Economy Team
Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities
Tim Murtagh, Constitutional Team

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Southwark Brexit Panel meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Linforth-Hall and Ochere.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

5. BREXIT UPDATE REPORT

Matthew Rolfe presented the report contained in the agenda.

The panel discussed issues around the EU settlement scheme, including rights to work, Government funding, post-deadline submissions of evidence, cases from vulnerable people often on benefits.

The panel also discussed:

- the work of the Southwark Law Centre
- the continued need to provide support for cases that were often complicated. Immigration lawyers were oversubscribed
- Home Office funding was essential to the work being carried out. Concerns were expressed over what would happen when that funding ends or is cut
- the skills strategy and skills training to meet residents employment and business needs including building, hospitality and healthcare sectors
- The UK shared prosperity fund as part of the broader levelling up strategy.

The Brexit Panel made the following points/recommendations to the Home Office:

1. Ask for long-term sustainable funding to support the provision of legal advice around the EU settlement scheme.
2. Recognising the impact of digital exclusion and the effect that is having on people applying. Put in place measures to support people digitally excluded.
3. Request for data on those who have not applied but are eligible to apply for the settlement scheme.
4. To note the impact of mental health on residents and ask for extra funding to mitigate that support locally.
5. Could BRPs (Biometric Residence Permits) be issued to vulnerable people especially those with mental health issues (that would cut need for indefinite need from some organisations).
6. Ask that the amount in the shared prosperity fund at least match what was in the previous European structural fund and that the criteria for location be the same as with the European structural fund.

The meeting ended at 7.13pm

CHAIR:

DATED: