



**Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force Meeting  
Tuesday, 24th March 2009  
17:30-18:30pm  
Room N Portcullis House, House of Commons**

**Minutes**

**Attendance:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Department/ Organisation</b>
Tony McNulty (Chair) (TM)	DWP
Lord Young (LY)	DIUS
Pat McFadden (PM)	BERR
Sadiq Khan (SK)	CLG
Dr Husna Ahmad (HA)	EMAG
Mike Noakes (for Katja Hall) (MN)	CBI
Wilf Sullivan (for Leslie Manasseh) (WS)	TUC
Alan Christie (AC)	EHRC
Arun Batra (AB)	LDA
Janice Shersby (for Maria Eagle) (JS)	GEO
Ashleigh O'Brien (for Angela Eagle) (AO)	HMT
Jennifer Hutton (for Tom Watson) (JH)	CO
James Caan (JC)	EMBTF
Darren Woolfenden (DW)	DWP
Christine Wright (CW)	EMETF Secretariat
Lorna Fraser (LF)	EMETF Secretariat

**Apologies received from:**

Maria Eagle	GEO
Vernon Coaker	HO
Angela Eagle	HMT
Tom Watson	CO
Leslie Manasseh	TUC
Katja Hall	CBI
Cllr. Mahroof Hussain	Local Government Association
Iqbal Wahhab	EMAG

**Item 1: Welcome and introductions**

TM welcomed members.

**Item 2: Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting were cleared.

### **Item 3: Report from Chair of EMAG**

- In IW's absence, HA gave the report.
- HA outlined the main points in the letter to the Task Force from Iqbal Wahhab on behalf of EMAG. This letter is attached at Annex A.
- In response, TM confirmed that the Task Force would formally respond to the letter.
- Regarding EMAG's point about the closure of POEM, TM explained that it was a pilot with a finite life and clear end date. DWP is working with City Strategy Pathfinders and Local Authorities which receive Working Neighbourhood Fund to continue outreach provision wherever possible. He added that Leicester City Strategy Pathfinder is taking on POEM clients who have yet to find work.
- Regarding EMAG's point about PREVENT, TM clarified the point on perceived grievances: poverty and employment deprivation in themselves did not lead those suffering to turn to violent extremism but could be used as a justification for radical action.

***AP1: Members to provide respond to Secretariat on issues in the letter that they lead or are they are responsible for.***

***AP2: Secretariat to provide a draft incorporating contributions for TM to send to IW.***

### **Item 4: Presentation – Stock Take paper and Possible Impact of the Recession on Ethnic Minority Employment**

- DW gave a presentation outlining the main points of the Stock Take, issues for ethnic minority employment in the current economic climate and setting out the planned agenda for future meetings and their links to publications, research reports and the work of the Project Groups. (This item was interrupted by the division bell and consequent departure and return of Ministers).
- In the ensuing discussion AB asked if it was possible to gauge the impact of the Task Force on narrowing the gap. DW explained that the situation is too complex and affected by too many factors for that analysis to be possible.

### **Item 5: Discussion - Where do we go now?**

- TM asked members for their opinions on how the Task Force could move forwards, to include thoughts on what the group does in a practical sense, the role of the Ethnic Minority Business Task Force and the role of ministers.
- In the ensuing discussion that ranged around the future configuration and purpose of the Task Force, TM noted that it would be important for joint working, and that entrepreneurial flair in the current financial circumstances was to be encouraged as a way of moving out of the recession.
- LY suggested that members be invited to share good practice across Departments. He cited some of the good work being delivered by DIUS and its agencies but noted that there was still some way to go before

apprenticeships recruited sufficient women and ethnic minorities. He agreed to circulate examples of their work.

- PM noted that it was not always clear about the relationship between the Task Force and its members. TM replied that members should reflect on this point and how it might be resolved. He added that there was a need for a sharp focus to bring the work together. AB said that the EMBTF lacked the ministerial support that the EMETF clearly had.
- AC reminded members that, in 2003, the Task Force has 24 'priority' areas. At the July 2008 meeting they had agreed a strategic approach with EMAG's Project Groups providing a focus on cross-cutting areas. He noted that the forward plan for Task Force meetings, DW had presented, was designed to link into forthcoming Government announcements. He felt that too radical a change now might jeopardise the new relationship between the Task Force and EMAG.
- After further discussion TM asked the Secretariat provide a paper outlining options for revising the Task Force organisation. He asked members to send in any ideas as to how to take the Task Force agenda forward, where EMAG should fit in, how the EMBTF might be played in and relationships with groups such as the NEC.

