

Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force Meeting

Tuesday 24th April, 2:00 to 3:00pm

Caxton House, Room 4.01

Minutes

Attendees:

Jim Murphy MP (Chair)	Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
Meg Munn MP	Communities and Local Government (CLG)
Pat McFadden MP	Cabinet Office
Janice Munday	Department for Trade and Industry (DTI)
Andrew Lean	Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)
Esmond Lindop	Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
Chris Wells	Department for Education and Skills (DfES)
Alan Christie	Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)
Jonathan Baldrey	Ethnic Minority Advisory Group (EMAG)
Wilf Sullivan	Trades Union Congress (TUC)
Cay Stratton	NEP
Frank Carson	HM Treasury (HMT)
Caroline Crowther	Presentation - City Strategy
Vicky Davis	Presentation - City Strategy
Nahid Majid, OBE	DWP
Dan Monzani	DWP
Carol McDonald	Task Force Secretariat
Viv Miller	Task Force Secretariat

Apologies:

Lord Andrew Adonis	DfES
John Healey MP	HMT
Jim Fitzpatrick MP	DTI
Rt Hon Richard Caborn MP	DCMS
Jeremy Anderson	NEP
Iqbal Wahhab	EMAG

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Action Point update.

Jim Murphy MP (Chair) welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were made.

All action points from the previous meeting have been cleared.

Agenda Item 2: Task Force Membership, Priorities & Work Programme 2007

Membership

It was agreed that the existing TF membership should remain broadly unchanged. However, two changes were mentioned:

- 1) Home Office officials to be consulted on whether one of their Ministers would like to join the TF.
- 2) Replacing the GLA with the LGA in order to give the TF a national view and broader scope on initiatives such as the City Strategy.

Priorities

It was agreed that the TF should focus on four priority areas and shape meetings around these:

- City Strategy (April)
- Employer Engagement (July)
- Olympics legacy (October)
- Procurement (January)

Departments have agreed to lead on these priority areas supported by other departments and stakeholders as appropriate and report progress at future TF meetings:

- DTI to lead on Employer Engagement, except where skills are discussed DfES should lead;
- DCMS to lead on the legacy of the Olympics;
- DWP to lead work on procurement;
- DWP to lead work on City Strategy and other local area initiatives, with CLG.

Focus Groups

Nahid Majid explained that departmental officials are currently working together to establish focus groups to drive forward projects, to deliver real outcomes in each of the priority areas. The groups will clarify objectives within each of these areas and invite experts in to support and/or challenge new and existing initiatives. For example, DTI has met with DWP, CBI, CRE and TUC officials to analyse/discuss where best to add value.

The Task Force agreed to sign off the membership and priorities of the TF.

AP1: Departmental officials to contact the Home Office re Task Force membership.

Agenda item 3: City Strategy presentation.

Caroline Crowther (DWP) and Vicky Davis (ECOTEC) gave a joint presentation on City Strategy.

Key points:

- City Strategy Pathfinders are testing whether a devolved decision and delivery mechanism can drive up employment outcomes.
- Expression of Interest exercise invited from 45 disadvantaged towns and cities.
- 15 pathfinders announced and business plans were submitted.
- Initial assessment of business plans was carried out by ECOTEC.
- Ministers announced that all 15 pathfinders could move into the delivery phase providing they had agreed targets and proper governance arrangements in place.
- DWP offered the pathfinders direct control of a £32m Deprived Areas Fund in 07/08 and 08/09; promise of at least £5m reward fund; influence over Provider Led Pathways specification; and package of flexibilities.

All Pathfinders were asked to provide in their Business Plans:

- A vision and strategic objectives.
- Local analysis to identify priority groups, and weaknesses in existing provision.
- Proposed response – how the Pathfinder proposes to change the mix/focus of existing provision.
- Targets to show what Pathfinders will achieve over and above existing commitments.
- Governance and management arrangements.
- Plans for consultation, communications and learning.

Questions/issues raised:

Discussion focused on whether Cities had sufficient focus on ethnic minorities. It was agreed that more needs to be done for ethnic minorities and ensuring programme provision exists for ethnic minorities was one of the things being considered in the assessment of the business plans.

Other concerns raised were around outreach provision and community engagement. Vicky highlighted the West London pilot and stated that funding have been awarded to enhance outreach for women, faith and community groups. Many pathfinders are finding that they need to reach people in their homes and local services/community.

There was a tension between devolution and ensuring a shared focus on the most disadvantaged. The pathfinders should ensure that there is a focus on ethnic minority employment where there is a high ethnic minority population within the pathfinder area.

TF will continue to challenge DWP in their delivery of the City Strategy for ethnic minorities.

AP2: City Strategy pathfinders to feedback to TF on employment outcomes.

AP3: City Strategy team to produce a profile of the labour market in each of the City Strategy areas.

Employer Engagement will be the main agenda item at July's meeting. This will focus on private and public sector. The Chair thanked the presenters, TF members, TF team and closed the meeting.

Next meeting:

Date:	25 th July 2007
Time:	2:00pm to 3:00pm (tbc)
Venue:	TBC

Summary of Action points:

	Action	Responsible	Deadline	Status
AP 1	Departmental officials to contact the Home Office re Task Force membership.	Secretariat	May 2007	Cleared
AP 2	City Strategy pathfinders to feedback to TF employment outcomes.	City Strategy team	October 2007	Not yet due
AP 3	City Strategy team to produce a labour market analysis of each City Strategy pathfinder.	City Strategy team	July 2007	Not yet due