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INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- About the Project and Objectives

The Goole Integrated Neighbourhood Team has identified a crucial theme to address: the low uptake of childhood vaccinations and immunisations in recent years. This issue is particularly pronounced among the estimated 3,000 residents of Goole who are either migrants or from migrant communities, representing approximately 14% of the town's population. Recognising the importance of this demographic, the project focuses on these residents as a pilot group.

The primary objective of this initiative is to ensure that childhood immunisation is well understood, easily accessible, and trusted within the migrant community. To achieve this, we aim to bring together cross-sector partners to gain a comprehensive understanding of the existing knowledge, challenges, and opportunities. This collaboration is intended to inform meaningful changes and foster new relationships that can support the community more effectively.

- Expected Outcomes
 - ✓ Trusted Relationships Between the Migrant Community and Support Services

One of the key expected outcomes of this project is the establishment of trusted relationships between the migrant community and the various support services available to them. By fostering open lines of communication and understanding, the project aims to build confidence and trust within the migrant population. This trust is essential for encouraging the community to seek and accept the support and services they need, particularly in areas such as healthcare and immunisation.

- ✓ Accessible Information that Reflects Cultural Beliefs and Interests

Another important outcome is the creation and dissemination of information that is both accessible and culturally relevant to the migrant community. By ensuring that educational materials and resources consider and respect the cultural beliefs, languages, and interests of the target population, the project aims to make it easier for migrants to understand and engage with the information provided. This approach is designed to eliminate barriers to understanding and increase the community's overall engagement with health services.

✓ Population Insight that Shapes Services and Reduces Health Inequalities

Through this initiative, we expect to gain valuable insights into the needs, preferences, and behaviours of the migrant population. This population insight will be instrumental in shaping and tailoring services to better meet the specific needs of this community. By doing so, the project aims to reduce health inequalities and ensure that all residents have equitable access to healthcare and other essential services.

✓ Increased Uptake of Childhood Immunisation

Ultimately, one of the primary goals of the project is to achieve a significant increase in the uptake of childhood immunisations within the migrant community. By addressing the underlying issues of trust, accessibility, and cultural relevance, the project aims to create an environment where immunisations are seen as safe, necessary, and beneficial. Increased immunisation rates will not only protect the health of individual children but also contribute to the overall public health of the Goole community.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

– HEY Smile Foundation

At HEY Smile Foundation, we excel in listening to our communities and bringing their ideas to life, especially those seldom heard. We support charities with governance, fundraising, strategic planning, and operations.

Our health initiatives enhance NHS patient and staff experiences through exceptional support. We also partner with corporates to unlock resources and give back to the community through engaging events, appeals, volunteering, and fundraising.

– East Riding of Yorkshire Council Adult Learning

East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Adult learning and employability delivers employment support, learning and skills training to adults all across the East Riding.

– East Riding of Yorkshire Council Opportunity Goole

Opportunity Goole is a service for all Goole residents aged 16+ and employers to assist in accessing existing training, employment opportunities and business support.

- About Welcome House

Welcome House work across Hull and East Riding to provide support to asylum seekers and refugees to make them feel welcome and included within the community.

BRINGING THE GROUP TOGETHER

To foster a warm, safe, and open environment for discussions and to gather these insights, the initiative of Google Community Conversations was established. It was essential to consider potential barriers that might hinder the understanding of the discussion's purpose. The conversations were designed to be open yet structured sessions, ensuring both inclusivity and organisation.

As partners, we collaborated to agree on an initial series of four sessions, commencing on Monday evenings from 13th May 2024. These sessions were further supported by East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) Personal Advisors, providing additional guidance and assistance. To maximise participation, engagement flyers were produced and translated into four different languages (Latvia, Arabic, Ukrainian and English), ensuring that the invitation reached and was understood by the diverse migrant community.

See sample flyers pictures here... [Community Conversations Flyer - Engl.](#)

Discussions were centered around;

- Understand where people would go if they needed help
- Improve their experience of support and services
- Support their health and wellbeing, skills and employability
- Understand their health needs including access to child immunisation and vaccination.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION SESSION 1

Overview of the Session

The first session of the Goole Community Conversations aimed to provide a platform for residents to share their experiences of living in the Goole community. The discussion revolved around three key questions: participants' experiences living in Goole, their leisure activities, and where they seek help when needed. The session highlighted both positive and negative aspects of life in Goole, uncovering key themes and potential areas for improvement.