***AP3: DIUS to circulate examples of their work.***

***AP4: Secretariat to provide a paper outlining options for reorganising the Task Force***

***AP5: Members to send their views to TM via the Secretariat***

**Item 6: AOB**

- SK outlined CLG's consultation on their new race equality strategy. It is seeking the views of communities on the strategy. Some communities are concerned that the single equality strand will lead to race equality being forgotten.
- JS gave an update on the Equality Bill. The package is still being finalised, but it will include procurement, positive action and diversity monitoring.

**Summary of Action Points:**

	<b>Action Point</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Status</b>
1	Members to provide respond to Secretariat on issues in the letter that they lead or are they are responsible for	All	
2	Secretariat to provide a draft incorporating contributions for TM to send to IW	Secretariat	
3	DIUS to circulate examples of their work	DIUS	
4	Secretariat to provide a paper outlining options for reorganising the Task Force	Secretariat	
5	Members to send their views to TM via the Secretariat	All	



**ETHNIC MINORITY ADVISORY GROUP**  
C/o Area Initiatives and Communities Division  
Department for Work and Pensions  
Caxton House, 6-12 Tothill Street  
London SW1H 9NA  
Tel: 020 7449 5693

Tony McNulty  
Chair, Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force

cc Task Force Members

Date: 23rd March 2009

**Dear Tony**

**Re: THE ETHNIC MINORITY ADVISORY GROUP (EMAG)**

At the Task Force meeting on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2009, we will be looking at the stock take paper "Narrowing the ethnic minority employment gap: progress update". EMAG members have asked me to write to you and the Task Force in advance of the meeting to make you aware of discussions had at our last meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

Members discussed our thoughts on the progress of the ethnic minority employment agenda and the role that EMAG had played. We would, therefore, like to offer our thoughts and concerns on what we consider to be the key issues which we face in taking forward our joint effort to narrow the ethnic minority employment gap.

Since it was set up in 2006, EMAG and its members have worked in partnership with the Task Force and have achieved a number of successes, including:

- Working with CLG colleagues to input into the Houghton Review of Worklessness to ensure that ethnic minority issues were addressed and highlighted
- Working with DWP to ensure an ethnic minority focus for City Strategy Pathfinders (CSPs), including their board membership and ethnic minority targets
- Supporting the piloting of initiatives to look at how to deliver better employment services to ethnic minorities, including mainstreaming of good practice through, for example, Local Area Agreements and the CSPs
- Taking forward detailed work for the Task Force via the three project groups (Employer Engagement, Procurement and Area Initiatives – including the Olympics)

However, for us to really make a difference in this area, especially given the challenging economic circumstances, we think that we, with the Task Force, should pay urgent attention to the following issues:

1. Maximising the benefits that ethnic minorities obtain from the **expenditure of mainstream budgets**, in particular Working Neighbourhood Fund (WNF), the Challenge Fund and major regeneration projects such as the Olympics and CrossRail. We would welcome realistic ethnic minority employment **targets** where large amounts of taxpayers' money are being spent. Members have expressed concern that to date only a limited amount of WNF funding has actually been spent on worklessness, and we would like to know how much has been spent on worklessness in Year 1, including how much has actually been allocated and spent on ethnic minority employment focussed projects and what measures are in place to ensure that ethnic minorities do not lose out. This is particularly concerning when DWP have closed the only ethnic minority employment programme "Partners' Outreach for Ethnic Minorities" – against our advice.

We recognise that we need to focus on mainstream provision, however we also need to ensure that mainstream provision actually delivers for ethnic minority customers, which members feel is currently not the case, and many individuals are "**off the radar**" as they are not in touch with the state, yet still are without work or living in poverty.

