



**Area Initiatives Project Group Meeting
 Tuesday 12 January 2010
 2.00 - 4.00 pm
 Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA**

Attendance:

Jeremy Crook (Chair) (JC)	BTEG
Nick Steward (NS)	JCP
Sandra Johnson-Blake (SJB)	Equality and Human Rights Commission
Hugh Harris (HH)	London First
Hayley Johnson (HJ)	DWP
Darren Woolfenden (DW)	DWP
Steve Harris (SH)	DWP
Apologies	
Shaynal Khan	London Muslim Centre
Rokhsana Fiaz	Change Institute
Kim Chaplain	Host Boroughs Unit
Patricia Winters	DWP
Arun Batra	LDA
Bela Arora	Higher Education Academy
Henry Abraham	GLA
Holly Creek	DCMS
Rev. Janet Murray	Religious Minister
Kevin Boucher	ODA

Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

- JC welcomed members and explained that the focus of the meeting was to go over the first part of the data portal written by DWP

Item 2: Discussion about the Data Portal

- JC introduced the data portal which he said had been put together by members of the Ethnic Minority Employment team within DWP since the areas workshop in October and after the revised project plan which was agreed by Jeremy and Iqbal Wahaab.
- HJ explained that the idea of the first part of the data portal was to pull together data sources relating to ethnic minorities, using the five host boroughs as an example so that any final product would be usable more widely, and particularly relevant to employment outcomes. The portal would aim to:
 - Set out the data sources available for analysis
 - Make accessing the data as accessible and user friendly as possible;
 - Raise awareness of gaps in data relating to ethnic minorities and;

- Part two would give local authorities examples and case studies of how to raise the employment rate of ethnic minorities.
- JC asked everyone to look through the portal and then give their reactions to it

Summary of responses to section 1:

- JC said that the introduction needs to provide a clear explanation that there are no specific data sets for ethnic minority employment, but that we have had to pick through other data sets to find relevant information. We should also provide clarification on what different terms mean, for example Super Output Areas etc. He also stressed the importance of language; if we talk about the five boroughs too much then other authorities may think the portal isn't relevant to them.
- DW suggested that we need to "flesh out" what we mean by "professionals", as employers as well as local authorities could also access this web portal if they wish to measure their own workforce against the population of the local area. He suggested that perhaps there should be separate sections on what this could mean for local authorities, local employers and providers.
- HH raised the issue that the fundamental problem is that however you try and get a figure that is meaningful when trying to discover whether you're making a difference to the EM rate within an area, when the data is stripped down to borough level the figures become less accurate. We need to state this as a caveat when talking about the reliability of data.
- HH also stressed the purpose of what we are doing which is to provide a starting point for local authorities to use as a baseline measurement when putting in place any action plans around ethnic minority employment rates. There is a danger that we are getting in to a state of paralysis through analysis.
- DW also emphasised that this is not an internal performance management organisational tool; it is more about influencing policy, direction of travel and helping an employer/partnership/local authority to target their spending, assess an area, make a judgement and to see in two years time whether they have made a difference to ethnic minority employment.
- SH noted that the labour force survey provides us with trends in terms of unemployment and inactivity in local areas, so you can see which borough is doing badly with unemployment and which is doing badly with inactivity. If you want to monitor some sort of policy impact then the admin data (eg JCP) is a way of monitoring on a monthly basis any improvements that are taking place. Therefore if you had a particular group which you were trying to target you could monitor on a month to month basis. SH also clarified that this tool would link to data on the claimant count.
 - There was also a discussion about whether we could use the portal as a group, and how Kim Chaplain's Performance Management Framework could link in to the portal.

Summary of responses to section 2:

- It was agreed that sections 2.5 to 2.9 would be better organised under themed headings with details of all the data sources available under those headings, with links to sections 2 and 3.

- SJB suggested that under geography we might want to map against deprivation. CLG are doing some work on this already and SH agreed to provide a link to the CLG website. SJB also suggested that perhaps the data should be more qualitative than quantitative, especially as we need to consider our target audience. We also need to assess how people will use this information and who exactly our target audience is.
- It was also agreed that Nomis was a good source of data as it is straight forward and easy to use, and free of charge. The drawback is that it doesn't include all the EM data it could as it doesn't tabulate all the data available by ethnic origin.
- The UK Data Archive was found to be difficult to use, very laborious for none statisticians in terms of finding what you want and the data comes in raw form and is not tidied up, meaning you need additional specialist software to do that for you as well as considerable expertise.
- ESDS is a sub set of the Data Archive and so the comments above also apply.
- The DWP Tabulation Tool was considered to be a little awkward to use and of very limited use as it only has ethnic minority categories for JSA.
- HONS was also thought to be a very difficult website to use.
- SH suggested that we need to clearly sign posts data sets, stating who they would be most relevant too, and the level of expertise needed to access them fully.
- SJB asked whether all the data sets were relevant and whether, as there are so many, if they need stripping down still further. SH acknowledged that he had purposely included all the sets he thought could be relevant so that the group could decide which ones they wanted to keep and which ones they should disregard.

Summary of responses to section 3:

- Not all the data sets listed here contain data on ethnic minorities, and it was agreed that the ones that do not should be removed.
- It would also be useful to include a column on geography to illustrate how local data can be broken down.
- It was agreed that the current list of data sets appears quite overwhelming, especially to none statisticians. There was a suggestion that there should be an indication what the top three data sets for beginners should be, so that people knew where to start, and that more experienced professionals should be advised to use the more complex ones.
- SH clarified that the data sets will be a stand alone list with links providing information. Also, the same information may be provided by three different data sets, just in three different formats, and it is up to the professional to decide which one they prefer.
- JC asked whether the data sets could be divided in to themes, and SH agreed to do this.
- There was also a discussion around whether data sets that did not directly link to employment should be used, for example those on crime. HJ suggested that a section could be included to illustrate how the crime rate could be compared to the employment rate to see

whether one affects the other and whether local authorities are making a difference.

- JSB also commented that data on child benefit doesn't illustrate poverty, but data on free school meals and working tax credits may say more.
- SH agreed to look at the National Child Development Study and whether it is relevant. SH will also investigate Local Authorities and the diversity of their employees as if the proportion of ethnic minorities employees is low in comparison then LAs could start by looking at their own recruitment.

3. AOB

It was agreed that HJ and DW would meet with Kim Chaplain to find out:

- Whether the portal would be useful for the Olympics and whether she would use it
- What Kim's views on the tool are and whether she could add anymore data specifically relating to local authorities
- Whether Kim could look at the data sets to see if there are things we have missed
- Where does Kim think we should host this to be best accessible (involving awareness) amongst local partnerships and local authorities? Is it something she could promote?
- JC also said that he is happy if we co-opt people on to the project group from the data gathering workshop.

Summary of Action Points:

	Action Point	Responsibility	Status
1	HJ to talk to Jenni Martin about which local authorities are attending the road shows, and whether there is any feedback from them send info to JC	Hayley Johnson	Pending
2	HJ and DW to meet with Kim Chaplain to discuss data portal	Hayley Johnson	Pending
3	SH to make amendments to sections 2 and 3 of the portal.	Steve Harris	Pending
4	HJ to look at second half of the portal and include Met Police and the Olympics	Hayley Johnson	Pending
5	All to think of positive initiatives/projects etc that help EMs get closer to the labour market throughout the UK and send info to HJ	All	Pending
6	HJ to enquire whether anyone from the data gathering workshop would like to be part of the project group	HJ	Pending

Next meeting to be held at the end of Feb 2010.