



North East Equality and Diversity Partnership

**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY EVIDENCE BASE TASK GROUP :
NOTE OF MEETING ON 1 APRIL 2008**

Present: Jon Carling, NERIP
Amy O'Donnell, Northumbria University
Mark Wright, Equality and Human Rights Commission
Tim Bird, Job Centre Plus
Abi Holder, Newcastle City Council
Liz Reay, Equality North East
Daljeet Singh, BECON
Joe Cleese, One NorthEast
Ruth Scott, Durham County Council
Stuart Linden, LSC
Karen Alexander, LSC
David Darton, Equality and Human Rights Commission
Susie Balderstone, Visionsense
Lynne Corner, Years Ahead Partnership

1. Introductions and Apologies

Apologies were received from Ranjana Bell and Nicola Boyne.

2. Note of previous meeting

The note of the 4 February meeting was agreed. The following actions (not covered elsewhere on the agenda) were discussed:

- a number of people had sent data and research to Northumbria University to inform the research project
- JC would discuss whether the Task Group was time-limited with the Equality and Diversity Board at its next meeting.

3. Update on the Northumbria University research project

Amy O'Donnell gave a progress report on the research project. Workstream A (mainly a data review) was on course for a draft to be circulated this week, and for completion by end of April. Workstream B was also on course for a completion date of mid-May.

In the discussion, the following issues arose:

- JobCentre Plus would provide Amy with a contact (**Action TB**)
- The following data sources may be worth investigating:
 - o Labour Force Survey and Family Resources Survey (for lone parents data)
 - o Commercial datasets, eg Mosaic (various demographic datasets)
 - o DWP analytical services division (benefits data)
 - o CREST in South Tyneside
 - o One NorthEast on entrepreneurship in the BME community

(Action Joe C)

- the report would include a number of chapters looking at cross-cutting issues

EHRC National Research Programme

David Darton gave an overview of the current and planned research work of the EHRC. This included:

- Initial research reviews into sexual orientation, religion and age, plus refugees/asylum seekers, immigrants and gypsies/travellers
- The development of a measurement framework, usable by a range of agencies at different spatial levels, drawing on the Equalities Review and using the seven diversity strands, and ten dimensions of equality (DD circulated a paper on the latter). There would be consultation on a range of spotlight and process indicators during 2008
- DD was keen to prioritise a number of issues on the interface between the diversity strands and the dimensions of inequality, and asked the group to send him any thoughts on what might be prioritised and why **(action : all)**
- EHRC had conducted a data audit and was going to undertake a fuller study of data available at district or regional level

In the discussion, the following points were made:

- SB and DS were concerned that the measurement framework might take a 'capabilities' approach and felt that much more emphasis should be given to identifying gaps, regardless of any issues relating to autonomy and choice
- DD was keen to work with colleagues in region, linking through Mark Wright
- MW suggested that a further seminar to present Amy's work, and linked to the consultation exercise, might be appropriate during summer 2008
- DD would provide a timetable for the EHRC's work programme and consultation exercises **(Action DD)**

4. The business case for equality and diversity

Jon C described the work of the sub-group looking at the business case, and said that it would be necessary to go to tender for this work during 2008. In the discussion, the following points were made:

- o SB thought that the business case work should include case studies
- o DD advised that the EHRC are thinking of doing something similar nationally, and would be keen to be involved in this project in some way, and advise that there may not be data to cover all the diversity strands; they also advise that improved quality of life is also an indirect effect and there may be benefit in factoring this in
- o SL advised that including a 'myth buster' might be useful
- o A O'D suggested that there would be a need to include parameters around changes in size of businesses

5. Feedback on the Board's awayday

JonC fed back that the Board awayday had provided an opportunity for Ranjana Bell to learn more about the Board's activities, and to start to shape

the agenda. There had also been discussion about the means to ensure that a variety of organisations were involved in the Board's work, either through formal membership of Task Groups, or by attendance at events and by receiving newsletters, etc. LR added that the partnership's website was about to go live, and that there should be two conferences this year. MW added that the Board were keen to ensure that a wider partnership was able to look at delivery of the Action Plan and ensure that the Board is accountable.