

# Embracing Diversity

## EMPLOYER FORUM ON DIVERSITY

BUSINESS LODGE, EUROPA HOUSE, BURY

21 April 2004

### MINUTES

#### Present

Sue	Chambers	Job Centre Plus	Steve	Mason	Bury Metropolitan Police
Allan	Costello	EYDCP	Pauline	Parrett	PACE
Gerrard	Curran	Business Link North M/cr	Chris	Reid	Armed Forces Careers
Huw	Davies	Bury EST	Kirsty	Roberts	NHS Pennine Care
Karen	Davies	Worsley Lodge	Marlene	Simpson	Inland Revenue
Sarah	Draycott	Village Hotel & Leisure	Catherine	Slater	The Extra Mile
Phil	Emmott	NHS Primary Care Trust	Lynda	Smethurst	Bury EST
Brian	Forber	Inland Revenue	Phil	Sutton	Bury EST
Dennie	Ford	Bury EST	Stephen	Tabner	Insurance Services
Mel	Hirst	CIS	Alison	Todd	Bury College
Ingrid	Hitchon	Molygran Ltd	Beverley	Unsworth	Cameron House
Carol	Kelly	NHS Acute Trust	Andy	Walkden	Bury MBC
Diana	Kyle	Mayflower Hospitals	Steven	Walters	Servo Metrolink
Michelle	Lomax	PACE	Tracy	Webb	Bury MBC
Lutha	Magloire	Armed Forces Careers			

#### Apologies

Diane	Atkins	Asda Stores Ltd	Nicola	Little	NHS Pennine Care (MH) Trust
Vicky	Attenborough	NHS Acute Trust	Mike	Mooney	First Buses
Hayley	Barthel	Marks & Spencer Ltd	Jane	Mowbray	B&Q Warehouse
Sarah	Beaney	CIS	Graham	Parry	Cormar Carpets
Peter	Bury	TUC	Edwin	Partridge	Joseph Holt's Brewery
Johnathan	Butterworth	Bolholt Hotel	Bhavna	Patel	Commission for Race Equality
Michael	Cowley	McDonald's	Victoria	Proudlock	Manchester United
Angie	Eckersley	De Vere Whites	Bill	Robinson	Armed Forces Careers
Christian	Fildes	McDonald's	Caroline	Schofield	Bury MBC
Richard	Gray	Village Hotel & Leisure	Chris	Sheelan	Unifi Dyed Yarns Ltd
Kay	Gregson	Bolton & Bury Chamber	Holly	Wallace	Ambers Attic
Claire	Griffiths	Fast JobNet	Peter	Weidenbaum	Trumeter Ltd
Cath	Hignett	NHS Trust	Anthony	Wharton	Archline Bending
Carol	Horrocks	Manchester Prisons	Suzanne	Wood	Bury MBC
Avis	Keen	Marks & Spencer	Carol	Woodhams	M.M.U.
Alicja	Kinsey	Senior Hargreaves			

# Embracing Diversity

## 1. WELCOME TO MEMBERS

Fred Bowen welcomed new members and invited guests to the meeting. Fred chaired the meeting due to the current situation at Unifi Dyed Yarns and Chris Sheelan's inability to act as Chairman on this occasion. Fred stated that he was pleased to hear that Molygran had found alternative premises at Heap Bridge and were now back in a trading position.

## 2. MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING

Fred asked for approval for the minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2004. These minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

## 3. MATTERS ARISING

With reference to the employer pack Fred reported that this was still in development with Bury EST managers and staff.

There were no other matters arising.

## 4. PROJECT PROGRESS TO DATE

Fred invited Huw Davies to give a brief updated report on the project.

### **Transnational working**

Huw informed members that following the recent technical meeting held in Spain agreement had been reached to hold the next seminar in Spain during the week 10 – 15 May 2004. This seminar will involve the participation of employers from the UK, Italy and Spain. Attending this visit will be three employers from the Bury forum GM Police, Molygran and The Village Hotels and three employers from the Stockport employers network namely John Lewis Partnership, Select Service Partners and Stockport MBC. Staff from Bury EST and Stockport Employment Services will accompany the employers.

The seminar will consist of a selection of workshops involving practitioners' and employers and there will be an opportunity for employers to visit a variety of selected employers in Zamora, Spain.

