

EME Task Force Stakeholder Group – Notes & Action Points

Thursday 9th December 2004

Attendees:

Symon Sentain
Jonathan Baldrey
Collette Cork-Hurst
Paul Howlett
Jane Sherwood
Jeremy Crook
Soloman Fubara
Afsana Shukur
Lucy Williams
Rev Janet Murray
Monica Coke
Dame Marlene Robottom
Ada Maduakoh
Zahid Hamid
Ivan Corea
Wilf Sullivan
Lucy Williams
Afsana Shukur

Organisation:

Trustee of the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust
Talent Recruitment
TGWU
CITB
London Borough of Newham
BTEG
CEED
DWP
DWP
Community Family Challengers Project
West Midlands RDA
Mulberry School
ProDiverse
Black Community Forum
Dream Harvest Group
TUC
DWP
DWP

Apologies:

Nahid Majid
Fiona Kane
Patricia Chale
David Boyle
Roger McKenzie
Eric Samuel
Linzi Kendall
Jo Thanki
Eddie Quaynor

Turner & Townsend / Stakeholder Group Chair
CITB
HR Consultant
Dunraven School
TUC
Food Enterprise Limited
Yorkshire Forward
Hindu Forum
CEED

Welcome and introduction

1. Jonathan Baldrey confirmed Nahid had nominated him to chair the meeting as she was unable to attend. Everyone at the meeting introduced themselves and explained what they thought the ongoing purpose of the group was.

Some of the comments made were:

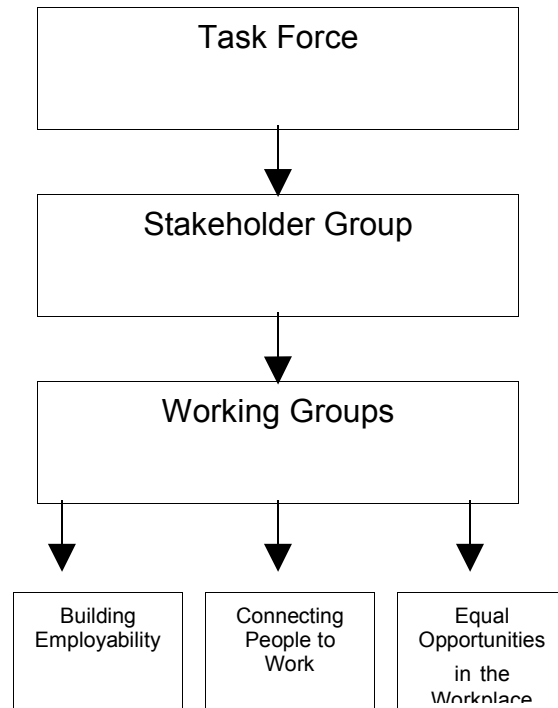
- Stakeholder Group acts as a test to make sure Task Force is on track.
- Trade Unions have a part to play in the role of Stakeholder Group and Task Force
- Stakeholder Group should be more action based.
- Stakeholder Group is there to scrutinise, check, recommend, guide and test government policy.
- Would like to find out what's going on around the country as national policies can act very differently at a local level. Need to look at the whole picture National/regional/sub-regional
- A school in Tower Hamlets where a stakeholder member is the head teacher has an intake that is nearly 100% Bangladeshi. There is an ongoing problem with Asian girls being able to break through the glass ceiling. Need to get employers to open doors. Would like the Stakeholder Group to help contribute to the solutions
- How can we help ethnic minorities at a local level? Olympic bid – no ethnic minorities at the top table so not represented at the highest level.
- Need cultural change in employment. Trade Unions have a big role to play in this. How can we motivate activity in this area? Want to avoid one size fits all.
- Want to see Stakeholder Group making a difference, and not just rubberstamping. Policy is formed without a clear understanding of community. Policy needs to be based on informed information at the ground level.
- Negotiate with policy makers who need to listen to what is happening in the community.

Minutes and action points from the last meeting

2. These were formally agreed at the end of the meeting. Collette Cork-Hurst asked for a small change to the minutes which Lucy Williams agreed to change.

Key objectives for the Stakeholder Group

3. Jonathan then reminded the group of its structure before handing over to Afsana Shukur.



4. Afsana Shukur gave an overview of the Task Force and the role of the Stakeholder Group.

5. Task Force is made up of Ministers, TUC, CBI, CRE, with Nahid Majid representing the Stakeholder Group. DWP lead the strategy that addresses labour market disadvantage. The overall aim is for the employment rate for ethnic minorities and overall population to be the same. From 2001 to 2004 the rate for ethnic minorities has increased from 57.7% to 59/60%. The most significant progress has been in increasing women in to work which is a large inactive group.

6. Jane Kennedy at the launch event stated that we need to do more than just meet the Strategy Unit recommendations. The Task Force must now go beyond the recommendations and if it is to carry on making a difference.

7. Afsana noted that there is little ethnic minority representation on the Task Force, and that the Task Force needs to ensure that it is aware of what is happening at delivery level.

8. The role of the Stakeholder Group should therefore be to challenge and scrutinise the work of the Task Force, and offer innovative solutions to the ethnic minority employment problem.

