



Area Initiatives Project Group Meeting
Wednesday, 14th January 2009
10.30 am – 12.30 pm
Room 2.29/2.30 Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA

Minutes

Attendance:

Jonathan Baldrey (JB)	Talent & At Work
Jeremy Crook (JC)	BTEG
David Blight (DB)	EHRC
Dr Bela Arora (BA)	Higher Education Academy
Marlene Cassell (MC)	ODA
Kate Burt (KB)	The Prince's Trust
Boyd Wood (BW)	DWP
Rokhsana Fiaz (RF)	Change Institute
Jody Dunderdale (JD)	JCP
Derek Harvey (DH)	JCP City
Janet Murray (JM)	Community Family Challenges Project
Mariska van der Linden (MvL)	Make your mark
Mark Turner (MT)	DWP
Christine Wright (CW)	DWP
Lorna Fraser (LF)	DWP

Apologies:

Hugh Harris	London First
Sandra Johnson-Blake	EHRC
Louise Woodford	LDA
Kim Chaplain	CSP
Arun Batra	LDA
Rachel Waterman	Nations & Regions Group

Welcome

- JB welcomed members to the new group.

Members' Introduction

- Members were asked to introduce themselves, outline their experience and areas of interest
- See Annex A for a log of members' experience and interests.
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Introduction of chairs and outlining of vision for new group

- JB explained that he and Jeremy would be joint chairs, with Jeremy leading on the Olympics work.
- JB sees the role of the areas group as a scrutiny body. They should invite organisations to present to the group about ethnic minority employment initiatives and the group would make recommendations for improvement and/or identify examples of good practice.
- JB would like the group to meet bi-monthly for two hours and asked members to commit to attending meetings regularly.
- JC outlined his vision for the Olympics strand. He would like to see the group identifying and undertaking practical activities which will improve the employment outcomes of ethnic minorities on the Olympics site. However he pointed out that there is a need to ensure work is not duplicated.
- JB then asked for members' opinions on how the group would operate, what areas they would like to explore and ideas for projects.
- Suggestions included:
 - A scrutiny role in looking at the Working Neighbourhood Fund – whether tackling ethnic minority worklessness is a priority and how the funding is being spent.
 - A mapping exercise to understand what is already being done.
 - A good practice forum for local authorities with high ethnic minority populations and WNF funding.
 - Talking to organisations and asking where their challenges lie – many would like to do more for ethnic minorities, but are unable to.
 - Looking at the City Strategy targets and LAAs, especially as many of them want to review their targets due to the downturn.
 - Looking at the private sector and ethnic minority progression in the workplace. It was decided that was more suited to the Employer Engagement Project Group.
 - Looking at Flexible New Deal. It was questioned whether FND constituted an area initiative and decided that it will initially because it will be rolled out on an area basis and local providers will have the right to bid.
 - Producing a questionnaire to send to WNF areas with significant ethnic minority populations to find out if they are doing anything specifically to improve the employment outcomes of ethnic minorities, what their offer is and how the local authority tender for provision.
- The group was in agreement that a questionnaire should be sent to relevant WNF areas. MT suggested it might be easier initially to send it to a selection of LAs with high ethnic minority populations to gauge the response rate.

AP1: Secretariat to draft questionnaire & proposal for circulation and circulate for comment before sending to WNF areas.

- MC questioned how the group could scrutinise organisations, what executive power does it have? CW confirmed that the group has no executive power, but reports back to the Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force (EMETF), that has a wide ministerial and stakeholder membership. EMETF has the power to influence policy development. Through EMETF,

the opinions of the group might influence DWP and CLG in their WNF thinking.

- JC asked about the City Strategy Pathfinders, whether they had been evaluated and what were the lessons learned? MT explained that it is difficult to determine the effects of a funding stream. A report is being worked on, it is unlikely to give any quantitative evidence, but it will highlight examples of good practice and lessons learned.

AP2: Secretariat to provide group with information on initiatives to address ethnic minority employment in City Strategy areas and performance data.

- JC asked about LAA indicators. DH confirmed that there is no disadvantaged groups' indicator. JD confirmed that around 133 of the 150 LAs have chosen the employment rate indicator. BW noted that only LAs with two or more economic indicators in their LAA targets were eligible to receive WNF.

