

## EQUAL VOICE MEETING NOTES

DATE: 15TH NOVEMBER 2023

LOCATION: SING PLUS CENTRE

- **Picture (left):** Dr Sylvia Forchap-Likambi – Voice of Nations and Emeka Onuora - Race Equality Hub - Liverpool City Region and combined authority
- **Picture (right) Chair –** Gemma Collins and Dr Sylvia Forchap-Likambi



### Agenda:

- Registration and refreshments
- Welcome
- Introductions
- Minutes from last meeting

#### Guest Speaker:

- Emeka Onuora - Race Equality Hub - Liverpool City Region and combined authority

#### Guest Speaker:

- Dr Sylvia Forchap-Likambi – Voice of Nations

- Open Discussions and Issues
- Events, Networking and Training opportunities
  
- Lunch – Networking

### Attendees:

- Sarah (Voice of Nations)
- Michelle King (Active Minds Day Center CIC)
- Fay Hamblett (Rule of Three at the Library)
- Sylvia (Voice of Nations)
- Katazyna (Registered Nurse)
- Justina (Polish Community UK)
- Katie Gillespie (Merseyside Police)
- Emy Onuora (Liverpool Race Equality Hub)

## **Meeting Commencement:**

### **Welcome and Introductions:**

The meeting commenced with a round of introductions. Each attendee briefly shared their name, organisation, and their role within their respective organisations.

### **Meeting Summary:**

Previous initiatives related to equality and diversity. We reflected on these initiatives to provide insight into what has worked well and what could be improved. Members shared experiences and lessons learned from these initiatives can help inform future efforts.

The need for more initiatives as some seem to have been dropped since the Covid-19 pandemic. Members are to share any programmes which help to support employment for DEBs individuals in Sefton.

Approaches by some larger organisation was highlighted some inequalities when applying for apprenticeship programmes. The race equality hub asks for evidence so that they can look into it and support the individual effected.

### **Guest Speakers:**

- Emy Onuora highlighted upcoming events and initiatives being organised by the Liverpool Race Equality Hub and encouraged collaboration and support from other attendees.

[Equal Voice Network Race Equality Hub Presentation 151123.pptx](#)

- Dr Sylvia Forchap-Likambi talked about her journey and the work of Voice of Nations. The recent Global Women Leadership Summit which took place in October. And the upcoming trade show at the Transformation Centre on Friday 10am-2pm at the Transformation Centre, Linacre Road in Bootle. This is to be the last Friday of ever month with expectation of December date TBC.

<https://m.facebook.com/p/Voice-of-Nations-CIC-100064724314628/>

### **Action Items:**

The meeting concluded with a consensus to continue fostering collaboration and communication among the network members. Future meetings and collaborative efforts were discussed, and attendees expressed their commitment to furthering the collective goals of the Equal Voice Network.

Note-taker:  
Gemma Collins  
**Sefton CVS**

**Online note cont. on next page...**

## EQUAL VOICE NETWORK MEETING NOTES – ONLINE

**DATE: 22<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2023**

**TIME: 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

**LOCATION: ZOOM**

### **Agenda:**

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - Opening remarks
  - Introduction of attendees
2. Voice of Nations Work Discussion
  - Q&A
3. Apprenticeships in the Trade for Black, Asian, and Ethnic Minority (BAME) Young People
  - Links found
  - Open floor for suggestions and ideas
4. Race Equality Hub Discussion
  - Q&A
5. Next Steps and Action Items
  - Summary of key points discussed
  - Identification of actionable steps and responsible parties
  - Setting timelines and deadlines for follow-up actions
6. Closing Remarks
  - Final thoughts and remarks

### **Attendees:**

- Kairen Smith (Northwest Ambulance Service)
- Paul McCann (Sefton Council)
- Emma Stewart (Sefton Council)
- Helen Shortall (Reengage)
- Dr. Sylvia Forchap-Likambi (Voice of Nations)

### **Meeting Summary:**

The meeting began with all attendees joining the online platform. The chair provided a brief introduction to The Equal Voice Network and addressed queries from new members.

Discussions focused on apprenticeships in trade organisations and the experience of accessing apprenticeships, with a need for further information to follow up on evidence.

Following brief introductions, extensive discussions centred on employment, job application processes, and strategies.

**Strategies:**

- Reengage uses "Applied," an anonymous recruiting system where applicants answer 5 job-related questions and receive feedback without providing identifiable information.
  - Paul from Sefton Council highlighted the use of the Socio-Economic Duty to examine all aspects of recruitment.
  - Emma from Sefton Council emphasised the importance of confidence, education, the legacy of racial discrimination, and the representation of current staff within the organisation.
- Kairen from NWAS emphasised the importance of ongoing engagement with communities to build trust and provide opportunities for skill development.

Kairen and Emma discussed the composition of interview panels, highlighting the need for diversity, including representatives from EDI, network, and management, with all panel members receiving training to address unconscious bias.

Paul from Sefton Council confirmed the implementation of recruitment training that includes unconscious bias, along with an ongoing rollout of anti-racism training.

The network deliberated on ring-fenced applications and discussed the Disability Confident scheme, which ensures that individuals meeting essential criteria are offered an interview, aiming to protect diverse candidates against discrimination. However, concerns were raised about the complexity of essential skills and the need for simplification.

NWAS also operates a pre-employment scheme to help applicants gain confidence and secure placements within the organisation.

NWAS also utilizes a tracking system to monitor roles with a high number of applicants and to check the EDI monitoring. If individuals with protected characteristics have missed a round of recruitment, NWAS aims to help break down any barriers they may face to facilitate their re-application. Sylvia discussed her work with Voice of Nations, focusing on empowering women, families, and children to address personal development, leadership, unique talents, and limiting self-belief. The organisation aims to build confidence and resilience in these individuals. Talked about the trade show at the Transformation Centre on Friday 10am-2pm at Linacre Road in Bootle. There is sponsorship and collaboration opportunities and to contact Sylvia or Gemma to arrange an introduction.

**Action Items:**

1. Follow-up with Kairen - NWAS to be a guest speaker to discuss Positive Action and workforce development strategies.
2. Consider conducting a survey or questionnaire regarding best practices.
3. Follow up with MK regarding apprenticeships and evidence of racism.
4. Introductions as required for Network Members.

The meeting concluded at 11:30 AM.

Note-taker:  
Gemma Collins  
**Sefton CVS**