9. She noted that the role of the Stakeholder Group should be to offer practical policy examples of what is happening at delivery level that will make a demonstrable impact on ethnic minority communities. The Group comprises 'experts' who need to feed into the developing ethnic minority strategy. They may therefore wish to consider looking at regional aspects of the strategy, in order to make the most of their influence on the Task Force.

10. Afsana discussed ways in which the Ethnic Minority Employment Division (EMED) can support the work of the Stakeholder Group, for example by:

- Allowing Stakeholder Group input into the strategy by circulating papers after meetings etc.;
- Providing Stakeholder Group with sight of research proposals; and
- Allowing Stakeholder Group sight of what it proposed before Task Force meetings.

11. The Group should have the latest information on internal analysis, and ought to commission work for further analysis. She added that EMED should seek views from the Group on what support they need, in order to help with their work.

12. EMED should provide Group with an overall picture of activity across government, to ensure that work is not duplicated. This will help to ensure that the Group can add value to the work of the Task Force.

Plenary Discussion

13. A comment was made questioning the use of statistics and how it was worrying that the employment rate has gone up, but specifically what type of employment has gone up?

Over-qualified people are being employed as they can't get the jobs they should be getting because of their ethnicity.

14. There was some discussion about the role of the SG in relation to NEP and MEG, who also look at issues of ethnic minority employment disadvantage, and current key issues including:

- Skills
- Procurement
- Inactivity

15. There was also some discussion regarding the role of OGDs in the further development of the strategy, for example DWP's work on the welfare to work strategy and on tackling inactivity, and their role in the use of procurement to promote race equality. Delegates also noted that DWP has a part to play in connecting ethnic minority graduates to the labour market.

16. It was noted that DTI has various relevant strands of activity, including its work with the Ethnic Minority Business Forum.

17. The Group discussed the need to look at issues including DWP's Outreach initiative, and the need to get ethnic minority people to engage with JCP.

Action: EMED to circulate brief update on job outcomes for EMO and progress.

18. The Group also discussed the fact that the Department for Health is not represented on the Task Force. However, it was also noted that Jane Kennedy wishes to keep the Task Force strategically focused.

19. There was some discussion around gaps currently present in the strategy, including:

- Private sector procurement
- Graduate under-employment
- The concentration of ethnic minorities in certain sectors
- Economic inactivity amongst ethnic minority women
- The regional agenda
- The achievements of ethnic minorities on the New Deal

20. Delegates noted that it would be helpful for the working groups to have to project timelines for the next twelve months.

21. It was also noted that there are some gaps in the membership of the SG, and that we should consider its membership and whether it should expand.

22. Jonathan Baldrey noted that he is keen that members of the SG should keep their commitment to the group, and keep up their attendance. Marlene Robottom agreed with this point.

23. It was also noted that the Group should draw on wider experience than is currently represented.

24. It was suggested that the Group should propose one key way in which they can make a difference to the work of the Task Force – but it was also noted that they should be clear about having manageable and achievable objectives.

25. Some key questions were raised:

- Who should be members of the Group?
- Who should be in the working groups?
- What are the SG's objectives?
- What are the SG's key products and outputs?
- What is the timeline for these?
- What assumptions is the Group working on?

26. It was agreed that there needs to be a debate about all of these key questions – particularly about the assumptions of the group’s remit. Jonathan Baldrey noted that they should challenge assumptions.

27. A range of key stakeholders were noted as being potential partners including:

- TUC and other trades unions
- RDAs
- Local authorities
- CITB
- CBI
- LGA
- LSCs
- JCP
- Business Links
- Faith Group such as the Muslim Council of Britain
- Umbrella organisations such as BTEG
- Refugee Councils

The general consensus was that there should be a focus should be on organisations that can help ethnic minorities find work.

Exercise looking at the Working Groups

28. Some key issues were raised regarding the Working Groups, including:

- Membership
- Timing and frequency of meetings
- Work plans for the next twelve months
- Milestones
- Products and outcomes
- Locations of meetings
- DWP funding of travel and hospitality costs
- Safety consideration

29. Symon Sentain outlined the membership and current work of the Building Employability group. He noted that the group needs to consider having its ‘end users’ (e.g. students) on the group.

30. There was some discussion around the size of the working group (current membership is 10-12), and the need for a scoping exercise to look at issues such as the higher education sector and supplementary schooling. He noted that the working groups should provide the wider SG with notes of their meetings.

31. Jonathan Baldrey spoke about the Connecting People to Work group, and agreed that it is important to include in the membership of the Working

Groups the 'end users'. He noted that they would be happy to have a larger working group, and that they would like to look at further issues including:

- Regional issues
- Programmes delivered by ODPM and JCP
- The evaluation of Ethnic Minority Outreach

32. He noted that the group was hoping to have a presentation from JCP, to enable them to raise a range of questions on various issues. ODPM are due to give a presentation soon.

33. Key issues for this group include:

- The possibility of having 'mystery shopper' exercises
- Those who have retired early
- The over 50s
- Students and graduates
- The double disadvantage issue for ethnic minority people who also have disabilities

34. This group will be meeting again at the end of January.

35. Wilf Sullivan has been chosen to head the Equal Opportunities working group.

36. The next Stakeholder Group meeting will take place on 1st March 2005, location to be advised.

STAKEHOLDER GROUP (SG) ACTION POINTS

	Action	Lead	Deadline	Status
1	EMED to circulate brief update on job outcomes for EMO and progress.	Lucy Williams	ASAP	