Olympics Items

- JC sought members' views on how the Olympics would slot into the work of the wider group.
- Suggestions for the group to consider included:
 - the effect of the economic downturn;
 - Nations and Regions Group and the role it plays (there is no clear understanding of what its overall function is at the moment);
 - The LDA & LSC volunteering programme "Personal Best" that was helping a number of participants into work;
 - a client's perspective of trying to get a job on the Olympics site
- There was a discussion about the seemingly complex processes to be gone through to put someone forward to an Olympics vacancy or to access skills training. MC confirmed that she would ask someone from ODA's Employment and Skills Team to talk to the group and explain the processes.
- After discussion it was decided that a separate half-day meeting focussing on the Olympics would be needed. The group could look at data in detail and invite key players to give presentations to get a full understanding of the situation. The group would then be in a position to decide where to target their efforts.
- Presenters to be invited to half-day:
 - Someone from ODA's Employment and Skills Team
 - Central team manager from JCP
 - Someone from NRG – Rachel Waterman?
 - Someone from the City Strategy Pathfinder – Kim Chaplain?
 - Ed Gallagher from Host Boroughs
- Presenters to be invited to speak under Chatham House rules.
- The following members expressed an interest in attending the Olympics half-day: Jonathan Baldrey, Jeremy Crook, David Blight, Dr Bela Arora, Marlene Cassell, Kate Burt, Boyd Wood, Rokhsana Fiaz, Jody Dunderdale, Derek Harvey and Janet Murray.

AP3: Secretariat to organise half-day meeting on the Olympics in February.

AP4: MC to provide contact details for ODA Employment and Skills Team.

AP5: DH to provide contact details for JCP central team manager & Ed Gallagher from Host Boroughs.

Ratification of Terms of Reference

- There was a brief discussion on the terms of reference. The frequency of meetings was discussed. It was decided that the group may need to meet more frequently than bi-monthly at first to get the project work off the ground.

AOB

- MC asked about the research suggested by the former London 2012 Group. MT explained that DWP has an extensive research programme. It was envisaged that any project undertaken by the group should be conducted by group members. Should the group recommend an academic research project, this should be put forward to the government department for whom it is most relevant for consideration in their research allocation.
- MC asked for clarification on why, if that was the case, research proposals had been sought. The project groups are tasked with producing a project, in correspondence between group members the term “research” was used to refer to suggestions for a work plan for a project, which evidently led some members to believe that there was a budget available for academic research.
- It was agreed that, as well as the half-day focussing on the Olympics in February, there would be a meeting focussing on WNF-related activities in March.

Summary of Action Points:

	Action Point	Responsibility	Status
1.	Secretariat to draft questionnaire & proposal for circulation and circulate for comment before sending to WNF areas	Secretariat	
2.	Secretariat to provide group with information on initiatives to address ethnic minority employment in City Strategy areas and performance data.	Secretariat	
3.	Secretariat to organise half-day meeting on the Olympics in February	Secretariat	
4.	MC to provide contact details for ODA Employment and Skills Team	MC	
5.	DH to provide contact details for JCP central team manager & Ed Gallagher from Host Boroughs	DH	

Annex A

Name	Organisation	Experience/Interests
Mariska van der Linden	Make your Mark	Attending as a guest with a view to someone from Make your Mark joining the group. Make your Mark is a campaign to promote enterprise culture in the UK and it is currently expanding to have a greater focus ethnic minority groups.
Rev. Janet Murray	Community Family Challenges Project	Main interest is in initiatives which support communities and families.
Boyd Wood	DWP AICD	Lead on City Strategy Pathfinders and DWP employment strategy for the Olympics.
Kate Burt	The Prince's Trust	Director of private sector fundraising at The Prince's Trust and is leading on engaging the private sector in initiatives surrounding the 2012 Games.
Derek Harvey	JCP City & East London District	City and East London District is the lead district on the City Strategy Pathfinders and London 2012.
Jody Dunderdale	JCP Strategic Development Division	Leads on partnership-related strategic work.
Dr. Bela Arora	Higher Education Academy	HEA is an umbrella organisation working with UK Higher Education organisations. In the Politics subject area, she has responsibility for diversity.
Marlene Cassell	Olympic Delivery Authority	Deputy Head of Equality and Inclusion at the ODA.
David Blight	Equality and Human Rights Commission	Olympics project manager at EHRC.
Hugh Harris (info sent by email)	London First	One of London First's principal interests is employability and skills. We are close to the London Skills & Employment Board, have a keen interest in the legacy aspects of the Games, and in the regeneration of East London generally. I am also a Board member of Newham College of FE.