

SOCIAL IMPACT OF **POPULATION CHANGE**

A short summary

RECENT HISTORY

In May 2004, eight additional countries in Eastern Europe joined the European Union (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia). Many people from these countries have come to the area to working in fields and packing crops. Very often people from Eastern Europe working and living locally are known as migrant workers. Many migrant workers have chosen to live permanently in the area and have made Boston their home.

POPULATION NUMBERS

Every 10 years the Government carries out a census to estimate the size of the population. In 2001 the official population figure for the Borough was 55,750, the 2011 figure is 64,600. This growth is one of the largest in England. The increase is not all due to the migrant population. However many people believe that this is too high for a small town and has happened too quickly. The change to Boston is seen by some people as a good thing, yet others are very concerned. All of this puts a strain on local services and can cause tension within the community.

TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Council set up a group to look into the issues and to listen to local people, migrant workers and the people who provide services (including the local MP, people from the health service, the police, schools, employers and others) to see if anything could be done. During the summer of 2012 the group listened carefully to what they all had to say.

Not everyone agreed on everything. Some felt that more money was needed to help provide services to a growing population; others felt that the European and British Governments should do more to stop immigration into the UK. The differences of opinion made the work of the group challenging. However after a period of careful consideration and thorough consultation the group has produced a balanced series of recommendations.

REPORT SUMMARY

This summary is intended to provide a short snapshot of the suggestions which the group has made.

A full copy of the report can be downloaded from
<http://www.boston.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4721>

There are recommendations for the Council, the Police, employers, the County Council, the Member of Parliament, the Government, the European Government and many more. Many of the recommendations will take a lot of time to happen and some may not be accepted. In some cases changes to the law are required. There

is not one single answer to the challenge. To make things better will require hard work and patience.

- ❖ We have asked the MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT to:
 - request that the Government set up a system to record each time cars and other vehicles that are registered abroad come into the UK to make sure that they are properly insured, taxed and MOT'd.
 - support the Gangmaster Licensing Authority who prevents rogue gangmasters from exploiting their workers.
 - support changes to the law to let the Council decide on the number of "off-licences" that can be set up within a certain area.
 - make sure that when new countries join the EU their residents are restricted from moving into the UK.
 - set up a system to record the number of people moving to the area and provide more money to support a growing population.

- ❖ We have asked the POLICE AND THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER to:-
 - take a very tough approach (zero tolerance) to those who drink in the street and cause anti-social behaviour.
 - produce public reports showing when and how often they have taken action to stop such bad behaviour.
 - work with offenders to apologise to victims and put right the damage they cause.
 - have regular meetings with the public to agree with them what is most important and to attend parish council meetings.

- ❖ We would like LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL to:-
 - see if schools can receive more money based on the number of pupils during the year rather than at the start of each school year.
 - provide sufficient support so that all pupils can learn English as quickly as possible.
 - make sure that parents are better informed that school choices are usually successful if brothers and sisters are in the same school and that it is the nearest school to home.
 - work hard to stop people from parking illegally throughout the Borough.

- ❖ We have suggested that all EMPLOYERS should advertise all job vacancies locally to help local people into work.

- ❖ We have asked SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND LOCAL BUSINESSES to make sure that young people are aware of the career opportunities in the food and agricultural industry and provide more chances for young people to obtain work experience.

- ❖ We feel that the LOCAL PAPERS, TV and RADIO should continue to put lots of effort into balanced reporting so that the good is reported as well as the bad.
- ❖ We believe LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS should be supported into continuing to provide events which bring people from different backgrounds together.
- ❖ We would like the BORDER AGENCY to agree with the Council how they will support people to return to their home countries where they are not actively seeking to support themselves financially.
- ❖ We would like all WEST STREET BUSINESSES to:-
 - get together to form a group to promote and improve the area.
 - make sure that shops are welcoming and encourage everyone to use them.
 - have specialist food markets and events.
- ❖ As a COUNCIL we will:-
 - make sure that everyone from the Prime Minister down clearly understands what we want to happen.
 - introduce a licensing scheme for all privately rented homes where people from more than one family live together to make sure they are safe.
 - put more effort into challenging people who drop litter.
 - work with the local doctors, the local hospital and the County Council to ensure high quality local health and social care services to all the people of Boston.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

In developing this report we have considered how to better organise the services provided to the people of Boston. We have also made recommendations for other people to consider and will push them to do what we ask. What is clear is that all the recent changes are set to continue. Our report does not and cannot contain all of the answers as there is no single solution. Everyone has their part to play. We must be understanding, tolerant and most importantly we need to work together to find solutions to the challenges.

The Council does not believe that the report is the end of the matter and will regularly measure and report on any progress on the recommendations.