Question 1: Tell me about your experience living in the Goole Community

Participants expressed a variety of positive experiences living in Goole. Many appreciated the convenience of amenities, the safety of the area, and the friendly nature of the residents. One participant noted, "Everything is near," while another added, "Feeling safe." The compact nature of Goole was highlighted as a benefit, with residents enjoying the ability to "go anywhere without a car." The community spirit was also praised, with one resident commenting, "People smile, ask if you're alright."

However, there were also challenges. Some residents faced difficulties finding employment due to the need for references and specific qualifications. One participant shared, "It is Hard to find a job due to references needed and being qualified for the job." Others pointed out the shortage of opportunities for extracurricular activities and the impact of the leisure centre's closure on swimming options. Healthcare access was a significant issue, with long waiting times for GP appointments and difficulties enrolling children with dentists, as illustrated by the comment,

"Dentists are full, I was told waiting list was 3 years – impossible to even enroll my child."

Question 2: What do you enjoy doing? What do you spend your time doing?

Residents enjoyed a range of leisure activities, such as walking their dogs at West Park, cooking, biking with their children, and engaging in hobbies like knitting and puzzles. One participant fondly described their time spent in the park, "Biking in the park with children is therapeutic, playground with children." Another resident enjoyed their allotment, sharing, "Allotment (opposite Lidl) – sharing food grown with friends and family."

Despite these positive activities, barriers such as time, cost, weather, and the closure of the

leisure centre limited leisure enjoyment. Health issues also impacted participation, with one resident explaining,

"Used to bike everyday but has now stopped due to ill health."

Question 3: If you need help, where would you look?

Participants identified several sources of support within the community. Many turned to Opportunity Goole for assistance with job searches, interviews, and CV writing. Family and friends were also a vital support network, particularly for language translation assistance. One participant shared,

"Ask daughter or friends (especially when speaking on the phone)."

Volunteering emerged as a valuable way to practice English, with one individual saying,

"Volunteering has helped me with English practice – really supportive, pushed me to speak English."

However, there were notable gaps in support. Some residents had to travel significant distances for medical care, such as going to Wakefield to see a Polish dentist or returning to their home country for treatment despite the risk of war. Language barriers in healthcare were also problematic, with one participant stating,

"In Hospital usually there are no translators – I can arrange a phone translator, but it is not a good experience as the translation was incorrect."

Potential Partnership Working Opportunities

The session highlighted several potential partnership opportunities to address the identified challenges. Collaborations between healthcare providers and local organisations could improve access to medical services and reduce waiting times. There is also a need for partnerships focused on increasing employment opportunities, possibly through CV writing or training programs that acknowledge overseas qualifications. Enhancing the availability of extracurricular or volunteering activities through community centres or local groups and charities could also be beneficial. Smile Foundation identified Opportunity Goole, Adult Learning centre and Welcome House as potential partners to further provide both informational and guidance support.

Impact Linked to Expected Outcomes

The insights gained from this session align closely with the project's expected outcomes. By understanding the community's needs and preferences, efforts can be made to build trusted relationships between the migrant community and support services. Providing accessible information that reflects cultural beliefs and interests will be crucial. The feedback will also help shape services to reduce health inequalities and increase the uptake of childhood immunisations.

Key Themes from Session 1

1. **Community Spirit and Safety:** Residents value the friendly and safe environment of Goole.
2. **Accessibility:** The compact nature of Goole makes amenities easily reachable.
3. **Employment Challenges:** Difficulties in finding jobs due to language, qualification and reference requirements.
4. **Healthcare Barriers:** Long waiting times and language barriers in accessing medical services.
5. **Leisure Activities:** Enjoyment of local parks, hobbies, and allotments, but barriers exist due to cost, time, and health issues.
6. **Support Networks:** Reliance on family, friends, and local organisations for assistance, particularly with language and job-related support.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION SESSION 2

Overview of the Session

The second session of the Goole Community Conversations focused on cultural experiences and the contrasts between the participants' home countries and England. The discussion covered three main questions: favourite aspects of their own cultures, the foods they miss from their home countries, and the differences they have noticed in England. The session provided valuable insights into the cultural richness of the migrant community and highlighted areas where support and integration could be improved.

Question 1: What is your favourite thing about your culture?

Participants shared a deep appreciation for their cultural heritage, particularly in relation to food, clothing, and traditional celebrations. One participant highlighted the importance of food and clothing, noting a particular fondness for "especially bright colours." The diversity in culinary practices was a recurring theme, with another participant expressing their love for "bakeries and making different types of bread." Family gatherings were cherished, as one Lithuanian participant mentioned, "Families and family get together."

