

Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force Meeting

09:00 to 10:30 20th July 2006
Room 149, Richmond House, Whitehall

MINUTES

Attendees

Jim Murphy MP (Chair)	Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
Jim Fitzpatrick MP	Department for Trade and Industry (DTI)
Meg Munn MP	Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)
Pat McFadden MP	Cabinet Office
Trevor Phillips	Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)
Alan Christie	CRE
Iqbal Wahhab	Chair, Ethnic Minority Advisory Group (EMAG)
Jeremy Anderson CBE	National Employment Panel (NEP)
Cay Stratton CBE	NEP
Leslie Manasseh	Trades Union Congress (TUC)
Teresa Clark	Department for Education and Skills (DfES)
Audrey Young	Greater London Authority (GLA)
Sharon White	DWP
Waqar Azmi OBE	Cabinet Office - Presentation
Nahid Majid OBE	Presentation - DWP
Will Driskell	Presentation - DWP
David Drew	Presentation - DWP
Astrid Breuer	Task Force Secretariat
Emma Heppenstall	Task Force Secretariat

Apologies

The Lord Adonis	DfES
John Healey	MP HM Treasury (HMT)
Katja Hall	Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
Rt Hon Richard Caborn MP	Dept for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)

Item 1: Welcome and Introduction

Jim Murphy (Chair) welcomed all to the Task Force meeting, particularly Pat McFadden MP, Treasury, Iqbal Wahhab, new chair of the EMAG and Audrey Young, who is representing the GLA. He explained that he wanted to widen the scope of Ministers in the group and had invited DCMS and the Cabinet Office Ministers. The GLA have made an approach to join the group and Jim Murphy has invited them to join.

In his opening speech Jim Murphy stressed the importance of equality of opportunity and asked the group to focus on what more can be done on aspects of Child Poverty, Social inclusion and Social mobility.

Item 2: Minutes and Action Points

The Task Force agreed the minutes of the last Task Force meeting of April 26th 2006. All action points were cleared apart from the action point for the CRE to write to departments pressing for progress on procurement. This will be carried forward. Trevor Phillips explained that he was soon to meet Sir Gus O'Donnell to discuss this issue and will write to him as a result of the meeting.

Item 3: Procurement

Nahid Majid provided summary of the progress paper:

- 3 pilots previously agreed – Jobcentre Plus (DWP), Passport Agency (Home Office) and DfES have all identified contracts and are developing work.
- DTI and DCLG are exploring suitable contracts to pilot.

Discussion focused on the number of pilots and who will take the lead in driving this across government. We are exploring different approaches in three pilots run by the DWP, HO and DfES.

The Jobcentre Plus pilot is testing revised terms and conditions in recently let New Deal contracts, will provide us with case studies and tools for strengthening race equality in procurement by:

- Post contract requirement for suppliers to supply and comply with policies on harassment, equality, diversity training and supplier diversity and requires sub-contractors who are also involved in the delivery of the contract to meet the same compliance requirements.
- Post contract requirement for suppliers to report the proportion of employees who are female, disabled and from an ethnic minority group. This is to be at the contract start and then every twelve months from contract start.

The Home Office Passport and Identity Service and the Department for Education and Skills Children's Centres Pilots will be looking at different approaches to strengthening race equality in government contracts.

David Drew then gave a summary of recent research on the use of positive action policies in contract compliance in the US and Canada, that is due to be published in October. The research from the US suggests that the use of positive action policies in contract compliance is the single most effective tool in increasing employment of women and ethnic minorities, although it should be stressed that setting targets or quotas for workforce composition is not possible in the current legal framework and not under consideration for the UK.

It was agreed that the 3 pilots in DWP, HO (Passport Agency) and DfES would be tested and evaluated initially. This will demonstrate the benefits and impact of a cross government approach.

Action Point 3.1: DWP to meet with Treasury to ask them to help drive procurement across Government.

Action Point 3.2: Report to be prepared for the January 2007 meeting that identifies early results of a process evaluation of the pilots.

Action Point 3.3: Transport for London to be invited to discuss the benefits of their approach to the East London Line procurement at a future meeting.

Action Point 3.4: Invite OGC to the January Task Force meeting.

Item 4 & 5: Presentation & Discussion on EMETF Strategy (inc. monitoring mechanism)

Key points:

- The City Strategy will drive forward economic activity – vital that we work together across government as there are 3 different strategies for cities - the DWP City Strategy, DfES City Strategy and the DCLG New Deal for Towns & Cities.
- The DWP are currently assessing 37 expressions of interest from consortia to take forward the City strategy. An announcement of successful bids to become the pathfinders will be made in the next few weeks.
- The measurement package provides a one page summary of how well the Task Force is doing; sitting behind the summary are a set of statistical indicators, and more information against each of the agreed priorities.

Questions on the balanced scorecard included:

- If and how Regional success variations will be shown
- How well ethnic minority women are doing in employment
- How well different ethnic groups are doing in employment.

Discussion about different issues faced by different ethnic groups included activity to improve employer engagement, which is currently assessed as red. Cay Stratton said that the Business Commission (that is being developed and covers the 5 Cities) would look at identifying these issues.

Cay Stratton was concerned that the City Strategy does not cover all ethnic minority groups, for example current pilots in London do not include South London that has a high percentage of Afro-Caribbean people.

Trevor Philips will comment on the strategy via the Secretariat.

Action point 4.1: The Task Force agreed to use the balance scorecard to report progress on a six monthly basis.

Action point 4.2: Ethnic Minority Employment Division (DWP) to follow up on specific queries raised (above) via correspondence.

Action point 4.3: The Task Force is to ensure that Ethnic Minority issues and activities are included within the successful City Strategy bids and to have a further conversation on this.

Item 5: Connecting People to Work (inc. Olympics)

Most recommendations for the DWP have been met; however there is more work to be done.

Olympics –

- A number of Government Departments are responsible for the legacy aspects such as skills and diversity. The Ethnic Minority Employment Division feeds into these discussions, such as the Olympics Diversity Board led by DCMS.
- The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) has no diversity board but a London Sustainability Commission which also deals with diversity across the board.
- The ODA is to tender for a diversity consultant and there are also plans for diversity proofing for the legacy.
- London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) will also be developing key indicators.
- LOCOG will announce a sustainability policy in July as well as a draft Olympic Procurement Policy.
- EMAG and CRE have suggested that the monitoring of the impact of the Olympics and the legacy, particularly in relation to recruitment of ethnic minorities, should have a strong focus and priority.

Action Point 5.1: A further update on the City Strategy (including the Olympic Boroughs) will be provided in the October meeting.

Item 6: Diversity in the Civil Service

Waqar Azmi presented an overview of the 10 point plan.

Questions raised:

- Data on the length of time ethnic minority people spend as a Senior Civil Servant.
- Issue of under representation of ethnic minority graduates, on courses typically feeding the Faststream (e.g. humanities).

- Further information needed breaking down statistics by geography / location, department, grade and role.
- Evidence of departments carrying out Race Impact Assessments on efficiency challenge activity.
- Request that the Cabinet office publish figures on staffing again.

Action Point 6.1: Due to time constraints Waqar Azmi was asked to respond in writing to questions raised around his presentation.

Item 7: Any other business

No items were put forward

Summary of Action points – Annex A

Date of next Task Force meeting has been changed to **Wednesday 25th October, 2006, 9:00 - 10:30am, Portcullis House, House of Commons, Room P**