2. **Ensuring that ethnic minorities are not disproportionately impacted by the recession.** We welcome the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and EHRC's joint announcement of research on this issue but believe that we need to demonstrate that, as well as monitoring the impact of the recession, we are doing something to tackle these issues.
3. Ensuring that ethnic minorities (and ethnic minority businesses) are not disenfranchised via **contracting arrangements**, especially with the increased use of "Prime Contractors". Members have expressed serious concern that smaller providers are losing out in terms of specialised focus on ethnic minority clients, with providers focussing on the larger flows and not the hardest to help.
4. We could **learn lessons from other countries**, such as Norway where their Anti-Discrimination Ombudsman has just won a significant rise in budget and powers around the "duty for public authorities, employers in public and private sector and employee and employer organisations to make active, targeted and systematic efforts to promote the purpose of the Acts".
5. That Government itself can be an **exemplar employer**, for instance, by collating and publishing in one place reports from Departments on **ethnicity** of workforce (which individual Departments currently publish separately as part of their Annual Reports). We could then legitimately ask other public sector bodies, such as Local Authorities, to do the same and if they were not minded to, use the Freedom of Information Act.
6. EMAG also recognises the huge extent of **child poverty** amongst ethnic minority communities (where in 2006 the rate of child poverty for Black Africans was 56%, 60% for Pakistanis and 72% for Bangladeshis, as opposed to 25% for whites). We need to ensure that assumptions about ethnic minority women are not made and that there is representation of ethnic minority women across boards and in senior positions in the public

and private sectors. It may be appropriate to invite a DCSF Minister to our meeting when we discuss child poverty to maximise links on this agenda.

7. Lastly EMAG also recognises the important link between under employment and grievance and possible radicalisation. We need to ensure that all relevant Departments have policy strands in the **PREVENT** agenda and would seek a stronger involvement within this Home Office led agenda. It may be interesting to map WNF and look at how the “hot spots” relate or match to see if there is a link. Members feel that work is an important factor and an enabler on cohesion and integration.

We would like EMAG to work with the Task Force on these matters, building on the good start already made by the three project groups. We would also like to host a high profile event to celebrate what we have achieved so far and to help Government lay out its actions and delivery plans on the policy being developed in ensuring that ethnic minorities and the long-term disadvantaged are not further left behind in the labour market in a downturn.

I know that EMAG members are keen to hear the Task Force’s views on these matters and I will report our discussions back to them. Members feel there is a need for greater dialogue between the Task Force and EMAG on these issues if we are to fulfil the Business Commission Report’s long-term policy ambition of eradicating the ethnic minority employment gap within twenty-five years.

I am copying this letter to Task Force members so that we can discuss it at the meeting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Iqbal Wahhab". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line that serves as a separator.

**Chair, Iqbal Wahhab**

### **EMAG members**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Iqbal Wahhab (Chair)	Roast Restaurant
Hugh Harris	London First
Jonathan Baldrey	Talent
Tunde Banjoko	Local Employment Access Projects (LEAP)
Dr Husna Ahmad	Faith Regen
Jeremy Crook	Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG)
Rokhsana Fiaz	The Change Institute
Tanzeem Ahmed	Olmec
Shaynul Khan	London Muslim Centre
Adeeba Malik	QED-UK
Rev. Janet Murray	Community Family Challenges Project
Symon Sentain	Waltham Forest Olympics Programme
Wilf Sullivan	Trade Union Congress
Helen Wollaston	Equal to the Occasion
Sandra Kerr	Race for Opportunity
Bela Arora	Higher Education Academy
Alan Christie	Equality and Human Rights Commission
Jagdeep Jagpal	The Carbon Trust
Prof. Anthony Heath	Oxford University
Zohra Moosa	The Fawcett Society
Cecil Edey	Manchester Enterprises
Tim Campbell	The Bright Ideas Trust
Colette Cork- Hurst	Transport and General Workers Union
Dr Christina Julios	Ethnic Minority Foundation

### **EMAG's Key Roles:**

- a.** Act as the Task Force's 'ear to the ground': identify gaps in provision, problems facing ethnic minority jobseekers and employees; other areas of concern that Government may not be addressing – a "critical friend"
- b.** Provide advice to the Task Force
- c.** Deliver specific pieces of work to the Task Force
- d.** Issue responses to Government consultations in order to ensure that policy drawn up adequately reflects the ethnic minority employment agenda