

**Venue: 24 Ribchester Drive, Bury BL9 9JT**

**Welcome:**

Zerqa opened the meeting by thanking all for attending and welcoming new members to the group. The aims and objectives of the focus group were briefly revisited and copies of them issued to all new members.

Minutes of the last meeting (06.05.04) were reviewed and there were no amendments. Introduced Tracey Webb and Simon Baguley from Bury MBC Personnel Department and discussed the main objectives of this focus group meeting which was to find out the difficulties faced by clients applying for jobs at Bury MBC.

**1. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

Tracey Webb and Simon Baguley introduced themselves, their roles and the purpose of the visit.

The questions discussed were:

- Have you ever applied for jobs at Bury MBC?
- What would put you off from applying?

**2. KEY POINTS OF DISCUSSION**

**Have you ever applied for a job at Bury MBC?**

No-one has ever applied for a job at Bury MBC.

**What would put you off from applying?**

Answers to this question included:

- Don't know where to look for the jobs advertised.
- No experience.
- No-one has ever seen the jobs board at the Town Hall.

**Where can you look for the jobs advertised for Bury MBC?**

Answers included:

Journals

- Newspapers – Bury Times, Bury Journal.
- Jobs Northwest.
- Employment Agencies.
- Local Authorities file.
- Jobs Bulletin.
- Notice boards.
- Teletext, internet, radio.

Websites

[www.jobsite.co.uk/home](http://www.jobsite.co.uk/home) - New website

- The criteria of a job can be emailed to the clients wanting to apply for jobs at Bury MBC.
- The majority of the group felt they would not know where to look if searching for vacancies on the Internet and they had no access to a computer. Zerqa informed the group that Adab has Internet facilities they can use but the room must be booked beforehand.

### **Requesting an application form**

When requesting an application form you will receive:

- Job Description: Lists the main duties you would be expected to undertake.
- Person Specification: This tells you the qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge you need to carry out the job.

### **How to get shortlisted**

- Ensure you read through the job description and person specification carefully BEFORE completing the application form.
- Study the shortlisting criteria.
- On the application forms give examples where appropriate.
- Only the candidates who fulfil the criteria will be shortlisted and invited for an interview.

### **Positive Action Scheme was explained:**

- The Scheme has been developed by Bury Metro and is supported by Employment Service.
- The scheme provides training and helps trainees gain qualifications, skills and experience to help them succeed in applying for clerical jobs with a variety of organisations.
- Helps with job search and how to sell yourself.
- To apply you must fulfil the following criteria: Aged between 25 and 63  
and be either: Disabled  
Of minority ethnic  
A returner to the labour market  
A lone parent

### **Different types of jobs available at Bury MBC**

- Our clients do not know the types of jobs available other than admin.

Other jobs available are:

- Social Workers
- Cleaners
- Teachers/Assistants
- Catering
- Construction/builders/joiners etc
- Full time posts - usually worked Monday to Friday - 37 hrs.
- Part time posts - any number of hours less than full time.
- Job share posts - people sharing any combination of the full-time hours usually splitting the days.
- Asghar clarified what Tracey and Simon said and ensured information given was fully understood.

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**What do you need to think about before starting work?**

Groups thoughts were:

- The relevant experience
- Suitability for the job
- Permanent or temporary
- Qualifications
- Support and supervision
- Will we lose or benefits

**What has been the main problem faced during interviews?**

Groups thoughts were:

- Lack of confidence.
- Nerves.
- Don't know what questions to ask?
- Can't think of any examples to support the questions asked.
- Lack of work experience in the UK.
- What shall I wear?

The group felt the need for preparing for the interview questions beforehand.

**Different types of interview techniques and Do's and Don'ts were discussed.**

- All focus group members were issued with examples of interview questions, a handout about different types of interview techniques and Do's and Don'ts in interviews.
- All members were also told about the Basic Work Skills course held at Ribchester Drive and encouraged to attend.

**Actions To Be Taken:**

- Invite Jobcentre Plus and GMP for discussions.
- Next Focus Group meeting date to be decided.