

Minutes of the 59th meeting of the Migration Advisory Committee on 15 November 2013

Chair: Professor Sir David Metcalf CBE

Attending: Dr Martin Ruhs
Dr Jennifer Smith
Professor Jonathan Wadsworth
Professor Jackline Wahba
Lesley Giles
John Thompson (Home Office)
MAC secretariat

Agenda item 1 - Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed John Thompson, the new Head of Migration Policy in the Home Office, to his first MAC meeting. He also welcomed Aashya Patel, who had recently joined the Analysis and Research team in the MAC secretariat from the Ministry of Justice.

In addition, the Chair informed members that Anne Ball, from the secretariat, will be leaving the Home Office to join the Office of Manpower Economics at BIS on promotion. MAC members expressed their recognition of Anne's significant contribution to the work of the MAC and their thanks for her efforts.

Agenda item 2 – Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2013

1. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Agenda item 3 – Home Office and MAC secretariat and other policy updates

2. John Thompson gave an update on behalf of the Home Office (HO). John reported that net migration target remained a HO priority and that the net figures to be produced on 28 November will shape thinking. He gave an indication of some emerging thinking about the possible future path of migration policy but said that this was still in development.
3. Tim Harrison gave an update on behalf of the MAC secretariat. He said that the work on low-skilled migration was still ongoing and that the call for evidence in relation to the Tier 1 (investors) commission was launched on 16 October 2013. Tim also advised that he will be meeting with John Thompson in late November/early December to consider a provisional programme of work for the MAC in 2014. In addition, Tim reported that the MAC secretariat will be making some structural changes mainly within the policy team because of current and upcoming staff movement, which included Margaret McGrath's retirement at the end of 2013. Tim said he will be keeping the

staffing situation under review in the coming months and in particular once the MAC work programme for 2014 is determined.

4. Lesley Giles reported that the UK Commission for Employment and Skills had fed into the Perkins Review with their own research on Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) related occupations. Jackline Wahba said that the Economics and Social Research Council (ESRC) is setting up an advisory group on migration for Europe and that she had been invited to be a member. Martin Ruhs reported that on 29 November there will be an Oxford University migration event and that he will be on the panel. Jennifer Smith informed the meeting that an agreement had been reached with DWP for her, Jonathan Wadsworth and other academics to use the Lifetime Labour Market database until September 2015.
5. The Chair confirmed that his investiture ceremony took place on 23 October 2013.

Agenda item 4 – Paper 59.1: Update on the low-skilled commission

6. The secretariat gave the Committee an outline of progress on partner engagement in relation to its commission on low-skilled jobs and migration. The secretariat said that an open forum meeting in Southampton had been confirmed for 19 November and that other targeted visits were being arranged in areas including Boston on 22 November. The Committee emphasised the importance of ensuring that meetings with recruitment agencies, including the Recruitment and Employment Confederation, also takes place.
7. The Committee was also provided with an update on the econometric work that was being carried out by the secretariat. The Committee agreed a structure for the report and suggested where each chapter could be informed by further in-house analysis of existing datasets. The Chair pointed out the need to ensure that all Committee members are kept centrally involved with key aspects of each chapter.

Agenda item 5 – Paper 59.2: Update on the Economic impact of the Tier 1 (Investors) route

8. The Committee received an update on progress on the Tier 1 (investor) commission. The call for evidence was published on 16 October and will close at the end of November. Partner evidence will be gathered through a targeted partner engagement approach, including a general partner event that took place on 11 November 2013.
9. The Committee also agreed how the report's policy and data context chapter should be structured. The Committee emphasised the need to consider the impact of consumption spending in line with the low number of Tier 1 investors, particularly compared to the greater effect of spending by tourists. It also said the report should include a table of approximately 30 countries outlining whether or not they offer a route similar to the UK Tier 1 (investor) route.

Agenda item 6 -- Update on the MAC research programme (oral item)

10. An update on research that the MAC has commissioned from external partners was provided. Both projects were making good progress with final milestones due in December 2013.

Agenda item 7 – Update on MAC Governance issues

11. The secretariat reported that an audit of the campaign to appoint members to the MAC during the 2012-13 reporting year was carried out on 14 November 2013. The audit sought to ensure that the campaign was compliant with the principles of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointment's code of practice and that the appropriate authorisations were obtained. The secretariat also said that it had arranged for MAC members to attend a 1 day media training course on Friday 10 January 2014 and that the Minister for Immigration had invited Dr Martin Ruhs and Professor Jonathan Wadsworth to remain as members of the MAC for a further year until November 2014.
12. The Committee confirm their availability to meet on the dates listed below:

13 December 2013
24 January 2014
28 February 2014
28 March 2014

Agenda item 8 – Any other business

13. There was no other business.

MAC secretariat

November 2013