Cultural celebrations were also a significant aspect of their heritage. Participants described various festivities, such as the solstice celebrations in Lithuania, which involve singing, dancing around bonfires, and an abundance of food and drinks. A Ukrainian participant shared their experiences of large-scale fireworks and celebrations, stating, "Fireworks and celebrations in Ukraine are 10 times bigger than the UK."

Question 2: What are the foods/meals you miss in your home country?

Food was a central theme in the discussion, with participants reminiscing about specific dishes they missed from their home countries. Traditional meals such as "Kartacze (Potato Dumplings)" and "Cold-blooded soup" were mentioned as favourites that are hard to find in England. The conversation underscored the emotional and cultural significance of food in connecting migrants to their roots.

Question 3: What is your favourite thing about England that is different in your country?

Participants noted several aspects of England that they appreciated, particularly in contrast to their home countries. The weather was a common topic, with one participant remarking on the extreme temperatures in their home country, "Weather in my country can be as high as 35°C." Another participant from Lithuania mentioned, "It's very cold in Lithuania unlike here, and it could be as low as -21°C to -12°C." These contrasts highlighted the milder climate of England as a positive change.

However, participants also pointed out challenges in adjusting to life in England. The variety

of English accents was noted as a difficulty, with one individual stating, "Different accents of English have made it difficult to understand." This highlights the need for more tailored language support to help migrants navigate these linguistic variations.

Potential Partnership Working Opportunities

The session revealed several opportunities for partnership working to support the migrant community better. Collaborations with local bakeries and culinary schools could help bring traditional foods from participants' home countries to Goole, fostering a sense of cultural inclusion. Additionally, organising cultural festivals and family-oriented events could celebrate and share diverse traditions within the community.

Language support services could be enhanced by working with local educational institutions to provide more comprehensive and accessible language courses that address the variety of English accents.

Impact Linked to Expected Outcomes

The insights from this session are directly linked to the project's expected outcomes. Building trusted relationships with the migrant community involves recognising and valuing their cultural heritage. By providing accessible information that reflects cultural beliefs and interests, the project can foster a more inclusive environment. The feedback on language adjustment will help shape services to reduce health inequalities and support the overall well-being of the migrant community.

Key Themes from Session 2

1. Cultural Heritage: Strong appreciation for traditional food, clothing, and family gatherings.
2. Celebrations: Importance of cultural festivities, such as solstice celebrations and large-scale fireworks.
3. Traditional Cuisine: Emotional and cultural significance of foods missed from home countries.
4. Climate: Positive aspects of England's milder weather compared to extreme temperatures in participants' home countries.
5. Language Barriers: Challenges with understanding different English accents, highlighting the need for tailored language support.
6. Community Integration: Opportunities for partnership working to celebrate cultural

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION SESSION 3

Overview of the Session

The third session of the Community conversations focused on participants' daily experiences, stress management and their interactions with healthcare services, specifically regarding GP visits and vaccinations. This session provided further insight into the everyday lives of the migrant community and highlighted ongoing challenges with accessing and navigating healthcare services.

Question 1: How do you feel today and how have you spent the last few days?

Participants generally expressed positive sentiments about their recent experiences. One participant simply stated, "Everyone is feeling alright." This reflects a baseline level of contentment within the group, indicating a stable daily life for many.

Question 2: How do you manage stress at home or at work?

Participants shared various strategies for managing stress, many rooted in personal and cultural practices. One participant mentioned, "I pray or perform prayer," highlighting the role of religious practices in stress management. Others found solace in music, with one individual noting, "I listen to music."

Engaging in community activities and hobbies was also a common theme. One participant said, "I tried to volunteer especially working with children," indicating that volunteering not only helps manage stress but also integrates them into the community. Other stress-relief activities included traveling, solving puzzles, watching films (sometimes with subtitles, others in their home language), and knitting.

Question 3: Have you taken your child to the GP or to vaccinate?

Participants shared a range of experiences with GP services, and there were several common issues. Many reported challenges with contacting their GP, with one participant stating, "They are always extremely busy when ringing them." There were also concerns about the quality of care, with comments such as, "Given meds without proper assessment."

Language barriers significantly impacted their experiences, particularly for those learning English as a second language (ESOL). One participant pointed out, "Explanation of systems – ESOL at disadvantage when learning how to use the service and this creates a barrier." This highlights the need for better communication and support for non-native speakers.

