

EME TF Stakeholder Chairs Away-day – 28th April 05.

The Following Delegates attended the session:

Nahid Majid (Turner and Townsend),
Wilf Sullivan (TUC),
Symon Sentain (Haringey NDC),
Jonathan Baldrey (At Work / Talent),
Collette Cork-Hurst (T&G), Patricia Chale (PC Associates),
Mary Smeeth (DTI),
Wendy Ahmun (LB BD),
Afsana Shukur (EMED),
Veena Vasista (MEG/NEP)
Mumtaz Samad (EMED).

Introduction

Some of the key findings highlighted so far in the Stakeholder Group (SG) review process was presented to the Group.

Group agreed key outcomes to achieve for each session:

- Identify what issues affecting the SG and the 3 thematic Working Groups.
- To establish no of action points to address issues highlighted in part one.
- Identify – key areas of work to address in 2005.
- To agree no of Issues (i.e. re-branding, synergy and sustainability) in relation to future of the SG.

Presentation by Afsana Shukur – Head of EMED on Progress on Task Force (TF) Priorities.

Afsana explained the role of the TF. TF has a strong influencing role and supports cross-governmental work. TF initial timeline set for completion on March 2006. However, presently it is expected to continue beyond achieving the objectives set out in the Prime Minister's Strategy Units recommendation report, due to its role and remit. The TF is the only dedicated forum that addresses BME Employment issues on national level.

Afsana, outlined number of key areas of work that her team are currently undertaking that may be of particular interest to the SG including:

Developing the DWP ethnic minority strategy

Procurement

EMED including other key government departments will be sending in their submission re key areas of work for 2006 and beyond to the TF.

Presentation by Veena Vasista – Director of MEG: Overview of MEG and NEP priorities –

Veena, stated that her forum too went through a similar process. It required resources to pull the various aspects of MEG into a more meaningful structure.

Role of NEP and MEG and the Fair Cities Project – Employment lead body. New Deal program with sub-committees (also employer lead). 10-employer coalition, dealing with how recommendations can be delivered on the ground.

Disability sub-committee dismantled as their work finished

MEG: consists of mixture of large employers and small business owners – mainly SMEs.

- **Two main projects: commenced September 04.**

1. Special Employment Advisors (SEAs) at Job Centre Plus – targeting BME.
2. Job Centre Plus & Procurement. Has working group, employers involved. Will reported to NEP and Minister for Work.

- **Fair Cities**

Pilot project have 3 catchment areas – Brent, Birmingham and Bradford.

Delivery currently in operation. Report available. Objectives for the pilot project include;

- Improve employment opportunities for BME groups

Timetable for delivery – 3 to 5 years pilot

Letter to Gordon Brown from Kay Stratton – NEP Director. Shows 10 key recommendations accepted by Chancellor.

Process still up for debate re how it should be delivered.

Final discussion points

- Key work areas for the SG 2005
- Governance & structure of the EME TF Stakeholder Group
- Future of the SG – re branding and sustainability

Feedback in the larger group included the following:

Key priorities

- Agreed that Stakeholder Group should play a more proactive monitoring and scrutiny role with EME issues and initiatives.
- Possibly monitor, pilot BME employment initiatives and national policies
- Monitor role of recruitment agencies delivering employment programs

- Monitor BME staff in Civil Service – progression routes (Cabinet Office)
- Stakeholder Group to have a ‘critical friend’ from outside.
- Need range of influential characters i.e. to champion Stakeholder Group role. Such as Lami, leading BME Business leaders.
- Investigate the option of having lead minister for each thematic groups

Future of the Group

- Re-branding the Stakeholder Group
- Addressing the composition of the group

It was agreed due to issues highlighted in part one of the session to look at the option of streamlining / downsizing the make up and structure of the group.

Stakeholder Group to be set up as ‘**executive committee**’. Key representatives to be nominated from the 3 thematic Working Groups. Current membership too large to get meaningful work carried out.

Delegates agreed to keep all 3 thematic groups.

Stakeholder Group to provide submission in line with DWP’s submission to Ministers – Sept/Oct 05.

Action Agreed:

Afsana to send map of evidence and policy details to all chairs re their key thematic area of work, to help formulate work plan, plus identify gaps.

Thematic Group chairs to identify what resources needed to carryout the work.

Re- Branding – All delegates to think of possible ideas for renaming the Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force Stakeholder Group.

Stakeholder Group Review Findings and Recommendations to be presented to SG and Task Force by Group Chair – Nahid Majid (June / July 05)