

Minutes: EMAG meeting, 11th March, 2008

1. **Stephen Timms, Minister for Employment and Welfare Reform** gave a welcome speech to the group. Points raised in discussion included:

- **Skills:** we can go further to develop employment and skills in Jobcentres. Getting advice from EMAG on this score is very important.
- **Child Poverty** is still an issue, despite the employment gap being at an historic low (14%). The Minister is keen to take advantage of the expertise of those present to help address child poverty.
 - The link between poverty and employment is not straightforward: complicated by issues such as childcare
 - A need to understand how income is distributed *within* the home
- Advice on the new **Working Neighbourhoods Fund** and **Local Employment Partnerships** was welcomed. These mainstream programmes are an important means of addressing the ethnic minority employment gap.

2. **2008 Work Programme:**

- Three key work areas were outlined:
 - Getting Diversity into Local Employment Partnerships
 - Engaging with City Strategies and Working Neighbourhoods Fund to ensure they work
 - Any proposals in the Equality Bill relating to procurement
- Other suggested areas included:
 - Skills: Looking at young EM take-up of apprenticeships;
Supporting self-employment: females and EM groups have highest entrepreneurial rate
 - The Business Commission

3. **Presentation on the Local Employment Partnerships scheme:**

Intro:

- Local Employment Partnerships (LEP) scheme announced in March 2007.
- Aim is to engage with long term unemployed and people who aren't actively seeking work.
- 600 employers have so far expressed an interest; 100 employers are recruiting now.

Q&A

- Q.** How new are these employers to Jobcentre Plus? Have they used DWPs services before? If so, what is the added value?
- A.** Many of the employers are ones JCP engage with - LEPs involves strengthening existing relationships and may also involve engagement with employers who previously have had limited contact with JCP.
- Q.** How far are Jobcentre Plus (JCP) engaging with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)?
- A.** Initial focus was on signing up larger scale employers but JCP is now also engaging with SMEs.
- Q.** How is the scheme different from mainstream provision already in place?
- A.** LEPs involve a "deal" with employers. The Government takes steps to satisfy employers that suitable candidates are being put forward for jobs are ready for work; and employers agree to give them a fair shot at filling their vacancies through various measures: guaranteed job interviews, work placements, mentoring, work trials and reviewing recruitment processes to make them more inclusive.

Actions:

- **Provide details on the numbers of companies who said no** to joining the LEP scheme.
- There are over 1m people aged 16-24 who are neither in education nor employment. **Provide figures on the number of EMs in this breakdown.**
- **Provide details of how LEP engagement differs from existing JCP-employer relationships**
- How will the progress of employees under the scheme be tracked? There is a set target of 250,000 people into work through LEPs by the end of 2010, and there will be an evaluation of the initiative. **Information on evaluation to be provided.**

4. EMAG leads on the London 2012, City Strategy, and Procurement Focus Groups fed back to the group on progress.

	Action	Responsible	Deadline	Status
AP 1	EMAG to finalise a 2008 work plan and designate leads for next meeting	Chair and Secretariat	3/6/08	Cleared
AP2	New members to be finalised and formally invited	Chair and Secretariat	30/4/08	Cleared
AP 3	Outstanding questions to be provided on LEPs	Iain Walsh	30/4/08	Cleared

Attendance

Iqbal Wahhab
 Hugh Harris
 Nahid Majid
 Dan Monzani
 Hannah Ormerod
 Shaynul Khan
 Helen Wollaston
 Tanzeem Ahmed
 Wilf Sullivan
 Parvin Ali
 Faraz Yousufzai
 Mohammed Ali (for Adeeba Malik)
 Symon Sentain
 Rokhsana Fiaz
 Jeremy Crook

Prospective Members:

Asif Choudri
 Riaz Shah
 Sandra Kerr
 Dr Bela Arora
 Alan Christie
 Jagdip Jagpal
 Prof. Anthony Heath
 Zohra Moosa
 Cecil Edey
 Tim Campbell

Visitors

Stephen Timms, MP

 Jessica Hodgson
 Iain Walsh

Apologies

Roast Restaurants (**Chair**)
 London First
 DWP
 DWP
 DWP
 London Muslim Centre
 Equal to the Occasion
 Presentation Group
 TGWU
 FATIMA Women's Network (**Deputy Chair**)
 Working Links
 QED
 Waltham Forest
 The Change Institute
 BTEG (**Deputy Chair**)

South London Housing Association
 Ernst and Young
 Race for Opportunity
 Higher Education Academy
 EHRC
 The Carbon Trust
 Oxford University
 The Fawcett Society
 Manchester Enterprises
 The Bright Ideas Trust

Minister of State for Employment and Welfare Reform
 Private Secretary to Stephen Timms
 DWP

Harish Patel
Reena Dayal
Caroline Waters
Tariq Modood
Dr Sylvie Koestle

Collette Corkhurst
Aviva
BT
University of Bristol
Ethnic Minority Foundation