

WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

29 OCTOBER 2008

Economic Inclusion Panel (EIP)

The Economic Inclusion Panel (EIP) was established as a result of information received by Advantage West Midlands at two annual conferences and an extensive consultation exercise on the new West Midlands Economic Strategy launched in December 2007.

Moreover, the Panel is unique in that it brings together in one place all those key bodies with an interest in and funding to deliver initiatives to address worklessness a major issue for the West Midlands. The Panel reviews how members can use their current resources more innovatively and collectively in order to maximise the impact.

Its remit is to act as a regional forum to share ideas and to facilitate pro-active, open, dialogue amongst organisations having an interest in developing innovative responses to promote economic inclusion. The context for this is provided by the West Midlands Economic Strategy *Connecting to Success*, which identifies that 20% of the region's £20b output gap is attributable to economic exclusion.

The EIP sits alongside: Regional Skills Partnerships, West Midlands Enterprise Board, Innovation Technology Council and Regional Transport Board. These core issues i.e. enterprise, innovation, skills, and transport along with Economic Inclusion represent the regions five key challenges.

This demonstrates AWM acting as the catalyst and regional leader in bringing key partnerships together to address the big issues that can then be delivered at local level in a way that meets local needs.

“Unless we seriously address this issue [economic inclusion] we will not improve the competitiveness of the West Midlands. Advantage West Midlands is committed to supporting this new approach and will provide resources to help this happen.” – Mick Lavery, Chief Executive, AWM

As agreed at the Panel’s meeting in June, the next meeting, which will be held on Thursday, 27th November, will incorporate a ‘Seeing is Believing’ session which will be organised by Business in the Community. The meeting will be hosted by Cadbury’s, and will incorporate a visit to a small number of organisations, to explore various aspects of economic exclusion. The Terms of Reference of the Panel will also be discussed at this meeting.

The membership of the Panel is set-out at Annex A. An Economic Inclusion Data Group has been set-up to support the Panel, its Terms of Reference are attached at Annex B.

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WEST MIDLANDS ECONOMIC INCLUSION PANEL

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Economic Inclusion Data Group Terms of Reference

7 July 2008

Overall Objective:

The overall aim of the Data Group is to:

To provide the partners within the Economic Inclusion Panel with a comprehensive, robust and up to date evidence base to inform its strategy development and action planning

The priorities for action of the Data Group will be guided by the need to focus on a number of key research questions to be determined by the Economic Inclusion Panel

Specific Objectives:

The Economic Inclusion Data Group has one key objective:

Prepare and deliver on behalf of the Economic Inclusion Panel a Data Plan that develops, uses and maintains the evidence base required by the Panel to support its work in the Region.

This can be subdivided into a number of specific objectives as follows:

- Identify critical data/intelligence gaps and needed data enhancements
- Agree the priority order of the critical data/intelligence gaps and needed data enhancements

- Identify appropriate actions to fill the prioritised critical data gaps and to implement agreed data enhancements. Harmonise data collection protocols and standards as necessary. Oversee the implementation of these actions
- Undertake data analysis, modelling and interpretation in relation to agreed key questions sought by the EI Panel
- Ensure that the catalogue of relevant existing data sources is updated regularly and that new data sources are added as appropriate
- Maintain necessary protocols for sharing of data and ensure agreed protocols are implemented in practice. Such protocols should define the scope of each data set to be shared, data formats, frequency of data exchange and any changes in operational data collection procedures
- Assess the quality of data available through agreed Quality Assurance (QA) procedures - This will need to be based on the concept of peer review to ensure that the quality assessments are robust, transparent and collectively agreed
- Engage with similar data activity that supports Economic Inclusion work in other regions where appropriate
- Co-ordinate the evaluation and dissemination of output/outcome measures. Dissemination vehicles will include events and seminars, including the WMRO annual conference. Other approaches may include the Internet, seminars, workshops and use of partner newsletters
- Ensure appropriate steps are taken in order to review the objective of the Data Group over time
- Evaluate the work of the group on a regular basis, securing feedback from the partners within the Panel

Administration of the EI Data Group and Reporting

Mechanisms:

The Data Group will be hosted and chaired by the West Midlands Regional Observatory (WMRO), who will also provide administrative and organisational support.

It will be the responsibility of WMRO to report back to the EI Panel on the progress of the Data Group.

Helena Duignan, Senior Research Analyst at WMRO will be responsible for overall co-ordination of Data Group activities.

Membership:

Any member of the partners within the EI Panel may be represented on the Data Group.

Data Group members will be active in developing inclusion policy and/or active data and intelligence practitioners and will be expected to make a significant contribution to the delivery of the objectives of the group.

It will be the responsibility of the Chair to review the overall composition of the group and suggest appropriate changes as necessary for agreement by the Progress Group.

Benefits of membership include access to data, intelligence and reports provided to the Data Group and the opportunity to shape the data work-stream plan.

Frequency of Meetings:

Meetings of data and intelligence practitioners will be monthly. Twice a year, these meetings will be extended to include non-members engaged in developing policy in order to ensure that the links to policy are appropriate and to assist in determining the priority of identified data gaps/enhancements.