Following the seminar a report will be published and circulated to all forum members and published on the Embracing Diversity website.

### **Newsletter**

Following the recent appointment of two marketing officers a Bury EST newsletter will be published and employers were requested to contribute with articles of interest they may wish to see included.

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We are also providing a feature for the Bury Times to celebrate ten years of Bury EST service, which will also feature some of the recent work achieved in cooperation with local employers.

Due to the success of the employer forum and increasing attendance figures it may be necessary to find an alternative meeting venue. It was suggested that enquiries be made at the Church Inn at Birtle for the July meeting. The subject for the next meeting has yet to be decided by members.

## **Project Update**

Lee Salad, co-ordinator of the Embracing Diversity project provided members with a project update a copy of which is attached.

## **5. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE**

Fred introduced Catherine Slater, Manager from NCH Extra Mile (National Children's Homes). Bury EST now have two staff members based at the offices of Extra Mile in Bury and are receiving direct referrals for employment support from personal advisors of young care leavers. Catherine Slater had offered to talk to members and answer any questions that members may have regarding the employment of young care leavers and the level and type of support that may be required in the workplace.

Catherine gave a very interesting presentation that highlighted the work of the Extra Mile and personal advisors that covered the following subject areas;

1. Reasons Why Young People May Be In Care
2. Types of care:
3. Different Outcomes
4. Issues For Looked-After Children
5. Preparation for Leaving care
6. Issues Affecting Employment
7. What we do to support Young people:
  - The moving on group
  - The survivors group
  - The victims group

A debate followed where members discussed issues and concerns around the employment of young care leavers.

It was very interesting how members were able to relate to the subject and contribute by sharing their own experiences of employing young people and what support they provided.

To summarise the discussion, the main points raised centred mainly on the importance of providing a buddy/mentor in the workplace, however it is also important to recognise the individual's dislike of having a 'label' placed upon them. Many young care leavers wish not to be identified and seen to be receiving 'special treatment'. Buddies and mentors should be chosen with care and have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. GM Police provide a buddy and mentor scheme.

The role of the personal advisors should be recognised and this was in addition to employment support and could offer practical and moral support to the individuals outside of the workplace.

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There was a suggestion to arrange a focus group consisting of employers and young care leavers to discuss problems or issues that have arisen during and seeking employment.

Employer members offered to provide interview training to young people and encourage young care leavers to consider work experience as a possible goal to gaining full-time employment.

A copy of the presentation slides on this subject will be sent to all members.

## **6. News Items**

Members were invited to give announcements.

Pauline Parrett (PACE) introduced the latest newsletter from Business solutions and invited members to attend future seminars listed in the newsletter. If anyone requires information on future PACE and CoVE events they can contact Pauline or Michelle Lomax on 0161 765 3662 or Email Michelle at [mlomax@pacenetwork.co.uk](mailto:mlomax@pacenetwork.co.uk). Anyone interested in CIPD events are welcome to contact Pauline for further information.

Tracey Webb (Positive Action Development Officer for Bury MBC) informed members of a 2 year training project in construction for young people who have faced barriers to gaining employment. This would start in September 2004 and would allow for 4 intakes of 6 people. The trainees will be on the course for a period of 6 months; they will be paid and will work towards a qualification. Funding for this project has been secured through SRB/Housing. The final details were being arranged with Jobcentre Plus.

Sue Chambers (Jobcentre Plus Business Development Officer) gave information about two funds that will be made available the Ethnic Minorities Flexible Fund and the District Manager's Discretionary Fund. Jobcentre Plus would be working with partners and would contribute funds to joint projects. The two funds are worth a total of approx. £300K.

Jobcentre Plus would be introducing a basic skills enhancement and sanctions pilot. This would involve the use of a formal screening tool and there would be financial incentives for jobseekers who start basic skills and a further incentive for those who achieve a basic skills qualification.

Jobcentre Plus would be closing some offices and re-shaping the provision of service and benefits. The 'new look' centres would provide a fully integrated service in the Bolton and Bury areas.

Fred informed members that Bury EST officers would be contacting some of them in order to carry out further job analysis in the workplace.

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Members were invited to choose the subject for the next meeting. There was an opportunity to discuss drug and alcohol or job retention. The majority decided on job retention.

## **8. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 7 July 2004 this will be a mid-morning meeting followed by a buffet lunch. The venue will be confirmed in the near future.