



**Employer Engagement Project Group Meeting
16 February 2009
11.00am - 1.00pm
Room 2.25, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA**

Minutes

Attendance:

Sandra Kerr (Chair) (SK)	Race for Opportunity
Sukhvinder Singh (SS)	EHRC
Helen Wollaston (HW)	Freelance Consultant
Collette Cork-Hurst (CC-H)	UNITE
Jennifer Miller (JM)	One and All Foundation
Jessica Hodgson (JH)	DWP
Christine Wright (CW)	DWP
Lorna Fraser (LF)	DWP

Apologies:

Adeeba Malik	QED
Anne Rae	BERR
Zohra Moosa	The Fawcett Society
Nicola Walker	CBI

Item 1: Welcome, introductions and apologies; ratification of Terms of Reference. Introduction of chair outlining her vision for the work of the group.

- SK welcomed members and set out her vision for the group. She asked that members commit to being proactive and carrying out their action points between meetings.
- Members requested that the draft Terms of Reference be amended to include public sector as well as private sector employers. This was agreed.

AP1: LF to amend Terms of Reference

- Membership was discussed and it was agreed to see if there are relevant officials from departments involved in the education, training and employment process who could be invited to join the group.

AP2: LF to see if there are officials willing to participate from relevant Task Force departments

Item 2: Members' introductions

- Members introduced themselves and outlined their areas of interest, what expertise they could bring to the group and what they are currently doing. A register of members' expertise and areas of interest is attached at Annex A.

Item3: Presentation by Jennifer Miller, One and All Foundation

- Jennifer Miller gave a presentation on the work of the One and All Foundation. Her presentation is attached in a separate document.
- In the ensuing discussion CC-H stressed the need to establish a baseline and monitor progress.
- Questions were raised about the forthcoming Equality Bill: what the timetable is and whether it will contain a section on procurement. SS confirmed that procurement would be included.

AP3: LF to find out more about Equality Bill

- The Social Mobility White Paper was discussed. SS explained that the "Equally Professional Network" is looking at the White Paper and has put out a call for evidence.

AP4: SS to circulate timetable for Equally Professional Network call for evidence

AP5: LF to circulate link to Social Mobility White Paper

Item 4: Discussion of members' 'Five Points for Progress'

- Members were asked to think of up to five ideas on how the group could mobilise leaders to take small steps that, collectively, could make a real difference and have an impact on the life chances and fulfilment of ethnic minority people. It was agreed that ideas must be realistic in the current economic climate. Ideas included:
 - Tackling the low aspirations which teachers hold for ethnic minority students
 - Promoting good role models for ethnic minority young people
 - Working with middle management to ensure the progression of ethnic minorities
 - Mandatory monitoring and publication of diversity statistics
 - Off the record networking for managers where concerns about the employment of ethnic minorities can be raised and misconceptions discussed
 - Reciprocal mentoring and mentoring circles
 - Completion of online bias tests by high profile individuals, e.g. directors and ministers
 - Increasing employer engagement in work experience programmes
 - Bring a child to work days
 - Working with recruitment agencies, highlighting how to deal with employers who might express a bias as to ethnicity of potential employees
 - Hosting business breakfasts around key topics and research

Item 5: AOB

- It was agreed that a recruitment agency would be invited to share their experiences at the next meeting. The Recruitment and Employment Confederation were mentioned as potential members of the group.
- HW has seen information about Blackburn Council running its own recruitment agency as part of the City Strategy and will investigate

AP6: HW to investigate Blackburn Council's recruitment agency

- It was agreed to hold the next meeting at the end of March/beginning of April and a further meeting in May/June.

AP7: LF to canvass dates for future meetings**Summary of Action Points**

	Action Point	Responsibility	Status
1	LF to amend Terms of Reference	LF	Cleared
2	LF to see if there are officials willing to participate from relevant Task Force departments	LF	In progress
3	LF to find out more about Equality Bill	LF	Cleared
4	SS to circulate timetable for Equally Professional Network call for evidence.	SS	Cleared
5	LF to circulate link to Social Mobility White Paper	LF	Cleared
6	HW to investigate Blackburn Council's recruitment agency	HW	Cleared
7	LF to canvass dates for future meetings	LF	Cleared

Annex A

Members' Interests and Expertise

Name	Organisation	Interests/Expertise
Sandra Kerr	Race for Opportunity & Business in the Community	Her network focuses specifically on ethnic minority employment, showcasing good practice and mobilising others.
Collette Cork-Hurst	UNITE	National Secretary for Equalities.
Sukhvinder Singh	EHRC	Focuses on all equality strands, including race equality
Helen Wollaston	Freelance Consultant	Has particular expertise on the participation of ethnic minority women. Currently working with North West development agency.
Jennifer Miller	One and All Foundation	Looking at all the equality strands in the hospitality sector.