



North East Equality and Diversity Partnership

Note of a meeting of the sub-group of the Evidence Task Group, 17 March 2008

Equality and Diversity – the Business Case for the region

1. We noted that the Employment, Skills and Enterprise Task Group was working on developing a business case for individual businesses, and that the two tasks were related but different.
2. Our task is to be able to demonstrate, in hard statistical and monetary terms, how the region's economy might improve if there was equality of outcome.
3. We noted that other dimensions of equality include equality of opportunity, process and worth, but that equality of outcome was the consequence of the other dimensions. That implies that we should demonstrate the benefits of equality of outcome, with the expectation that this will encourage policy-makers (especially those producing the next Regional Strategy) to focus on achieving improvements against the other three dimensions.
4. We also noted that it is often hard to make a distinction between the benefits of embracing equality and diversity, and following good employment practices more generally. This will need to be acknowledged in any forthcoming research.
5. We will take a dynamic approach, looking at how the region's economy will change by 2016. That will mean that we need to use economic projections to 2016 by sector, making assumptions about staff turnover, migration, expected retirement levels and reduced levels of unemployment/worklessness in the region. A key assumption should be that over that period there will be a move to equality of process, worth and opportunity, which will provide the gateway to equality of outcome.
6. In effect, this means that people will be recruited into jobs on the basis of having appropriate qualifications, and that as a result the workforce will be more appropriately skilled than at present. That should enable it to be more productive, and therefore companies will make higher profits. This will enable them to invest more, creating more jobs and with noticeable

indirect effects on jobs and turnover of other companies. An economic model will be needed to achieve this.

7. We will also need to look at the aspirations of different communities of identity, and ask what the realistic levels of employment might be for each. The EHRC's 'State of the Nation' report should help with this.
8. Finally, we will need to identify the barriers to equality of outcome so that policy-makers can consider how to address them.

Jon Carling

Head of NERIP

0191 229 6377

Jon.carling@nerip.com

19 March 2008