Some participants faced difficulties registering with local healthcare providers. One resident noted, "Could not find registration in Goole. Having to register in Hull for dentists." Additionally, there were reports of discriminatory practices, with one participant stating, "In Goole, once accents are noticed, appointments are not given."

In terms of vaccinations, participants had mixed experiences. Some mentioned that GPs asked to administer vaccines that had already been given in their home countries, causing confusion and frustration. However, there were no significant issues reported for children who had not been previously vaccinated, indicating that initial vaccinations were generally accessible.

Potential Partnership Working Opportunities

The session highlighted several opportunities for partnership working to improve healthcare access and support stress management among the migrant community. Collaborations with local healthcare providers could focus on reducing language barriers by providing multilingual support and clearer explanations of healthcare systems. Additionally, partnerships with community organisations could facilitate better access to volunteer opportunities, which serve as both a stress management tool and a means of community integration.

Educational programs tailored to ESOL learners could help demystify the healthcare system, making it easier for migrants to navigate services and understand their rights. Efforts to address potential discrimination in healthcare provision should also be prioritised, ensuring fair and equitable access for all residents.

Impact Linked to Expected Outcomes

The insights from this session directly inform the project's expected outcomes. Understanding and addressing the barriers to healthcare access can help build trusted relationships between the migrant community and support services. Providing accessible information that respects cultural differences and language needs will enhance service utilisation and reduce health inequalities. These efforts will ultimately contribute to an increased uptake of childhood immunisations and overall better health outcomes for the community.

Key Themes from Session 3

1. General Well-being: Participants generally feel content with their daily experiences.
2. Stress Management: Diverse strategies include prayer, music, volunteering, traveling, puzzles, films, and knitting.
3. Healthcare Access: Significant barriers include difficulty contacting GPs, perceived inadequate assessments, and language barriers.
4. Registration Issues: Challenges with registering for local healthcare services, including discriminatory practices based on accents.
5. Vaccination Experiences: Mixed experiences with GP vaccinations, with some confusion over repeat vaccinations but no major issues for initial vaccinations.
6. Language and Communication: ESOL learners face disadvantages in understanding and using healthcare services, highlighting the need for improved communication and support.

Summary and Next Steps

Community Engagement

- Goole Community Conversations were established to create a warm, safe, and open environment for discussions among residents.
- The sessions included discussions on cultural experiences, daily life, stress management, and healthcare access.
- Participants valued the friendly, safe, and accessible nature of Goole but highlighted challenges such as job opportunities, healthcare access, and language barriers.

Insight and Intelligence Gathering

- Key insights included appreciation for cultural heritage, difficulties in navigating the healthcare system, and diverse stress management strategies.
- Language barriers significantly impacted participants' ability to access services and integrate fully into the community.

Partnership Building

- Collaboration among local organisations, including HEY Smile Foundation, East Riding of Yorkshire Council Adult Learning, Opportunity Goole, and Welcome House.
- Identified potential partnership opportunities to improve healthcare access, support cultural integration, and provide tailored language and job training.

Health Impact Potential (Childhood Immunisation and Vaccination)

- Highlighted the need for better communication and support regarding vaccinations, with some participants facing confusion over repeat vaccinations.
- Ensuring accurate and accessible information about immunisations to increase uptake among the migrant community.

Limitations and Next Steps

- The sessions revealed barriers such as language difficulties and the need for more flexible, tailored support.
- Continuing efforts are needed to address these challenges and support the migrant community effectively.

We at HEY Smile Foundation with support from Opportunity Goole, and the Adult Learning Centre gathered feedback from the attendees, and this has revealed a desire for continued sessions tailored to their needs, including language support, training, job empowerment, and health and well-being.

The Adult Learning Centre has secured approval to host an additional four sessions starting on the 24th of June, focusing on living, learning, and working.

Welcome House will be empowered to take on the community conversation project in Goole, with ongoing support from HEY Smile Foundation, Opportunity Goole, and the Adult Learning Centre. Discussions are underway to seek grant support to enhance activities for the group.

A network of partners with shared objectives has been established quickly, indicating strong potential for future collaboration and impact.

Acknowledgement

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Adult Learning Centre, Opportunity Goole, and Welcome House for their invaluable support in making the Goole Community Conversations possible. Their commitment and collaboration have been essential in addressing the migrant community's needs and fostering a supportive and inclusive environment.